

The Karma of Untruthfulness

Secret Societies, the Media, and Preparations for the Great War



Vol 1

13 LECTURES BY RUDOLF STEINER

THE KARMA OF UNTRUTHFULNESS

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Secret Societies, the Media, and Preparations for the Great War

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Thirteen lectures given in Dornach and Basel between 4 and 31 December 1916

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LECTURE ONE, Dornach, 4 December 1916

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LECTURE EIGHT, Basel, 21 December 1916

Christmas at a time of tragic destiny. Jesus and Christ. The Christ concept of Gnosis and the dogmatic creed. Loss of the Christ concept in the South resulting from the rooting-out and dying-away of Gnosis. The newly-converted heathen in the North at first fail to comprehend Jesus. The northern Mysteries of the Ingaevones. Vanir and Aesir. Worship of Hertha or Nerthus. The Anglo-Saxon rune song. 'The revelation from on high and peace on earth.' Shouting down mankind's longing for peace.

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LECTURE TWELVE, Dornach, 30 December 1916

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LECTURE THIRTEEN, Dornach, 31 December 1916

Poisons in the social sphere. No moral judgement of historical necessities. Judgements about history change with time. How can the seeming increase in world population be understood in relation to reincarnation? The spiritual background and the consequences of the Opium War. The 'Chinesifying' of Europe. The 'social carcinoma'. Effect and significance of poisons. Bearer of the ego: metamorphosed poison substances of ancient Moon. Consciousness arises through the forces of decay. The healing powers of poisons: luciferic forces balanced by ahrimanic forces. The Baldur myth as an expression of how poisons work. G. S. Fullerton on Germany.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

Rudolf Steiner gave the lectures collected in this book to audiences of anthroposophists in Dornach, Switzerland throughout the month of December 1916. The lectures were taken down by a professional stenographer, Helene Finckh, who was solely authorized to do so, and as a result there is only one of the frequent gaps in the shorthand reports that mar transcriptions of Steiner's lectures in the early years of the century. These lectures are not easy, but Steiner never wanted his work to be easy; he wanted people to work at it in full, active, wakeful consciousness. There is a wealth of historical detail and individual colour here—more perhaps than in any of Steiner's work, and readers whose grasp of the history is tenuous will find the notes indispensable.

Publication history

Given the importance of the content for an understanding of the events surrounding the First World War, it is significant that these lectures 'were not made accessible, even in the Dornach archive', until 1948 and even then Marie Steiner 'decided to bring out a restricted mimeographed edition which was handed out on a personal basis only'. The first German edition in book form did not come out until 1966, and the second edition (from which this translation by Johanna Collis was made) appeared in 1978 (GA 173). Vol. 2 (GA 174) was not available to the public until 1983. The first English translation of Vol. 1 was only published in 1988 (Rudolf Steiner Press, London and Anthroposophic Press, New York), 72 years after the lectures were given, and Vol. 2 did not appear in English till 1992. The two English language volumes contain *all* the lectures contained in GA 173 and 174; none are omitted.

The uniqueness of *The Karma of Untruthfulness*

We are approaching the centenary of the terrorist assassination at Sarajevo in 1914 that sparked the Great War, which ultimately led to the Second World War and the Cold War. Thus the Great War could be said to have shaped the whole twentieth century. By 2014 there will be no one left who fought in the war. Many might think, 'What's the point of dwelling on such an unattractive conflict in the past that has little relevance to the modern world?', until it is pointed out that the Israel-Palestine problem, the development of Iraq, Fascism, Nazism, Communism, Maoism, national self-determination, the centralization of society and economic organization in the West, women's rights, the rapid and radical development of aircraft, military technology, and the arts, the end of the old British Liberal Party and the rise of the Labour Party, the break-up of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, the decline and fall of European empires and colonialism, the movement for European unity, the United Nations and the emergence of the United States as world superpower—all these were to a greater or lesser degree rooted in or made possible by the Great War. That titanic struggle was a caesura between two ages; it did so much to define and shape the modern world. Its consequences are still with us—many of them in the form of still unresolved problems. It could even be said that with the outbreak of war in 1914, western civilization somehow failed to maintain its progress and has been treading water ever since—despite space rockets, the Beatles, the Pill and the Internet.

Fundamental issues such as the use of energy, the grip of a narrow materialism on intellectual life, relations between the sexes and classes, the problem of nationalism, the nature of architecture and music—all of which were teetering on the edge of new creative solutions in the decade prior to 1914—were either sidetracked, put on hold or else diverted into wholly unhealthy directions by the catastrophic shock of the war, so that we are still faced with those issues today. If we look attentively, we shall see that the terrorist's shots that echoed round the world from Sarajevo on that summer's day in June 1914 are still echoing to much greater effect than, say, the shots in Dallas, Texas, or the destruction of the Berlin Wall.

While a consensus has been relatively easy to reach about the Second World War, opinions remain divided as to an understanding of the First. We still need to gain a clearer picture of what that awesome conflict was about and how the cataclysm broke upon western civilization.

Although some of Rudolf Steiner's thoughts about the war and what was behind it had been available to English-speaking readers in other lecture cycles such as *The Challenge of the Times* (GA 186, given November to December 1918 and first published 1941, Anthroposophic Press), *The Occult Movement in the Nineteenth Century* (GA 254, given October 1915, published 1973, Rudolf Steiner Press), *Secret Brotherhoods* (GA 178, given November 1917, first published in English translations of various cycles and as a complete set by Rudolf Steiner Press, 2004), and *The Destinies of Individuals and of Nations* (GA 157, given *passim* from September 1914 to July 1915, published 1986 by Rudolf Steiner Press and Anthroposophic Press), in no other lectures currently available in English does Steiner go so deeply into the nitty-gritty details of political and media events as in this course of lectures (GA 173 and 174), later titled *The Karma of Untruthfulness*. Nowhere else does he lay bare so clearly the secretive and sometimes occultly inspired machinations that lay behind what erupted in the July crisis of 1914; nowhere else does he describe with such directness the all-too-human failings that caused a whole generation to be herded to the abyss of culture and civilization by unscrupulous or ignorant politicians, writers, propagandists, military men and academics. And for his own and subsequent generations, including our own, which is often said to be adrift in an ocean of information of which we cannot make sense, nowhere else does he describe so usefully and helpfully the methods, techniques and signposts needed to be able to cleave to the truth in the miasma of public lying and untruth that pollutes society and politics in the modern world.

The Karma of Untruthfulness as a media course

Many have felt these lectures constituted a kind of intensive course in applied media studies for his listeners. In his time, 'media' meant predominantly newspapers, magazines, journals and books—the printed word—whereas today we have to make sense of information not only from these but also from radio, TV, DVDs, cinema, not to mention the already enormous World Wide Web, which had not even been invented when the first English edition of these lectures came out in 1988. Steiner was clearly making strenuous efforts to wake people up to the dimensions of the catastrophe engulfing them and their civilization. Not only were his listeners, like so many of their generation, inclined to be swayed by waves of patriotism and other such partisan emotions, many of them—incredibly—had to be convinced that it was worth him discussing details relating to the

war; their heads were, as before the war, still inclined towards the more theosophical planes of 'higher spheres'. He clearly feels he has to justify his focus on the murky political events of the earthly plane but does not apologise for it, telling his audience in no uncertain terms that one of the reasons the catastrophe occurred was because people were too much preoccupied with their own personal worlds and not enough with the greater affairs of mankind in general; they had paid little or no attention to world events and as a result had allowed themselves to be manipulated into the war.

How true this remains today when the distractions and temptations of our personal worlds are all the greater, and the results have been Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda, 9/11, Afghanistan and Iraq. Again and again, he tells his listeners that to extricate themselves from feelings of ethnic partisanship is a requirement of the times; we must become aware of our membership of mankind. At the same time, he tries from innumerable angles to illuminate the different natures of various cultures so that understanding can spread of where foreigners are coming from, as we would say today. The inability to put oneself in the place of others, to try to feel as they do, was a major cause of the one-sided nationalistic prejudices that were so common in his day.

The Russian anthroposophist Andrei Bely, who was in Dornach in 1914, gives a vivid picture of what Steiner was up against:

The outbreak of the war brought Steiner new, special problems; he had to guide the outbreaks of nationalistic sentiment into sensible directions. Three weeks [after the outbreak of the First World War] the first momentum of our spontaneous solidarity was quite evidently broken. All through September and through all of October the storms in the canteen did not abate: the British and the Russians gathered together in little groups, the Germans insisted very tactlessly that the war had been instigated by the provocative attitude of England; the Russians countered with the statement that a breach of neutrality amounts to barbarism. Soon, theoretical debates changed to concrete incidents and endangered the whole life of Dornach. [Edouard] Schuré's withdrawal from the Anthroposophical Society, the nasty rumours that filtered out of France via the French part of Switzerland, the duplicity of some Poles—all this had very negative effects. All eyes were on the Doctor; one secretly hoped that he would at least state: 'Germany is in the right!' or 'Germany is to blame for all the catastrophes!' However he did not accuse a single country, only the mendacity of the press... The Doctor ... succeeded in smoothing the waves of nationalistic passion by pointing out the unity that all great culture has in common. In light of his words we once again turned to one another; the oppressive atmosphere was transformed. [Andrei Bely, Assya Turgenieff, and Margarita Voloschin, *Reminiscences of Rudolf Steiner*, Adonis Press, New York, 1987, pp. 55–6.]

The Karma of Untruthfulness and the British

The fact that it took so long for these lectures to appear in English had its consequences for an older generation of British anthroposophists who had been brought up to think that Britain, led by the noble and fair Sir Edward Grey, went to war in 1914 to save gallant little Belgium from the jackboots of a brutal Prussian militarism. Some had not managed the (admittedly difficult) extrication Steiner was calling for and were shocked by the claims he makes in the lectures about Britain's part in the war and its preparation. The

karma of materialism in British history, Steiner says, led inexorably to 1914. In the crisis of that summer, he insists, just one sentence from Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey could have prevented the World War. Equally, he says, one sentence from the Russian Foreign Minister, Sasonov, would have done just as well. Sometimes ethnic conditioning runs so deep that one does not see the more subtle skeins of materialism that can warp one's thinking and stretch it on a sense-based loom. 'If I do not see it in front of me, it does not exist.' Therefore, there are no conspiracies. History is regarded as a succession of cock-ups, coincidences, and ideas passed, almost randomly, from one person to another. Such is a common English habit of regarding history.

Or at least it was, while professional historians controlled the flow of historical information and research. With the World Wide Web, we have seen a revolution in access to information as significant as the development of printing in the 15th century. As reading the Bible for themselves changed ordinary people's ideas about religious truth—often in a confused and chaotic, even destructive way, but was nevertheless a crucial step on the path of individual spiritual freedom—so being able to access information from almost anywhere about almost anything at the click of a mouse has opened many people's eyes to the ways in which they have been manipulated in modern society. The assassination of Kennedy, the Vietnam War, the Wars against Drugs and Terror, the exploitation of developing countries, the New World Order, the European 'project', AIDS, global warming and the ecological crisis—all these are subjects about which citizens no longer have to be dependent on mainstream media or public library selections for the information which helps them to form judgements. It is easier for us now to have the wider view that Steiner was calling for back in 1916. Drawing attention to this very point of manipulation, he said (in lecture 11):

What is essential is to develop the will to see things, to see how human beings are manipulated, to see where there might be impulses by which people are manipulated. This is the same as striving for the sense for truth ... One who possesses the sense for truth is one who unremittingly strives to find the truth of the matter, one who never ceases to seek the truth and who takes responsibility for himself even when he says something untrue out of ignorance ... One cannot claim there is no way of getting to the bottom of these things ... if one seeks honestly, there are many ways of finding out what is going on.

The context of the lectures: Rudolf Steiner in 1914–16

Before these lectures Rudolf Steiner had not made much explicit comment on the details of the war. In the years immediately before 1914, he was busy developing anthroposophical work on Christology and the arts (Eurythmy, Speech Formation and the Mystery Dramas in particular), and starting the construction of the Goetheanum building in Dornach—his contribution to a new path for architecture. On the day of Franz Ferdinand's assassination, he was lecturing in Dornach on 'Ways to a New Style in Architecture'. As the July crisis unfolded, he lectured on architecture, colour, and the question of anthroposophy and Christianity. During the period in the early years of the century when he had been seeking to establish a relationship with the Freemasonic tradition, although under no illusions as to the remaining vitality of Freemasonry, he spoke positively about it (*The Temple Legend* lectures 1904–6, GA 93, Rudolf Steiner Press,

1997), and there is nothing about the dark side of the western brotherhoods that we hear in the lectures of 1916. However, after the outbreak of war in 1914, Steiner never again had anything really positive to say about Freemasonry as a spiritual stream and it could be surmised that the outbreak of war made him turn his attention to the role that western Freemasonry (French as well as British) and occult groups had played in bringing about the war.

On 1 September 1914, as the colossal Battle of the Marne was about to begin, he gave his first lecture about the war itself (in GA 157, *The Destinies of Individuals and of Nations*, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1986) in which he spoke more about the general spiritual background to the tragedy that was unfolding; the mood was very empathetic, urging spiritual solidarity with all involved. Thereafter, he continued with anthroposophical themes and at the end of the year was again lecturing about art, maintaining the importance of continuing constructive work for the future in the face of the insanity of the war (31 December, Dornach; *Art as Seen in the Light of Mystery Wisdom*, Lecture IV, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1996). Occasional lectures (included in GA 157) about the war followed in 1915 but on the whole he continued to work with other anthroposophical themes.

As the waves of hatred against Germany and specifically against what was condemned in the West as German ‘Kultur’ mounted ever higher, he published *Thoughts During Wartime. For Germans and those who do not believe they have to hate them* (July 1915, Berlin). This was a defence of German spiritual culture against those who wished only to calumniate it by associating such spirits as Goethe and Fichte with the use of poison gas in war (April) and the sinking of the *Lusitania* (May). The text also dealt with the question of who had actually wanted the war by showing that it was France’s hatred of Germany since the defeat of 1871, Russia’s determination to dominate Eastern Europe and take Constantinople, and England’s will to continue her hegemony over world trade and finance that provided the best answers to that question. For these observations, Steiner was castigated as a ‘German chauvinist and apologist’, not least by British theosophists. He continued with his anthroposophical work in 1915, but in October (10–25) gave a course of lectures, later published as *The Occult Movement in the 19th Century* (GA 254, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1973), which lifted the lid on the struggles among esoteric groups, especially those around the figure of H.P. Blavatsky. In this context, it may well be that Steiner was familiar with lectures given in 1893 by a little known and seemingly independent English esotericist, C.G. Harrison, to a group called the Berean Society. This obscure group may have been associated with the High Church group of theoretical occultists to which Harrison later claimed to belong and which actively opposed what it considered the ‘decadent’ doctrines of reincarnation and eastern teachings espoused by the theosophical followers of H.P. Blavatsky. In these far-reaching and quite profound lectures, Harrison lays bare some of the knowledge possessed by the western brotherhoods in relation to their understanding of septenary historical cycles and the role of ethnic groups within those cycles, especially as regards the Latin and Russian peoples. Twenty-four years before the Russian Revolution, he speaks of the ‘experiments in Socialism’, which would have to come about in Russia because Western Europe was not suited for them.* This experiment got underway in December 1916 with the assassination of Rasputin, the last representative of native opposition to western esoteric plans for Russia.

He was murdered by Prince Yussopov, a Freemason initiated in Oxford; the murder was assisted by the British Secret Service.[†]

In a series of lectures in Dornach in September 1916, Steiner dealt with themes more obliquely but nevertheless related to the terrible events of the war: *Inner Impulses of Human Evolution: The Mexican Mysteries and The Knights Templar* (GA 171, Anthroposophic Press, 1984). Here aspects of British and American evolution in relation to Asia are discussed, and one can sense a groundwork being laid for an understanding of what would transpire the following year with the entry onto the world stage of America and the Bolsheviks in Russia. After a series of lectures on psychology and Goethe, he then gave the course of lectures collected in this volume, beginning on 4 December.

The context of the lectures: the events of 1916

In the year 1916 those European nations involved in the war plummeted into the most dreadful slaughters in the bloody history of their continent up to that time, and sustained scars on their national life which would last for decades. To anyone with an interest and a concern for European cultural life, it must have seemed like an unending nightmare. Both sides waged a war of attrition (or *Materialschlacht* in German) in which generals did not hesitate to throw the lives of hundreds of thousands into what soldiers referred to as ‘a mincing machine’. In February the appalling Battle of Verdun opened, where the German supreme commander von Falkenhayn set out to bleed the French army white. The French did not yield but it was a pyrrhic victory; the battle, which lasted for most of the year, did succeed in draining the energy from the French army, which by the end of the year was exhausted. The French general Nivelle’s spring offensive in 1917 ended in ignominious failure and the first large-scale mutinies in the French military. The British were hard-pressed in May, first by the Easter Rising in Dublin and then on 31 May when the Royal Navy’s High Seas Fleet, which could ‘lose the War in an afternoon’, almost lost the Battle of Jutland (the British lost more ships but retained control of the seas; the German navy never reappeared in force). In June the Russians seemed on the verge of a major breakthrough in the Brusilov Offensive, which took hundreds of miles from the Central Powers but eventually petered out later in the summer. It was effectively the imperial Russian army’s last gasp.

June 1916 saw the death of Helmuth von Moltke, Chief of the German General Staff when war broke out. He was replaced by von Falkenhayn after the failure of the Battle of the Marne in September 1914 and effectively retired. His wife Eliza had long been a faithful pupil of Rudolf Steiner’s and after his dismissal he himself drew close to anthroposophy and Rudolf Steiner personally in the last two years of his life. Steiner spoke at his funeral and later maintained for some years a post-mortem communication with the soul of the dead man. (See *Light for the New Millennium—Rudolf Steiner’s Association with Helmuth and Eliza von Moltke*, ed. T.H. Meyer, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1997.) It was as the awfulness of 1916 deepened and von Moltke passed over the threshold that Steiner began to speak more directly than ever about the nature and causes of the war.

After Verdun, the British High Command felt obliged to launch its own major offensive—on the Somme—on 1 July. It turned out to be the black day of the British army as some

60,000 casualties were sustained in the vain effort to achieve a major breakthrough in the German front line. The British used tanks for the first time in warfare, but ineffectually; they achieved little. By the time the 'battle' ended in September, allied losses were 650,000 while German losses amounted to 400,000. The experience of the Somme seared itself into Britain's national psyche for a generation. By the autumn the Triple Entente was reeling from the blows the Germans had given it in both East and West. Their discomfiture was compounded when Romania, rich in oil and wheat, whose entry into the war on their side in the summer had cheered them, was swiftly overrun by the German army under von Mackensen. By this point von Falkenhayn, whose Verdun strategy had ended in failure, had been replaced by Hindenburg and Ludendorff, who dominated the military councils of the Central Powers until the end of the war. As this truly appalling year approached its close, in November President Woodrow Wilson was re-elected in the USA and Emperor Franz Josef of Austria-Hungary, who had ruled since 1848, died. An effective coup d'état took place in Britain in early December when a cabal around Lord Milner managed to oust the Liberal leader Asquith and his Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey and install themselves in the Cabinet with new Prime Minister Lloyd George as their front man. These were hard men, determined on victory at any price. On 12 December the Germans, feeling their situation in the war, though critical, had improved since the defeat of Romania, put forward a serious peace proposal. Though vague and self-justificatory in tone, it was nevertheless the first major peace proposal since the outbreak of war. Throughout the Christmas period, therefore, the world waited with bated breath to see how the Entente and the neutral Americans would react to the German offer.

It is against this terribly fraught background that the urgent tone of Steiner's lectures in *The Karma of Untruthfulness* must be seen, and also the palpable bitterness with which he greeted the news (30 December) that the Entente had rejected Germany's peace proposals. He must have guessed what this would ultimately mean for Central Europe and the world. On that very day Rasputin was murdered by Yussopov. Within five months, unrestricted submarine warfare had been resumed at the insistence of Hindenburg and Ludendorff; the Czar had abdicated; America had entered the war against Germany; the German High Command had facilitated Lenin's return to Russia, while the Americans and the British allowed Trotsky to join him.

The question of war guilt and Steiner's contribution to the understanding of the Great War

Essentially, Steiner is saying in these lectures that the catastrophe (he always denied that it was just a 'war') happened for two broad reasons: firstly, because the lack of consciousness and attention on the part of so many people in Europe allowed the war to happen; Europeans were too lazy to seek for truth, either of a spiritual or of an earthly (political) nature and so became paralysed with the fear that resulted from their failure to see the truth of the situation. This fear created the poisonous climate into which the spark of war could be thrown. That spark, however, was thrown consciously, and it is here that Steiner makes a key contribution to the understanding of the Great War.

Since the victorious Entente and its allies branded Germany with sole responsibility for the war by forcing her to sign the infamous War Guilt clause Article 231 of the Versailles Treaty on 28 June 1919 (five years to the day after the assassination in Sarajevo),

argument has never ceased among historians as to whether that verdict was justified. This is no mere academic dispute; our whole understanding of the 20th century and the modern world can be said to depend on its outcome. Between the wars, the German guilt thesis was less heard of as the iniquitous consequences of Versailles became evident, but World War II and the crimes of the Nazis, notably the Holocaust, tended to reinforce the earlier notion that the Germans must have been guilty because there was something intrinsically not right about them as a people and as a culture. Younger German historians, notably Fritz Fischer, joined in this castigation, portraying post-1870 Germany as the seedbed of an inevitable Nazi totalitarianism. Other western historians went rummaging in the distant past of German history looking for the antecedents of Nazism: the Romantics, the Holy Roman Empire, the Saxon Emperors, Charlemagne, the Germanic barbarian tribes...

In the 1970s and 1980s the balance was redressed, and the war came to be seen more as a 'Galloping Gertie', a collective insanity of western civilization in which no one nation was 'to blame', a complex socio-cultural reaction to the challenges of industrialization that had got out of hand. With the end of the Cold War and in the mood of Anglo-American triumphalism as the millennium dawned, there was a further shift, at least among English-speaking historians, and a revisionism took hold that was reminiscent of the attitudes and judgements of 1919: Britain had been right to fight Germany after all; German militarism had indeed been threatening either Britain or Europe. The Entente had been caught unprepared by the devious plans of the German militarists to use the July crisis to force the war they had been wanting since at least September 1912 and perhaps for decades. British generals had not been donkeys leading lions. The war, though a severe trial, was after all a victory for democracy over autocracy and militarism.

This has been the majority view since the mid-1990s and has been reinforced in the English-speaking world by innumerable TV documentaries, books, magazine articles and even examination papers. The British *GCSE Modern World History* textbook of 2001 (for the OCR, AQA, EDEXCEL, CCEA, WJEC examining bodies) for high school students, for example, focuses almost exclusively on the question of German guilt. It starts by asking: Who should bear the blame? then moves to Anglo-German naval rivalry and asks: Did Germany cause the War? It sets up a law court scenario in which Germany is in the dock and pupils are invited to come to a verdict.

Rudolf Steiner's approach challenges this view head-on. First, he showed how it is only necessary to use common sense in looking dispassionately at the evidence available and to develop a nose for truth, half-truths and lies in the public arena; one's motto, he said, should be that 'wisdom is to be found solely in truth'. Second, he provided an understanding of the broad spiritual streams behind current events, without which one just gets lost in details. Third, he discerned characteristic elements crucial to understanding events on the physical plane—a technique of historical illumination he would later (1918) develop into what he called historical symptomatology.* What is important in history is to point out what is *characteristic* about facts, not just to list them one after the other. Fourth, he showed how various broad spiritual streams work in different geographical locations and through secretive brotherhoods, groups and individuals. He emphasized, for example, that the events of the war could not be understood without taking into account the existence and activities of elite brotherhoods in the West—mostly of a Masonic or semi-Masonic nature—with a deep occult knowledge of the human being and of the evolution

of consciousness. They abused this knowledge and put it at the service of special interest groups, one-sided national egoisms, in order to bring about far-reaching historical aims. These brotherhoods were masters at the grey (the media) and black (ceremonial magic) arts of manipulation, at long-range planning, networking of all kinds and, above all, ensuring the right people were in the right place at the right time.

Sceptics, especially those who have not managed to extricate themselves from their own ethnic conditioning (as was mentioned earlier), will immediately retort: ‘So Steiner was just another conspiracy theorist!’ Simplistic conspiracy theories, however, invariably end up positing an egotistic desire for power on the part of some individual or group. Steiner goes far beyond this, concretely indicating how the profound efforts of such brotherhoods are bound up with the course of human evolution. He speaks, for example, of plans laid for the Great War back in the 1880s when a new era in human evolution had opened. His indications in this regard are similar to those of western esotericists such as the shadowy C.G. Harrison, who in 1893 also drew attention to the long-range plans—notably for Russia and the Slavic peoples—that would materialize as a result of the intended Great War.

One of the most important keys to understanding the activities of these western brotherhoods, Steiner pointed out, was that ‘the whole of recent history [since the 16th century] has to do with the struggle between the ancient Roman-Latin element and *that element that is to be made out of the English people if they fail to put up any resistance to it*’ (lecture 11). Benjamin Disraeli, twice Prime Minister of Great Britain under Queen Victoria, also spoke—even in the House of Commons—about the networks of Masonic secret societies that covered Europe and their ongoing war with monarchies and the Church.* The death of Pope John Paul I, the P2 scandal in Italy, the pontificate of John Paul II, as well as the worldwide publishing success of *The Da Vinci Code* and other books by Dan Brown, and a host of similar books in the last 25 years—such as all those that have followed in the wake of *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* (1982) by Baigent, Leigh and Lincoln—have not a little to do with this ongoing occult struggle between Anglo-American brotherhoods and the champions of the Roman-Latin stream of culture.

The main points of the lectures in *The Karma of Untruthfulness*, Vol.1

What kind of phenomenology of world events does Steiner outline in these lectures? In lecture 1 he urges his listeners not to take things at face value but to examine them, look at things side by side and wait for them to speak. They should prepare themselves by looking at things from many different sides, keeping in mind motivation and perspective and remembering that clarity is the fundamental prerequisite for the formation of any judgement. It is of great importance always to look for people in public life who seek to understand and interpret things clearly, people with voices that speak with insight and authority. In lecture 2 he outlines some of the methods of the brotherhoods, indicating that they reckon with long periods of time and a certain cold-blooded detachment that is necessary to work with spiritual forces on the physical plane. They often make use of intermediaries to achieve their ends, pulling strings and obliterating their tracks; sometimes, in a kind of pseudo-Hegelian dialectic, they even deliberately set up counter-strategies that appear to cross their own paths, i.e. the opposite of what their representatives and puppets say they want. Through their direct or indirect control of the

media they create thought 'environments' or atmospheres into which ideas can be seeded. They exploit to the full the fact that most people are inattentive most of the time. Conventional historians, busy with their chain-logic amassing of facts, rarely even notice what is going on. Much therefore depends on the historian's karma leading him to the right information at the right moment. One should be alert for the single phenomenon that can illuminate decades, trying not to generalize in an abstract manner but always looking for individual situations.

In lecture 3, in discussing the Austrian writer and social commentator Hermann Bahr, Steiner shows how occult ideas slip or are slipped into society by means of popular literature; today of course, this happens to an enormous extent through films, for example *The Matrix*, *X-Men*, *Revelation*, *Donnie Darko* and *Constantine*. He continually interweaves descriptions of outer events with warnings of how we have to change our inner states in order to observe outer events correctly and points to the difficulty of working with our sympathies or antipathies when faced with the obvious contradictions in current events.

In lecture 4 he warns his listeners against forming judgements about nations on the basis of criticism of representative individuals of those nations, a way of thinking he characterises as 'pitch darkness'. Criticism of George W. Bush, for instance, should not lead on to criticism of the American people as a whole. He develops the previous theme of how brotherhoods work in underhand ways, pitting streams against one another to achieve results, working with contradictions. The two presidential candidates in 2004, Bush and Kerry, are both members of the same highly influential American secret society, Skull & Bones; whichever man won, Skull & Bones would be in the White House. But the media paid more attention to their golf memberships and their wives' wardrobes than to this fact (yet as of June 2005, there were 53,500 web pages on Bush & Kerry's membership of Skull & Bones!).

Using the example of Serbia in the 19th century, Steiner shows how those whom a nation loves are destroyed by setting up hate figures that associate with them or by creating 'counter-loves'; one can think of the media manipulation of Posh and Becks vs. Charles and Diana. One has to be aware of a person's standpoint when they express a view (what stream are they standing in?) and also of the significance of well-placed women who may operate behind the scenes with great charms and skill; historians have tended to underestimate the influence of salon hostesses, for example. Though outwardly, situations or individuals may look trivial or comic, one needs to see through them to discern whether something deeper is at work; one has to develop an eye for all kinds of details and pay attention to politicians' expressions and gestures as much if not more than their words; indeed, the media often report these better than their words. Obviously a keen sense of discrimination is called for here. In the same lecture, in connection with the question of a possible localization of conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia in August 1914, Steiner poses what is today modishly called a counterfactual, a what if... ? as a method of historical illumination. In his day historians would have turned their noses up at such a method; today, it is not unusual.

Discussing the book *The Law of Civilization and Decay* (1895) by the American writer Brooks Adams, an important member of the American East Coast Establishment, Steiner

tells his listeners in lecture 5 to notice which companies publish books, what interests they serve, and what streams they stand in. Kites are flown by occult groups to gauge reactions; they work by releasing bits of occult knowledge (not wholes) that they use to serve their ends when needed. Detailed comment on Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1515) in lecture 6 reveals the deeper spiritual principles at work in history and also points to the control of the destiny of Britain by certain oligarchical families since the time of Henry VIII. Analysis of key elements in Italy's history since the days of Dante and Venice's glory are brought in to show how not coincidence but systematic driving forces were at work in the events of 1914–15. The example of Dante shows how blood functions in karma; mixed, not 'pure' blood is needed for advanced individualities. Occult groups have knowledge of historical epochs and genetics and this knowledge is taught in western groups. British politics in particular are 'totally under the influence' of what lies hidden. In Britain especially, the key is to put the right man in the right place. Criticism of the seed someone sows is not to criticize them personally but merely to point to objective relationships between cause and effect. Again Steiner insists that judgements cannot be made on the basis of sympathies and antipathies. Karma brings us to places where we can sniff out knowledge if we are awake to the surroundings.

In lecture 7 Steiner shows how we have to see how individuals stand with regard to their own country; what is their inner attitude to it—embedded in it or independent from it? Tracing certain historical processes from the Middle Ages up to the 20th century, he describes how they grow out of each other and gradually take shape; the Great War was in preparation in Europe for a long time before 1914. It was untruths, he said, that had caused the damage; the truth can never be as damaging as an untruth. One should have courage for truth and stand on the foundation of truth even if it is harmful or embarrassing. Words, illusions and empty phrases are worth nothing; instead, it is necessary to look at what people want and actually carry out. He called his listeners to stand up for those who were clear about what they wanted, even the ones who clearly hated others; at least you knew where you were with them rather than those who were slippery and full of hot air. Finally, there was an urgent need for ethnic self-knowledge—to understand something of the essence of what was actually living in British, German, French and Russian culture, right down to the relationship between thoughts and words in the various languages; these too are deeply conditioning forces in cultural life. Without this ethnic self-knowledge there could be 'no real healing'.

Lecture 9 deals with the need to be aware of rhetorical devices in the media and by public figures, their pictorial descriptions, use of images, intensifications and comparisons. We should pay attention to the significance of names chosen by people for certain purposes and take note of what is done on particular days and under astronomical constellations which echo similar configurations in the past, calling forth unconscious or semi-conscious reactions in people. One needs to be aware that brotherhoods reckon with long periods of time; they set things going and leave them to develop. New leaders emerge to carry on predecessors' impulses. Egotistic esoteric groups reckon with:

- individuals' gifts (how, where and when to manipulate them);
- long periods of time (timing);
- people's disinclination to pay attention to wide contexts.

Under certain circumstances something undesirable can be made to fade out by treating it well for a while, the more easily to engulf it later; the history of the Seven Years War (1756–63) showed how a great deal can be achieved in one place by bringing about events in another.

In the last lectures Steiner emphasizes that what people think is far more important than what they do, as thoughts become deeds in the course of time. We live today on the thoughts of past times, which are fulfilled in the deeds of today. We need to remember that *states* wage war, not peoples or nations, and this means that essentially just the few individuals on the bridge of the ship of state are the ones making the decisions for war—which is hardly a democratic process, even in democracies.

Finally, on the last day of 1916, with the bitter knowledge that the Entente governments had rejected the German and American calls for peace negotiations made earlier in the month, Steiner spoke about disease and poison, first in the human body and then in the social organism. When a diseased form of any kind comes into being, evolution is advancing too fast. Cancer occurs when a part of the organism excludes itself and grows faster than the rest. This, he said, also applies socially. Whereas ‘poisons’ can be introduced into the body by doctors with the intention of healing, so can they also be led and guided into the social organism to bring about sickness—this is what he calls ‘the grey magic’ of the Press (today, ‘the Media’). In view of his statements that nothing is better for a person than real insight into how things work in the world, and that what people think is far more important than what they do, the Media can with justification be called the real ‘drug dealers’ of the social world as they form and influence so many judgements on the basis of untruth, lies, sensationalism, distortion and prejudice.

Conclusion

The First World War was the crucible of today’s world, and the month of these lectures, December 1916, was the turning point of the war, the point of no return when the decision was made in the West to plunge the world into the bottom of that crucible. With its terrible violence and force and its totalitarian centralist imperatives, the war transformed the neurotic but complacent *laissez-faire* society of the 19th century with its appalling extremes of rich and poor into the depressingly regimented and bureaucratic consumerist society of the 20th century. It changed the world of the arts, science and technology beyond recognition from what they had been just 20 years before, and revolutionized relationships between the sexes. It destroyed three European empires, radically redrew the map of Europe, signalled the end of colonial rule and drew the curtain on European world hegemony, as the peripheral superpowers of the USA and Soviet Russia pushed their way onto centre stage in 1917. It gave birth to two unprecedented monsters, Bolshevism and Fascism, and ultimately two more appalling world wars—the Second World War and the Cold War. Its beginnings, development and conclusion buttressed entirely by lies and untruth, the Great War was, in short, as Rudolf Steiner described it, an utter catastrophe for the world—a catastrophe which, given the state of spiritual culture in Europe in 1914, was almost inevitable. Ninety years on, are we really any the wiser? If we are to answer in the affirmative and avoid more such catastrophes that occur due to laziness, inattention, gullibility and devious manipulation by secretive cliques, then we can do no better than to make careful study of these valuable lectures of that critical month of December 1916 and

apply to our own time the subtle and infinitely helpful lessons they teach.

Terry Boardman

July 2005

* See C.G. Harrison, *The Transcendental Universe* (Temple Lodge Publishing, London 1993), lecture 2.

† BBC documentary, *Timewatch*, 19 September 2004.

* See Rudolf Steiner, *From Symptom to Reality in Modern History* (GA 185, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1976).

* *Hansard*, House of Commons debates, III series, cxliii, 773–1, 14 July 1856.

LECTURE ONE

Dornach, 4 December 1916

An unbroken thread has run through all the discussions held here over many years: it is vitally important that those who are moved by the impulses of spiritual science should develop a sense, a feeling for the extent to which this spiritual science enters into everything that mankind has brought to the surface during the course of human evolution—I mean to the surface of spiritual life or, indeed, all life, for it is absurd to maintain that spiritual life can exist in isolation. In fact, everything that seemingly belongs to materialistic life is nothing other than an effect of spiritual life.

To begin with, the connections between material life and spiritual life are little understood because spiritual life is frequently seen today as nothing more than the sum of abstract philosophical, abstract scientific, and abstract religious ideas. From what has been said on other occasions you will have grasped that religious ideas are today often most strongly afflicted by abstraction, by ideas and feelings which can quite well be developed without any direct, real spiritual life. An abstract culture of this kind cannot enter into material life; only a truly spiritual culture can do this, a culture whose source lies in the life of the spirit. If man's future evolution is to avoid being swept into total degeneracy, a true spiritual culture will have to enter ever more strongly into external life. Very few people realize this today because very few have any feeling for what spiritual life really is. I have stressed frequently that just now it is extremely difficult to speak about the position spiritual science holds in the many painful events of our time.

A number of years ago we chose as our motto these words by Goethe: 'Wisdom lies solely in truth'.¹ Our choice was not dictated by the superficial whims that often govern such decisions these days. We chose this motto bearing in mind that the human being needs to be prepared in his entire soul, in his whole nature, if he intends to absorb spiritual science into his soul in the right way, making it the real driving force of his life. The wide preparation he needs if he wants to penetrate in the proper way into spiritual science today is encapsulated in this motto: 'Wisdom lies solely in truth'. Of course the word 'truth' must be seen as something serious and dignified in every connection. Even superficially we find that the level of culture we have reached today—highly praised though it is—both in Europe and the world at large, shows how little souls are moved by what is expressed in this motto.

Please do not assume that I mean our anthroposophical circles in particular! This would be a total misunderstanding. Spiritual science, certainly to begin with, must, in an ideal sense, recognize its relationship to modern culture as a whole. Inevitably I have to mention many things belonging to today's culture which make it wellnigh impossible to relate in a proper way to spiritual science. But in this I refer least of all to our anthroposophical circle which seeks to penetrate consciously into the spiritual needs of our time, and endeavours to find whatever might bring healing to it without disparaging anything that it has brought into being.

There are, of course, fundamental inner necessities which were not unforeseen. But

leaving these aside, we have outwardly entered upon a time in which, within that spiritual life which rises to the surface to the extent that anyone can see it in his soul, people are not in the least inclined to take truth in its truest sense, in its most fundamental meaning. In no way, not even for the sake of the inmost impulses of their soul, not even in those joyful moments of inner sensitivity, do people illuminate with the full light of truth what interests them most of all. Instead they illuminate it—especially at the present time—with the light that derives from their membership of a particular national or other community. Consciously and unconsciously people today form judgements in accordance with this type of viewpoint. The quicker the judgement, that is, the fewer the true insights that go to make up this judgement, the more comfortable it is for the souls of today. That is why there are so many utterly impossible judgements today pertaining both to the wider issues and to individual events. These judgements are not based on any kind of intimate knowledge; indeed there is no wish to base them on any such knowledge. People strive to distract attention from what is really at issue and look instead at some other matter which is not at all the point.

In this vein people speak today about the differences between nations; judgements are made about nations. Amongst ourselves this obviously ought not to take place, but in order to gain a proper yardstick we sometimes have to be clear about what is going on around us. So, judgements are made about nations, and yet there is no understanding for someone who does not make such judgements but, instead, judges what is real. Those judgements about nations never touch on what is real. Yet when someone judges those things that are realities and in the course of doing so has to say one thing or another about some government or other, or about a particular person, or about something that has taken place in politics,—whether about everyday happenings or more far-reaching matters—then he himself is judged as though his intentions were quite other than is in fact the case. How easy it is for someone to pass a judgement about some statesman who is involved in what is going on today. If this comes to the ears of a person who belongs to the same nation as the statesman in question, then this person immediately feels himself affronted. This is because he takes something that is said about a reality and relates it, not to this reality but to something that is quite indefinable if it is not viewed in the light of spiritual-scientific reality; he relates it to his nation, as he says, or to some other nation.

Thus the oddest judgements buzz about in the world today. People belonging to a particular nation form judgements about other nations without realizing that such judgements carry no content whatever; they consist of no more than the words that express them and contain nothing that has been in any way experienced. Just consider what is entailed in forming a judgement about a whole nation—and are not judgements about whole nations scattered around in all directions these days! And not only that. People are fervently committed to their judgements without having the slightest inkling of even the most scanty evidence on which such a judgement should be based. Of course you cannot expect everybody to be in possession of such evidence. But you can expect of every single individual that he pronounce his judgements with a certain modicum of reserve, refraining from placing them in the world as absolute statements. Even if we do not go as far as this, we must be quite clear about the difference between a judgement that carries content, a sentence that carries content, and a sentence that is empty of all content. We could say: The great sin of our culture today lies in the fact that it lives in sentences that bear no

content, without realizing how empty these sentences are. More than at any other time we can experience today: 'Then words come in to save the situation. They'll fight your battles well if you enlist 'em, or furnish you a universal system.'²

Indeed, we are experiencing even more; we are experiencing how history is being made and politics carried on with words that have no content. What is depressing is that there is so little inclination to realize this very thing. Only rarely have I met a genuine sense for what is really going on in this field. But in the last few days I did come across some passages which do show a sense for this great deficiency in our time:

'With astonishment we hear from the prophets of our time that the old words, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity were no more than "tradesmen's ideals" due to be replaced by something new. Professor Kjellen said this...'³

I must point out—this is necessary nowadays—that the professor is not a German but a Swede; he belongs to a neutral country.

'in his paper on "The Ideas of 1914" in which he compared the old slogan of 1789 with the new one of 1914: Order, Duty, Justice! Looking more closely we find that these so-called new words are in fact quite old and pretty threadbare. Comparison between the two reveals the ancient conflict that characterizes human spiritual life, the conflict between an inner world of free personal activity and an outer world of rigid laws, coercive measures. Even as long ago as the time of Christ, justice as the fulfilment of the law was balanced by mercy, duty by love, and the legal order by voluntary imitation of Christ.

To give him his due, Professor Kjellen does not advocate the unconditional abolition of the words Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, even though they have become superfluous upon the demise of the "ancien régime". He suggests a synthesis between them and those new ones of 1914: Order, Duty, Justice. But there is nothing new in this synthesis either. It was enough of a reality in the England of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to allow for the imperfection of every human institution.

The fact that this synthesis has now become ineffective only goes to prove that all values and counter-values, together with whatever temporary synthesis may be current, become empty phrases as soon as the divine spark that gave them life is extinguished. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity signify one formula that gains its power from a social conscience. Order, Duty and Justice, on the other hand, must presuppose the suggestive power of a higher authority if they are to become effective. Herein, and not in the predominance of one or another formula, is revealed the deficiency that is so decisive for the destiny of modern mankind: the force of a social conscience is lacking in too great a majority for the liberating values to dominate, and the force of authority is too much lacking for those values that bind from outside to dominate. Values which are not deeply rooted in evolution can rapidly turn to empty phrases and fall prey to misuse...' and so on.

Thus, occasionally a chord is struck that reveals a genuine sense of what is going on. I need not be surprised at these words which stand out for me like an oasis in today's desert of empty phrases. They were written, after all, by my old friend Rosa Mayreder.⁴ They are to be found in the November 1916 issue of the *Internationale Rundschau* and they point to

much about which we spoke together many years ago. So I need not have been surprised to find these words standing out for me; but in many ways I was delighted to hear how the thoughts of such a personality have developed over the years. Though she cannot bring herself to rise to a view of the world based on spiritual science and has ever taken a standpoint of unfruitful criticism, yet she has to say:

‘All the problems found in the external structure of the world can be traced back to one single source—the power problem.’

If only we could take heed of this, we should be far less inclined to live our lives in empty phrases!

‘At the centre of all the quarrels and disturbances that dominate the human condition stands the battle of groups and individuals for power. This battle for power between whole groups of nations or states is, beyond all empty phrases, the true cause of every war. War cannot be separated from power-seeking; those who desire to combat war must first devalue the principle of power—just as, quite logically, the early Christians did. The guise in which the power principle now appears is worse than any it may have donned in the past; for now it threatens the human soul in all its most beautiful and noble traits. It could be called *the mechanization of life through the technical and economic mastery of nature*. It is the tragic destiny of man forever to become the slave of his own creations because he is incapable of calculating their consequences in advance. Thus it has happened that even where he has used his ingenuity and inventiveness to coerce the elemental forces into his service, he has once again become the slave of the unforeseeable effects they assume through their combination with the power principle. Modern technology, which makes human life so much easier in so many ways, and modern economics, which so infinitely increases man’s material wealth, having now become the tools of modern imperialism, turn against the essential being of the individual. Massed together in a soulless multitude, human beings are ground up by the machinery of party interests that drives today’s civilization. The individual becomes a spare part, a cog; he can hold his own only to the extent to which he has the strength. But the values of soul quality established by past cultures perish in the process... At present such cultural values survive only in countries which lie outside the realm of imperialistic competitiveness, or in rural areas and small towns where there is still a degree of leisure and repose, where the demands made on the individual do not exceed his capacity to fulfil them. These are the indispensable preconditions for a harmonious art of living; but they are sucked under by the murderous maelstrom of excesses prevailing at the centres of modern civilization...’

Voices such as this prove that there are some—not very many—who understand what is lacking today. Yet these people recoil from grasping the living impulse of spiritual science. The very thing most able to grasp reality is kept at arm’s length. The main reason for this is that there is a fundamental impulse lacking in their striving, and that is the fundamental impulse for truth. There is an urge to seek for the truth in empty phrases. But however enthusiastically they fill their being with these phrases, this urge will never lead them to the truth. To find the truth it is necessary to have a sense for the facts, regardless of whether these are to be found on the physical plane or in the spiritual world.

Let us look at life as it is today: Has the urge for truth kept pace with the sagacity and

with the immensely admirable progress that are embodied in external culture? No. We can even say that in a certain sense people have lost the goodwill to look properly and see whether what is there in reality is rooted in any way in the truth. But it is essential to develop this feeling for truth in daily life, for otherwise it will be impossible to raise it up to an understanding of the spiritual worlds.

To show you what I mean, let me give you an example, not only of the lie of the empty phrase but also of how actual lies surge and billow on the waves of present-day civilization, influencing real life. There are many events we can now look back on which have shaken Europe to its foundations. It is necessary to go back many decades and to recognize over these decades the essential characteristics of these events if we want to form a judgement about what is today causing the whole world to quake; but we must have an eye for the realities.

I have told you before⁵ that in certain secret brotherhoods in the West—I have proof of this—there was talk in the 1890s about the present war. The pupils of these brotherhoods were given instruction by means of maps⁶ which showed how Europe was to be changed by this world war. The English brotherhoods in particular discussed a war that was to take place—indeed, that was to be guided into being and properly prepared. I am speaking of facts, but there are certain reasons why I have to refrain from drawing maps for you, though I could quite easily draw for you the maps which figured in the teachings of those western secret brotherhoods.

These secret brotherhoods, together with everything affiliated to them, were counting on tremendous revolutions which were to take place between the Danube and the Aegean Sea and between the Black Sea and the Adriatic in connection with the great European war they were discussing—every sentence I say here is quite deliberate. One of the sentences which figured in their discussions, and which I shall quote more or less literally, went: As soon as the dreams of Pan-Slavism have developed just a little further, a good deal will take place in the Balkans which is in accord with the developments in Europe. They meant in accord with the secret brotherhoods.

This is one great network that I want to bring to your awareness. The dreams of Pan-Slavism were discussed over and over again by these secret brotherhoods. They spoke of political dreams, of political revolutions, not of cultural dreams which would have been fully justified; have not we in our spiritual-scientific movement discussed more thoroughly than anyone else what lives in the soul of the East! Having seen what kind of role the dreams of Pan-Slavism played, let us now turn for a while to the realities of the physical plane. I will give one example. For many decades there existed, under the protection of the Russian government, a ‘Slav Welfare Committee’.⁷ What could be nicer than a ‘Slav Welfare Committee’ under the protection of a mighty government? I will now read you a short letter that has to do with this Committee, dated 5 December 1887. It says the following:

‘The President of the Petersburg Committee of the Slav Welfare Society has approached the Foreign Minister with a request for weapons and ammunition for the Nabokov expedition.’

The request was not for warm underwear for little children, it was for ammunition for a

certain expedition connected with stirring the revolution in the different Balkan countries! You may perhaps see from this how something that is a lie, a conscious lie, can float about in public life. A ‘welfare committee’,— how innocuous, indeed worthy!—carries on the business of the various revolutionary committees connected with the Russian government who have the task of stirring up the Balkan states.

I could easily quote you ten, even twenty, such little notes. Let me add one more: In the fateful year of 1914 a certain Mr Pasic⁸ occupied a high position in the government of a certain Balkan country. No doubt you remember the name. While the Obrenovich dynasty were still the rulers of Serbia, this Mr Pasic was exiled to another Balkan country. You might ask what he was doing there. I do not want to criticize this gentleman but I would like to read you another short letter. It starts: ‘Secret communication from the President of the Committee of the Slav Welfare Committee in Petersburg to the Consular Administrator in Rustshuk, dated 3 December 1885, Nr. 4875.’ I quote the file number so that you don’t think I am making this up or merely recounting an anecdote:

‘On the instruction⁹ of the Director of the Asiatic Department I have pleasure in sending to Your Honour herewith 6000 roubles with the humble request that this sum be paid to the Serbian emigrant Nicola Pasic through the kind offices of the widow Natalya Karavelov who resides at Rustshuk. Please be so good as to confirm receipt and further disposal of this sum.’

You see how even those who worked for the innocuous ‘Slav Welfare Society’ played a certain part in the fateful events in Europe. Would it not be a good thing to develop an instinct for truth by not being so careless as to take things at their face value according to a name or a phrase and, instead, cultivating the will to examine them a little? Unless this is done, conclusions are reached entirely thoughtlessly, and thoughtlessness in forming judgements is what takes us further and further away from the truth. The fact that thoughtlessness in judgement takes us away from the truth can never be countered by the excuse that we did not know this or that. The judgements we carry in our soul are facts that work in the world; we should never forget that what we carry in our soul works in the world, though on the whole it is subject to what is at work governing the whole wide range of life.

To digress for a moment, the strangest judgements about the relationships between the various states can be heard these days. The words for this—an empty phrase in the place of the truth—are ‘international relations’. Judgements are reached by people who make not the slightest effort to consult the evidence, even though this would sometimes be quite easy to find. I do not refer, of course, to those who are united with us here in the Anthroposophical Society. Nevertheless, we do stand in the world and it does influence us via at least one fatal indirect route, for we always allow ourselves to be influenced by what some people have called a major power: the Press! The effect of the Press really is most disastrous, for it falsifies and blurs virtually everything. How little would be written if those who write were really called upon to write properly! Who does not write today about the relationship of Romania to Russia, or Romania to any of the other states? It does not even occur to them that a fundamental prerequisite for saying anything about these relationships is to read the memoirs of the late King Carol of Romania.¹⁰ Those who write without having done this only write things which are not worth reading, even by the

simplest people.

Times are grave; therefore only grave and earnest views of the world and of life can serve in these times. So it is important to sense something of a feeling that I have often described as essential: above all not to judge rashly but, instead, to look at things side by side and wait for them to speak. In the course of time they will say a good many things to us. To acquaint oneself with as many aspects as possible is the best preparation for penetrating thoroughly into the difficult and complicated conditions of life today.

Without wishing to express any judgement I should like to tell you something which will demonstrate the proper way to place the kind of thing I have to tell side by side with other things that happen. The important part played by the Romanian army in the Russo-Turkish war is well known. After the Russians had demanded permission to march through Romania, and after they had been refused, a moment arrived in this war when Grand Duke Nikolai,¹¹ who was already playing an important part at that time, wrote to Romania as follows: 'Come to our assistance, cross over the Danube however you wish and under whatever conditions you wish. But come quickly, for the Turks are about to finish us off.' As a result, as we know, the intervention of the Romanian army led to a favourable outcome for Russia. After this, King Carol of Romania wanted to take part in the peace negotiations. He was not admitted. So he took up quite a vehement position vis-à-vis the Russian government, in consequence of which he underwent rather a peculiar experience. There were Russian troops stationed in Bucharest and it was quite easy to be convinced that the intention was to remove the king; the situation being as I have just hinted, you can easily understand that such intentions might indeed exist. So King Carol demanded the withdrawal of the Russian troops, whereupon he received an exceedingly brusque, indeed quite atrocious reply from Gorchakov,¹² the then Foreign Minister. He thought for a while—such people do think from time to time—and comforted himself with the notion that at least Tsar Alexander would not agree and that it was only Gorchakov who was taking such liberties. So he wrote to the Tsar and received a reply from which I quote verbatim the main sentences:

'The embarrassing situation brought about by your ministers has not in any way altered the cordial interest I feel for you; I regret having had to hint at the possible measures which the attitude of your government would force me to take.'

I am telling you these things only as an example of how to place the events of recent decades side by side, so that out of these events one judgement or another may present itself. Only the events themselves can help us to form judgements with real content. And the events of recent decades are such that they cannot be judged summarily because far too many threads lead to each one. Furthermore, it is necessary with every judgement to bear in mind the proper motivation, the proper perspective. In this connection the most painful experiences can be had. I must admit that in the face of the great accumulation of unkindness I am now meeting in just this connection I cannot but reach the painful conclusion that there is very little inclination in the world to give judgements their proper perspective and also very little will to understand someone who tries to judge things in this way, thus finding the right perspective for his judgements.

Without stating my own opinion one way or the other, I must admit that outside Germany I have hardly met a single judgement about Germany that is really understanding

and friendly. Judgements have been pronounced with immense confidence, yes, but not with genuine understanding. On the other hand, there are innumerable extraordinarily benevolent judgements about everything in the periphery. Nobody need believe that this surprises me. It certainly does not. I am not in the least surprised, but I do try to understand why it is so. The reason is that there is absolutely no will to gain a proper perspective. People do not even suspect that a judgement about what lives today in Central Europe has to be made from a perspective that differs utterly from that needed to judge what lives in the periphery. They have no idea what it means that with everything contained in Central Europe each single individual is vulnerable and threatened, and therefore that the scale of affairs is at a human level, whereas in the periphery the scale is that of state and political affairs which require to be judged from an entirely different perspective. Each is judged on the same basis, but this is meaningless in this case.

As I have already said, I am not stating an opinion but speaking about the form in which judgement is passed. Nowhere in the world is account taken of the fact that something that is not meant to relate to a particular nation is, nevertheless, inappropriately seen in relation to that nation. Nobody takes into account that the British Empire covers one quarter of the earth's land surface, Russia one seventh, France and her colonies one thirteenth. Together this amounts to about half of the total land surface of the earth! I can well understand that the benevolence directed towards this side can be quite easily accounted for, simply mathematically. Obviously one is dependent on what dominates one half of the earth! I quite understand. But the terrible thought to be considered is that this is not admitted and, instead, all kinds of moral statements and empty phrases are used. If only people would say: We cannot help but go along with one half of the earth! At that moment everything would be almost alright. But people will do anything to avoid saying this. By the way, I might as well just mention that Germany, with all the colonies she has ever possessed, covers one thirty-third of the earth's land surface.

These things must definitely be taken into account, and I ask you: Is it not essential to include such things in one's judgement? What was meant by 'imperialism' in the essay quoted earlier was, of course, the spread of domination over the territories of the world. The British Empire is obviously the largest. This is indisputable. I am not speaking of opinions but of facts. Please do not think that my remarks are aimed at any particular person belonging to any particular nation.

Bearing in mind what has just been said, it is not surprising to learn that the British Empire had, and still has, the highest export figures. We have to know this and take it into account. However, a remarkable circumstance arose: Germany's exports started to catch up with the British. Not very many years ago a comparison showed that Germany's export figures¹³ were very low and those of Britain very high. Now let me write on the blackboard the figures for January to June 1914. For this period Germany's export figure was £1,045,000,000 and that of Britain £1,075,000,000. If another year had passed without the coming of the World War, it is possible that the German export figure might have been larger than the British. This was not to be allowed to happen!

These things can be seen without any need to let feelings come into play in one direction or another. What individual people, who strive for objectivity, think about the events of the present day is far more important than any subjective sympathies or

antipathies and, above all, far more important than what throbs through the daily press in such a disastrous way. I shall go into these things more deeply from a spiritual point of view quite soon. But I would be failing in my duty if I were to throw spiritual light on these matters without pointing to the realities of the physical plane. I cannot make everything comfortable for you and avoid hurting anyone's feelings by lifting the forming of judgements up into cloud-cuckoo-land. It is essential that I let the light of what can be said about the spiritual situation shine also on what one can and ought to know about the physical plane. So let me draw your attention to something which may interest you and which will not cause too much offence now, since I believe that all our friends here present are obviously entirely free of any prejudice. I have to carry out my duty conscientiously and this involves creating a proper basis.

There are some people today who strive to look at things clearly and see them for what they really are. Though it might seem that everyone is biased there are, in fact, varying degrees of prejudice and we should not lose sight of this. Without recommending or praising it in any way, I want to mention an article which, interestingly enough, has been published here in Switzerland: *On the History of the Outbreak of the War Based on the Official Records of His Majesty's British Government* by Dr Jakob Rüchti.¹⁴ This article diverges considerably from what is heard everywhere across half the world these days about the so-called guilt of the Central Powers. The style of the article is formally scientific, even rather pedantic, after the manner of historical seminars. And the records quoted are chiefly those of the British Government. Out of consideration for people's feelings I shall not repeat the conclusion reached, since it diverges greatly from the judgement usually heard in the periphery about Central Europe. At the end of the article we read:

‘But history cannot be permanently falsified; the myth cannot stand up to the scrutiny of scientific research; the sinister web will be brought into the light and torn to pieces, however artfully it has been spun.’

This article, the fruit of a historical seminar at a Swiss university, was even awarded a prize by the University of Berne. So there exists today an article that has been awarded a prize by a Swiss university, an article which endeavours to reveal the facts in a light that differs from that found at the periphery very frequently nowadays. This is worth taking into consideration, for no one would dare to accuse the historical faculty of the University of Berne of having perhaps been bribed.

There is yet another fact I want to mention. For some time a discussion has been going on between Clemenceau,¹⁵ Mr Archer¹⁶ and Georg Brandes.¹⁷ Georg Brandes is a Dane, a Danish writer. Most of you will know of him, since he is one of the most celebrated European writers. Do not think that I am mentioning him today because I have any particular liking for him; indeed he is a writer I particularly dislike, for whom I have very little sympathy.

Without any further introduction, let me now read to you the article Brandes wrote recently, following an argument with Grey,¹⁸ Mr Archer and Clemenceau. I must repeat, though, that I am counting on my earlier statement about our present circle proving true: namely, that discrimination will be exercised and that no one will believe that it is my purpose to pick holes in any particular nation. I am not giving my opinion, I am merely

reading to you an article by Georg Brandes. He writes:

‘Since I have met with personal insinuations both in foreign newspapers and in those anonymous letters through which the flower of the Danish gutter airs its perfumes, I must say the following once and for all: I have the honour of being a member of three distinguished London clubs, and was president of one, vice-president of another; I am an honorary member of three learned societies and an honorary doctor of a Scottish university. Thus, strong links attach me to Great Britain. I owe England’s literary and artistic world a debt of deep gratitude and I have ever been strongly attracted to British life and letters. The German Reich and Austria-Hungary, in contrast, have never awarded me the slightest honour of any kind, not even the tiniest Little Red Bird Fourth Class;¹⁹ I have never been a member of any German club or learned society and have never received even the smallest award from a German university.’

I, too, have never heard of any inclination on the part of a German society to award any honour to Georg Brandes, but they do heartily abuse him!

‘Because of my remarks about Northern Schleswig I have been regularly and violently slandered in the German press for the last twenty years. It cannot, therefore, truly be claimed that I have been bribed to take up cudgels for Germany.’

Very true! This, dear friends, by way of a brief introduction. I might add that Brandes was a most intimate friend of Clemenceau. I myself have seen in Austria on the estate of friends of theirs, a bench on which—so I was told—Clemenceau and Brandes once sat in the most beautiful and affectionate concord and on which the names ‘Clemenceau and Brandes’ had been carved. Since then this bench in that beautiful Silesian hermitage has been known as the Clemenceau-Brandes Seat.²⁰ Lecturing in Budapest, Georg Brandes once said:

‘Since I cannot speak Hungarian I shall not be able to speak to you in Hungarian, and since I dislike the German language every bit as much as you do, I shall not speak to you in German either. I shall give this lecture in French.’

As you see, there is not the slightest reason why any German should have a particular affection for Georg Brandes. His article continues:

‘It cannot, therefore, truly be claimed that I have been bribed to take up cudgels for Germany. If I have spoken without taking sides about what I see to be the truth, I have done so for reasons other than those so stupidly hinted at by Mr Clemenceau when he suggested that I was currying favour with the Kaiser.’

I do not know whether one or the other name has been eradicated from that seat since the appearance of these words! Brandes continues:

‘Mr Archer bases his argument on the premise that the Central Powers alone (namely, certain persons) are to blame for the war and made preparations for it. This same premise turns up repeatedly among the Allies: the assumption that incomplete preparation for the war proves one side to be the lamb and the other wolf.

In my opinion the unpreparedness for war of a certain country on the Continent in the summer of 1914 proves nothing more than a certain carelessness, negligence, sloppiness

and lack of foresight among the appropriate authorities. A certain nation might therefore very well have hoped, by means of war, to regain possession of some confiscated provinces. It is quite easy to imagine that public opinion has all along considered such a war to be a holy duty but that, even so, negligence meant that the military forces were unprepared.

And what applies to a land force applies just as much to a sea force.

I.

On 27 November 1911 a question was asked in the English Parliament as to whether the April 1904 Anglo-French agreement about Morocco could be interpreted, either by the French or the English Government, to include military support by land or sea, and under what circumstances. The answer amounted to a statement that diplomatic support did not commit to either military or maritime support. On the same day Sir Edward Grey said: "Let me try to put an end to some of the suspicions with regard to secrecy... We have laid before the House the secret Articles of the Agreement with France of 1904. There are no other secret engagements... For ourselves we have not made a single secret article of any kind since we came into office." On 3 August 1914 Sir Edward Grey read out in Parliament, among other things, the following passage from a document that he had sent to the French ambassador in London on 22 November 1912: "You have pointed out that if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, it might become essential to know whether it could in that event depend upon the armed assistance of the other. I agree that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, or something *that threatened the general peace*, (an exceedingly vague expression) it should immediately discuss with the other whether both Governments should act together to prevent aggression and to preserve peace, and, if so, what measures they would be prepared to take in common." In the same speech, Grey says: "We are not parties to the Franco-Russian Alliance. We do not even know the terms of that Alliance." '

Brandes adds, in brackets: 'A really extraordinary statement.'

'On 10 March 1913 Lord Hugh Cecil said in the Debate on the Address: "There is a very general belief that this country is under an obligation, not a treaty obligation, but an obligation arising out of an assurance given by the Ministry in the course of diplomatic negotiations, to send a very large armed force out of this country to operate in Europe..." Here Mr Asquith interrupted the speaker with the words: "I ought to say that this is not true."

On 24 March 1913 the Prime Minister was asked again whether under certain circumstances British troops could be mustered in order to land them on the continent. He replied: "As has been repeatedly stated, this country is not under any obligation not public and known to Parliament which compels it to take part in any war." Does this reply conform to the truth? When rumours surfaced again in the following year, Sir Edward Grey answered on 28 April 1914: "The position now remains the same as stated by the Prime Minister in answer to a question in this House on 24 March 1913." To yet another question on 11 June 1914 Sir Edward Grey replied: "There are no unpublished

agreements which would restrict or hamper the freedom of the Government or of Parliament to decide whether or not Great Britain should participate in a war.” Without any exaggeration this can be called sophistry.

After all, there existed the letter of 22 November 1912 to Monsieur Cambon which, in the dreadful bureaucratic style of diplomatic language, unequivocally committed England to participation in any military recklessness into which Russia might lure France.’

The style is indeed excruciating.

‘Even more extraordinary was the conclusion of the speech by the Foreign Minister: “But if any agreement were to be concluded that made it necessary to withdraw or modify the Prime Minister’s statement of last year, it ought, in my opinion, to be, and I suppose that it would be, laid before parliament.”’

The whole world knows that this did not happen.

II.

These passages from parliamentary speeches prove that Great Britain was not unprepared for a war with Germany. Mr Archer regards it as quite definite that Germany passionately longed for a war with Great Britain.

It has been proved that England’s declaration of war was so unexpected by the German government that it caused consternation. It is possible to call the German government naive in this connection, but there is absolutely no doubt that they were painfully surprised. As C. H. Norman conclusively proves, Kaiser Wilhelm had good reason to hope for England’s neutrality. In the years 1900–1901 he had prevented a European coalition that would have forced England to grant favourable peace terms to the South African republics. He had shown his friendship for England by refusing to receive in Berlin a deputation of Boers who were being fêted throughout Europe. In the well-known interview in the *Daily Telegraph*²¹ he expressly publicized the fact that *he had refused the invitation of Russia and France to join them in taking steps to force England to bring the Boer War to an end*. Neither France nor Russia have ever dared to deny this.’

I could add a good deal out of that letter in the *Daily Telegraph* which would speak far more clearly than Georg Brandes is doing; but I don’t want to add anything myself!

‘So the Kaiser was not all that keen on a war with England at that time. And it will not be easy to convince any thoughtful person that six years after the publication of that interview he was all of a sudden eagerly planning to go to war with the whole globe. It is obvious, of course, that his Government made a false calculation. But they did not want war with England in 1914, and the uncontrollable hate of the German people against the English which burst out so repulsively was obviously the result of the surprise of discovering in Great Britain an unexpected and uncommonly powerful enemy.

To the last minute, Germany sought through her diplomats to win England’s neutrality. They worked cautiously. The German Chancellor proposed to Sir Edward Goschen (the British Ambassador in Berlin) that he would stand for the inviolability of French

territory if Germany should happen to conquer France and Russia. But Sir Edward Grey's attitude was negative because Germany would not extend this guarantee to include the French colonies.

Now Prince Lichnowsky,²² the German Ambassador in London, asked whether England would agree to remain neutral if Germany refrained from violating Belgium's neutrality. Sir Edward Grey refused. He wanted to retain a free hand. ("I did not think we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone.") Would he agree if Germany were to guarantee the integrity of both France and her colonies? No. ("The Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could formulate conditions on which we would remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her Colonies might be guaranteed. I said that I felt obliged to refuse definitely any promise to remain neutral on similar terms, and I could only say that we must keep our hands free.")

Sir Edward Grey afterwards maintained that Prince Lichnowsky had certainly overstepped his authority in making these offers. Surely he could only say such a thing because he was, and still is, convinced that Germany had an invincible urge to do battle simultaneously with Russia, France, England and Belgium.'

Please forgive me for adding something here. From what I have just read to you we may see that a single sentence from Grey would have sufficed to prevent the violation of Belgium's neutrality. However, I do not blame Grey in any way, for he is the puppet of quite other forces about which I shall speak later. On the contrary, I regard him as a perfectly honest but exceptionally stupid individual; but I do not know how far it is permitted today to express such judgements! Anyway, one sentence from Grey would have sufficed to prevent the violation of Belgian neutrality, and it is possible to add: a single sentence and the war in the West would not have taken place. Some day the world will hear about these things.

I think that these things weigh quite heavily, for they are facts. Brandes continues:

'As I said earlier, and this is obvious to common sense, Germany was prepared for a German-Russian war, should this arise from the invasion of Serbia by Austria. But Germany did not want to molest France (or Belgium) if she remained neutral. France, however, was determined to go to the aid of Russia. The wisdom of this policy will be judged by future generations, but meanwhile its consequence is that ten million people are spending seven days every week miserably murdering one another. Without the knowledge of Parliament, the English Foreign Ministry had committed Great Britain to assisting France in the event of a European war. Given the new and strong sympathy for France, public opinion in England might even have approved of this commitment had it been public knowledge. But if all the details had been known it would certainly not have approved of the constraint under which England was placed, for England was to be forced to go to war because of France's relationship with Russia, the only power with nothing to lose in the case of a war. Russia's population is so enormous that the loss of life occasioned by a war would hardly be worth considering, and if national passions were aroused and if the war were to lead to a victory, then this could only serve to strengthen the position of the conservative Government. If the political position had been fully known, public opinion in Great Britain would have recognized that the consequences of a conflict could contain nothing good for the freedom or the well being

of mankind. If the Allies were to win, this would only lead to an immense increase in the might of Russia, the victory of a governmental system opposed to that of Great Britain. For the Russian people, who as a people have won the heart of Europe, such a victory would bring no progress.

III.

I do not believe that my esteemed opponent, Mr Archer, can detest Prussian militarism more than I do. It is caused by the two long and threatened borders, that between Germany and Russia on the one side and that between Germany and France on the other.'

Note that this is said by a person who has never been awarded even the tiniest Little Red Bird, not even fourth class!

'It is excusable vis-à-vis France by the fact that the French have occupied Berlin twenty times or so, whereas the Germans have only taken Paris twice. It is obnoxious because of its caste system and its arrogance. But it can hardly be said to be worse than the militarism of other countries.'

Says Georg Brandes, who does not possess even the tiniest Little Red Bird, not even fourth class!

'Europe, including England, was worried to note during the Dreyfus Affair what forms French militarism was capable of taking.'

Of course I agree whole-heartedly with Georg Brandes!

'As for Russian militarism, in the year 1900 our idyllic and amiable Russians, about whom my esteemed friend Wells is so enthusiastic, and who have captured the hearts of the rest of us too, cold-bloodedly slaughtered the total Chinese population of Blagoveshchensk and surroundings. The Cossacks tied the Chinese together by their pigtails and launched them on the river in boats which sank. When the women threw their children on the beach and begged that they at least might be spared they slaughtered them with their bayonets. "Even the Turks have never been guilty of anything worse than this mass murder in Blagoveshchensk," wrote Mr F E Smith, the former English press censor, in 1907, the very year of the Anglo-Russian agreement which guaranteed and at the same time undermined the independence of Persia.

The same English writer confirmed the description of Japanese militarism by the correspondent of *The Times*. On 21 November 1894 the Japanese army stormed Port Arthur and for four days a rabble of soldiers slaughtered the civilian population, men, women and children, with the utmost barbarity: "From dawn till far into the night the days passed with murder, plunder and mutilation, with every imaginable kind of nameless cruelty, until the place presented such a picture of horror that any survivor will shudder at the memory to the day he dies." '

These things which Georg Brandes says, even though he does not possess even the tiniest Little Red Bird fourth class, were of course well known to someone who wrote: 'War brings with it the horrors of war and it is not surprising if the most modern methods are used in war.'²³ Yet I heard the other day that particularly this sentence in my pamphlet has been taken amiss. It can only be taken amiss by people who know nothing about history

and have no idea of the cause of such a thing. Georg Brandes continues:

‘So we see that militarism, whatever its nationality, is much the same everywhere. I wish Mr Archer would read a lecture which Dr Vohringer²⁴ gave about German Africa on 30 January 1915 in Hamburg. He would learn from this what the German inhabitants of the Cameroons, about fifty men and women, suffered when, surprised by the declaration of war, they were locked up by English officers and handed over to black guards who mistreated them. They suffered hunger and thirst. If they begged for water they were given slop buckets, and a British officer said, “It doesn’t matter whether the German swine have anything to drink or not.” On the journey from Lagos to England they were not even given water for washing.’

I did not bore anyone reading my pamphlet by telling things like this; yet it has been taken amiss that I do not join in the tune that is being sung everywhere. It is not what the pamphlet says that has been criticized but the fact that it does not say what is being said everywhere. It has been taken amiss because it does not scold in the way everyone else is scolding. Georg Brandes continues:

‘This is what English militarism looks like. Is it any better than Prussian militarism when English nationalism, as with any other nation, is stoked up to the point of madness?

IV

Let Mr Archer and other eminent gentlemen in and outside Great Britain bring to an end the eternal discussion, into which I too have been dragged, about who is guilty of having started the war and about who ought to bear the consequences of its outcome! Let them turn instead to the only important and crucial question, namely how to find the *way out* of this hell of which we can in truth say, as in Macbeth:

Oh horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee...

The appetite of those who wage war is insatiable. Has it not been decided in Paris to carry on the trade war even after the cessation of hostilities? Is there never to be an end to this madness?

In any case the war will have to end with an agreement; and since the war is of an economic nature, the agreement will have to be an economic one. As a free trade power, England has shown the way to the whole world. Tariff agreements will be unavoidable; governments will be forced to make mutual concessions and it will be necessary to strive for greater freedom of trade so that finally *world free trade* can be achieved.

A citizen of the country which has suffered the most from the war right from the start, a Belgian manufacturer from Charleroi, Monsieur Henri Lambert,²⁵ has spoken the redeeming word that can smooth the way for peace: The only intelligent and far-seeing policy, in this case tariff policy, is a *just* policy which does not begrudge life to the other party. He has pointed out that a permanent improvement of the European situation can only be reached if the country seeking peace is obliged to abolish or at least reduce tariffs, of course only under an arrangement that is totally just to both sides. The abolition of tariffs seems to be the only sensible and effective means of preventing the

economic tactic known by the English as “dumping”, of which they so passionately accuse the Germans.

Tariff agreements will also be unavoidable in the unlikely event that the war is fought to the point of a crushing victory for one side or the other. If this were to happen, millions and more millions of human beings would be sacrificed on the battlefields or would perish at home of wounds, sickness and deprivation. Supposing the victors were to decide (in accordance with the economic conference in Paris) to discriminate against the conquered to such an extent by means of tariffs that they were brought down to a lower economic level, this would be a relapse for mankind as a whole to the system of national slavery. The underdog would, as a matter of course, make every effort to rise up again; he would utilize any dissension among the conquerors and be free again within half a century. Alliances never last as long as fifty years.

So, a peaceful future for Europe depends on *free trade*. As Cobden says, free trade is the best peacemaker. Indeed, it seems to be even more: it is the only peacemaker. In olden times, horses whose task it was to go round and round on a treadmill had their eyes put out. Similarly, blind to the reality around them, the unfortunate nations of Europe are going round and round on the treadmill of war, voluntarily and yet under compulsion.’

This is the judgement of a neutral citizen, but one who does not base his judgement on empty phrases; he includes a number of facts in his judgement, showing how it is possible to measure these facts against one another in the right way. My endeavour has been not to express an opinion but to indicate something that is needed in our time if we are to seek the truth. Why should it not be possible to suspend judgement, at least in one’s own soul, if one has neither the time nor the will to bother about the facts in a suitable way? Spiritual science can show us that judgements made today, and so frequently clothed in such words as: ‘We are fighting for the freedom and the rights of the small nations’, are indeed the most irresponsible empty phrases. Someone who knows even the least part of the truth must realize that such talk is comparable to that of the shark²⁶ negotiating for a peace treaty with the little fishes who are going to be his prey. It will naturally not be understood immediately, perhaps not until some meditation has taken place, that much of today’s talk resembles the suggestion: Why don’t the sharks enter into an inter-fish agreement (international is a word much used today) with the little fishes they want to eat?

People who today speak about the coming of peace say that the murder will not cease until there is a prospect of eternal peace. It is virtually impossible to imagine anything more crazy than the notion that murder must continue until, through murder, a situation has been created in which there will be no more war. It is hardly necessary to have knowledge of spiritual matters today in order to know that once this war in Europe has come to an end only a few years will pass before a far more furious, far more devastating war will shake the earth outside Europe. But who bothers today about things that are a part of reality? People prefer to listen to statesmen who declaim that this or that must be achieved in the interest of freedom and the rights of small nations. People even listen when lawyers, quite competent lawyers, who have become presidents²⁷ appear in the toga of a Moslem prince to conduct cases in Romania...only this is not noticed because in this instance we speak of a ‘republic’. What more is there to be said if people are still willing

to go to lectures given by such people about artistic and literary matters, about the relationships between the myths and sagas and literary materials of West and Central Europe, quite apart from other facts such as the one I mentioned to you the other day: that Maeterlinck was applauded loudly for calling Goethe, Schiller, Lessing and others 'mediocre intellects'. But I do not wish to influence your judgement in any way; I merely draw your attention to the fact that for the forming of judgements perspectives have to be sought, as well as quite other things, if the judgement is to become truth.

We must realize that the population crowded together in Central Europe has to be judged from an entirely different viewpoint because, here, human values are under threat. For the peripheral countries, on the other hand, the viewpoint can be that of state and political values, at least for some time to come, until certain other conditions are brought about by the prolongation of the war for many years. In Central Europe we have to do with the treasure of the spirit, with the development of the soul and with everything that has been created over the centuries. It would be utter nonsense to believe that we have to be similarly concerned about the periphery; it would be thoughtless to express any such thing. Of course there is much everywhere with which fault can be found. But it is one thing—comparing greater with lesser matters—to find fault with things that take place inside a closed fortress and another to find fault with what occurs among the besieging army. I have as yet heard no judgement from the periphery that takes any kind of account of these things.

In order not to be one-sided, I shall now, in conclusion, turn to something else. In order to be just, it is always thought to be a good thing to judge both sides by saying: Here it is like this and there it is like that, and so on. But the question is never asked: Is it really so? A Swiss newspaper recently published articles which, in order to be just to both sides, pointed out in quite an abstract way that lies were told in both camps. But supposing what is said there is not true? The article was about untruthfulness in the world war, but the article is, in itself, because of the way it is written, totally untruthful. Now I want to read to you—in fear and trembling, I might add—something out of a German magazine, selected at random, in order to show you the difference. What is written all around Germany is well enough known, and it is also well known that it is surely not written out of any benevolence towards the nations of Central Europe. Even in articles expressing judgements that are a little less vitriolic there are still plenty of very unkind statements against the nation who, after all, brought forth Goethe, Schiller, Lessing and others.

I came by chance across this article on human dignity by Alexander von Gleichen-Russwurm.²⁸ The article is motivated by the fact that the Germans have been called barbarians, and are indeed still called barbarians in the periphery. Gleichen-Russwurm—he is Schiller's grandson—is not particularly offended that the word 'barbarian' is used. On the contrary, he shows rather nicely what the ancient Greeks and Romans meant by 'barbarian', which was certainly nothing dreadful. I shall not go into this aspect. He then goes on to discuss the various nations. The article is like many others we may find today written by people in Central Europe who are equivalent, say, to Maeterlinck. Pardon me! Gleichen-Russwurm distinguishes between nations and governments and in some cases he does so in words—I am only passing them on to you, they are not my words—that may seem terrible if a reader or listener feels offended because he is a member of that nation. I am confident there is no one among us here who will feel thus; we are all anthroposophists

and can understand such things. It is not because of the words used to describe governments that I want to read you this article, but to show you how Gleichen-Russwurm—not a very famous man but one who is roughly on a par with Maeterlinck as far as intelligence goes—in no way recoils from saying to his own people within the fortress what a courageous, thoughtful and honest man has to say if he does not intend to throw sand in their eyes. Obviously, though, what is said inside the fortress ought not to impinge on the periphery because basically it has nothing to do with that. Think tactfully and you will understand what I mean. Gleichen-Russwurm says:

‘The Russian people are good natured and gentle, whatever the Cossacks, who are not related to them, might do. The criminal Tsarist Government has brought about the war, yet the greatest poet of the nation, Tolstoi, who will ever retain our respect, has preached abhorrence of war in most moving words. The atrocities committed by the French mob, the stupidity of their ministers and the uncultured remarks of Paris journalists and writers, cannot undo the fact that France is the country of that saint of charitable love, Vincent de Paul, who still has many followers, nor that the majority of French people are hardworking and peaceful by nature.

England remains the birthplace of Shakespeare and has given the world gentle poets, selfless philanthropists and philosophers of the highest worth. Yet the country is ruled by liars and tricksters and the English people, who are proudest of their own culture, have brought into being the worst kind of modern barbarism through their manner of conducting the war.

Italy’s characterless bandit Government is despicable. Everything connected with Italy recently has been disagreeable and repulsive even to her friends. Yet since Goethe we have received such rich treasures of culture, artistic sense and natural beauty from her that we shall keep her in our hearts, unforgotten and still fruitful.

The hate our enemies bear towards us has perhaps preserved what is most valuable in our nature. The bitterness shown us nowadays, our recognition of the unprecedented antipathy facing us on all sides, is like the warning whispered by the slave to the victor: “*Memento mori!*”

Even if spoken by vile mouths it ensures that noble-mindedness does not become overbearing, that triumphal jubilation does not degenerate into arrogance or hubris—the presumptuousness the Greek poets warned their heroes to guard against.

Schiller, concerned for the dignity of man, considered that noble human beings pay not only by what they do but also by what they are.’

You see, it is possible to form very derogatory opinions about those who are participating in current events, without falling into the trap of scorning whole nations. Judgements of this kind may be found by the hundred and if, one day, statistics are drawn up from 1914 onwards showing the way other nations are judged by Central Europe and by the periphery, the result will be a revelation of a remarkable cultural and spiritual nature! But nothing is further from anybody’s mind meanwhile. At present Mr Leadbeater²⁹ is compiling statistics comparing the criminal records of Germany and England, and recently announced in large print in the *Theosophical Review* how many more criminals Germany has than England. Then, in the next issue someone else pointed out that a certain figure

had been inserted under the wrong heading and that a rectification would show the situation to be quite different. I seem to remember that he put down twenty-nine thousand criminals for England, forgetting a hundred and forty-six thousand; for Germany he included them all. But whereas the table showing Germany as the country with the greatest number of criminals is printed in large letters in the *Theosophical Review*, the refutation appears in minute print right at the end of the next issue.

Statistics like this will one day be superseded by others and then something of what is said in that article ‘On the History of the Outbreak of the War’, which was awarded a prize by the University of Berne, will be found to be true:

‘But history cannot be permanently falsified; the myth cannot stand up to the scrutiny of scientific research; the sinister web will be brought into the light and torn to pieces, however artfully it has been spun.’

It has been necessary to say these things in preparation for speaking next time on matters which a number of people are greatly looking forward to hearing about but which, I must repeat, may not be made as comfortable as some might imagine. I myself have no need to express one opinion or another. As a spiritual scientist I am used to looking at facts purely as they really are, without any falsification, and to speaking about them as such. I know very well what objections some people—though of course nobody from this circle—are likely to make with regard to certain atrocities and other things which are told and stirred up over and over again without any proper perspective. I know these objections, but I also know how shortsighted it is to make them and how small a notion someone who makes them can have about how matters really stand and how the blame is really distributed.

When we had our dispute—if I can call it that—with Mrs Besant,³⁰ she managed to load all the blame on to us. According to someone who until that time had been her devotee but who then withdrew his esteem, she acted according to the principle: if a person attacks another person, and if the one who is being attacked cries for help, then the attacker can tell the one who is crying for help that he is wrong not to let himself be slaughtered. Many judgements made today are of a similar nature. The strangest situations can be met in this respect. Kind-hearted, well-meaning people who would never form such a judgement in everyday life, nevertheless do so with regard to political matters about which they know nothing. These people lack clarity in their judgements. But clarity is the fundamental prerequisite for the formation of any judgement, though it is not a justification for the delivery of this or that judgement in one or another direction.

LECTURE TWO

Dornach, 9 December 1916

Today I should like to add a few remarks to what I started to say in the last lecture. Since our friends wish it, I shall today and tomorrow endeavour to penetrate more deeply into this matter. But so that we may understand, and not misunderstand, one another when I start to illuminate the subject more from the spiritual side, as is the intention, I must first of all lay the foundation. For if we cannot take into account certain circumstances now prevailing on the physical plane and also the times during which these circumstances were being prepared, then it is not possible to enter into the more spiritual aspects. You know that it is not a question of taking sides or of sympathies or antipathies, but of displaying certain conditions and relationships which, so I have heard, some people wish to know in order to help them understand today's difficult times. So today, in so far as time allows, I shall give a few more introductory explanations.

To start with, it must become clear to us that everything that happens externally on the physical plane is dependent on the underlying spiritual forces and powers. But it is difficult to get to know precisely and concretely the manner in which these spiritual forces and powers work. For the incursions of the spiritual world into the physical plane are more obvious in some places than in others. I have often pointed out here that there are, in a certain way, lines of connection, via the most varied intermediate links, between the external world and the secret brotherhoods, and onwards from the secret brotherhoods to the spiritual world. To understand this rightly it is necessary to take into account that wherever human beings work with the help of spiritually effective forces, whether with good or evil intent, they have to reckon with long stretches of time; because of this, account must also be taken of the fact that much depends on the ability of the individual to grasp and use the conditions of the physical plane with a certain cold-blooded detachment. This is particularly required when existing spiritual streams are to be used in order to achieve something. During the course of my description you will doubtless see whether something is striven for or achieved with good or bad intent. One characteristic of those who make use of spiritual forces is that very frequently—not always but very frequently—they have reasons for not wishing to appear on the stage of the physical plane. Instead they make use of intermediaries through whom certain plans can be realized. Often these things have to be done in such a way that others do not notice what is going on. I have already pointed out a number of times that people are, in a way, inattentive; they do not like looking closely at what is going on. Many of those who work with certain occult connections in order to bring something about in the world make use of this fact. Those of us who see the world, not in the usual way but with free and open eyes, will know that there are people who can be influenced by those who want to make use of such means. Someone who is intent on influencing people, someone who, as an occultist, is not entirely scrupulous, can indeed gain power over people in this way.

Let me start right at the beginning and take an example. You will find that starting at the beginning will lead us to an understanding of more profound aspects later. In the year 1889 Count Richard von Pfeil,¹ who had lived in St Petersburg and knew it quite well,

wrote the following lines about the reigning Tsar of Russia:

‘The overall impression I gained of Tsar Alexander III confirmed what I had long suspected: that those around him were purposely keeping him in a state of deep mistrust towards Germany and that this mistrust was now so firmly rooted in him that a change could hardly be expected. He was rightly convinced of his own deep love of peace, but he also believed his counsellors and other influential people in Russia, many of whom did not desire peace nearly as strongly as did he.’

Here, in a most prominent position, you have an individual of whom it must be said: He can be influenced by those who approach him for that purpose, yet who do not want to show themselves by stepping into the foreground. What does someone do who knows about certain connections arising out of the impulses of the fifth post-Atlantean period and wants to make use of them for his own ends or those of some group? He aspires to approach such a person by awakening the impression that nothing is further from his mind than the desire to influence him, so that no one will notice that he does indeed desire to gain influence. And so he gains influence over him. All he need do is form his sentences in a certain way, use certain expressions, and other means which I shall not describe, and he succeeds in turning the other’s mind in the desired direction. The world at large, being to a certain extent unobservant and therefore kindly disposed in its judgement of certain people, will simply assume: Well, he is rightly convinced of his love of peace, but he also believes all his counsellors and other influential people!

You see how easy it is in the widest context to practise something similar to what I have described in another case, that of Blavatsky.² After the mahatma who is known as K.H. had had a good influence over her for a while, he was replaced, through machinations, by another who was a spy in the hands of a particular society. He had run away from certain secret brotherhoods into whose highest degrees he had been initiated, and it was thus possible for him to remain in the background as a mahatma and achieve, through Blavatsky, things that he wanted to achieve.

By pointing out these elementary matters I simply want to draw your attention to what you must take into account if you want to form a judgement; for the world is frequently misled by the way in which history is written. The writing of history is really something very much more profound. Only at the outermost edge of physical existence, in the utmost maya, can it be said: If this or that professor is a competent historian who has mastered the historical method, he will know how to depict the right things historically. This need not be the case at all. Whether a historian knows how to depict the right things or not depends on whether his karma leads him to the possibility of discovering the right things or not. Everything depends on this. For the right things are often not expressed in what he finds when he looks here or there; they are often revealed only to one who knows how to find the right places to look. Let me say this in another way: For one who is led by his karma to see the right things at the right moment, they are revealed at the point where something significant is expressed by a single phenomenon. Often a single phenomenon expresses something that throws light on decades, illuminating like a flash of lightning what is really happening. To prepare for what will be specially important when we turn to the more spiritual aspects, I should now like to tell you a little story.

There was, in Vienna, a physician³ who, even in the eighties of the last century, was

practising analytical psychology, psychoanalysis, though not to the exaggerated extent that has since become fashionable through the theories of Freud. He still lives there, as a matter of fact, but no longer occupies himself so much with these things. He enjoyed some outstanding successes with his psychoanalysis because he managed to draw a good deal out of people by his method of catechism. In 1886 a man came to this physician who gave the impression that he might have a great deal inside him. So he started to treat him for his nervous condition. And indeed, for a doctor who knew his job, there was a good deal to be found in this man's soul life; it was handed to him on a plate, you might say. This was a particularly interesting case. The doctor found out that his patient was involved in the most varied political factions, that he could poke his nose in everywhere and had his finger in every pie. He also discovered that he wrote articles for certain journals and that these articles had a great influence on the ruler of his country.

The patient, Voidarevich was his name, was a late descendant of a family of voivodes from Herzegovina. He said a great many things. Amongst much else he knew all about the interconnections in the net spun from Russia in the seventies in Herzegovina and Bosnia before the beginning of the Russo-Turkish war. Under normal conditions people do not usually give away such secrets; but under the hands of a psychoanalyst things come out which would otherwise remain hidden. After a number of sessions it became clear that he had also been involved when, before the declaration of war, King Milan⁴ and Nikita⁵ had resisted Turkey at the end of the seventies, and the uprisings in Bosnia and Herzegovina had been arranged. The motive for declaring war on Turkey had been given to Nikita and Milan by sources in Russia. And yet, outwardly, it was said, the people of the Balkans had been roused by the bad treatment given them by Turkey. This is not to deny that such treatment did occur. I am only relating the connections and, in this respect, we must realize that causes often lie, or are made, far longer ago than is suspected.

Something else was revealed by Voidarevich, something that prompted the doctor to seek an interview with an appropriate authority in Vienna, for even though it was only a matter of disconnected sentences, nevertheless the doctor, an intelligent man, was able to deduce a great deal. He learned from Voidarevich that the Russian ambassador was in Vienna and was on his way to St Petersburg, and not to Constantinople as the papers were saying. Further, he learned that the Russian Foreign Minister⁶ was staying at home and would not be going to a Bohemian spa as the papers were saying. These two things made a strange impression on the doctor: that the Russian ambassador in Constantinople was on his way to St Petersburg via Vienna, and that the Russian Foreign Minister was not going to a Bohemian spa but was waiting in St Petersburg to receive the ambassador, and also that the newspapers were saying something quite different. It suddenly dawned on him—it was one of those obscure intuitions that come by instinct: All this is connected with the fact that Alexander von Battenberg⁷ is to be deposed in Bulgaria. It all seemed very suspicious to the doctor, and he informed the appropriate authority. But the appropriate authority merely knew that the Russian ambassador was travelling to St Petersburg on private business, as they say; and the authority was quite satisfied with this explanation, as often happens, because such authorities, too, can be so plagued by that urge for inattentiveness about which I have spoken, that they are not in the least concerned with getting to the bottom of things. And a week later Battenberg was forced to abdicate.

You see, this is quite an insignificant event from a historian's point of view, but it is nevertheless an event that throws light in the deepest sense. And if it had not happened 'by chance'—as is so easily said—that the doctor wormed these things out of Voidarevich by psychoanalysis, it would never have come to light. The threads of karma run in remarkable ways. We know from the psychoanalysis that Voidarevich—who gave away a number of other things of a similar kind—was destined, had everything gone according to plan for the descendants of the ancient voivodes in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to assume the rank of voivode himself. Because of the light that dawned on the doctor we know how the threads ran from Russia in the East to Herzegovina and Bosnia and we can eavesdrop on the origins of a story that later on played an important part in history. For Voidarevich was in the service of Russia and was a party to all this from the beginning.

So we are dealing here, not exactly with magic but with the knowledge of how to utilize the situation and conditions of the physical plane in order to achieve certain quite definite aims. Voidarevich failed to serve his purpose only because he grew nervous; a great deal had been instilled into him and it was intended that he should achieve much. You have here a striking example of how to work in the world while at the same time obliterating the tracks you intend to follow. From this you will be able to grasp that forming judgements about world events is not as easy as is usually imagined. Those who desire to work systematically behind the scenes of world history know very well how to pull such strings and they are cold-blooded enough to make use of them in a way that suits their purpose. Much can be exploited in this connection. Only a thirst for knowledge and a will to learn can lead us to see the things of the world clearly.

In order to understand what many of our friends here are striving to grasp, let us turn our attention to what exactly there is that can be utilized. We will look at the manner in which the streams of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch work through certain externally discernible endeavours and facts of the present time in a wider sense. Let us start with the Russian people in the East of Europe. I said only last Monday that all the people of Europe have taken them to their hearts. In the Russian people, together with various other Slav elements, there lives—I have spoken about this a number of times—a folk element of the future. For in the folk spirit of all that is gathered together as the Slav peoples there lives what, one day in the future, will furnish the material for the spiritual stream of the sixth post-Atlantean epoch.

In this Slav element we have first the Russian people and, in addition, all those other Slavs who, though differentiated from the Russians, nevertheless feel themselves in some degree linked as Slavs with the Russian Slavs. Out of these links arises, or arose, what is nowadays known as Pan-Slavism, a sense among all Slavs of belonging together in spirit and in soul, in political and in cultural life. In so far as such a thing lives within the folk soul it is a thoroughly honest and, also in the higher sense of human evolution, a right thing—though the word 'pan' is thoroughly misused these days. For one who understands the interconnections it is possible to use the phrase 'Pan-Slavism' for that spiritual communion which, I would like to say, quivers through all Slav souls in the way I have just described. To speak of 'Pan-Germanism', whether within or outside Germany, is nonsense, more than just mischief, for it is not possible to force everything into the same mould. If something does not exist, it is not possible to speak about it. It might perhaps be posed as a theory and even haunt the minds of some individuals; but it is quite different

from that genuine communion which quivers in the many Slav souls, varying from one Slav people to another.

Whoever, since the nineteenth century, has concerned himself seriously with certain spiritual knowledge, knows that in the East of Europe there is a separate folk element. Spiritual scientists have always known that a folk element for the future lives in the Slavs. If certain occultists belonging to the Theosophical Society have maintained something else, for instance that this folk element for the future sixth sub-race lies with the Americans, this only goes to prove either that these people were no occultists or that they wished to bring about something other than that provided for by the facts. So we must reckon with the fact that there is in the East an element which bears a certain future within it, that emerges as though out of the blood, an element that today is still basically naive and does not know itself, yet prophetically and instinctively contains within itself something which will one day evolve from it. It is often present in dreams.

As every spiritual scientist further knows—not externally, but as a cultural fact—the Polish element comes forward in a quite particular way as the most advanced and culturally secure, because it is both political and religious; this element differs from all the other Slav elements in that it possesses a uniform, firmly-rooted spiritual and cultural life that is exceptionally vigorous and energetic. This just as a short sketch. Perhaps we will go into more detail later.

Let us return to what I have just described. In contrast to what I characterized just now there is the spiritual and cultural life of the British people, which is equally well-known to the spiritual scientist in its deeper significance. I mean the kind of cultural life as it appears before the world in British institutions and the life of the British people. This element is, above all, extremely political in character; its tendency is supremely political. One consequence emerging from it is the political thinking that is so much admired by the rest of the world; in a certain way the most advanced and free kind of political thinking. Wherever in the world efforts have been made to set up political institutions in which freedom can live—freedom in the sense we have come to understand it since the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century—there, ideas have been borrowed from British thinking. The French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century was more a matter of feeling, of passionate impulsiveness, but the thoughts it contained had been brought over from British thinking. The manner in which political concepts are formed, the manner in which political bodies are structured, the manner in which the will of the people is led within political organizations that are as free as possible so that it can work from all sides—all this is expressed in British political thinking in accordance with its original tendencies. That is why so many new states in the nineteenth century imitated British institutions. In many places efforts were made to take over the British way of parliamentary life and parliamentary institutions, for in this connection British thinking is the teacher of modern times.

In England during the nineteenth century, let us say up to its final decades, this political thinking came to expression in some very important politicians who modelled their thoughts in particular on this political thinking. One thing especially became obvious: the salvation of the world could be brought about by this thinking if only people would devote themselves entirely to it and allow nothing else to take effect in the arrangements of the

various institutions. Therefore, politicians who may seem one-sided to some extent but who model their thoughts entirely on this political thinking and endeavour to work in accordance with it, appear as outstanding and entirely moral. Think of Cobden,⁸ Bright⁹ and others, not to speak of greater men who are always being mentioned; for in this field it is very possible to go astray as soon as a really prominent position is reached. That is why I mention those who have not gone astray in any direction but who are genuinely important in the sense I now mean. I could name many others. This phenomenon was really present there as an impulse right up to the nineties of the nineteenth century, and as such it is, in a certain way, the counter-image of what I described earlier as being borne by the Slav people. For this way of forming thoughts of a political orientation belongs in its character very much to the fifth post-Atlantean period. That is where it belongs and where it has to be developed. And those people I have mentioned have taken it up in the right way. On the one hand we have something that is made visible through good sense, intelligence and political morality, and on the other something that exists as a future folk potential deep down, not only in the soul but in the blood.

Let it be clear to us that what I am speaking about is not only my own knowledge; it was viewed in the way I have described throughout the nineteenth century by those who are concerned with such things. In those western brotherhoods I told you about there lived an exact knowledge of these things and of their connection with the stream of evolution in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch and its transition to the sixth post-Atlantean epoch. And in some individuals there was the will—we have yet to see whether for good or bad—to make use of the forces concerned. For these are indeed forces: on the one hand the talent to think in that way, and on the other a folk element for the future.

If someone wants to use these things, he can. Of course there exist not only those streams I have described but also others which flow side by side with them, and it is necessary gradually to point these out as well. There exist ways and means in the world of carrying out what I might call ‘mass hypnosis’. To bring about a suggestion on a grand scale you have to place something in the world which makes an impression. Just as it is possible to insinuate an idea into the mind of an individual in the way I have shown, so too, by using suitable means, suggestions can be made to whole groups of people, especially when one knows what actually binds these groups together. It is possible to steer a force that lives in an individual person in a particular direction. This person may then be totally convinced of his deep love of peace; and yet he does what he does because somehow or other a suggestion has been planted in him. He is quite at odds with what he does. In the same way, with the right knowledge, similar things can be done to whole groups; it is merely a matter of selecting the appropriate means. You take a force that lives but has no particular direction, such as the force living in certain Slav races, and by suggestion on a grand scale you nudge it into a definite direction.

There is a suggestion on a grand scale which has worked, is still working and will continue to work in a marvellous manner: the so-called ‘Testament of Peter the Great’.¹⁰ You know the history of Peter the Great; you know how he was at pains to introduce western life into Russia. There is no need for me to describe it since you can read it up in any encyclopaedia. I have no intention of recounting external history nor of developing sympathy in any one direction; I shall merely point in the simplest way to certain facts. Much of what is said of Peter the Great is true, but it is not true that he composed that

testament. The testament is a forgery; it did not come from him but emerged at a certain point, in the way such things do emerge, out of all sorts of underground goings on. It was thrown in amongst human evolution; suddenly it was there. It has nothing to do with Peter the Great but a great deal to do with certain underground currents. It is very convincing, for it vindicates the future of Russia—I say Russia, not the Slav people—by stating that Russia must extend her boundaries over the Balkan states and Constantinople, across the Dardanelles and so forth. All this is contained in the testament of Peter the Great. It is easy to be so moved by this testament that one says: This is no bungling effort, it has been given to the world by a grand gesture of genius! I still sometimes recall the impression made by the testament of Peter the Great, during a course I had to give,¹¹ when I studied it with individual students in order to demonstrate the implications of the separate paragraphs and their influence on the cultural development of Europe.

Those who desire to work in this way are always concerned, not to stimulate just one stream but to make sure that one stream is always crossed by another, so that they influence each other in some way. Not much is achieved by simply running straight ahead with a single stream. It is necessary sometimes to throw a sidelight on this stream so that certain things become confused, so that certain tracks are covered up, and other things are lost in an impenetrable thicket. This is very important. Thus it comes about that certain secret streams which have set themselves some task or other also set about achieving the exact opposite. These opposing tasks have the effect of obliterating all tracks. I could point to a place in Europe where so-called Freemasonry, so-called secret societies, had a great influence at a certain time when significant things were going on; certain people were acting under the suggestive influence of certain Masonic societies with an occult background. It was then necessary to obliterate the tracks at this point. So a certain Jesuit influence was brought to play so that the Masonic and Jesuit influences met; for there are higher instances, ‘empires’, which can quite well make use of both Masons and Jesuits in order to achieve what they want to achieve through the collaboration of the two. Do not believe that there can be no individuals who are both Jesuit and Freemason. They have progressed beyond the point of working in one direction only. They know that it is necessary to tackle situations from various sides in order to push matters in a particular direction. I say this in order to point out certain connections in an elementary way.

Peter the Great—let us return to him once more—introduced western civilization into Russia. Many genuine Slav souls bear a deep hate for all the western elements that Peter the Great brought to Russia; they have a deep antipathy against it all. This has grown particularly strong during this war, but it has always been present. On the other hand there is the testament of Peter the Great, which is not really his but which somehow made its appearance, and which is suitable for making use, by means of suggestion, not of individuals, but of whole masses of Slav connections, those masses in whom lives that antipathy towards the west that is symbolized by the name Peter the Great. So here we have two things at the same time in a way amounting, I must say, to historical genius: sympathy with the testament of Peter the Great and antipathy towards everything western. They work beautifully all muddled up together, so mingled, in fact, that their working can become extremely effective. And with this I point to another side of this stream in the East. I shall show as we continue how, after years of preparation, use can be made of such a stream from a definite moment onwards. Then there is one stream into which, as it were,

two tributaries have been made to flow. As I said at the beginning, account has been taken of long passages of time. Once a stream has been brought to the point of being effective, it can then be put to use.

Now let us prepare in yet another way. I want to show you another stream that flows along in the West beside the one that has brought into being what is hitherto the most mature political way of thinking in the fifth post-Atlantean period. This other stream has been more hidden and has only revealed its occult basis from time to time, smuggled into all kinds of public activities. With that I have to point once again to certain secret brotherhoods in the West. It is characteristic of these, more than anything else, that they have an exact knowledge of the kind of situations I have been describing and can instruct their pupils how things are going for the fifth, for the sixth post-Atlantean period, and what kind of forces are at work: for instance for the one the element of intelligence, and for the other the folk element. And they can show their pupils how such things can be used for one purpose or another.

These occult streams which live, as I have said, through the secret brotherhoods have, as one of their basic doctrines, the teaching that the English-speaking peoples are for the fifth post-Atlantean epoch what the Romans were for the fourth. This is a fundamental doctrine among these brotherhoods and they say further that, whatever happens, account must be taken first of the Latin element. This expresses itself in the various Latin cultures and peoples—I am not saying this myself but am merely repeating what has always been taught in the brotherhoods—and is destined to be submerged further and further in the materialism of science, the materialism of life and the materialism of religion. There is no need to take any trouble over these, for eventually they will disintegrate in the decadence into which they will fall. So, they say, their chief attention must be turned to ensuring that what they call the Latin race is in the process of total disintegration, that it is an element that is perishing; the task is to arrange and do everything in such a way that the Latin element will perish.

This view goes so far as to say: Those forces which push the Latin element down the slippery slope must be absorbed into all political impulses and also all spiritual and religious impulses. Of course nothing of this must show outwardly; but support must be given to anything that helps to free the world of the Latin element. They say that, just as at the end of the fourth post-Atlantean period everything was to be permeated with the Latin culture, so at the end of the fifth period the nature of everything must be filled with the culture that is to arise out of the English-speaking peoples. I am only speaking of the teachings of the secret brotherhoods and of what can, and indeed does, ensue from them. In addition, it has always been taught that, just as the Germanic-British element, as they call it, opposed the Latin, so will the Slav element come to oppose the English element, for that is the way of the world. Only now there is a ninety-degree change of direction. Whereas the Latin element found its impulse in the North, now the impulse strives from East to West.

We must realize that such things flow into much that is printed, much that is read by the general public, and into whatever else seeps into human social life. There are ways and means of bringing this about unnoticed, as I have described. For just imagine if this were to become known in certain quarters—it is, of course, unthinkable! It is just that things are

expressed differently; it is a matter of exercising influence by means of suggestion. You can do one thing and say another, you can say something different from what you are doing, and you can often do something that seems to be the opposite of what is supposed to happen and of what you are really doing.

You may look upon what I have been sketching for you as some kind of spiritual atmosphere; indeed care is taken that it should be a kind of spiritual atmosphere. You might read something quite innocuous, but between the lines—this concept ‘between the lines’ can be something perfectly concrete—you find yourself reading something quite different as well; you learn something quite different and find you are looking at something quite different. So now people are immersed in this atmosphere and their thoughts form themselves accordingly. The thoughts of even the most intelligent people sometimes take on quite bizarre forms. Thus, in order to judge the way other people think, it is not enough to develop that naive enthusiasm of inattentive people, of which I have often spoken during these lectures; attention has to be paid to the kind of atmosphere in which people are living. This is perfectly real and is not that nebulous, abstract something which many people call the influence of the environment. Eucken,¹² for instance, speaks of the influence of the environment without noticing that he is saying on the one hand: The environment creates the person; and on the other hand: The environment is created by people; which is equivalent to saying: I want to lift myself up by my own pigtail! The way to look at what is termed the environment in which people are immersed is to realize that this environment emerges in a definite way from certain spiritual streams. It is not the nebulous something that many people consider it to be.

Let us look at a case in point. You will have to forgive me, but I did say last Monday that I would not be able to make matters easy for you. We cannot avoid going into certain details; and you will understand the connection tomorrow. I want to read to you some passages from a letter written in the middle of April 1914 by Mitrofanoff,¹³ a history professor in St Petersburg, to a German who had been his teacher and with whom he had remained friends. Imagine this Mitrofanoff immersed in the various streams. In April 1914 he writes a letter that contains the following passages:

‘... aversion towards the Germans is felt in every soul and expressed by every mouth, and it seems to me there has rarely been such unanimity of public opinion.’

The following is a particularly interesting passage. Please pay particular attention to this passage, but not because of the name it mentions; it is possible to feel sympathy or antipathy with regard to this personality. I simply want to draw your attention to the formal content living in this passage:

‘It was perhaps Bismarck’s greatest political mistake that he did not want to be more Russian than those Russian diplomats who, from weakness and lack of understanding, meanly surrendered the interests of their country during the Congress.’

What a marvellous expectation! This man reproaches Bismarck for not having been more Russian than the Russian statesmen who attended the Berlin Congress! That is why it is necessary to hate the compatriots of Bismarck! Whatever you may think of it, this sentence is certainly most original. And because the good professor of St Petersburg indulges in thoughts of this kind, he can also write the following:

‘As a reaction’—against the Triple Alliance that had come about in Central Europe —’the Double Alliance was formed, which meant that Russia was associated with a vengeful France instead of the Triple Alliance.’... ‘For Russia the Balkan question is no *guerre de luxe*, no adventurous dream of the Slavophiles. Its solution is without doubt an economic and political necessity. The Russian budget is based on export; if her balance of payments becomes negative the Russian treasury will be bankrupt, because it will be incapable of paying the interest on its enormous foreign debts. And two thirds of these exports pass through the southern ports and the two Turkish straits. If these outlets are blocked Russian trade will falter, and the economic consequences of such a blockade would be incalculable. The last Italo-Turkish war showed this clearly. Only possession of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles can bring to an end this insufferable situation, since the existence of a world power such as Russia cannot be allowed to depend on chance and the arbitrary acts of others. On the other hand Russia cannot possibly behave with total indifference towards the fate of the southern Slavs of the Balkan peninsula. First of all, the little Balkan states provide rear cover for the two straits and, secondly, over the course of the centuries far too much Russian blood and Russian gold have been expended on the Balkan heroes for the whole thing to be dropped now: Such an act would constitute moral and political suicide for any Russian government.’

Connect this, please, with the various remarks I have made about the Slav Welfare Committee. Too much Russian gold has been expended! Mitrofanoff continues:

‘One must, of course, not exaggerate the significance of Pan-Slavism and its ideals, but it does exist and it is doubtless quite vigorous; the demonstrations by the Slavophiles in 1913 on the streets of so many Russian towns, in which even elements of the opposition participated, provide a clear demonstration of this.’

This letter of April 1914 then gives the following summary:

‘Once more: The urge to go south is a historical, political and economic necessity and whatever foreign power opposes this urge is *eo ipso* an enemy power. For some time the Triple Alliance has been single-mindedly set upon this course towards war. In Austria the urge to go south is also seen as a historical necessity, and the Austrians are just as right from their point of view as are the Russians from theirs. During the first half of the nineteenth century there were three directions in which the mighty Habsburg monarchy could expand: towards Italy, towards Germany and towards the Balkan peninsula. Since 1866 only the latter remains; Bismarck once again, this time perhaps unintentionally, caused Austria and Russia to face one another for a decisive battle, and by entering into the Triple Entente he placed the might of the German Empire at the disposal of Austria. Austria of course took advantage of this: everywhere and at every opportunity, if it was a matter of the Balkans, Russia found Austria standing in her way. The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which made a deep impression in Russia, constituted not more than a page in the thick volume of Russian-Austrian enmity. Indignation was so great and danger was approaching so obviously that even the peace-loving Russian Government, despite its shattered finances, was prepared to go to war.’

He means in 1908.

‘But the “Nibelung” by the Spree¹⁴ threateningly shook his armoured fist and Russia, not sure of her allies, was forced to yield. In the year 1913 the realization of the Slavo-Russian ideal at last seemed almost within reach. The Turks were hit on the head, the victorious southern Slavs pressed forward to Salonika and Constantinople; one small push and the matter was settled.’

This letter is really interesting for it points to a number of remarkable matters. For instance the writer gets all excited about the following:

‘The workshops of Essen sent their cannon to the Turkish artillery; they were not up to the standard of the Creuzot guns, but nevertheless were very well made. And most important of all, German instructors drilled the Ottoman field army... It has now become clear to the Russians’—April 1914—‘that if everything remains as it is at present, the road to Constantinople lies through Berlin. Vienna is merely a secondary question.’

April 1914! A number of other things are said which demonstrate clearly that in this head there is a dream of what is to happen soon. Whether the head in question imagined that the time was so close is another question; but this head, together with its body and limbs, of course, now set out to visit its teacher in Berlin. They spoke about many things together and I intend to tell you about a number of these. The professor of history said:

‘If you do not leave Constantinople to us, war will be inevitable.’

He repeated over and over again: It goes without saying that the Germans will remain God’s choice of teacher for the Russian people, and that we only have to keep the peace—that the Germans only have to keep the peace—in order to conquer by means of spiritual, inner superiority. But do not believe that you can conquer us. On my estate at Saratov I own a house in which my ancestors have lived for centuries; but I would set it on fire with my own hands before allowing German soldiers to be quartered there. We could get on rather well together if we were to share Austria between us, so that German-Austria became part of the German Empire while the other part of Austria was taken over by Russia!

This is in June 1914! We could show in a number of ways how thought forms come into being in a particular environment. Quite a bit has taken place recently that could astonish us. Where social forms are more autocratic, things that happen tend to emanate from single sources, whereas in other situations they arise more out of popular streams. Never generalize, for in one place it is like this and in another like that. We could ask, for instance: What is the basis for this peculiar, puzzling behaviour by a country like Romania? I am not speaking of the incident that gave the final push but of the stream out of which it arose. But I do not want to give what is nowadays usually called a ‘historical’ explanation, for the type of history that has been coming into being since the nineteenth century and has now entered the twentieth is not worth a snap of the fingers. A true science of history has to proceed symptomatically; it has to show the different situations which are suddenly illuminated as if by lightning. I should like to point out one such lightning illumination.

Those who are knowledgeable in the field know that much that has gone on in Romania recently has been puzzling. This is connected with the fact that in the whole of the East a

certain circumstance has been reckoned with that has dominated very many people like a suggestive idea. I do not want to characterize this by means of impressions; instead I shall merely tell you certain remarks made—I do not want to be vague—by the Minister for Interior Affairs, Take Ionescu,¹⁵ in 1913 to a certain Mr Redlich. He said, almost word for word, that in his opinion the monarchy of Austria-Hungary would not exist beyond the death of Franz Josef, and he would surely die soon. It would then be a matter of dividing this monarchy into its constituent parts. This was a firmly-rooted opinion and, in accordance with it, people's thoughts tended to go in one particular direction. It was another of those widespread, suggestive ideas.

An article written by a Russian asks what Russia can still expect from France and sets forth reasons why Russia can no longer expect much from France with regard to her own plans, and why Russia must become the victim of France if things do not change. This article was written by Prince Kotshubey and published in the 26 June 1914 issue of the Paris journal *Correspondent*. I have not chosen an article at random but selected one by a well-known writer who is thoroughly versed in whatever lives in his environment. The author asks whether it would have been better for Russia not to rely any longer on her alliance with France but instead to join forces with Germany once again. Prince Kotshubey discusses this possibility. But, he says, it would not be feasible to carry it out because of the Franco-Russian alliance which forces Russia to be the permanent enemy of Germany, her powerful western neighbour. So, in this head, the situation is reflected in a way that makes Russia an opponent of Germany as a result of pressure from the alliance with France, which in turn provides her with two alternatives: either to cancel the alliance with France in favour of closer relations with Germany, or drop her plans for expansion eastwards into Asia. He then goes on to say:

‘But whatever surprises may be in store for us in the future, one thing is certain, and that is that the Triple Entente would only constitute a true political alliance if France were to enforce a three-year military service and if England were to introduce general conscription.’

June 1914! This is how that prince sees the Triple Entente that had gradually come about; for he thought that the alliance with France was no longer sufficient. The French would have to be quite strong, yet this was not enough; England must also introduce general conscription!

You see, the thought is so comprehensive that there was no time to realize it before the outbreak of war; but general conscription was introduced in England anyway. To understand the real situation in the world it is not enough to single out one thing or another arbitrarily; it is necessary to develop the will to look at those things that really matter. One person can say something far more important than a hundred others who chatter away like the blind talking of colours, repeating what they hear, and whose words have no effectiveness.

I have attempted, on the one hand, to show you how definite environments come into being and, on the other hand, to give you a few examples which show how people are immersed in these environments, and how it is necessary to get to know the environment if one wants to understand the thoughts that are expressed in one place or another. It is necessary, at least once, to thoroughly absorb the demand that is made of life as it is

developing today: to develop, not the enthusiasm of inattentiveness but the enthusiasm of attentiveness.

We shall speak more about such things tomorrow, and thence endeavour to penetrate more deeply into our subject. We need these details in order to do this. It would be more comfortable to skim over the surface, but those who do not know at least a few actual cases cannot put the right questions to the spiritual world.

LECTURE THREE

Dornach, 10 December 1916

In order to examine, from our point of view, the subject we are dealing with at present, we must never lose sight of the manner in which spiritual-scientific observation—with all its significance for mankind's development in the fifth post-Atlantean period and for the preparation of the sixth—makes its appearance. For without paying attention to how materialistic man today is negligent with regard to a spiritual-scientific observation of the world, we cannot proceed to the source of present-day events. As a starting point for further discussions I want to show you the manner in which, in some individuals, a kind of compulsion comes about to look up to those worlds with which our spiritual science is concerned. It is important to realize that this compulsive winning-over of these people to a certain view of the world is only sporadic so far. Yet, even so, there is much in it that is extremely characteristic.

A short time ago I mentioned to you that a certain Hermann Bahr¹ had published a drama, *The Voice*, in which he attempts—though rather after the manner of the Catholics—to link the world that surrounds us and is accessible to our physical senses with spiritual events and processes. Not long before writing this drama, Hermann Bahr wrote a novel *Ascension*² and this novel is really in some respects a historical document of today. I do not want to overstate its artistic and literary merit, but it is certainly a historical document of our time. As is the way with karma, it so happens that I have known Hermann Bahr, an Austrian, for a very long time, since he was a young student. This novel, *Ascension*, describes a romantic hero, as literary criticism would say. He is called Franz and he seems to me to be a kind of likeness—not a self-portrait, but a kind of likeness—of Hermann Bahr himself. A lot of interesting things take place in this novel, which was written during the war. It is obviously Hermann Bahr's way of taking issue with present-day events.

Imagine that the hero of this novel represents a kind of likeness of a person living today, now fifty-two or fifty-three years old. He has joined in all the events of his day, being involved very intensely from a young age in all sorts of contemporary streams. As a student he was sent down from two different universities because of his involvement in these various streams, and he was always intent on joining his soul forces to all sorts of spiritual and artistic streams. This is not a self-portrait; the novel contains no biographical details of Hermann Bahr's life. But Bahr has definitely coloured his hero, Franz. A person is described who endeavours to come to grips with every spiritual direction at present to be found in the external world, in order to learn about the meaning of the universe. Right at the beginning we are told about all the places Franz has frequented in order to gain insight into universal matters.

First he studies botany under Wiesner,³ a famous professor of botany at the University of Vienna. Then he takes up chemistry under Ostwald,⁴ who took over from Haeckel as president of the Monist Society. He studies in Schmoller's⁵ seminar, in Richet's⁶ clinic, and with Freud⁷ in Vienna. Obviously someone who wanted to experience present-day spiritual streams would have to meet psychoanalysis. He went to the theosophists in

London and he met painters, engravers, tennis players and so on. He is certainly not one-sided, for he has been in Richet's laboratory as well as with the theosophists in London. Everywhere he tries to find his way about. His fate, his karma, continues to drive him hither and thither in the world, and we are told how here or there he notices that there is something in the background behind human evolution and discovers that he ought to pay attention to what goes on behind the scenes. I told you yesterday about one such background and I now want to show you how someone else was also won over to recognize such things. So I shall now read a passage from the book. Franz has made the acquaintance of a female person. She is particularly pious—Klara has her own kind of piety—but just now all I want to do is point out that this is of importance to Franz:

‘It was more important at the moment to decide whether he should reply to her and what he should say. Should he decline politely and then wait calmly till chance should bring her into his vicinity? Or should he follow her advice and turn to one of the pious men, and then take this as an occasion to write to her once more?’

The pious men in this connection are Catholic priests, and he does attempt to discover whether their opinions and knowledge can help him find his way in the affairs of the universe. The book continues:

‘But first and foremost he ought to make up his own mind as to what it was that he himself really wanted. Was he merely in love, and was therefore his inclination to turn pious nothing more than a hidden wish to please her? He had certainly not lied on purpose, but it could be that his feeling for her, which cast a brightness over everything, made all her attributes and ways desirable to him. Instinctively the lover longs to resemble his beloved, so that what she loves and values is lovable and valuable to him too. No, this did not apply in his case! Was he not on the way to believing before he ever met her? It was, indeed, unlikely that he would ever have made her acquaintance had that strange, to him inexplicable inner urge not drawn him gently into the church where he found her before the saint, herself almost a saint. Otherwise he would hardly have noticed her; did he perhaps not love her at all but merely the appearance through her of his own longings? So was what he now felt not love, not what love had meant to him hitherto, but the bliss of piety? But was he pious? He only knew that he wanted to be, but somehow still did not dare to, perhaps from fear of deceiving himself once again, since hitherto every desire had deceived him and, if he were to be disappointed yet again, there was no further wish he could aspire to! He longed to be pious, but whether he was capable of it was indeed questionable. Could he be as pious as those beggars in whom he so envied the staring bliss of their stolid worship? He doubted it. For that, he had tasted too much of the tree of knowledge. Could he be as pious as Klara? He was no longer in a state of spiritual innocence. But was there not perhaps a kind of second innocence—innocence regained? Was there not the piety of the one who knows his limitations, of the humble intellect, the faith of one who knows, the hope of desperation? Had there not lived, in every age, wise men, hidden, secluded from the world, associating with one another by secret signs, silently working wonders with their almost magical power, living in a higher region above nations, above creeds, above limitations, in the region of a purer humanity that was nearer to God? Were there not still in the world today, widespread yet hidden, knights of the Holy Grail? Were there not disciples of a white lodge, invisible perhaps, not to be entered, existing only in

feelings, yet working everywhere, reigning over all, guiding destiny? Was there not ever on earth an anonymous company of saints, unknown to one another, not knowing of one another, and yet working on and with each other through the rays of their prayers? In his theosophical phase he had already been much exercised by such thoughts, but evidently he had met only false theosophists; maybe the true ones could not be known.'

He had met a canon who had shown himself to be a man with few prejudices in any direction.

'Suddenly he wondered whether the canon might not perhaps be one of those true masters, one of those hidden spiritual rulers of the world, a secret guardian of the Grail? Only now did he realize that the canon had always attracted him, seeming to promise great revelations, as though he might be a repository of the words of life. The regard in which this priest was held; the timidity, the awe with which people spoke about him, the obedience shown even by those who disliked him, the deep solitude that surrounded him, the mysterious power he was reputed to have with which he could help his friends and damage his foes— though he smilingly denied that he deserved either the gratitude of his friends or the rancour of his enemies—all this went far beyond the importance, the power, the dignity of his office, of his external position. Some explained all this as stemming from "his good connections", others by his rumoured descent from an exalted personage; and yet the magical power of his glance, his presence, indeed even his mere name, remained unexplained. There were dozens of canons in the city, but he was The Canon. If anyone spoke of the canon, he was meant. Someone asking for His Excellency was not immediately understood. They still could not accustom themselves to call him that. To them he remained the canon. In processions he paced modestly behind the cardinal, yet he it was who commanded all the attention. If he did not appear at a certain hour for his customary walk, the whole town whispered: The canon has gone away! And later when word went round: The canon is back; this seemed to be of the utmost importance for the whole of the city. Franz remembered a conversation years ago in Rome,'

forgive me for reading this, but Hermann Bahr wrote it

'a conversation with an Englishman who, after travelling the whole world, had settled in the holy city because, he maintained, he had found nothing more mysterious than the *monsignori*. One who could understand them would possess the key to the destiny of mankind. He was an intelligent man of mature years, of good family, wealthy, independent, a bachelor and a proper English gentleman; sensible, pragmatic, unsentimental, totally unmusical, inartistic, a robust and jolly man of the flesh, angler, oarsman, sailor, given to hearty eating and drinking, a high liver whose enjoyment of life was disturbed by a single passion, a thirsty curiosity to see everything, to know everything, to have been all over the place. There was really no other reason for this than to have the satisfaction of saying, whatever town in question: Ah, yes! Cook's put me in that and that hotel and I saw such and such and met this or that person of high position or renown. To make his travels more comfortable and ensure an entrée wherever he went, someone had recommended that he become a Freemason. He praised the usefulness of this association until he thought he had discovered that there must be a similar but better managed and more powerful organization. Then he was determined to

become a member of that, just as he would have turned to a different, better Cook's if such a thing had existed. He could not be dissuaded from believing that the world was ruled by a tiny group of secret leaders. History was supposed to be made by these hidden men who were unknown, even to their closest servants, who in turn were unknown to theirs. Following the trail of this secret world government, this true Freemasonry, of which the other was no more than an exceedingly foolish copy possessing inadequate means, he claimed to have discovered its seat in Rome among those very monsignori, though of course most of these were unaware of their role as a crowd amongst whom the four or five true rulers of the world could conceal themselves. Franz still had to smile at the comical despair of his Englishman whose misfortune it was never to find those he sought; instead, ever and again coming up against none but supernumeraries. Yet he never allowed himself to be put off entirely. Indeed, his respect for such a well-guarded, impenetrable society only grew. He wagered that in the end he would be admitted to its ranks, even if he had to remain in Rome to the end of his days, become a monk or even have himself circumcised. For since he had everywhere sniffed out the invisible threads of a power which enmeshed the whole world, he was not disinclined to esteem the Jews to a considerable extent. Occasionally he seriously posed the supposition that in the last, inmost circle of this hidden world-wide web, rabbis and monsignori might be found joined in utmost concord. He would not have minded this in the least if only they would let him join in their magic workings.'

You see, he is searching! We are shown a person who is a seeker. And although this is not an autobiography you may be quite certain that Hermann Bahr met this Englishman! All this is told from life.

'Even in those days Franz had asked himself from time to time whether there might not be a grain of truth in the Englishman's foolish idea. Life, both that of the individual and that of nations, appears at first glance and from close to, to be nothing but a confusion of coincidences; yet seen from a little distance, from a higher vantage point, it is ever well planned and firmly guided. If we do not want to assume that God Himself takes a direct hand in bending man's folly, the mad arbitrariness of his actions, to serve His purposes, then there is nothing for it but to imagine a kind of middle realm which mediates His will. Perhaps there is a circle of men who rule in seclusion, through whom God works upon the world; stages of divine power and wisdom, sending forth rays into the murky darkness of mankind, so that in the end all is once more purposefully ordered. These lenses of God's light, gathering the creative spirit and scattering it forth into the world, these secret organizers, these hidden kings, they it must be who transform all madness into sense, all passion into stillness, who render chance into necessity, give chaos form and bring light into darkness. Who in his life has not encountered people who seem indeed to possess a remarkable majesty and distance, who reputedly have the power to curse or bless with a glance, and who, however still they may seem, none the less appear to exercise their power far and wide? Often their lives are simple. They may be shepherds, country doctors, village parsons; often they are old women or precocious children who die young. There is something about them all that makes them uncanny to ordinary folk, something that gives them great power over man and beast, or indeed, it is always maintained, over all nature, over springs and minerals, weather, sunshine and rain, hail and drought. When our paths cross with theirs

we sense with absolute certainty, at that very moment perhaps, or maybe years later, that the meeting has been decisive for our own life. They themselves, it seems, feel their power to be more of a burden, even a curse, but always a definite obligation. They live in obscurity and are glad to be left in peace. It is not hard to imagine them all linked together throughout the world, communicating by signs, or perhaps passing on the signs of even more mighty secret princes. Maybe they are quite unconscious of all this, or only partly conscious, fulfilling inner commands, obeying by instinct rather than acting from their own initiative; for they seem indeed to be not in control of their own power but rather overwhelmed by it. All these capacities appear when consciousness is dulled or even extinguished. In his youth, Franz had known people like this; they are not rare in the mountains. The Englishman's visionary fancies reminded him of them. Very much later it had occurred to him that perhaps even someone not born with these capacities might come into their possession; possibly by education and training they could be acquired. But he had soon been disappointed by the theosophical exercises. He had only been reminded of all this by the sight of the ecstatic worshippers in the dark church. Through practice these people had reached a stage in which sorrow, distress and envy were stilled; composed, comforted and strengthened they returned from prayer.'

As you see, Franz did not want to undertake these theosophical exercises; he did not want to find a transition to knowledge of the spiritual worlds by this means. But something about which we had to speak yesterday is beginning to dawn. People are being won over into recognizing the course of certain threads and they are beginning to notice that certain people make use of these threads. If only people like Hermann Bahr would approach this matter even more seriously than they do. Even the canon encountered by Franz did so more seriously. Franz was once invited to the home of this canon together with some rather unusual company which is described. We discover that the canon associates with all sorts, not only pious monks but also cynics and frivolous people of the world. He invites them all to his table. Franz noticed a number of things. The canon led him into his study while the others were conversing together. As we know, when dinner is over, something else always follows. So the canon led him into his study:

'The niece had retired, but the guest of honour, Uncle Erhard and His Excellency, seated in comfortable chairs and devoutly given over to the process of digestion, had still not reached a conclusion. The tales waxed increasingly risqué, the mockery more audacious, the allusions more obvious; nothing was spared and it seemed as though the whole world consisted of nothing but anecdotes. Disgusted, Franz turned to the library. It was not large, but very select indeed. Only the bare essentials as far as theology was concerned:'

of course a canon needs theology least of all for himself

'the Bollandists, many Franciscan writers, Meister Eckhart, the spiritual exercises, Catherine of Genoa, the mysticism of Görres, and Möhler's symbolism. Then philosophy; there was more of that: the whole of Kant including the papers of the Kant Society, Deussen's Upanishads and his history of philosophy, Vaihinger's *Philosophy of the As If* and a great many works on the theory of knowledge. Then there were the Greek and Latin classics, Shakespeare, Calderon, Cervantes, Dante, Machiavelli and Balzac in the original; of German writers there were only Novalis and Goethe, the latter

in various editions, that of his scientific writings in the Weimar edition. Franz took out a volume of these and found in it many annotations in the canon's hand. The latter at that moment left the young monk and the Jesuit to join Franz. He said, "Nobody knows Goethe's scientific writings. Alas! The old heathen he is supposed to have been appears in quite a new light in them, and they help you to understand the ending of *Faust* as well. I could never bring myself to believe that he was suddenly just pretending to go all Catholic" '

We can forgive the canon, can we not, for wanting everything to be 'Catholic'; what is important for us is that he has turned to the natural scientific writings of Goethe.

' "merely for the sake of the pictorial effect. My respect for this great writer is too great, indeed so is my respect for any writer, to believe that any one of them would dress up in a costume just when he is about to pronounce his last words. But in the scientific writings every page shows how Catholic Goethe was," '

Let us forgive the canon.

' "without knowing it perhaps, and certainly without the courage of his convictions. When you read them you seem to be listening to someone unfamiliar with Catholic truths who has discovered them all on his own. Of course he does violence to some of them and there are some wonderful eccentricities, but by and large nothing crucial, necessary or essential is missing, even that hint of superstition, magic, or whatever you might like to call it, that a born Protestant finds so suspicious about our holy doctrine! Often I could hardly believe my own eyes! But once you are on the track of Goethe, the unavowed Catholic, you soon find him everywhere. Observe his trust in the Holy Spirit, though he prefers to call Him *Genius*," '

Goethe has good reason for this, of course!

' "observe his profound feeling for the sacraments, of which he considers there are too few, observe his feeling for the mysterious, observe his gift for reverence. Note especially how he is quite unprotestant in the way he is never satisfied with faith alone; everywhere he urges that God should be recognized through the living deed, through pious works. And see his rare, most lofty and most difficult understanding, that man cannot be taken up by God if he does not first call God into himself; his grasp of this terrible human freedom of choice, the freedom to accept or reject the proffered grace, the freedom which makes of this grace a reward for the one who decides to accept it. Despite the exaggerations and distortions, all this is so utterly Catholic that, as you see, I have in many places been able to write the passages from the tridentine mass in the margins next to what Goethe says in almost the very same words. When Zacharias tells Werner that one sentence in *Elective Affinities* made him into a Catholic, I most certainly believe him. Of course I would not deny that there is also a heathen, a Protestant, and even almost a Jewish Goethe. And I certainly would not claim him as an exemplary Catholic, though he was more than the insipidly jolly, common or garden monist that the north-German school teachers present to their pupils under his name." '

You notice, even in these circles a different Goethe is sought, one who can follow the path into the spiritual world, a different Goethe for sure than that 'insipidly jolly, common or

garden monist' described and presented to the world today by the Goethe biographers. As you see, the path trodden by Franz is not so very different from those you find interwoven in what we call our spiritual science and, as you also see, a certain modicum of necessity can be present.

May I remind you—I have often mentioned it—that the death of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria⁸ is one of those concealed events of the present day, despite all that occurred on the external physical plane. I have stressed especially that if the physical and spiritual worlds are taken together, then for them as a totality there was something present before the assassination of Franz Ferdinand that became different after that event. It does not matter in such cases what things look like in external maya! What occurs inwardly is the important thing. As I told you: What rose up as the soul of Franz Ferdinand into the spiritual worlds became a focal point for very strong, powerful forces, and much of what is now happening is connected with the very fact that a unique transition took place between life and so-called death, so that this soul became something quite different from what other souls become.

I said that someone who has lived through recent decades in a state of spiritual consciousness must know that one of the main causes of today's painful events is the fear in which the whole world was drenched, the fear that individuals had of each other, even though they did not know it, and above all the fear that the different nations had of one another. If people had seeing eyes with which to track down the cause of this fear, they would not talk as much nonsense as they do about the causes of the war. It was possible for this fear to be so significant because it is woven as a state of feeling into what I described to you yesterday by means of examples. Please regard this as a kind of sketch. But, drenching everything is this aura of fear. That soul was connected in a certain particular way with this aura of fear. Therefore that violent death was in no way merely an external affair. I told you this because I was able to observe it, because for me it was a particularly significant event that is connected with many aspects of what is going on at present.

I do not suppose that such things, which obviously ought to be kept within our circle, have been talked about all over the place outside our circle. The fact is, however, that I have been speaking about these things in various branches⁹ since the beginning of the war. There are witnesses who could verify this.

Hermann Bahr's book appeared much later, only quite recently. Yet in it there appears a passage that I shall quote in a moment, and I would ask you to pay attention to the following fact: within the circle of our anthroposophical spiritual science, indications are given about an event that is spiritually very important; then a novel written at a later date is published, in which is found a character who always appears to be rather foolish. He is actually a prince in disguise, but he appears as a foolish person who performs lowly tasks. From a poster—he is living in a rural area—he learns of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, whereupon he makes a remark which almost causes him to be lynched and leads to his being locked up; for any police force would naturally be convinced that somebody making such a remark immediately after an assassination must be a party to the plot. Though there are many miles in between, the one event having happened in Sarajevo and the other taking place in Salzburg, nevertheless to the police, in its wisdom, that man

must be a party to the plot.

It now emerges that this person is a prince in disguise and that he owns a deeply significant mystical diary. The reason for the remark he made also emerges. He was actually a prince, but had found the whole business of being a prince irksome and so had disguised himself as old Blasl who performed lowly tasks, behaved stupidly, even let himself be beaten by his master, and hardly ever spoke a word; he became talkative on certain occasions but usually he said nothing. Then when he was being investigated he was found to possess a mystical manuscript which he had written himself. The book

‘The enchanted, now disenchanting prince, still in his old clothes, and still the same old fellow, too, though somehow different now that Franz knew they had been a disguise, said smiling, “Forgive me the deception which for me was none. I ceased to be the Infante Don Tadeo long ago. If circumstances now compel me to represent him again for a while, it will be a far more difficult role for me to play. For me, I really was old Blasl and, if I lied, it was myself I lied to, not you. That I should cause you inconvenience I could not have known. I am sorry indeed for that. Of course it was the most stupid misunderstanding. Though I had never met him, I knew the heir to the throne very well; he meant a great deal to me and we were in communication with one another, though not in the manner usual here.” ’

‘The manner usual here’ denotes the manner usual on the physical plane: We were in communication with one another, though not after the manner of the physical plane.

‘ “He had long gone beyond the boundaries of earthly work and stood with one foot in that other realm of purely spiritual activity. Now it was time for him to step over finally. I knew that in order to fulfil himself he could no longer stay. His deed will be done from there. I was only surprised that destiny had hesitated so long with him. On that Sunday when I stepped out of church, where my prayers had once again been rewarded with reassurance, and saw the uneasy crowd, I knew immediately that his liberation had come. What has to happen through him he can only bring about from the other side. Here he could only promise; his life was only a prediction. Only now can it really happen. I have never been able to imagine him as a constitutional monarch with parliamentarianism and all that humbug. He was too great for that. By this he has seized the initiative for himself. This dead man will now truly start to live. This is what I felt when I heard the news. That is what I meant to say. You will understand that there was little chance of making myself understood to those peasants. I preferred to give myself up in silence and am only surprised that they did not do for me. I was prepared for that—then by now it would all be over. There must still be something for me to do. So be it!” He had said all this in the same tone of voice, as it were without punctuation, only staring at Franz from time to time with numb eyes. Then he requested him not to mention his notebooks and to forget them himself.

“The truth is written in them, but only for myself; to understand them you would have to understand my sign language. What is written in them is right; only the words are invalid.” Franz could not help describing to him the impression the notebooks had made on him.’

For Franz was the only person in that town who could understand Spanish, and since the

notebooks were written in Spanish he was asked to help out. There is a little gentle irony here too, since in Austria anything not immediately understandable is said to be 'Spanish'. Since Blasl, or rather the Infante, was suspected of being a party to the plot, it was necessary to read the notebooks, and since Franz had once been in Spain, it was he who had to read them. For Hermann Bahr had also once been in Spain.

So you see, since we must assume that Hermann Bahr had not been tipped off about this, that we have here an example of a remarkable winning-over of an individual to a recognition of these things, of an inner need growing in him today to occupy himself with these things. I think it is justifiable to be somewhat astonished that such things appear in novels these days; it is something to do with the undercurrent of our time. Admittedly, to begin with, only people like Hermann Bahr are affected, people whose lives have been similar to that of Hermann Bahr, who went through all kinds of experiences during the course of time. Now that he is older, having for a long time been a supporter of impressionism, he is endeavouring to comprehend expressionism and other similar things. He is a person who has truly been capable in his soul of uniting himself outwardly and inwardly with the most varied streams. He really immersed himself in Ostwald's thoughts, in those of Richet, in those of the theosophists in London, struggling to enter fully into them. Only finally, when his perseverance failed him, did he happen upon Canon Zingerl, whom he now considers to be a Master. He did indeed immerse himself to the full in internal and external streams.

When I first knew him he had just written his play *Die neuen Menschen*,¹⁰ of which he is now very ashamed; its mood was strictly social-democratic, and there was at that time no more glowing social-democrat than Hermann Bahr. Then he wrote a short one-act play¹¹ which is rather insignificant. He then converted to the German nationalist movement and wrote *Die grosse Sünde*¹² from their point of view. Again, there existed no more radical German nationalist than Hermann Bahr. Meanwhile, he had reached his nineteenth year and was called up to serve in the army; now he was filled to the brim with militaristic views and soldierly pride.

He understood, you see, how to unite his soul with external streams, yet he never shirked coming to grips entirely seriously with those that are more inward as well. After his period as a soldier he went to Berlin for a short while and there edited a modern weekly journal, *Die freie Bühne*. Chameleon-like, he could turn himself into anything—except a Berliner! Then he went to Paris. He had hardly arrived, could not even conjugate a reflexive verb with *être* but used *avoir* with everything, when he started to write enthusiastic letters about the sunlike being Boulanger¹³ who would surely show Europe what true, genuine culture is. Then he went to Spain, where he became a burning opponent of the Sultan of Morocco against whom he wrote articles in Spanish. Finally he returned, not exactly a copy of Daudet¹⁴ but looking very like him.

He told us about all this in the famous Griensteidl Café¹⁵ which has offered hospitality to all sorts of famous people since 1848 when Lenau,¹⁶ Anastasius Grün¹⁷ and others went in and out there. Even the waiters in this cafe were famous; everybody knew Franz, and later Heinrich, of Griensteidl's! Now it has been demolished, but because Hermann Bahr talked so much there about the way in which his soul had entered into the spirit of France

and about that sunlike being Boulanger, someone else had grown rebellious, and when Griensteidl's was pulled down Karl Kraus¹⁸ wrote a pamphlet *Literature Demolished*. I still remember vividly how Hermann Bahr told us about the grand impressions he had gained and how he, the lad from Linz, had been the proud owner of the handsomest artist's face in the whole of Paris. He spoke enthusiastically about Maurice Barrès¹⁹ and stood up in the most intense way for the French youth movement; through the outpouring of a single heart filled with ardour we gained an experience of the total will-force of a whole literary movement. Then, in Vienna together with others, he founded a weekly journal himself, to which he contributed some really important articles. He became increasingly profound yet, with him, superficiality always seemed to go hand in hand with profundity. Thus he never stopped changing: from social democrat to German nationalist, from a militaristic disposition to a glowing admiration for Boulanger, then discipleship of Maurice Barrès and others; and after a later transformation he began to appreciate impressionist art. From time to time he returned to Berlin, but always departed again as quickly as possible; it was the one place he could not tolerate. Vienna, on the other hand, he loved dreadfully, and he expressed this love in many ways.

In more recent years his beloved friends in Danzig have invited him a number of times to lecture on expressionism, something they are said to have understood exceedingly well; and the lectures are included in his book on expressionism.²⁰ He also enthuses about Goethe's scientific writings and shows that he has drawn a little nearer to what we are coming to know as Anthroposophy; but in his case it is only a beginning. I might add, by the way, that his recent book about expressionism is full of praise for his Danzig friends—of course, so that they should stand out favourably in comparison with the Berliners.

Lately it has been said that Hermann Bahr has converted to Catholicism. I don't suppose he will be all that Catholic though—perhaps about as much as he was boulangistic in days gone by. But he is a human being! You have now seen in his most recent novel that through his very worldliness, through his longing to learn about everything in his own way, he has now been touched by the necessity to discover something about man's ascent into the spiritual world and about the links between human beings that are different from those ordinary physical links; in other words, links of the kind we described yesterday.

You can understand why I find it to some extent significant that such a novel should contain not only general echoes but should lead to a point as concrete as the death of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. This shows that these things are far more real than is generally supposed. Just such things as this must show us that what takes place on the physical plane is often no more than a symbol of what is really happening 'behind the scenes of earthly life'. For if you read about what has occurred in connection with these events, in connection with this assassination, without appealing to the spiritual aspect, it will be impossible for you to understand that someone can be led to place such significance on the matter. But it is not yet possible today to speak about these things without some reservation; as yet, not everything connected with these things can be expressed. Attention may be drawn to some aspects only; to begin with, perhaps, the more external ones.

Let us recall what was said yesterday about the world of the Slavs, about the soul of the Slavs. The testament of Peter the Great appeared on the scene in 1813, or perhaps a little

earlier, and was disseminated for good reason as though it stemmed from Peter the Great himself. This document is used to seize hold of a natural stream, such as the stream of the Slav soul, in order to guide and lead it by means of suggestion. Whither is it to be led? It is to be led into the orbit of Russianism in such a way that the ancient Slav stream should become, in a way, the bearer of the idea of a Russian state! Because this is so, a clear distinction must be made between the spiritual Slav stream, the stream that exists as the bearer of the ancient Slav tradition, and that which strives to become an external vessel to encompass the whole of this Slav stream: Russianism.

We must not forget that a large number of Slav peoples, or sections of these peoples, live within the boundaries of the monarchy of Austria-Hungary. The Austro-Hungarian monarchy encompasses—let me use my fingers to help me count—Germans, Czechs, Slavonians,²¹ Slovacs, Serbo-Croats, Croats, Poles, Romanians, Ruthenians, Magyars, Italians and Serbs; as you see, many more than Switzerland has. What really lives there can only be recognized by someone who has lived for quite a long time among these peoples and has come to understand the various streams that were at work within what is known as Austria-Hungary. As far as the Slav peoples are concerned there was, during the last decades of the nineteenth century, a paramount endeavour to find a way in which the various Slav peoples could live together in peace and freedom. The whole history of Austria-Hungary in recent decades, with all those bitter battles, can only be understood if it is seen as an attempt to realize the principle of the individualization of the separate peoples. This is of course exceedingly difficult, since peoples do not live comfortably side by side but are often enmeshed in complicated ways. Among the Germans in Austria there are very many who consider that their own well-being would be served by the individualizing of the various Slav peoples in Austria, that is, by finding a form in which they could develop independently and freely. Obviously such things need time to come about; but such a movement certainly does exist.

Then, apart from the Slavs in Austria-Hungary, there are the Balkan Slavs who lived for a long time under Turkish dominion, which they have thrown off in recent decades in order to found individual states: Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and so on. Yesterday I mentioned the Polish Slavs as those who have developed furthest in their spiritual life. I am mentioning only the more important sub-divisions, for I too can only work these things out gradually. In all these Slav peoples and tribes there lives what I called yesterday a consistent, primal folk element, which is something that is preparing for the future.

Seen quite externally, why was Franz Ferdinand rather important? He was important because in his being, in all his inclinations—you must take the external manifestation as a symbol of what lived within—he was the external expression of certain streams. In him there lived something which, if only it had been able to free itself, bore the deepest understanding for the individual development of the Slav peoples. You might indeed call him an intense friend of all that belongs to the Slavs. He understood—or perhaps I should say: something living in him of which he was not fully aware understood—what forms would be necessary for the social life of the Slavs if they were to develop as individual peoples.

We have to realize that karma had decreed that this karmic path should be extremely unusual. Let us not forget that there was once an heir to the throne, Archduke Rudolf,²² on

whom great hopes were pinned, especially as regards the direction in which many liberal and free-thinking people of the day were tending. Those who knew the circumstances and the person, understood that something was working through his soul which would have brought about the application to the Austrian situation of what I yesterday called English political thinking, English ideas concerning the way in which states should be administered. This is what was expected of him and it was also what he himself was inclined to do. But you know how karma worked and how what should have happened was made impossible. So then something else became possible instead. Now a man tending in quite another direction grew in importance. It is indeed not without significance if our attention is drawn to this: 'Here he could only promise; his life was only a prediction. Only now can it really happen. I have never been able to imagine him as a constitutional monarch, with parliamentarianism and all that humbug.'

Yet this is just how we should have imagined the other one to be! You see that karma is at work and we must see how this karma works in order to achieve further heights of understanding. The circumstances which could and should have been brought about—not because of the wishes of some person or other but because of the purpose of world evolution—by this soul who looked upon the Slav folk element with understanding (for the moment I am giving a purely abstract description), would truly have had a liberating effect on the Slav folk element. But it would, at the same time, have destroyed what Russianism wants to do with the Slav element. For Russianism wants to confine the Slav element within its own framework and use it as its tool. It wants to contain it within the confines of the testament of Peter the Great. The speed with which such things come to realization depends, of course, on all kinds of side-currents and peripheral circumstances. But it is important to have an eye for what is gathering momentum in any particular direction. Obviously, therefore, only those who understood the Slav element more deeply could understand what web was really being woven, and also that those who wanted to destroy the Slav element through Russianism had to work against more healthy endeavours.

Matters become particularly delicate and tricky if they start interfering with streams and counting on methods that are connected in some way with the occult streams using the secret brotherhoods which exist all over the world. Some are more profound, as are those about which I shall speak tomorrow. Others only touch on these things but, even then, as they do touch on them, they must be seen as vessels through which occult streams flow. The society whose dissolution was demanded after the death of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the Serbian society 'Narodna Odbrana', was the actual successor of an earlier secret brotherhood,²³ having changed its methods only slightly. I am stating no more than facts.

Here, then, is a contact between political strivings and a secret society which, though centred in Serbia, had threads leading in every direction to wherever Slavs were to be found, and also links with all kinds of other societies, but in particular an inner connection with western societies. In such a society things can be taught which are connected with occult workings throughout the world.

Why do we have to make so many detours in order to reach even a partial understanding of what we actually have to understand? Do not be surprised that so many

detours are necessary, for a superficial judgement is all too easily reached if insight is directed to immediate events in which we are involved with sympathy or antipathy; all too easily misunderstandings and false ideas come about. What often happens to all of us? We are perfectly entitled to have sympathies and antipathies in our soul; but often there are reasons why we do not admit this to ourselves. Perhaps we do not actually convince ourselves on purpose, but autosuggestion often gives us good reason to believe that our judgements are objective. If only we would calmly admit to sympathies or antipathies, we would also accept the truth. But because we want to judge 'objectively' we do not admit the truth but, instead, delude ourselves in regard to the truth.

Why do people have this tendency? It is simply because, when they endeavour to understand reality, they easily meet with extraordinary contradictions. And when they meet these contradictions they attempt to come to terms with them by accepting one half of what is contradictory and rejecting the other half. Often this means a total lack of any desire to understand the truth.

I will give you an example of how we can become entangled in a serious contradiction if we fail to understand the living connection between the contradiction and the full truth of the reality. In our anthroposophical spiritual science we understand Christianity to be something that is filled with the meaning of the Mystery of Golgotha, with the fact that Christ was condemned, died, was buried, but then also rose again in the true sense and lives on as the Risen One. This is what we call the Mystery of Golgotha and we cannot concede the right to anyone to call himself a Christian unless he recognizes this too. What, though, had to happen so that Christ was able to undergo, for human evolution, what I have just described? Judas had to betray Him and He had to be nailed to the cross. If those who nailed Him to the cross had not done so, then the Mystery of Golgotha would not have taken place for the salvation of mankind.

Here you have a terrible, actual contradiction, a contradiction of gigantic proportions! Can you imagine someone who might say: You Christians owe it to Judas that your Mystery of Golgotha took place at all. You owe it to the executioner's men, who nailed Christ to the cross, that your Mystery of Golgotha ran its course! Is anyone justified in defending Judas and the executioner's men, even though it is true that the meaning of earthly history is owed to them? Is it easy to answer a question like this? Is one not immediately faced with contradictions which simply stand there and which represent a terrible destiny?

Think about what I have placed before you! Tomorrow we shall continue. What I have just said is spoken only so that you can think about the fact that it is not so easy to say: When two things contradict one another I shall accept the one and reject the other. Reality is more profound than whatever human beings may often be willing to encompass with their thinking. It is not without reason that Nietzsche,²⁴ crazed almost out of his mind, formulated the words: 'The world is deep, deeper than day can comprehend.'

Now that I have endeavoured to indicate the nature of a real contradiction, we shall tomorrow attempt to penetrate more deeply into the subject matter we have so far touched on in preparation.

LECTURE FOUR

Dornach, 11 December 1916

Before continuing with the discussion we started a week ago, I wish to say once again that, if misunderstandings are to be avoided, on no account are judgements which are based on facts to be taken as something aimed at a nation as a whole or a nation as such. It is a total misunderstanding when again and again generalizations are made by applying to whole nations something that has been said about actual, real factors, such as personalities. Something is said about a personality who stands, or seems to stand, as a representative for a particular nation; then others identify with this personality by saying: I, too, belong to this nation. Most people have no idea what is going on when they do this. They are talking in pitch darkness. What is to happen with people's judgements if they make them on the basis of empty phrases without being able to pin-point anything, because such judgements do not touch on any kind of actual reality?

I intend, so far as is possible, to direct the eye of your soul to three things. First I want to give you some understanding—of course it can only be some understanding—of the great spiritual streams that underlie current events. Then I want to show how these streams are working in different places and how they either work through people with the help of associations, brotherhoods or whatever, or more or less consciously through individuals. Finally, I shall indicate how to discern those characteristic elements which are crucial for an understanding of how the events of the physical plane can be explained out of a wider context.

Let us first adopt a somewhat higher standpoint so that we can encompass in our view that wider context. We find that many things have changed in proportion, now that we no longer see them as a chance patchwork of odd facts. For the history of mankind—even in its most painful events—is guided and led by spiritual impulses. But these spiritual impulses also work against each other and people stand within streams which often contradict one another. It is too easy to think that the wisdom-filled world order will sort everything out. If this were so, there would not exist in the entire wide sweep of the physical world something that in fact does exist: human freedom. On the other hand, however, there do exist impulses of necessity, great karmic impulses which work in everything, and in our present considerations we shall particularly take into account the working of these karmic impulses. At the same time, though, we have to deal with the details and pay attention to the way in which affairs develop when there is a particularly great contrast at work which is significant for the continuing evolution of mankind. One such contrast is that which exists between the West and the East in European culture, and I have described to you what has developed in the West and also what lives in the East as a folk element for the future. These are real forces that are at work. It is true that most people know nothing of these real forces, but certain individuals have always been able to learn something about them.

Two things are possible. Either people know nothing of these real forces; in such cases it can easily happen that, through lack of awareness, without being able to do much about it in the ordinary sense, they become unconscious tools by letting themselves be used by

others who, in their turn, are more or less swept away in the current and whose working is a kind of combination between the regular streams and their own egoism, their own ambition. These people are able to influence, by suggestion, those who are unobservant.

Or the opposite can happen; something that has been so important and significant in European life during recent decades: that there are individuals who, by some means or other, learn through the secret brotherhoods about the spiritual forces that exist and consciously misuse this knowledge for some other ends. Perhaps their goal is not even an end that deserves a morally damning judgement. Yet it is like playing with fire when people, who do not know how to treat spiritual impulses, work to turn these impulses in a particular direction. Such a situation arose in the second half of the nineteenth century, when various more or less secret brotherhoods, who were strongly influenced by the European periphery, formed themselves in Central Europe. They worked to a high degree with occult means. One of these was the ‘Omladina’,¹ which achieved a great deal through the impulses living in it.

The Omladina was an association that worked amongst its members through the means of certain rites such as are used in the different degrees of these secret brotherhoods. In Central Europe the Omladina formed several extremely secret brotherhoods which were spread particularly over the various Slav areas, but also the Balkan states, and which actually worked with occult means in their ceremonial rites. They achieved a great deal until by chance, as is said—but only as is said—the whole matter came out into the open through a court case in Bohemia. These societies, all of whom maintained links with one another, burrowed and stirred a great deal under ground, and behind masks they continued in existence. One such mask was the much-mentioned ‘Narodna Odbrana’ in Serbia, which was named so frequently at the beginning of today’s painful events. This stream, which had already flowed through something that worked with occult means and which encompassed people who knew about such things and others who knew nothing, gave the impetus for much that has taken place in south-eastern Europe during recent decades. In the western, particularly in the English brotherhoods, there was much talk, during the last decades of the nineteenth century, of the coming world war, and it was always pointed out how important would be the events that were to take place in the Balkan countries.

Let me say something more to introduce this subject. For if we investigate only the spiritual aspect of things we lack the basis on which to frame the right questions, and we then do not know how the spiritual happenings are mirrored below, on the physical plane. This is the important question I now wish to develop further for you, after having yesterday called upon you to ponder deeply about the great contradiction of the Mystery of Golgotha. What I have to describe as an introduction will serve as a basis for a number of topics, and I want to stress yet again that I beg you not to believe that what I have to say is in any way aimed at a particular nation as such. Nobody can have more sympathy than I feel for the unfortunate Serbian people. Not only have they endured so much that is painful in recent times but, above all, they have for decades been the plaything of the most varied elements which have made use of what lives in this nation, for purposes of which it can surely be said: They are behind a misuse which is intended to turn those real impulses of mankind’s evolution, which live in the fifth post-Atlantean period, in a particular direction.

I shall not go further back than the second half of the nineteenth century. Little is discussed nowadays which can really throw light on these matters. I shall give only a sketch, and in a sketch some things are described only in outline. I know how little inclination there is to go into the real facts, but some of them at least must be made known. So I shall go back only as far as Michael Obrenovich,² who played an important part as the ruler of Serbia in the second half of the nineteenth century. He was an attractive personality of whom it can truly be said that he did not try to steer in an evil way those forces which are, of course, seen above all by one who belongs to a particular people. It is possible, out of national or individual egoism, to steer the impulses of a people in such a way that these impulses become grossly over-strained; in other words the individual folk impulse is pushed beyond the point at which it can remain in harmony with the impulses of mankind as a whole. It is extremely difficult to hit upon the right measure in this matter. In the case of Michael Obrenovich it was so that, on the whole, his ideas ran concurrently with the good European impulses. But he needed these good European impulses only so far as he could go as a good Serbian patriot. In order to understand a certain one-sidedness in Michael, you have to put yourself in Serbia's position. You could say that if a man like Michael Obrenovich lives out his patriotism in such a way, this way would certainly be comprehensible for others whose birth, inheritance and education have given them a similar patriotism for a different country. I need only quote a few words about the ideal of Michael Obrenovich written by one who knew him well. Milan Pirotsanatz says:

‘His political aim was not the creation of Greater Serbia but the formation of a confederation of southern Slavs under the hegemony of Serbia.’

So Michael was thinking of a Balkan confederation. This confederation was also discussed by those western European occultists who were informed and working in the very best way during the good period of western European occultism. And even though this ideal was opposed to those of many, it must be said that it was an ideal which was connected with certain real impulses of the fifth post-Atlantean period. Against this ideal of Michael Obrenovich there now rose up a greater part of Serbia's intelligentsia under the leadership of Jovan Ristic.³ From this Serbian intelligentsia there flowed an element that was different from that of Michael. Whereas his aim was to create a Balkan confederation out of the Slav forces of the Balkan countries without any assistance from Austria and Russia, that of the group led by Jovan Ristic and others was, at all costs, to place Serbia at the service of what came out of Russia, infiltrating the Serbian soul by means of suggestion and with the help of the testament of Peter the Great, in order to create a framework for Russianism.

The group influenced by the Omladina originated the slogan which claimed that a movement must be started which would work against Michael's efforts, and also that, at all costs, Russia must play the same role in connection with Serbia that France had played for Piedmont when the new Italy was created. Just as France had given her assistance when Piedmont was transformed into modern Italy, so Russia should serve Serbia, so that out of Serbia on the other side of the Adriatic could emerge something new, but only under the guidance of what was to be included in the mysterious impulses of the testament of Peter the Great.

There are altogether about six million Serbs. Only three-and-a-half million of these live

in Serbia and Montenegro; two-and-a-half million migrated to Austria earlier on. All these are surrounded and mixed with four million Catholic and half a million Mohammedan southern Slavs. Obviously clashes were inevitable. Just imagine the spiritual chaos surging and mingling there, and what it must have been like in this chaos to guide a particular movement such as that of the Omladina. Various things can be done if the possibilities are utilized properly. And those who use such means in the way the Omladina did, always pit one stream against another so that something else emerges.

Thus it came about that Michael Obrenovich met with terrible opposition, and that this opposition found an effective way of working against him by organizing a hostile movement with the corresponding hostile press outside Serbia, in Hungary. Since the Omladina existed not only within Serbia but also maintained connections in all the states of Central Europe, it is easy to understand how it was possible to silence it within Serbia if necessary and instead organize all sorts of things from the outside. In this way, in case anything should leak out, the possibility remained to be able to say: That other country organized it. This possibility always had to be maintained.

In addition to all this, Michael Obrenovich was deeply loved by his people; they loved him with elemental force. Such a force is also an occult power. To counter this love of the people it was necessary either to set up an equally strong love in another direction—but this was not all that easy to do—or to bring about something revolutionary. So it came about that to all the endeavours mounted by the Omladina was added the dynastic dispute between the Obrenovich and the Karageorgevich families. The Karageorgevich faction were based in Geneva, were in debt in a number of places all over Europe, and coveted the Serbian throne for themselves. They had the opportunity of making the acquaintance of all sorts of societies in Europe—there were many—and also of finding out what their impulses were. By working hand in hand, especially when you have at your disposal the means I have described, you can achieve a great deal. You organize things in such a way that different things can be brought about from various different places which have to be situated in different countries. Thus Alexander Karageorgevich⁴ set up an administrator for his affairs in Szegedin in Hungary. This administrator was—shall we say—a banker. There was nothing much for him to administer, but one day he exercised his influence on a group of convicts—these things are done with the help of convicts or other such elements—and on 10 June 1868 these convicts murdered Michael. On 10 June 1868 Michael Obrenovich was murdered.

His only male heir, a nephew, was a very wretched fellow and hardly more than a boy, so now all the power fell into the hands of Jovan Ristic, who was very much a certain type of politician, a great politician from one point of view. Since he represented all these things in everything he did, it is possible to retrace the external paths he trod in order to achieve his internal aims. First and foremost he established, as a supreme principle, that Serbia was now to follow only those impulses which came from Russia, but that this need not necessarily always be done openly. If the Russian impulses could be better served by making concessions and establishing friendly neighbourly relations with the Habsburg monarchy, then there was no harm in undertaking some project together with Austria against Russia once in a while. In reality, though, everything was to be done in the service of Russia and this meant, on occasions, going along with the others. This was the supreme principle for Ristic.

At first his main concern was to establish himself and gain supporters. This was difficult, since the Serbs did not love Milan Obrenovich, and of course no one must be allowed even to guess at the secret threads which connected Ristic himself with the murder of Michael Obrenovich. One can put a great distance between oneself and events and yet be very close to them. Then the tracks have to be obliterated. He did this by bringing it about in some way that rumours were spread throughout Serbia claiming that the murder of Michael Obrenovich had been plotted in Hungary and the Magyars were the guilty party. This was believed without question in the circles which were important to him.

Into the stream about which we have just been speaking flowed yet another, founded by ten people in the year 1880. The intention was that it should work in harmony with other European streams, so it was founded in Zurich. One of the ten, among whom Nikola Pasic⁵ was numbered, drafted the manifesto of this 'Brotherhood of Ten'. It included the words:

'A confederation of all the Serbs⁶ presupposes the destruction of Turkey and the destruction of Austria-Hungary, the removal of statehood from Montenegro and the freedom of the peoples of Serbia.'

This, then, was the quite definite manifesto of these 'Ten', worked out in 1880. The subsequent plan was to weave this manifesto more and more closely together with the radical stream of Ristic, for he was now the right person at the right place: since Milan was a minor, Ristic held the power. The two fitted very well together. Certain streams always worked to win the right man at the right place in order to achieve as much as they could.

The university professor Jovan Skerlic, who was also connected with this radical stream wrote, for instance: 'The freedom of the Serb people and the existence of Austria-Hungary are mutually exclusive.' I wish to speak only of facts and do not deny that a manifesto such as this is perfectly possible for a Serb from his own point of view. When Milan Obrenovitch attained his majority, circumstances brought it about that he wanted to free himself from this radical stream. He wanted to carry on with Serb patriotism, but in agreement with Austria-Hungary. So as time went on these two streams proceeded to weave in and out of each other: on the one hand the rather weak, though definitely existing impulses which emanated from Milan Obrenovich, and on the other everything that was connected with the pretendership of the Karageorgevich family. It is worth noting that while nobody from the Obrenovich dynasty was invited to the coronation of Alexander III of Russia,⁷ Peter Karageorgevich, the pretender who later occupied the throne of Serbia, was present.

The bonds between Russia and the Balkans were to be tied even more tightly through the marriage of Peter Karageorgevich with the eldest daughter of Nikita of Montenegro who, however, did not particularly relish this plan since he himself wanted to assume the Serbian throne after the departure of the Obrenovich. However, the Russians offered a million as dowry. Of course old Nikita pocketed this; he was rather partial to such little tricks.

I shall not trouble you further with external history at this point, except to mention that,

after Serbia had lost the unfortunate war with Bulgaria⁸ which took place at this time, her realm was only preserved by the decisive intervention of Austria-Hungary. The Omladina party could not have cared less about this. Their sole aim was to support the stream which was working to imprison the Slav element in Russianism. This party worked very well indeed. Some remarkable statistics were compiled by Serbs, not foreigners. Statistics can, of course, be made to say what you want them to say, but in this case even if half the claims are disregarded they are still significant enough. It was maintained that this Omladina party had been able to spread far and wide because they had carried out 364 political assassinations between 1883 and 1887 in order to rid themselves of those who would have acted as troublemakers if they had been on the physical plane while the party was expanding. As I said, this claim is made by Serbs, not foreigners: 364 political murders between 1883 and 1887. Even if only half is true, it is surely enough.

In the nineties this party underwent a further considerable expansion. After a long period of systematic work it took a mighty step forward when, on a certain day during the nineties, every Serbian town suddenly blossomed with flags. This caused great concern in Austria. What had happened? It was the day on which the alliance between Russia and France had been sealed! During the same week, behind the backs of the Obrenovich dynasty, one hundred thousand rifles had been ordered from France for the radical party.

It was during this period that a personality appeared on the scene through whom a great many influences worked, but for whose position it was extremely difficult to gain agreement from leading quarters. She had been singled out by Russia for certain purposes. However, the party which was the continuation of the Omladina was embarrassed to use, as an important tool, a personality of this type and in this kind of position. This was really going too far for the Serbs. I am speaking of Draga Masin⁹ whom Alexander Obrenovich was allowed to elevate to the position of his mistress in 1886. This person appeared on the scene at this time, and a friend of the Obrenovich dynasty, Vladan Georgevich, wrote a very significant and beautiful book from which a great deal can be learned: *The End of the Obrenovich Dynasty*. I recommend particularly the chapter which describes the remarkable weaving of the threads of world history, even though Georgevich half unconsciously only hints at this. He tells of an extraordinary visit he had to make to Draga Masin who was, of course, an important personage. He shows how the enchantment with which she had to inveigle those whom it was necessary for her to inveigle emanated from a particular blend of perfumes, which was suitably adjusted to the individuality of the person who was to be influenced by suggestion. If you read with understanding this chapter in Vladan Georgevich's thick book you will gain from his veiled description many hints—in the occult sense, too—regarding the field of lesser magic. You will be astonished to discover how much can be achieved, when those who want to achieve something remain in the background and leave what has first to be done to the seductive charms of a woman skilled in the art of perfume blending. Even in the seventeenth century this played a considerable part in the politics of many a royal court. The history of some periods cannot really be written except by someone who is an expert on the effects of perfumes in history at different times and periods.

Then an event took place which throws some light on a number of strange karmic connections. The party I have described to you continued to work. A point was reached when, once more, by means of a plot such as that mentioned earlier, an attempt was made

to assassinate Milan, who had long since abdicated but still played a role, and through whom, moreover, a number of roles were indeed still played. One of those condemned to death in consequence was Nikola Pasic; you know the name. He owed his deliverance solely to the fact that Emperor Franz Josef intervened on his behalf. You remember, Pasic is the name of the man who was Prime Minister of Serbia when the war broke out.

All these events took place because it was necessary for something to happen. The desired goals could not be achieved while the Obrenovich dynasty remained. So Karageorgevich would have to be established on the throne under Russian protection. But Draga Masin, who had meanwhile married Alexander, also stood under Russian protection. She had in the meantime become a thorn in the flesh of the radical party, because they had come to regard her as a disgrace. All this had been reckoned with, because those who had put her in this position in the first place were not concerned with establishing this charming person, gifted in the art of perfume-blending, upon the throne of Serbia, but rather with making the Obrenovich dynasty look impossible through its representative Alexander. So she had to be made to look ridiculous and impossible. Draga Masin had to be made Queen so that she could be murdered. Those whose purposes were to be served were those for whom, outwardly, Draga Masin was extremely awkward. The whole comedy had to be played in order to get rid of her, and it was Draga who had to play it. I shall not mention details except to say that they even included the pretended imminent birth of a future heir to the throne, though such a one was, in fact, never on the way. There should be mention, though, of the fact that the most extraordinary personalities were taken on, whose task it was to set up connections between Geneva, where the Karageorgevich family dwelt, and the Balkans, and also various other connections.

Peter Karageorgevich had been instructed to remain quietly in Geneva, without stirring. In contrast, there existed in various places a whole series of intermediaries whose task it was to run the affair in accordance with Russia's wishes, and also to give it a face. I should like to point out here that there is often no need to attach any special significance to those who work in connection with these things. For example, there was an important intermediary from Montenegro who played a large part in the various activities undertaken jointly by Russia and Karageorgevich. He himself was not in the least interested in serving the radical Serbian party, or anyone else if it comes to that. He showed this later, in particular by offering for sale in Vienna in 1907 the numerous letters he had exchanged with Peter Karageorgevich in this fateful matter. So poor old Karageorgevich himself had to cough up 150,000 francs in order to buy them back.

I only want to touch on these things. When one day the history of these events is written—and it will be written—much light will be thrown on many matters by the chapter which mentions what took place then in the Hopfner Restaurant in Vienna, in Linz on 22 January 1903, and in the Biegler Hotel in Mödling in April; then it will be made known how the document came into being in which Karageorgevich committed himself not to punish the murderers of Alexander Obrenovich¹⁰ and Draga Masin, if he should come to the throne. Particularly important will be the revelation of what it was that Peter Karageorgevich signed on 22 January 1903, and of what was discussed by certain officers serving this cause when they met in the Kolaratz Restaurant in Belgrade.

After all these preliminaries the murder was committed in Belgrade in July 1903; it

became known to the world in a different way. An important part was played in this murder by a certain Lieutenant Voja Tankosic. It is not without significance that the leader of one of the groups who were distributed in various places, in order to carry out the murders of numerous supporters of Alexander Obrenovich and Draga Masin, was Lieutenant Voja Tankosic. For perhaps you know that, according to an enquiry carried out in Austria, a certain Major Tankosic is named as one of those who organized the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo. It is the same Voja Tankosic, now promoted to the rank of major, who then had the task of murdering the two Lunjevitza brothers, the brothers of Draga Masin and then, as a major, played the role now known to the world in connection with the assassination of Franz Ferdinand. It is important to see in this way, by means of real examples, how events are interconnected, and to indicate how they continue to work in subsequent events.

Once the dynasty of Obrenovich was out of the way, it was a matter of finding a means of putting Karageorgevich on the throne of Serbia. Pasic, for instance, though he had his finger in every pie, was not yet ready to agree to the ascent of Karageorgevich to the throne; at that time he wanted to put an Englishman on the Serbian throne. Even in eastern Europe there were differences of opinion. It is historically documented, for instance, that when the death of the last Obrenovich became known, the Grand Duchess Militza was heard to say: Let us drink to the health of King Nikita of Serbia. So there was an inclination in this circle to put Nikita of Montenegro on the Serbian throne. But when the time came to make the final decision Tcharikoff, the Russian attaché in Belgrade, said, literally: I have come in order to inform you that my government will only give its consent if Prince Karageorgevich is elected unanimously as King of Serbia at tomorrow's election.

I have now pointed out a number of facts in order to show you how things work when they are channelled into particular streams. It is necessary to have a concrete idea of what is going on in the world. Now let me proceed by what might be called the symptomatic method. We have to look into all sorts of things in order to gain a complete picture which can lead us a step up to the fundamental truths. Once again in connection with all this I must stress: You may have a standpoint, and any standpoint is understandable; but you must then be aware that this or that standpoint is the one you have chosen; you cannot then form judgements as though your standpoint were higher.

Recently I have often had to ask myself what might be the origin of certain judgements which crop up again and again. When I began these lectures I told you how painful it was for me to meet in a certain direction only unfriendly or at best uncomprehending judgements, and I said that the very people who make these unfriendly judgements with a particular bias are the ones who ascribe to themselves the capacity to judge things objectively. There is no need to look far to find the unfriendly judgements I mean. I must stress that I can understand every standpoint; but I cannot understand it when certain judgements which are anything but objective are claimed to be founded on an objective basis.

For instance, if it is stated that the diplomatic documents already known are of crucial value for deciding who is to blame for the outbreak of the war, then there can be no objection. But there must be every objection to the conclusions so often drawn from them. It is necessary to study these documents far more thoroughly than is usually done if a valid

judgement is to be reached. I might tell you that I have closely studied all the Blue, Red and White Papers many more than a dozen times and yet I could still justify any number of judgements based on what they tell me. If only it had been possible to make proper use of the actual facts! All in all, I must say that the judgements I hear remind me of long discussions which end with the words: Never mind, the Jew will be burnt!¹¹ Whether people are more or less intelligent, the voice that always sounds the loudest says: Never mind, the German will be burnt! And since an objective foundation can never be found for such grave allegations as these, the only thing to do is to accept that we are faced with a most important question: Why is it that such a large proportion of people forms judgements which can be summarized, if not literally then from their general content, in the words: Never mind, the German will be burnt?

Many elements flow together in this judgement, especially because it is pointless to bring out one or another aspect which allows the basis on which this judgement is founded to speak for itself. And still the question I am asking is in the deepest sense of the word a question of the heart and a question of the soul. I am aware of all the notions that arose when from a certain necessity I wrote my pamphlet *Gedanken während der Zeit des Krieges* (Thoughts during Wartime), which was intended, as it says in the subtitle, *for Germans and those who do not believe they have to hate them*.¹² I know that it expresses thoughts—do not think me immodest when I say this—which some day, however far distant, will be recognized by history as those thoughts which ought to be taken into consideration. But I also know that for inner spiritual reasons certain things will not be possible until, at least in certain quarters, there grows a sense for the rightness of these thoughts. Those who do not wish to be convinced by the inner gravity of such thoughts will find themselves facing lessons from many sides.

One important lesson will be shared with the world when the manifestos of such people as Lloyd George¹³ come to be realized. Possibly many other lessons will be needed as well. Certain people in the periphery will also be faced with such lessons. Much could be carried out differently if only people would not allow themselves to be so very stupefied by the judgements I have described. What I am telling you is really true. Many a solution will come about because the judgement reached in certain quarters will be steered towards the direction just mentioned. What purpose is served if an Englishman gives his support to a particular personality through whom certain influences are working, and if this Englishman is then personally offended when that personality is characterized in an objective way? English culture itself has brought it about that political thinking can be formed in a particular way, and it is because of this that much that serves certain purposes can be concealed behind this thinking. The extraordinary situation is: that for certain impulses which stem from western Europe the political thinking of English culture must be regarded as the least suitable instrument.

It really is so that, on the one hand, there exists the task which the English people are called upon to perform during the fifth post-Atlantean period, and yet this purpose is constantly being thwarted from quite another direction. And though there are indeed beautiful voices in the orchestra, as I described the day before yesterday, there are also a good many others to be heard as well. Let me draw your attention to some remarks made by Lord Rosebery¹⁴ in 1893, not because they are particularly important but because they

are a symptomatic expression of something that does actually exist. Lord Rosebery said:

‘It is said that our Empire is large enough and that we possess sufficient territories ... We must, however, examine not only what we need today but also what we shall need in the future ... We must not forget that it is a part of our duty and our heritage to ensure that the world bears the stamp of our people and not that of any other ...’

It is important to know that such voices, too, join in the orchestra of the world. Lord Rosebery himself was not particularly important in this direction, but the way he spoke in this tone was a good example of what I wanted to point out. It is important that a pretension of this kind should ring forth, not from a people but from an individual who is backed by various concealed groups, a pretension that the whole world must be stamped with the mark of the English spirit. It is nothing other than an echo of what had always been taught in some secret brotherhoods¹⁵ in words such as the following: The Latin element is now decadent; it may be left to itself and it will trouble us no more. The fifth post-Atlantean period belongs to the English-speaking peoples alone; it is for them to make the world into something which stems from them.

The firm doctrine which had come into being in the secret brotherhoods must be heard resounding in the words of Lord Rosebery; for we must learn to look in the right places. What happens outwardly might be quite a comedy. But we have to see through the comedy and not regard it as something that can bring blessing to the world.

If somebody defends the standpoint of Lord Rosebery, there is no need to enter into any discussion with him, for discussion is quite unnecessary in such matters. Neither is it possible to say that no one has the right to such a standpoint. Everyone has the right to take up Lord Rosebery’s standpoint. But he ought then to say: My aim is to make the world English; and not: I am fighting for the freedom and rights of the small nations. This is what matters. It is not difficult to understand Lord Rosebery from his own standpoint. But someone who does not share this standpoint must, instead, take up another. In consequence, there is no agreement between these two standpoints, and the matter has to be balanced out by the means the world has at its disposal for such matters. Under certain circumstances such standpoints of necessity even lead to the outbreak of war. This is perfectly obvious, since it would otherwise be possible to demand that the opposition subject itself voluntarily to one’s own standpoint. But if their standpoint prevents them from doing this, conflicts arise. So I am describing here only standpoints, for we are dealing not with objective judgements but simply with choosing between two possibilities.

I can, for instance, very well comprehend the standpoint of the French Minister Hanotaux¹⁶ expressed in his book on Fachoda and the partition of Africa. He says:

‘It is ten years since the work was completed; France has defended her position among the four world powers. She is at home in all quarters of the world. French is spoken, and will ever be spoken, in Africa, Asia, America and Oceania ... The seeds of mastery have been sown in every part of the globe. They will flourish under the protection of heaven.’

This standpoint, too, is perfectly comprehensible, yet obviously there could be collisions with other possible standpoints.

Now let us take another objective point into consideration. Bismarck never intended to follow a policy of colonialism. Germany had to be won over to adopt a colonial policy. She did not carry it on of her own accord but was induced to do so in a very peculiar manner from quite another side. I may go into this later. Anyway, it was certainly not in accordance with the character of the German people to bring about collisions in this respect. Fichte, in his famous speeches to the German nation,¹⁷ said expressly: Germany will never argue with a nation who speaks about the freedom of the seas while actually meaning that it intends to defend the seas against all comers. Above all it was known in France that the tendency was not to oppose the aim expressed by Hanotaux but to let France pursue in peace her path as a colonizing nation. In Minister Hanotaux's book there is also the following passage:

‘It will be a matter for history to decide what was the leading idea of Germany and her Government during the complicated dispute which accompanied the partition of Africa and the final phase of French colonial policy. It may be assumed that, to begin with, Bismarck and his politicians watched with satisfaction as France entered into distant and difficult enterprises which for years ahead would fully occupy the attention of country and Government alike. However, it is not certain that this calculation proved to be right in the long run, since Germany for her part eventually followed the same path, though rather too late, and attempted to win back the time lost. If this country, at her own discretion,’

Note that he says ‘at her own discretion’.

‘left the colonial initiative to others, she should not now be surprised that they took the best territories for themselves.’

Of course this standpoint is perfectly comprehensible, but it also contains the admission that Germany, at her own discretion, left the best territories to the colonial policy of France.

Please do not base any judgements on the details I am giving you, for not until I have gathered them all together will a total picture emerge.

Now let us ask how it is possible to construe—as is often done so utterly irresponsibly—any connection between the events of 24 and 25 July 1914 and those of the days that followed. You have no idea how excessively irresponsible it is to seek a simple continuity in these events, thus believing that without more ado the great World War came about, or had to come about, as a result of Austria's ultimatum to Serbia. There was a lot more to it than that; a great many things had to be in preparation for decades. It is necessary to develop an eye for all kinds of things that happened, and to pay attention to them. I should like to advise those gentlemen who simply make judgements about all the many books, as in the example I gave you, to do their reading, not in the way it is often done today but in such a way that they notice what things were at work. To do this, as you probably know, particular attention must be paid to a number of things. For the present I do not mind laying myself open to the accusation that I am making all sorts of statements that cannot easily be proved. But I can prove all these things quite well.

Read the reports of the conversations that took place in July 1914 and take note of how these conversations proceeded. In real life people's expressions also contribute to the

actual words. In the case of politicians it is their expressions and gestures more than their words which sometimes really tell us what is meant; indeed often their words only serve to disguise what is actually being communicated. Moreover, reports are often more accurate as regards these incommunicables than they are in respect of the words.

So let me ask: Why did a personality such as Sasonov¹⁸ so obviously play two roles during all the negotiations? During the negotiations with the representatives of the Central Powers he plays the part of an extraordinarily agitated person who has to hold onto himself with all his might in order to remain calm, so that he gives the impression of one who has been rehearsed. Why does he play the part of apparently not listening and only saying what he has prepared beforehand, which never provides an answer to the questions he is actually asked?

Why does he play this part in the negotiations with the representatives sent by Austria, and why does he appear totally different when negotiating with the representatives of the Entente? Why does he listen to them? Why do we find, in the reports of what he said, sentences which were obviously first spoken by the representative of the Entente? Only compare the two! Why does he listen to the representatives of the Entente, and why does he know in advance what he is going to say when he is speaking with the representatives of Austria? With the latter he even went somewhat too far. During the visit of 24 July he said after the Austrian ambassador had only spoken a few preliminary words: There is no need for you to tell me all that; I know what you are going to say! He was embarrassed by what the ambassador wanted to say because his answer was already prepared. And why in this rehearsed speech did he emphasize so strongly that Austria must on no account demand the dissolution of the Narodna Odbrana—which, of course, continues the earlier endeavours of the Omladina? Just bear these questions in mind! Often it is necessary to ask negative questions.

Another example: the blame for the war is laid at the door of the German government. Against that, the question can be asked: What would have happened if what the German government had desired had come to pass, namely the localization of the war between Austria and Serbia? For even a child could tell by following the negotiations that it was the aim of the German government to localize the war between Austria and Serbia, and not to allow it to spread beyond the conflict between Austria and Serbia. So we can ask: What would have happened if events had gone as the German government wished? We should all answer this question conscientiously.

There is another question which also requires a conscientious answer. In order to localize the war, one thing was necessary: Russia should have kept quiet; she should have refrained from interfering. If Russia had not interfered, the war could have been localized. Of course, other constraints play into this from other directions, but these constraints have nothing to do with the will of human beings or with the question of apportioning blame. Why, in the discussions between Sir Edward Grey and all the others, does the viewpoint of localization never put in an appearance, at least not seriously? Why, instead, even as early as 23 July, does the viewpoint arise: Russia must be satisfied? We never hear the viewpoint that Austria might be left alone with Serbia; always we hear that Russia cannot possibly be expected to leave Serbia alone. The viewpoint of localization was not brought up, even when Austria gave her binding promise not to attack the territorial integrity of

Serbia. Is it possible to say that this was not believed? Even then they could have waited! It has happened before—only think of earlier events—that countries have been left to get on with their quarrel, and afterwards a conference has been called. Why does it immediately become the task of those with whom Sir Edward Grey speaks to keep on defining the problem as a Russian one? This is another question that must be answered by those who want to examine this affair conscientiously.

This now brings us to the important point of the relationship between Central Europe, England, America, and so on—in other words to everything that is connected with the words of Lord Rosebery, everything that proceeds from them and also what lies concealed behind them. We also come to the fear nations had of one another, that I described yesterday.

It would be going too far to explain this fully today; but I shall certainly have to go into it before bringing this discussion to the culmination it ought to reach. Let me merely remark that certain things happened from which the only sensible conclusion to be drawn later turned out to be the correct one, namely that behind those who were, in a way, the puppets there stood in England a powerful and influential group of people who pushed matters doggedly towards a war with Germany and through whom the way was paved for the world war that had always been prophesied. For of course the way can be paved for what it is intended should happen. So there arose in the minds of a number of people in Central Europe, particularly in Germany, the firm conviction which was connected with a strong fear, that a war in which Germany and England would confront each other would definitely be brought about at a suitable moment by a certain group in England. This had nothing to do with a longing to start a war with England at all costs. From the German standpoint such a longing would have been utter nonsense. Yet it was the case that even those who only saw things superficially recognized, as a result of various events, that a war was threatening to break out.

So let me draw your attention to another point that is important for the formation of judgements: until 1908, or even 1909, there existed in England extensive circles¹⁹ quite close to King Edward VII,²⁰ who considered it an impossibility that Russia should ever be allowed to approach Constantinople or enjoy free passage through the Dardanelles in the way she desired. But then an event took place which changed much during the course of only a few months. Two people spoke to one another,²¹ one of whom understood a very great deal about interpreting the signs. This was the attempt to gain Austria's agreement to free Russian passage through the Dardanelles in compensation for the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This was Russia's aim, and Izvolski,²² who is an intelligent man but thought himself even more intelligent than he really is, really believed at that time that he had in his hands Austria's agreement to this Russian demand, despite English endeavours to the contrary. But this was not the case, so another course had to be taken.

This was one of the important events. There were many others. Everything that has happened in recent years is full of deceptions, and many of these are to be found in the periphery. There is no escaping this fact. And when you have struggled honestly and fairly with the various papers, which of course only describe the final phases of the tragedy, when you have studied them, as I have, twelve, fifteen or even twenty times, it is impossible to avoid realizing how powerful was the group who, like an outpost for mighty

impulses, stood behind the puppets in the foreground. These latter are, of course, perfectly honest people, yet they are puppets, and now they will vanish into obscurity so that Europe can start to convince herself of what is still to come.

Still, a situation had now been reached in Central Europe that prompted the question: Will it be possible for enough honest people to come to the surface through selection in order to overcome that powerful group, or not? Also, there were people who were worried because they foresaw that there would be a coalition between Russia, France and England if a war were to break out. I really wonder whether there is any need for surprise that these people were worried. There is much about which one may be surprised, but this particular thing really is not surprising. Those wise gentlemen who study all the official papers could, it seems to me, at least discover something that was even discovered by the author of that celebrated article which was awarded a prize by the University of Berne, namely, that for England's part²³ the war was made absolutely unavoidable when Belgium's neutrality was violated. Absolutely everything points to the fact that there was no reason that could have been candidly presented to the English people. For the reasons that did exist could not on any account be mentioned! If any English minister had presented Parliament with the real reasons, he would have been swept away by public opinion. That is why Sir Edward Grey, for instance, had to give such peculiar speeches.

It is easy and reasonable to maintain that the English people did not want a war. Indeed it hardly needs saying, for it is obvious and everybody knows it. No one who really points to the true facts can maintain that the English people wanted such a war. On the contrary, anyone voicing the real reasons would have been swept away by public opinion. Something quite different was needed—a reason which the English people could accept, and that was the violation of Belgian neutrality. But this first had to be brought about. It is really true that Sir Edward Grey could have prevented it with a single sentence. History will one day show that the neutrality of Belgium would never have been violated if Sir Edward Grey had made the declaration that it would have been quite easy for him to make, if he had been in a position to follow his own inclination. But since he was unable to follow his own inclination but had to obey an impulse which came from another side, he had to make the declaration which made it necessary for the neutrality of Belgium to be violated. Georg Brandes pointed to this. By this act England was presented with a plausible reason. That had been the whole point of the exercise: to present England with a plausible reason! To the people who mattered, nothing would have been more uncomfortable than the non-violation of Belgian territory! Of course this does not apply to the people, nor to the majority in Parliament, but—well!—parliaments are parliaments!

All this had been in preparation for a long time, and some of it had leaked out after all. There were some people who had the most extraordinary experiences; for instance in April 1914 a German²⁴ had a conversation in England in which he was given some strange information. I shall bring this up again in another connection. Since all this was going on it is understandable that some people were saying: We shall have to be prepared to find that what is worst for Germany will come from England.

Naturally these people then also began to discuss these things publicly in Germany, especially after the beginning of the new century. I shall now quote one of these voices. You will have to forgive me for quoting this particular voice, but nowadays one has to ask

for forgiveness for so many things because so much that is peculiar is buzzing about in the world that one quite often has to speak in paradoxes in order to express the truth. I want to read you a passage from a book that was written in 1911 and has since become well-known. It discusses what threats Germany might have to face from England:

‘Nevertheless, English policies could also go in another direction so that, instead of a war, an agreement might be sought with Germany. Such a solution would certainly be preferable to us.’

These words appear in a well-known book by Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War*.²⁵ You know that, together with Treitschke, Bernhardi has achieved a certain renown abroad. He is less well-known in Germany, but there it is. Let me read you another passage from his book:

‘To increase her power by territorial gains in Europe itself is probably totally out of the question for Germany under the present circumstances. The eastern territories lost to Russia could only be regained as a consequence of an extensive war which we would have to win; and even then they would continue to be a cause of further wars.’

In other words the author considers that to seek territorial gains from Russia is the least desirable of all possible courses of action!

‘Even to regain what was once southern Prussia, which was amalgamated with Prussia when Poland was partitioned for the second time, would be a highly doubtful exercise on account of the Polish population.’

This is quoted from a book written in 1911 which states that among all the things Germany ought to do should be included the firm determination not to start any territorial wars in Europe. This passage is from the book by Bernhardi, and for people on the periphery who speak about him it would be more sensible if they would look without prejudice at what the book actually says and, above all, seek to discover the context in which things are said. Though much is clumsily expressed in this book, a closer study of it would at least reveal that it would be more sensible to take things as they are, rather than in the way in which they are taken today.

LECTURE FIVE

Dornach, 16 December 1916

If we were not a society whose task it is to observe all things from the point of view of deeper knowledge, indeed of profound spiritual knowledge, I would obviously now bring to a close the discussions we have been having and which were requested from so many different quarters. If it were a matter of anything other than deeper knowledge, then these discussions would of course have to be suspended until such time as the results of the important events¹ now taking place were available.

It is, I believe, without question that every soul who is earnestly and honestly concerned with the welfare of mankind is awaiting with bated breath the outcome of the next few days. The facts will show whether certain sources from what we have called the periphery, the circumference, are capable of coming to their senses sufficiently. If they are not, then the whole of mankind—in the future, too—will be expected to believe that one fights for peace by turning down and excluding the possibility of a relatively early achievement of peace. If matters go in the direction that various voices in the press seem to assume—though no serious observer would still consider such an assumption—then no one would be obliged even to pretend any longer to believe that there is one jot of sincerity in all those declamations which proclaim peace or even the rights of nations. In the near future the world will have the opportunity to decide with full consciousness whether to see the declamations of the will to peace as wrong and untruthful and yet still continue to find them significant, or whether to turn to the truth.

We, however, do stand on the foundation of deeper knowledge, and so there is no need for us to interrupt our observations. We are seeking for the truth, and truth must be found at all costs. For the truth can never be seriously harmful or work harmfully.

Today I intend to put before your soul certain matters which give us the opportunity to make our judgement justifiable in a number of directions. In no way do I want to influence anyone's standpoint, nor their judgement; for we are concerned with looking the facts of the physical plane, as well as the facts and impulses of the spiritual world, calmly in the eye. Some time ago I said that the question of necessity in world events would have to be scrutinized, even in the face of the most painful happenings. But Anthroposophy will never make us into fatalists, in the sense that we speak of necessities as a fate to which we have to resign ourselves. It is justifiable to ask: Did these painful events have to take place? But even if we feel obliged to answer in the affirmative, there is still no question of bowing down to these necessities in a fatalistic way. I should like to start by illustrating what I mean by a comparison.

Let us suppose that two people are arguing about how good the harvest will be next year in a certain area. The one says: The harvest will depend on the constraints laid down by nature. He lists all the constraints—the weather, and all the other conditions that are more or less independent of the will of man. The other, however, might object: You are right, all that exists; but what we ought to do is look at the practical question of how much of a contribution we ourselves can make. Then it is much less a matter of the weather and

other things over which I have no influence; my main concern, then, is that I want to play my part in next year's harvest, so on my section of the land I will sow the best quality seed I can find. Whatever the other factors may be, it is my duty to sow the best possible seed, and I will make every effort to do so. The first man may be a fatalist; the second may not deny the reasons for the fatalism of the first, but he will do his best to sow the best quality seed. In the same way, for every person who desires to be prudent it is a matter, above all, of finding out how he can sow the best possible seed.

Of course, for the spiritual development of mankind the expression 'to sow the proper seed' means something vastly more complicated than is the case in the comparison I have just cited. It does not mean the application of a few abstract principles. It means taking the demands of mankind's evolution and recognizing correctly what is needed at the present moment for this evolution of mankind. For whatever next year's weather may be like and whatever other hindrances or unfavourable circumstances may apply, if the second person does not sow good seed the harvest will certainly be bad! So it is most important to recognize that at present the salvation of mankind's development demands certain conditions which, at the moment, by far the greatest portion of mankind is resisting. These are conditions which must be incorporated in human development so that a thriving and healthy development can take place in the future. And it must also be realized that man finds himself at present in a phase of development in which, within certain limits, it is up to him to cope with his mistakes.

In earlier times this was not the case. Before the fifth post-Atlantean period, before at least a large part of earthly mankind had come to the full realization of their freedom, divine spiritual powers intervened in earthly development, and it can be clearly perceived that this intervention by divine spiritual powers was sensed by human beings. Today, what matters is to show mankind how it is possible to reach certain insights and, above all, how to form a healthy judgement which coincides with the conditions demanded for man's development. The fact that there is a resistance to this judgement is one of the deeper causes of the present painful events.

Another question we shall have to consider over the next few days is why human beings did not turn to more spiritual inclinations a century ago. For had they done so today's painful situation would surely not have arisen. Let us postpone this a little longer and come to it perhaps tomorrow or the next day. Above all, let us hold to the knowledge that the painful events have come about chiefly as a result of this rejection of man's links with the spiritual world. Present events might therefore be described as a karma of materialism. But this phrase 'karma of materialism' must not be taken as an empty phrase; it must be understood in the right way.

Insights that are so deeply necessary have surfaced only sporadically during the years spanned by our lives—the final decades of the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth century. Certainly some insights—and much depends on insights—have been cast amongst mankind. Moreover, the attempt was made to cast them in such a way that a considerable number of people might have been included. But, at the moment, for reasons which will be mentioned later, people are still tremendously resistant to any kind of higher, spiritually grounded insight.

I now want to mention a book which appeared years ago. You might of course say:

Many books are published, so why is this one so significant? At most, a book can only give people some theoretical instruction, and the salvation of the world is certainly not going to depend on whether they read it or not. Let me tell you that more is at stake than might be expected if certain ideas and insights are disseminated. Look in your soul once more at what I have told you during the last two or three lectures and you will be able to admit that this is so.

The book I mean was published in America and the author is Brooks Adams.² When it appeared all those years ago it seemed to me to be one of the most important manifestations of new human insight. Even though the way it was presented to the world was spoilt by the fact that it included a foreword by ex-President Roosevelt,³ one of the greatest phrase-mongers of today, nevertheless the ideas in this book by Brooks Adams could have brought enlightenment in the widest sense of the word. Another factor to be considered in connection with European cultural life was that the German translation of this book was brought out by a publisher of whom it was known that he serves quite particular spiritual streams, streams which are definitely hostile and detrimental, for instance to our Anthroposophical Movement. This is not what matters, however. What always matters is to have a sense for the fact that it is significant if certain ideas are presented to the world under an appropriate flag of this kind. It is quite different if a book is published by, let us say, the Cotta'sche Verlag, a distinguished publishing house which simply publishes books or, as in the case of the book in question, by a publisher who brings out books which serve the purposes of a particular society. There is a great difference between dealing simply with literature and dealing with certain definite impulses!

What is in this book by Brooks Adams? Let me first unfold only the main ideas which are brought forward, I must say, quite generally and abstractly in the most amateurish way and only in so far as their significance could be recognized in America. Yet it is important to know that a bird such as this flies up from this particular spot. Brooks Adams says in effect: There are in the world various nations who have been developing slowly for long ages. In the development of these peoples it is possible to detect both rise and fall: they are born, they pass through infancy, youth, maturity and old age, and then they perish.

This is, to start with, no profound truth but merely a framework. However, what Brooks Adams then develops in connection with the evolution of these peoples in the way of developmental laws certainly has some significance. It can be observed, he says, that in the period of their youth these peoples necessarily develop two tendencies which belong together. To enter properly into ideas such as these of Brooks Adams we must, of course, distinguish strictly between a people as such and the individual human beings; neither must we confuse the concept of a state with the concept of a people. So, Brooks Adams ascribes certain characteristics to a particular developmental period of a people and he also considers that these characteristics belong together. According to him some peoples, in the period of their youth, have the capacity for imagination, that is the capacity to form mental images which are, in the main, drawn from within. They owe their origin to the productive imagination and not to considerations such as those of what we today call science; they are drawn from the creative inner powers of the human being. This characteristic of creative imagination is, according to Brooks Adams, necessarily connected with another: these peoples are warlike. The two characteristics of creative imagination and a warlike

disposition are inseparably linked in these peoples. Brooks Adams considers this to be a natural law in the spiritual life of these peoples. Peoples who are both imaginative and warlike are, as it were, a particular type.

In contrast to those peoples who belong to the imaginative and warlike type there are, says Brooks Adams, peoples who belong to another type. Here, creative imagination is no longer predominant, for it has developed into something we can call sober scientific judgement. Peoples who possess this characteristic of sober scientific judgement are not warlike by nature; they are industrial and commercial. These two characteristics—we are speaking of peoples, not individuals—belong together: the scientific and the commercial (for industry is simply a basis for commerce). Thus, there are peoples who are scientific and commercial, and peoples who are imaginative and warlike.

For the moment I do not want to criticize these ideas but merely mention that an opinion is asserting itself, though in a rather dilettante fashion, which years ago fluttered up, as it were, from American soil: take care not to believe that the whole of mankind can be measured by the same yardstick! Do not imagine that the same ideals can be set for every nation! Note that consideration can only be given to what is founded in evolution, which means that you cannot expect a people like the Slavs, whose character is imaginative, to be unwarlike! Those of you who read Brooks Adams' book attentively, please note this latter example particularly. Judgement must be based, not on external appearances but on inner values, inner affinities.

The book is superficial if only for the reason that such knowledge, if it is expressed at all, should be expressed on the basis of spiritual insights alone. So long as there is a lack of spiritual insights, judgements about the evolution of mankind—which is of course affected by the working of spiritual powers—cannot but be one-sided. Above all, a great truth is omitted: on the physical plane we stand within the realm of maya regarding events as well as the will of human beings. As soon as maya is treated, not as maya but as reality, we must fall into error. And as soon as we fail to pay proper attention to developments within maya and to what resembles development within maya, we are already treating maya as reality.

If it were not nonsensical it would be very nice, for instance, to live in a season of permanent springtime, to be surrounded forever by blossoming, sprouting, burgeoning life. Why did the creators of the universe not arrange things so that we have sprouting, burgeoning life forever? Why do the beautiful tulips, lilies and roses have to fade and decay? The answer is quite simple: they have to fade and decay so that they can bloom again! In so far as we stand on the physical plane it must be clear to us that the one cannot be without the other—indeed, that the one is there for the sake of the other; and there is profound truth in Goethe's saying⁴ that nature created death in order to have much life. Since the physical world is maya there is no balance so long as we are in the physical world; a balancing can only come about if we can raise ourselves from the physical to the spiritual world. However, this balance is different from the balance we would expect so long as we hold the physical world to be a reality. So it is necessary to come to know the laws of maya, and to learn that within maya a balance can never be found, either by man or by any other being, if maya is not interwoven with something which lies outside maya but inside spiritual reality.

So, above all, it is always important to come to know maya as maya, to come to understand what it means when sprouting and burgeoning have to be accompanied by decay. In the case of nature it is easy to admit, since we see before our very eyes the facts we have to recognize. It will be easy to make anyone understand that in the summer and autumn of 1917 the fruits will ripen which were sown in the previous year's sowing season. If bad seeds were sown, then of course bad fruits will be harvested. So we will tend to pay attention to the quality of the seed and not allow ourselves to be so easily deceived by maya, as we are in other areas of human life where matters are rather more obscure.

Someone who points in a similar way, in connection with the life of nations, to the effect a bad sowing has on the quality of the ripening fruit, will immediately be met with prejudices. These may, for instance, be expressed as follows: I might suggest to someone that he should not be surprised at his bad harvest since his seed was poor when it was sown; he might then retort that it was *his* seed and that I am hurting his feelings by saying bad things about it. But I have no intention of hurting his feelings, for the poor quality of his seed might not be his fault at all. It is not a question of hurting a person's feelings but rather of stating an objective fact. It is not for me a matter of judging the connection between him and his seed-corn; that is his affair and I leave it to him entirely. But to know the objective facts it is necessary to inspect the seed-corn very closely and face up to what is really at the bottom of events. If, in doing so, we can maintain a proper objectivity, this might even be beneficial to the sower. Indeed, the benefit to him might be considerable if we succeed in making clear to him the connection between the harvest and the sowing. What I want to make clear to you is the importance of putting forward the thoughts in the right direction, and of seeking them in the right way.

After this prelude, I now want to go back some way in history. The reasons for this will soon be clear to you. I have already drawn your attention during lectures here to a king of England who played an important part for England in the realm of maya, in relation to religious development: Henry VIII.⁵ As you know, he was rather good at getting rid of his wives, of whom he had quite a number. He also had—well—let us say, the pluck to break with the Pope who did not want to dissolve one of his marriages. This refusal by the Pope gave Henry VIII the courage to bring about a new religion for the whole of England, inasmuch as it depended on him. We have spoken about this on another occasion.

During the reign of Henry VIII lived the great and eminent Thomas More.⁶ He was a man of sublime spirituality, indeed of a spirituality equal, for instance, to that of another great man, Pico della Mirandola,⁷ as well as other eminent personalities of that era. Thomas More was an enlightened spirit, even though, despite his enlightened insight, he became Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor and did not despise Henry himself. I shall prove to you in a moment that he did not despise Henry VIII. He was a spirit whose illuminated instinct enabled him to accept maya as maya. Yet, like Pico della Mirandola, he was also a pious man. He was not pious after the manner of Henry VIII, nor after the manner of the Pope; he was a sincere, earnestly pious man and from his point of view rejected all the impulses and attempts at reformation which were already beginning to flicker during his time.

In a certain respect Thomas More was a faithful son of the Catholic church; and

although Henry VIII, whose Lord Chancellor he already was, would have loaded him with every honour if he had complied with his wishes, he remained disinclined to turn to a new religion simply because Henry desired to take a new wife. For this he was not only deprived of his position, he was condemned to death, and the record of the court proceedings which culminated in his condemnation is extraordinarily interesting and very characteristic of that time. The wording of the sentence which condemned Thomas More to death is quite remarkable.

Most of you know, since it has long been published in secular books, that in Freemasonry the ascent through the various degrees is connected with certain formulations which also include the manner of death awaiting those who fail to keep the secrets of a particular degree. It is stated that under certain circumstances the candidate will have to die a terrible death; for instance, in the case of one of the degrees, his body shall be cut open and his ashes strewn to the four winds of the earth. These things, as I just said, are now the subject of numerous secular writings. Now the sentence passed on Thomas More coincides exactly with the formulation in respect of a particular degree of Freemasonry: he was to be brought from life to death by a most inhuman method. Yet this alone was not enough. His body was to be divided into as many segments as there are compass points and the pieces were to be scattered in all these directions. Part of this sentence was indeed carried out in this very manner.

Consider that this event took place at the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean period. Thomas More was born in the second half of the fifteenth century and died in the first half of the sixteenth century. We may well ask whether all he did was to refuse the king the oath of supremacy—that is, refuse to recognize that the English church was independent of the Pope and commanded instead by the King of England. Is this really all he did?

Let us now turn to the most important thing he did, namely something which, even today, can have the utmost significance for anyone who looks at it squarely. Thomas More wrote the book *Utopia. On the Best Form of the State and the New Island of Utopia*.⁸ The main part of this book deals with the institutions of the island of Utopia, which means ‘not place’, or ‘no place’. If we take the book in the sense intended by Thomas More, we discover that Utopia means much more to him than some imaginary land in the external physical world. We should not be so foolish, however, as to assume that More wrote the book simply as an imaginary story. Thomas More cannot be counted among the Utopians. He did not want to present people with some imaginary tale; he wanted to say far more than this, in so far as this was possible in his day.

The main part of the book deals with Utopia, but it also has a very detailed introduction. This explains to us why More wrote the book. There is an important passage I want to bring to your attention, so that you can see that he did not despise Henry VIII. It begins as follows:

‘There was recently a rather serious difference of opinion between that great expert in the art of government, His Invincible Majesty, King Henry the Eighth of England, and His Serene Highness, Prince Charles of Castile. His Majesty sent me to Flanders to discuss and settle the matter.’

While in Flanders as an ambassador for Henry VIII, whom he calls an enlightened and

great king, he meets a man he regards as exceptionally intelligent—spiritually, exceptionally important. So he asks him: Since you know so much and can assess matters so correctly, why do you not place your insights at the disposal of some prince? For More considers that most people in the service of princes are not very inspired, and that much that is good and favourable could ensue for the world if such inspired people were to place themselves at the service of the princes. The other now replies: It would be to no avail, for were I to express my views within some ministry or other, I should render the others no cleverer; instead they would very soon throw me out. In order to stress that this man, with whom he himself cannot agree, did actually exist, Thomas More adds: I met this man in the most varied company and he told us how he had once attempted to put forward his views in another company.

This is not merely an introduction to *Utopia*; Thomas More means something further. We have the curious situation in which Thomas More wishes to express criticism of the England of that time, the England of the turn of the fifteenth to the sixteenth century; the Lord Chancellor wants to criticize England. It goes without saying that someone who thinks as Thomas More does would not embark on a criticism of something abstract. In speaking of England he knows that the English people are not identical with what is meant by the configuration of the English state. He knows this very well and he also knows that the state is not something abstract but that it is made by individuals, and that the English people are not included in any criticism that might be expressed about the actions of these individuals on whom all the more important aspects of the English state depend. So Thomas More seizes on the best possible starting point for a concrete discussion, for it is certainly not concrete, but mere nonsense, to say: England is like this, Germany like that, Italy like the other—and so on; to say this is to say nothing at all.

Now, within the framework of a larger company, More brings this intelligent, enlightened man into contact with someone who is an excellent lawyer, someone whom the world considers to be ‘an excellent lawyer’, and so these two—the intelligent man and the excellent lawyer in the eyes of the world—enter into a discussion of English jurisprudence. English jurisprudence was then of course not as it is today, but no matter: the fifth post-Atlantean period was just beginning. The intelligent and enlightened man thought that it was extraordinarily stupid to proceed against thieves in the way considered proper in the England of that time. This man, who has seen Utopia and later describes it, thought that the whole way in which robbery and other matters were considered was not at all clever. He thought that the deeper reasons for such behaviour should be investigated. Thus he came to reject all the views of that time concerning people’s attitude to thieves. The excellent lawyer, of course, could not understand him at all. Let us now occupy ourselves a little with the arguments of the intelligent man—not those of the excellent lawyer. He says:

‘I once happened to be dining with the Cardinal when a certain English lawyer was there. I forget how the subject came up, but he was speaking with great enthusiasm about the stern measures that were then being taken against thieves. “We’re hanging them all over the place,” he said, “I’ve seen as many as twenty on a single gallows. And that’s what I find so odd. Considering how few of them get away with it, why are we still plagued with so many robbers?” “What’s odd about it?” I asked—for I never hesitated to speak freely in front of the Cardinal.’

Now let us hear the intelligent man speak!

‘ “This method of dealing with thieves is both unjust and socially undesirable. As a punishment it’s too severe, and as a deterrent it’s quite ineffective. Petty larceny isn’t bad enough to deserve the death penalty, and no penalty on earth will stop people from stealing, if it’s their only way of getting food. In this respect you English, like most other nations, remind me of incompetent schoolmasters, who prefer caning their pupils to teaching them. Instead of inflicting these horrible punishments, it would be far more to the point to provide everyone with some means of livelihood, so that nobody’s under the frightful necessity of becoming a thief and then a corpse.” “There’s adequate provision for that already,” replied the lawyer. “There are plenty of trades open to them. There’s always work on the land. They could easily earn an honest living if they wanted to, but they deliberately choose to be criminals.” “You can’t get out of it like that”, I said.’

This is the intelligent man once again.

‘ “Let’s ignore, for the sake of argument, the case of the disabled soldier, who has lost a limb in the service of King and Country, either at home or abroad—perhaps in that battle with the Cornish rebels, or perhaps during the fighting in France, not so long ago. When he comes home, he finds he’s physically incapable of practising his former trade, and too old to learn a new one. But as I say, let’s forget about him, since war is only an intermittent phenomenon. Let’s stick to the type of thing that happens every day.

Well, first of all there are lots of noblemen who live like drones on the labour of other people, in other words, of their tenants, and keep bleeding them white by constantly raising their rents. For that’s their only idea of practical economy—otherwise they’d soon be ruined by their extravagance. But not content with remaining idle themselves, they take round with them vast numbers of equally idle retainers, who have never been taught any method of earning a living.

The moment their master dies, or they themselves fall ill, they’re promptly given the sack—for these noblemen are far more sympathetic towards idleness than illness, and their heirs often can’t afford to keep up such large establishments.

Now a sacked retainer is apt to get violently hungry, if he doesn’t resort to violence. For what’s the alternative? He can, of course, wander around until his clothes and his body are both worn out, and he’s nothing but a mass of rags and sores. But in that state no gentleman will condescend to employ him, and no farmer can risk doing so—for who could be less likely to serve a poor man faithfully, sweating away with mattock and hoe for a beggarly wage and barely adequate diet, than a man who has been brought up in the lap of luxury, and is used to swaggering about in military uniform, looking down his nose at everyone else in the neighbourhood?”

“But that’s exactly the kind of person we need to encourage,” retorted the lawyer. “In wartime he forms the backbone of the army, simply because he has more spirit and self-respect than an ordinary tradesman or farm-hand.” “You might as well say,” I answered,’

Now the intelligent man speaks again.

‘ “that for the purposes of war you have to encourage theft. Well, you’ll certainly never run short of thieves, so long as you have people like that about. And, of course, you’re perfectly right thieves do make quite efficient soldiers, and soldiers make quite enterprising thieves. The two professions have a good deal in common. However, the trouble is not confined to England, although you’ve got it pretty badly. It’s practically a world-wide epidemic.

France, for instance, is suffering from an even more virulent form of it. There the whole country is overrun even in peacetime—if you can call it that—by mercenaries who have been brought in for much the same reasons as you gave for supporting idle retainers. You see, the experts decided, in the interests of public safety, that they must have a powerful standing army, consisting mostly of veterans—for they put so little faith in raw recruits that they deliberately start wars to give their soldiers practice, and make them cut throats just to keep their hands in, as Sallust rather nicely puts it.

So France has learnt by bitter experience how dangerous it is to keep these savage pets, but there are plenty of similar object-lessons in the history of Rome, Carthage, Syria, and many other countries. Again and again standing armies have seized some opportunity of overthrowing the government that employed them, devastating its territory, and destroying its towns. And yet it’s quite unnecessary. That’s obvious enough from the fact that for all their intensive military training the French can’t often claim to have beaten your wartime conscripts—I won’t put it more strongly than that, for fear of seeming to flatter present company.” ‘

Thus says the Lord Chancellor, Thomas More. We need hardly do more than copy down what he said then about the poor people of France. You could use these words to formulate the most beautiful sentences to present to the English ministers so that they can fulminate against ‘Prussian militarism’. But these things were said at the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean period, and possibly the juxtaposition of today’s chatter with what lay at the beginning of it all might cause hurt feelings in some quarters.

You see, Thomas More lets us listen to the words of a person who endeavours to get to the bottom of things, and, moreover, in a way which could be disagreeable to some, even if matters are only touched upon quite superficially. He continues:

‘ “In any case I don’t see how it can possibly be in the public interest to prepare for a war, which you needn’t have unless you want to, by maintaining innumerable disturbers of the peace—when peace is so infinitely more important. But that’s not the only thing that compels people to steal. There are other factors at work which must, I think, be peculiar to your country.” ‘

Thus speaks the man who has come back from Utopia.

‘ “And what are they?” asked the Cardinal.’

A new participant in the conversation.

‘ “Sheep,” I told him. “These placid creatures, which used to require so little food, have now apparently developed a raging appetite, and turned into man-eaters. Fields, houses, towns, everything goes down their throats. To put it more plainly, in those parts of the kingdom where the finest, and so the most expensive wool is produced, the nobles and

gentlemen, not to mention several saintly abbots, have grown dissatisfied with the income that their predecessors got out of their estates. They're no longer content to lead lazy, comfortable lives, which do no good to society—they must actively do it harm, by enclosing all the land they can for pasture, and leaving none for cultivation. They're even tearing down houses and demolishing whole towns—except, of course, for the churches, which they preserve for use as sheepfolds. As though they didn't waste enough of your soil already on their coverts and game-preserves, these kind souls have started destroying all traces of human habitation, and turning every scrap of farmland into a wilderness. So what happens? Each greedy individual preys on his native land like a malignant growth, absorbing field after field, and enclosing thousands of acres with a single fence. Result—hundreds of farmers are evicted. They're either cheated or bullied into giving up their property, or systematically ill-treated until they're finally forced to sell. Whichever way it's done, out the poor creatures have to go, men and women, husbands and wives, widows and orphans, mothers and tiny children, together with all their employees—whose great numbers are not a sign of wealth, but simply of the fact that you can't run a farm without plenty of manpower. Out they have to go from their homes that they know so well, and they can't find anywhere else to live. Their whole stock of furniture wouldn't fetch much of a price, even if they could afford to wait for a suitable offer. But they can't, so they get very little indeed for it. By the time they've been wandering around for a bit, this little is all used up, and then what can they do but steal—and be very properly hanged?

Of course, they can always become tramps and beggars, but even then they're liable to be arrested as vagrants, and put in prison for being idle—when nobody will give them a job, however much they want one. For farm-work is what they're used to, and where there's no arable land, there's no farm-work to be done. After all, it only takes one shepherd or cowherd to graze animals over an area that would need any amount of labour to make it fit for corn production. For the same reason, corn is much dearer in many districts.

The price of wool has also risen so steeply that your poorer weavers simply can't afford to buy it, which means a lot more people thrown out of work. This is partly due to an epidemic of the rot, which destroyed vast numbers of sheep just after the conversion of arable to pasture land began. It almost looked like a judgement on the landowners for their greed—except that *they* ought to have caught it instead of the sheep. Not that prices would fall, however many sheep there were, for the sheep market has become, if not strictly a monopoly—for that implies only one seller—then at least an oligopoly. I mean it's almost entirely under the control of a few rich men, who don't need to sell unless they feel like it, and never do feel like it until they can get the price they want.” ‘

I need read no further, but simply point out to you that in this book Thomas More, the Lord Chancellor, a man who shares the views of Pico della Mirandola, expresses bitter criticism through the mouth of a person who may indeed be fictitious and who has been in Utopia; but the criticism is levelled at something that really happened at that time. For indeed over wide areas the people who had tilled the soil with their hands were driven from their land, which was turned into grazing ground for the sheep of the landowners who sought to make profits in this way from the sale of wool.

Thomas More found it necessary to draw attention to the fact that people exist who drive the rural population from the soil they have tilled in order to turn it over to sheep. Those who are able to link effects with causes in an objective way can pursue, on the physical plane, how the structure of the English state today is intimately bound up with what happened all that time ago and was criticized in this way by Thomas More. And if one pursues the matter with the means of the spirit, which also exist, then one discovers that the English people cannot be held responsible for a great deal for which the England of politics must be held responsible. Moreover, those who are responsible for the England of politics are the heirs—in certain cases, even the actual descendants—of those who are criticized here by Thomas More. There is an unbroken evolution which can be traced back to that point. If we take such things into account we shall discover and know that in speeches such as that of Rosebery, which I quoted to you the other day, can be heard the voices of those who long ago made profits from the sale of wool in the manner described. Everywhere the objective connections must be sought. Above all one must be entitled not to be misunderstood in every possible way.

What does it mean when one is reproached and told to be more tactful because, otherwise, the English will think this or that? This is not at all what matters. What is important is that there are certain things in our life today which can be traced back to certain origins, and these origins must be sought in the proper places. There is no cause for anyone, merely because he is English, to rush to defend the impulses of the descendants of those who long ago drove the peasants from house and home, land and soil, in order to keep flocks of sheep instead of retaining arable land. It is necessary to become familiar with the laws of cause and effect, and not babble about one nation or another being to blame for this or that.

Now that I have endeavoured to demonstrate to you a characteristic link between something in the present and something in the past, let me turn to yet another point, in order once again to make a connection. I shall present you with a number of external facts which shall serve the purpose of giving you a foundation on which to build judgements.

A survey of present-day Europe, with the exception of the eastern part which is inhabited by the Slavs, reveals that for the most part it has emerged from what was the kingdom of Charlemagne⁹ in the eighth and ninth centuries. I am not concerned at the moment with Charlemagne himself, nor with the fact that there is much argument about him today. This argument about Charlemagne really has as little point as the argument of three sons about their father. If three sons quarrel amongst each other, the reason is frequently that they are all quite right to call a certain person their father. Indeed, three people would often not quarrel amongst each other were it not for the fact that they do all share the same father; and the object of their quarrel as likely as not is their inheritance!

Out of the realm of Charlemagne have come, in the main, three component parts: a western part which, after various vicissitudes, became the France of today; an eastern part which, in the main, has become today's Germany and Austria, with the exception of the Slav and Magyar regions; and a middle part which has become essentially the Italy of today. Strictly speaking, all three are equally justified in tracing themselves back to Charlemagne. Sometimes people even have strange feelings which determine whether they want to be traced back to Charlemagne or not. For instance, when you consider how

many Saxons were slaughtered by Charlemagne, it is not surprising if some people attach no particular importance to being traced back to him. So, these three regions emerged from the kingdom of Charlemagne. In order to understand much of what is going on today we need to take into account that throughout the Middle Ages there existed, between the middle and the western region, certain links which were of an ideal nature, links which today no longer exist at all in such areas, apart from some empty phrases which cannot be taken seriously. For the Holy Roman Empire was to a large extent founded on ideals. If you do not wish to believe other sources which speak of these ideals, then read Dante's¹⁰ *De Monarchia*, or investigate what else Dante thought about these things. Consider, for instance, that it was Dante who reproached Rudolf of Habsburg¹¹ for taking too little care of Italy, 'the most beautiful garden in the Empire'! Dante was, at least during that part of his life that matters most, an ardent adherent of that ideal community which had come into being and was called Germany-Italy.

Then in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries we see that the Venetian Republic began to rebel against what came down from the North. First of all Venice devoured the patriarchate of Aquileia,¹² but the main concern of the Venetians was to gain a foothold on the Adriatic and settle along the coast there. Venice was very successful and we can see how what came from the North was indeed pushed back, particularly by the influence of the Venetian Republic. Then comes the era known as the Renaissance, which flourished in Italy and elsewhere, particularly under the influence of the blossoming of the free cities. But this was followed by the Counter-Reformation and the politics emanating from the Pope and Spain, and we see that not until the eighteenth century can Italy begin to think of recovering from centuries of pain and suffering. Since you can read it up in any history book, there is no need for me to describe how the moment at last arrived when Italy found her unity, to the approval of the whole world. Those of us who are familiar with these things know that in German regions just as much enthusiasm was expressed for the unification of Italy as elsewhere.

We might ask how the modern unification of Italy came about. We should look upon the case of Italy as a particularly important example of how unified states come into being. But we must also come to understand the connections between the events in Serbia and Italy which I told you about last week. These are connections which are immensely important for an understanding of the situation today. But first one must consider for a moment how the state of Italy came into being, a state which can surely be recognized ungrudgingly.

We need go back only as far as the Battle of Solferino¹³ in which France fought alongside Italy, and where the first step was taken towards the subsequent creation of the modern state of Italy. We are in the fifties of the nineteenth century. How did it come about—for there was a great deal at stake at that time—that the first step on the path towards modern Italy could be taken at Solferino by Italy and France? Read your history books and you will find they fully bear out what I am saying: It came about solely because Prussia and Austria—Austria could only lose—could not reach any agreement!

What happened subsequently is owed to the fact that Italy had in Camillo Cavour¹⁴ a truly great statesman, in whose soul the idea flourished that, from this starting point, something could arise in Italy which would lead to a rebirth of the ancient Roman

greatness. But matters took a different turn. Something similar, though perhaps with a very different nuance, occurred; something similar to what we saw in connection with Michael Obrenovich, Prince of Serbia, when he sacrificed his earlier idealistic views to the demands of state necessity. In a similar way the great soul of Camillo Cavour bowed before karmic necessity and made the transition from the ideal to external realism.

I can only give you an outline of these things.¹⁵ Italy proceeded from stage to stage. In the summer of 1871 Victor Emmanuel¹⁶ was able to enter Rome. How had this become possible? It was made possible by Germany's victories over France! From the statesman Francesco Crispi¹⁷ stem the words: Italy went to Rome thanks to the German victories, after France had taken the first initiative at Solferino. But the fact that Rome became the capital of the kingdom of Italy is due to the German victories over France.

Now a remarkable relationship develops between Italy and France. It is interesting to note how to the extent that Italy was able to consolidate her unity, she became at once an opponent and an ally of France. Another factor is that Italy's statesmen set great store by the fact that her state structure was pieced together from the outside and also that she owed to Germany the final great push towards unity. These statesmen also saw that to join forces with France in the way which would have been possible at that time could not be fruitful for her. This stream, however, was in opposition to another, which gained in force from the year 1876 onwards: that of the francophile democratic left-wing party. So now this new state vacillated between an attraction to France which was, I might say, more on the feeling level, and a more practical attraction to Central Europe. The remarkable thing was that in everything that came about at that time it always turned out that the deciding factor was the practical tendency of Central Europe.

A new turn of events came about when France took over Tunisia.¹⁸ It had always been taken for granted that Tunisia would fall to Italy. But now France proceeded to spread herself there. So the practical tendency in Italy began to gain the upper hand, the tendency which leaned towards Central Europe. It is interesting, for instance, that at the Berlin Congress the Italian delegate asked Bismarck, who was quite calmly suggesting that France should spread over into Africa, whether he was really intent on setting Italy and France at each other's throats. Certainly for the Italian statesmen of that time this meant that Italy must turn towards Germany. And since Bismarck had spoken the famous words: 'The path to Germany lies via Vienna', Italy had to turn towards Austria too. So the ancient feud, which Austria had taken on as what I would call her tragic destiny, had to be shelved. For everything the Venetian Republic had done meant, basically, that those elements which tended towards Germany had been pushed out of Italy. So Austria had to take on the role of bearing the stream which came down from the North.

As a result of France's actions in North Africa, the francophile stream in Italy had to retreat, and so the connection with Central Europe came to be taken for granted at that time. I am giving you only a sketchy outline of these things since it is, after all, not my task to teach you politics. But it is necessary to know certain things about which, unfortunately, far too little is known these days. Italy joined Central Europe in 1882 in what came to be known as the Triple Alliance. Certain people will always misjudge this Triple Alliance because they cannot accustom themselves to using the valid terms. There really are people who blame the painful events of the present war on the Triple Alliance

instead of the so-called Triple Entente, which included the Entente Cordiale. You see, people do not always use the proper terms. Normally you can ask about something which is intended to lead to a particular goal whether it is really getting there and how long it remains valid. Now, it was always said by those who were a party to the Triple Alliance that its purpose was to preserve peace. And it did indeed serve this purpose for many decades; that is, for decades it served the purpose for which its participants said it was intended.

Then came the Triple Entente of which it was also said that its purpose was to preserve peace. Yet within less than a decade peace had disappeared! Anything else in the world would be judged on what it achieves. Yet precisely in this matter people do not condescend to form an objective judgement. Only five years later that secret matter was contrived which gives us the possibility of studying more closely the alchemy of those bullets which were used for the assassination at Sarajevo! The assassination of June 1914 could not possibly fail! For if those bullets had missed their target, others would have succeeded! Every precaution had been taken to ensure that if one attempt failed, the next would succeed. It was better thought out, indeed planned on a larger scale, than any other assassination in the whole of history.

In order to study what our friends have asked us to bring up here, we shall have to discover the alchemy of those bullets. I shall return to this later. For after only five years something had been mingled with the interrelationships of the Triple Entente, something which brought it about that there was a link between every event that took place in Italy and every event that took place in the Balkan countries. The aim was to let nothing happen in the Balkans without a corresponding event in Italy. The passions of the people were to be swayed in such a way that no action could be taken one-sidedly, either in the one country or the other; the people's feelings and thoughts were always to run parallel. For decades there was this intimate connection between the various impulses in the Apennine and the Balkan peninsulas. Sometimes a case of this kind stands out in an extraordinarily symbolic way. It is 'a beauty' in the way it conforms exactly to the theory, just as a doctor might find a serious case 'a beauty' if it gives him an opportunity of performing a particularly good operation—which does not mean in any way that it is something beautiful in itself.

On a visit to Italy we once called in Rome on a most charming, delightful and friendly gentleman who has since died.¹⁹ He conducted us into his sitting room where we found in a very prominent position the portraits, personally autographed, of Draga Masin and Alexander Obrenovich. This friendly gentleman was not only a famous professor; he was the organizer of the so-called Latin League, which was concerned with the separation of South Tyrol and Trieste from Austria in favour of Italy. Of course I do not want to draw any great conclusions from such an insignificant experience. But it is significant symbolically that somebody who organizes the Latin League—I am not judging or criticizing, merely reporting—and, in connection with this Latin League, causes the students of Innsbruck university to riot, should have in his sitting room, visible to all comers, the autographed portraits of Alexander Obrenovich and Draga Masin. Since the secret threads which link Rome and Belgrade were well known to me at the time, this experience did make an impression on me as being symptomatic in a certain way. Karma does, after all, lead us to whatever is important for us in the world, and if we are capable

of seeing and understanding things in the proper way, then we realize that karma has brought us to a point where there is something to be 'sniffed out' in the furtherance of our knowledge.

Things now developed in such a way that in 1888, a year in which war could have broken out just as it did in 1914, the crisis was averted because Crispi remained loyal to the Triple Alliance. He remained loyal to the Triple Alliance because France was proceeding to spread herself in North Africa. France embarked at that time on a political tactic aimed at Italy, who was starting to turn away from her. The French themselves said this tactic was intended to bring about the 're-conquering of Italy by means of hunger',²⁰ that is, a kind of trade war was attempted against Italy, and this trade war certainly played an important role at that time. The consequence was that Italy's practical links with Central Europe were increasingly strengthened. It is perhaps just as well if I give you the opinion of a Frenchman on this, rather than that of a German. He said that modern Italy was economically a German colony.

It has often been stressed, not only by Germans but by others as well, that Italy was saved by her close economic ties with Germany from the danger of being conquered by France through hunger—not a nice prospect. All this contributed to the peaceful settlement of the crisis at the end of the eighties. It is most interesting to study this crisis in all its details. It reveals something quite special to someone who is inclined to take account of interconnections and not be deceived. I did the following: I called to mind the events of 1888 and superimposed on them the date 1914. The events are absolutely identical! Just as in 1914 the incitements in the press were started in Petersburg and then taken up in Germany, so it was in 1888. As then, so also in 1914, a conflict was to be brought about between Germany and Austria. In short, every detail is the same. It is interesting that I have read aloud to various people a speech made in 1888²¹ in which I replaced the date 1888 by 1914. Everybody believed that the speech was made in 1914!

When such things are possible we are not inclined to speak of coincidences. We have to understand that there are driving forces and that these driving forces work in a systematic way. In 1888 the matter was averted in the manner I have described. Then the situation became more complicated. The complication arose particularly because the connection of the Apennine peninsula to Central Europe took on a most peculiar character as far as Italy was concerned. It is psychologically interesting to study these things. It really came to a point where Italy, political Italy, had to be treated like some hysterical ladies are treated. The most unbelievable things developed, particularly because the opinion grew and was propagated in Europe that Austria must break up. I am not criticizing, only reporting.

You may gain an impression of how this opinion was propagated in Europe by reading the publications²² of Loiseaux, Chéradame and others, all of which treat of the assumption that Austria will be divided up in the near future. Now these judgements of Loiseaux and Chéradame and the others were thrown onto what was smouldering away down in the South. Under these circumstances it was definitely not easy to carry on what is usually known as politics. For instance, Oberdank²³ was much celebrated in Italy. He had attempted to assassinate Emperor Franz Josef. In Vienna, on the other hand, a picture in an exhibition had to be renamed for the visit of the Duke of the Abruzzi. Its title was *The Naval Battle of Lissa*. This battle had been won by Austria, and so as not to offend the

Duke of the Abruzzi the picture had to be renamed *Naval Battle*. This is just one example among many. I am not criticizing, but I do wonder about the question of give and take. Would anyone in Italy have condescended to be so considerate as to omit the name of a sea battle Italy had won? In Vienna they were. Whether it is right or wrong, it does raise the question of give and take. I mention this in order to characterize the different moods somewhat. For it is these moods which matter when streams such as that of the 'Grand Orient de France'²⁴ come into play and when occult impulses of this kind start to take a hold.

Certain things of which people have taken no note so far will have to become things of which they take a great deal of note in the future, for it is not the case that the 'Massonieri', as also other secret brotherhoods, do not notice what is there; rather they set themselves the task of making use of those forces which are indeed there. They know where the forces are of which they must make use. So if on the Apennine peninsula there exists a certain stream, and if on the Balkan peninsula there exists another stream, then suitable use must be made of these two streams so that, at the right moment—that is, the right moment from the point of view of these people—one thing or another can be set in motion.

Let this be a preparation for the alchemical discussion I mentioned, which will take us further along our path. Please note that, in order to meet the wishes of our friends, I cannot but mention a certain amount of what is going on at the present time. What I have to say has to be linked to certain things which do exist, even if not everybody agrees that these should be brought out into the open. I am convinced that one of the chief causes for the painful events going on in the world today is the attitude that a blind eye can be turned to certain matters while others are discussed on the basis of an entirely false premise. Even in the face of large-scale matters of this kind, each individual should start from a foundation of self-knowledge. And a portion of self-knowledge is involved if we recognize that to claim no interest in these things and to want only to hear of occult matters is, in a small way, no different from all that adds up to the events we are experiencing today. For spiritual things are not only those which have to do with higher worlds. These, to start with, are of course occult for everybody. But much of what takes place on the physical plane is also occult for many people. We can only hope that much of what is occult and hidden on this plane may be revealed! For one of the causes of today's misery is that so much remains occult for so many people, who nevertheless persist in forming judgements.

LECTURE SIX

Dornach, 17 December 1916

In order to reach the goal of our discussions, we shall have to endeavour to comprehend the whole nature of the fifth post-Atlantean period in all its deepest significance. It is impossible to come to an understanding of events as deeply important as those of the present day by refusing to enter into concrete matters, and by insisting on considering only general aspects of the universe and man in the way that can be done when one is not concerned with specific circumstances. Unfortunately, I have to stress that an understanding for the deeply important nature of these events is largely lacking today.

For certain quite definite reasons which will become apparent, I yesterday spoke to you about two matters. First of all I told you how the book by Brooks Adams had been launched on mankind, a kite flown to gauge the scale on which such things are understood, at least by a few individuals. This book describes how a nation should be seen as a living organism which comes into being and passes through phases of childhood, youth, maturity and decline in a similar way to a human being, though of course only similar, not identical. Furthermore it is pointed out that at certain stages of their development nations evolve two characteristics which belong together, namely, at one stage those of an imaginative and a warlike nature, and at another those of a scientific and an industrial or commercial nature. So it is assumed that nations which are imaginative and warlike by nature, and others which are scientific and industrial or commercial, live side by side and that in the mutual interplay of such nations the universal development of mankind proceeds.

I told you that this was a one-sided view. How do such views surface in the first place? What does it signify that they are launched on the public?

Views of this kind have made an impression on individuals of a certain standing and therefore have become part of the impulses working today. In such matters it is always a question of disconnecting portions of the overall spiritual knowledge of man's evolution and planting them in the world when needed or wanted. By taking a portion of the total occult picture of mankind's development it is possible to achieve definite things in the service of a particular group and its particular egoism. Knowledge of the whole picture always serves the whole of mankind. Portions taken out of context always serve the egoism of individual groups. It is significant and important to take into account that much that is launched on the public from occult sources is not untrue, but half true, a quarter true, an eighth true, and just because it bears within it a part of the truth it can be used to achieve one aim or another in a one-sided way. That is why those who see through these things gain a significant impression from the fact that, on the part of America, the twentieth century is introduced by the launching of certain ideas in the world via some channels of the bookselling trade serving certain movements which make use of occult means.

The second matter about which I spoke was the remarkable treatise by the noble Thomas More on the best form of public administration in the state and on the island of

Utopia. Out of this treatise by Thomas More I quoted to you yesterday the passage in which More says through the mouth of a stranger what he wants to say about Utopia. This stranger is presented as a fictitious person; perhaps we shall get to know him better today, but he is not fictitious, as you will see. Out of a certain mood of his time, which I described yesterday, he develops the theme of his feelings and then describes Utopia itself.

This description of Utopia by Thomas More, who flings these particular ideas into the midst of human development at the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean period, is indeed quite remarkable. I have found a number of people who have read *Utopia*, but not a single one who has read it carefully enough to become even partly aware of all the extraordinary ins and outs and unlikely details the book describes. People simply take the description of the island of Utopia as that of an imaginary island and just read on, page after page. This is understandable in the present age, which is void of all spirituality. But at least one should notice either that Thomas More is describing something incomprehensible, even if it is only meant to be imaginary, or that he must have been a complete idiot, an absolute fool. But such logical conclusions are not drawn in our time; people far prefer to pass over things by means of superficial judgements. I shall now call up before our souls an outline of the content of this work. If you want all the details, you must read *Utopia* yourselves.

It is significant that Utopia is described as having reached a certain maturity in its institutions. It is expressly stated that the situation being described did not exist in the beginning but has taken 1,760 years to achieve, so that we are now presented with a kind of finished product of some maturity.

The first point to be particularly stressed is that property is common, nobody owns anything. The state is divided into certain families who, if we can put it like this, elect elders, and from among the elders a prince is elected. From time to time a council is called at which public matters are discussed in accordance with the instructions of the different sections of the population. Here we immediately come to an extraordinary arrangement: public affairs may only be discussed in the prescribed manner. Anybody who privately discusses public affairs is liable to be condemned to death. Further, we discover a highly sensible arrangement: when a suggestion is made during the council meeting it may never be discussed immediately; people must first go home and think about it and it is then brought up again on a subsequent occasion. The one who is telling us the story says that in this way people have an opportunity to think about things, and do not make hasty judgements which they would naturally defend with stubbornness and egoism, just because they have become attached to their own judgement instead of thinking carefully and coming to the right conclusion.

In Utopia everyone has to learn farming while still a child. Later they also learn a trade, usually that pursued by their parents, though they may choose another if they have the skill for it. Work is strictly regulated and nobody need labour for more than six hours a day.

Everything else is also arranged in the best way; there are three hours of work in the morning but, before this, at sunrise, those who wish may gather to learn about spiritual and similar things. Games such as those we know outside Utopia do not exist there. They have, however, a competitive game something like chess, a kind of arithmetical battle, and also another competitive game, again similar to chess, in which the vices and the virtues

compete with one another.

Under the supervision of the elected representatives those who are suitable are declared scholars. From among their number the ambassadors and the priests are elected. The dirtiest work is performed by slaves who are either recruited from amongst conquered peoples or else are criminals. Every true Utopian is free. There is another arrangement in Utopia which we, who are not from Utopia, have only just come to enjoy: no journey may be made without permission from the appropriate authority. A passport is necessary for even the shortest journey. Money does not exist. Anything available for consumption is taken to the markets where anybody can help himself. Since this is so well arranged that no one takes more than he needs, there is no necessity to pay anything, for everyone receives what he requires. Money or anything like it is simply not necessary.

The only metal of any value is iron. Please take note of this, for it is very significant. Silver is valued less and gold least of all. Gold is not fashioned into the articles non-Utopians would use it for, but mainly into chains for criminals, and for similar objects. Gold is forged into chains for criminals; they have to wear them as a symbol of their shame. Certain receptacles which one does not mention in polite company are also made of gold, and so on. This had a curious consequence once, when some foreign diplomats visited Utopia and sought to impress the Utopians by festooning themselves in gold chains and jewellery. The Utopians thought them to be of very lowly origin, since such things were only used as toys for children, who discarded them as they grew older. When the diplomats came, the children watched them pass by in the street and said: Look at those old fogeys still wearing children's playthings!

No value is attached in Utopia to the wearing of fine clothes, for they say: How can anyone fancy it matters whether his clothes are made from this wool or that wool? The sheep were the first to wear them. How can you fancy there is anything special in wearing what the sheep first wore naturally!

In Utopia there is also another peculiarity; good and evil, virtue and vice are only judged in connection with religious ideas. A goal to be striven for in life is a kind of epicureanism in the pleasures one enjoys. The more fun one has in life, the more virtuous one is considered to be. The Utopians believe in the immortal soul of man and have a kind of religion of reason. They consider that everybody may use his common sense to see that God rules the world like an overseer, that man has an immortal soul and that after death this will enter into a spiritual world where there will be reward and punishment for virtue and vice.

The Utopians think nothing of jewels for they say: When somebody buys a jewel he has to seek the assurance of the seller that it is genuine; why on earth should something be valuable if you cannot see with your own eyes whether it is a genuine or a counterfeit jewel? This could only happen in Utopia. Hunting is also scorned as something undignified. Only butchers are allowed to hunt, and theirs is not an esteemed profession.

The man who tells all these things explains that he himself introduced the Utopians to Greek literature and art and that they proved to be extraordinarily intelligent. Indeed their language seems to have affinities with Greek, and their culture is unusual in that it seems to remind one of that of Greece mingled with something of Persia. The manner in which

husband and wife are selected I shall not describe for reasons which you will understand if you read the book. There are no lawyers in Utopia; they are considered to be the most harmful people. Contracts are not entered into because the Utopians believe that if someone wants to keep an agreement he can do so without a contract, whereas if he does not, he can break it even if he has a contract.

In war, they avoid bloodletting if at all possible; it is considered the most shameful thing. They say: If one spills blood in war, one is no better than wolves and tigers. Other methods must be sought, for man has intelligence. Only in absolute extremity, if there is no other hope, will they spill blood. They set about the matter of making war on another nation by sending out scouts whose task it is either to bring about confusion among the enemy so that they start to quarrel among themselves, or to murder one or another member of the enemy force, or something similar. In other words they seek to use 'love and good sense' to bring about discord and dissension as well as mutual irritation among those on whom they wish to make war, and only if this fails will they decide to shed blood. And even then they use quite special methods which show that they intend to cease the blood-letting at the first possible opportunity.

Another point is that religious tolerance is a fundamental characteristic of the Utopians. So long as he does not break the law, anybody may belong to any sect or represent any religious view he likes. This was instituted by the founder of Utopia, Utopus himself. However, all must believe in a highest being, whom they call Mithra. The one who tells us this has himself attempted to introduce Christianity there. The Utopians proved to be most open to it and recognized it as being indeed the best religion. The utmost religious tolerance prevails, and all may believe whatever they will, except that someone who is a materialist or who does not believe in the immortality of the soul forfeits all civil and other rights, indeed is declared to be without rights.

There is a sect which holds animals to be creatures who have souls like people. There are priests who teach in special mystery churches and perform cultic rites. Festivals are celebrated at the end and the beginning of each year. Musical instruments differ somewhat from those in other countries, for they are particularly suited to expressing in music what the human soul feels in its various moods. And so on.

I have told you all this just as it is described in the book. You will have noticed I said on the one hand that the Utopians have a religion of good sense, in which each individual believes what his good sense tells him is right; and yet, on the other hand, we are told that Christianity has been introduced and that all believe in a kind of Mithra. Further, it is said that tolerance prevails, and yet those who are materialists forfeit their rights as citizens. In short, you will find in the book one contradiction after another.

So what is this book really about? What is it describing? We can indeed only understand it on the basis of spiritual science. We must understand that Thomas More, like Pico della Mirandola and others, is a man who stands with part of his being in the fourth post-Atlantean period while another part already projects into the fifth. But he is also a man who knows that this is so and develops it in full consciousness because he possesses a certain spiritual life.

Thomas More spent many hours every day in meditation, and with his meditations he

achieved certain quite definite results. But these results came about because, as I said, part of his being still lived in the fourth post-Atlantean period, so that atavistic elements joined in him with a conscious raising of his soul into the life of the spiritual world. Yet he lived a whole century after the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean period and in his soul everything lived which was characteristic of that fifth period: intellectuality and reasoning as we know them today—which did not yet exist during the fourth period, contrary to the opinion of those whose view of history is utterly fantastic. All this worked and mingled in his soul. You can discover what must have gone on in such a soul if you study Pico della Mirandola and also the relationship of Pico della Mirandola to Savonarola.

We have, then, a man into whose soul we must penetrate a little if we are to understand what he meant with his description of Utopia. Such a man as this knew that occult impulses work and weave in the evolution of mankind, and also that at the turn of the fourth to the fifth post-Atlantean period it was necessary to provide the right impulse for many people. Whether they then make use of it is another question. What did such people know? We have often discussed that things are different nowadays, but this is what it was like then; so what did such people know? They knew that mankind must grow decadent if only those things were developed which were, let me say, unspiritual, thought-out, merely reasoned. Such people know that human beings must become desiccated even down to their physical bodies—of course not during the course of a few centuries but over a long period—if only dry reasoning, if only that spiritual element is developed on which materialistic views are founded. Such people have quite a different concept of the truth from that which gradually evolved during the fifth post-Atlantean period. They know that thoughts must be thought which do not relate to the physical plane, because, quite apart from the truth of such matters, human beings, if they do not wish to wither, must think thoughts which do not relate to the physical plane. These are the thoughts which bring life, which make life possible and help it to make progress. This is why what is spiritual is so important, quite apart from the aspect of truth.

Through his meditations Thomas More had come to experience pictures of the higher worlds in a partly atavistic and partly conscious way, but these were mingled with the material aspect of the dream worlds. Out of these actual experiences arose what he relates in *Utopia*. It is not something he has thought out, it is not fantasy, but something he really experienced as the fruit of his meditation. He placed it before us just as he experienced it, in order to say: Behold! A man who lives in England under King Henry VIII, a man who is even a servant of Henry's state, a man who bears in his soul the feelings, the desires, the intimate goals of England at this time—when his visions stir up his inner being, he experiences what is here described to be a kind of ideal state. He wanted to express what are the wishes, the goals, the ideas lurking in the subconscious of those who are dissatisfied with the external world. This is what he wanted to express.

So it can be said: This is the astral self-knowledge of a man of that time. A wise man such as Thomas More does not simply set before his contemporaries a fantastic ideal for the future. He sets before them what he himself experiences because, through this, in his own way and in keeping with his own time, he wants to present them with the great truth that the external world perceived by the senses is maya and that this external world of the senses must be seen in conjunction with the supersensible world. But if one sees them in conjunction in this way—so that all the desires, all the wishes which belong to a particular

age and are in keeping with that age, are allowed to play their part—then the outcome is something which, if looked at closely, is by no means a proposition that could be considered ideal. For I must admit, if I were to be born in Utopia I would probably see it as my primary task to overcome the prevailing conditions as quickly as possible and replace them with others. I might even consider the conditions prevailing here or there on our earth—apart from those of the immediate present—to be more ideal than those in Utopia. But it was not Thomas More's aim to describe ideal conditions. His intention was to show what he really experienced under the conditions as I have described them. He wanted to say to people: If you could see your wishes, if you could see before your eyes what you imagine to be ideal conditions, you would find that you were not in agreement with them at all.

Now we have made the acquaintance of the stranger who describes Utopia: he is the astral self of Thomas More. These things must be seen as being much more real than is usually supposed. At certain points of human evolution the fundamental facts must be sought out if one wants to understand this human evolution. A judgement cannot be made simply by taking the few facts closest to hand. A valid judgement cannot be based on these, for it would merely relate to sympathies and antipathies. These are valid, of course, but they take us no further, and mankind cannot be served by them.

My purpose here—and we shall return to these things later—has been to place before you a man who is particularly typical of the turning point between two ages, namely, between the fourth and the fifth post-Atlantean ages: one who is able to bring to the surface what is characteristic of his deeper soul life in such a way that he has an experience of self. Let me just leave this as a fact for the moment.

In order to gain an understanding of the kind for which a number of our friends here have expressed a wish, we must now also work on achieving a comprehension of the concrete reality of a folk soul. For our materialistic age and way of feeling tends to make us confuse the folk soul with the individual soul. I mean, when we speak of a people, a nation, we believe that this has something to do with the individuals who constitute this nation. To use a rather rough-and-ready, though graphic comparison: to say that an Englishman or a German can be identified with the folk soul of his nation is, for the spiritual scientist, as nonsensical as saying that a son or daughter can be identified with father or mother.

This is a rough-and-ready comparison, as I said, because on the one hand we are dealing with two physical people, whereas on the other we mean one physical and one non-physical being, which differ totally from one another when examined concretely. Not until there is an understanding of the mysteries of repeated earth lives and of the karma which these involve will there really be a comprehension of what underlies all this, which it is highly necessary to understand if one wants to speak on a firm basis about these things. An immensely important truth lies in the fact that one lives within a certain folk spirit only for a single incarnation, whereas one bears within one's own individual being something quite different, something immeasurably greater and yet also immeasurably smaller than that which lives within a folk soul. To identify oneself with a folk soul is, in reality, totally devoid of meaning once one goes beyond what is described by such words as love of the fatherland, love of the homeland, patriotism and so on. We shall only understand these

things properly, once we can look earnestly and deeply at the truths of reincarnation and karma.

I have spoken recently in various places about the connection between the human soul between death and rebirth and what comes into being when man enters a new existence through birth. I pointed out that between death and rebirth man is linked with the forces which bring people together over many generations. Through the ever-repeated union of different pairs of parents and all that leads to descendants, as well as other aspects of the succession of generations, it comes about that the human being between death and rebirth finds himself within a whole stream which, in the end, leads him to the parents through whom he can incarnate. Just as in physical life one is linked with one's physical body, so between death and rebirth is one linked with the conditions which prepare for birth through a particular pair of parents. One is immersed in the forces which bring one to particular parents, and which brought father and mother to their parents, and so on back through the generations, in all their offshoots and ramifications, and whatever works together here in the most varied ways—in all this one is immersed for centuries!

Consider the imposing number of centuries one would remain within all this in order to pass through a mere thirty generations. The period from Charlemagne to the present day encompasses approximately thirty generations, and over all that time, in all that has taken place in the way of meeting, falling in love and begetting descendants which at last led to our own parents—in all this we have ourselves been involved, all this we have ourselves prepared.

I am repeating this because in connection with those personalities one calls leaders, those who can be recognized as leading personalities in some respects, it is important to understand that what makes them significant for mankind comes about through all that I have just described. I shall draw your attention now to a leading personality, and the climax of what I have to say about him will be expressed in the words of another. You will see in a moment why this is so.

We see in Dante a most eminent personality who lived at the end of the fourth post-Atlantean period. We may juxtapose such an eminent personality with those personalities who gained a certain eminence after the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean period, such as, for instance, Thomas More. Let us look closely at what may be recognized in general in a personality such as Dante. A personality such as Dante is of far-reaching significance, gives far-reaching impulses. It is therefore interesting to consider, or at least to guess, how such a soul before entering through birth into a physical existence that is to be significant for mankind, puts together—excuse this rather peculiar expression—what he is to become, in order to be born in the right way through the right parents. Obviously these conditions are brought about out of the spiritual world, but they are realized with the help of the physical tools. In a certain sense the spiritual world guides this blood to that blood, and so on.

As a rule, a personality like Dante cannot be born of homogeneous blood. To belong to a single nation is impossible for such a soul. It needs a mysterious alchemy; various blood streams must flow together. Whatever those over-patriotic people might say who claim great personalities for a single people, there is no great reality behind it!

As regards Dante, so that you do not think I am taking sides I shall now let another, who knows him intimately, describe what is clearly apparent in his being. It would be easy to imagine that I might be carrying on politically, which is actually furthest from my intentions. So for this reason I have made enquiries of Carducci,¹ the great Italian poet of today, who is an expert on Dante. Behind Carducci—and this is why I am quoting him—stand what are called ‘Massonieri’ in Italy, and what is connected with all those secret brotherhoods to whom I have drawn your attention. Because of this, Carducci’s theoretical arguments about the actualities of life are, to a certain extent, based on some deeper knowledge. I would not maintain that he has flaunted this deeper knowledge all over the market place or that he is in any way an occultist. But what he says does contain a certain amount of what has come to him via all kinds of secret channels.

Carducci says: Three elements work in Dante, and it is only because these three elements work together that Dante’s being was able to become what it was. First, through certain branches of his lineage, there was an ancient Etruscan element. This gave Dante whatever it was that opened the supersensible worlds to him; because of this he was able to speak so profoundly about the supersensible worlds. Secondly, there was in him a Roman element which gave him a proper relationship to the life of his time and a basis of certain legal concepts from which to proceed. And thirdly, says Carducci, there was a Germanic element in Dante. From this he gained the boldness and freshness of his views, a certain candour, and the courage of his convictions in what he had set himself. These three elements, says Carducci, made up the soul life of Dante.

The first element points to the ancient Celtic influence which pulses through him like blood in a certain way, leading him back to the third post-Atlantean period; for the Celtic element in the North leads back to what we have come to know as the third post-Atlantean period. After this we find the fourth post-Atlantean period in the Roman, and the fifth in the Germanic element. Carducci maintains that the elements in Dante’s soul are composed of these three periods and their impulses, so that we really have three layers lying side by side—or rather one above the other—the third, fourth and fifth post-Atlantean periods: Celtic, Roman, Germanic. Dante experts of some stature have gone to great pains to discover how, from the spiritual world, Dante managed to mingle his blood in such a way as to obtain the final composition with which he was born. Of course, they did not express this in these words, but they went to great pains and came to believe that much may be put down to the fact that a great many of Dante’s ancestors are to be found in the Grisons area of present-day Switzerland. This is borne out to some extent by history. The chain of Dante’s predecessors points in every direction of the compass, including this district, where so much mixing of blood streams took place.

We now see how, in a single personality, the remarkable working together of the three layers of European human evolution is revealed. We also see how a man like Carducci, whose judgement is based on a certain objectivity and not on present-day nationalistic madness, points to the foundation on which Dante stands.

Herewith we touch on conditions which are well-known in circles familiar with the realities of life, conditions which may be reckoned with and which may be used as forces if one wants to do certain things. These conditions are by no means unknown to the secret brotherhoods, neither in their rightful use, nor in that other direction which uses secret

knowledge in one way or another in the service of some group egoism. For the secret of how the three consecutive layers—which are exceedingly meaningful, mainly for Europe—work together, is discussed most carefully in all secret brotherhoods worthy of the name, though naturally in some cases in a manner which deflects from what might be termed the good direction.

Please be sure not to forget that knowledge about such things exists, and that it is taught—even though, in the external, clever world no one wants to know much about it—very systematically and with great care, especially in the western and American secret brotherhoods.

Having now prepared the way and brought to your attention the teaching about what is, in a certain way, a mystery of evolution and which is taught, albeit with the most varying aims, I shall now point to some further teachings simply by describing them to you. These teachings formed the content of the instruction given in certain occult schools, particularly towards the end of the nineteenth century. They continued into the twentieth century, but it was particularly in the nineteenth century that they were taken up, at which time they gained a considerable degree of influence. Efforts were made to bring them into all kinds of situations in which it was felt necessary to use them for certain ends. So to start with I shall simply report, quite uncritically, on certain teachings from the secret brotherhoods of England, whereby I shall be alluding to what I have prepared.

The following was taught and is still taught: the evolution of Europe can be comprehended if, to start with, one looks at the transition from the Roman, the fourth post-Atlantean period, to the fifth post-Atlantean period. The teaching was—please remember that I am merely reporting—that the mystery of the transition from the fourth to the fifth period or, as was said in these brotherhoods, from the fourth to the fifth sub-race, must be understood. You know that we cannot use the term ‘sub-race’ for the reasons I have frequently expressed, for to use this term means to pursue one-sided group aims, whereas group aims can never be our concern, but solely the general aims of mankind. So the teaching was that the fourth sub-race is represented mainly by the Roman, the Latin peoples. Throughout human evolution it is the case that when things develop in sequence it is not a question of what comes after taking its place behind what came before. What came before remains and takes its place side by side with what comes afterwards, so that they remain side by side in space. Thus, the stragglers of the fourth sub-race, consisting chiefly of the Roman and Latin elements, have remained during the period of the fifth sub-race.

The fifth sub-race, which began at the start of the fifteenth century, is composed of those peoples who are called upon to speak English in the world. The English-speaking peoples represent the fifth sub-race, and the whole task of the fifth post-Atlantean period consists in conquering the world for the English-speaking peoples. It will be evident that the stragglers of the fourth sub-race, the peoples touched by the Latin element, will fall more and more into a certain materialism. They bear within themselves the element of their own inner dissolution, and even in the physical sense bear their own decadence within them. As I said, I am merely reporting and not saying anything which I myself maintain to be true. Further, it is said that the fifth sub-race bears within it a germ of spirituality, of a capacity to comprehend the spiritual world. It is necessary, it is said, to

understand how the fourth sub-race affected the fifth, and for this purpose one must look back to where the Nordic peoples, who later became the Britons, the Gauls, the Germans,² came towards the Roman Empire. The question was asked: What were these peoples at the time when the Roman Empire was making war on them; in other words, when the conflict between the fourth and the fifth sub-race began? As peoples they were at the stage of infancy! The important point is that the Romans, the Roman element, the fourth sub-race, came in order to be their wet-nurse. These expressions are needed to enable us to draw the analogy between the folk element and the element of the individual human being. So the Romans became wet-nurses and they remained so for approximately as long as they maintained their dominance over the peoples of the North who were going through their infancy.

Infants grow to be children. This is the age in which the Papacy is founded in Rome and in which the Pope in his reign becomes the guardian of the child, just as the Roman Empire was the wet-nurse of the infant. Again, I am merely reporting, and not maintaining that this is the case. So now we have the interplay between the Papacy and what is going on in the North, what developed through Central Europe right out as far as Britain. This is the education of these people under the guardianship of the Papacy, out of which the Roman element from the fourth post-Atlantean period is still working. Round about the twelfth century, when the Papacy began to be no longer what it had been, the youth of these various people commenced, this being characterized by the awakening of their own intelligence. The guardian now withdraws. The youth of these peoples continues until roughly the end of the eighteenth century. As a rule, when such things are taught the present is omitted, because for certain reasons this is thought to be a good thing to do. People must not be told too clearly what one thinks about the present time; they learn about this more through suggestion.

Thus, in the course of time in the North, under the rule of the wet-nurse, the guardian, and so on, the present mature condition grew. This bears within it the germ of rendering Britain the ruling nation of the fifth post-Atlantean period, in the same way as were not only the Romans but also the Roman element in the form of the Papacy, which was derived from them. So, according to this doctrine, while the remains of the Latin element crumble away from the human race, a new fruitful element expands from the factor in which lives the British element. Now it is hinted that all external actions and measures which are to serve any purpose and be fruitful, must be made under the sign of these views. Anything that is undertaken without these views, anything that does not take into account that the Latin element is in decline and the British element ascending, is doomed to wither. Of course such things may be undertaken, say these people, but they are condemned to remain meaningless, they will not grow. It is like sowing seeds in the wrong soil.

In the doctrine I have sketched for you we have a foundation which seeped into all the brotherhoods, even the more esoteric ones—those who worked in the West as so-called high grade Freemasons and suchlike. These things were insinuated into public affairs by people who had either close or loose connections with these brotherhoods, often in such a veiled way that those concerned had no idea how they had come by their knowledge. Particularly since the sixteenth century these things have been carried from the West into much that can be experienced in human evolution.

Other things are also taught. It is said: Just as those people in the North during the time of the Roman element were preparing themselves to be the fifth sub-race, so today, in a similar way, the Slav people are coming towards the West as the developing sixth sub-race; in the same way the Germanic peoples came out of the North to meet the Roman element. Thus it is said that living in the East, under a despotic rule that is doomed to destruction, are a number of individual peoples who, like the Germanic peoples when the Roman Empire started to spread northwards, are not yet nations as such but still tribal peoples. These tribal peoples constitute the separate elements of the so-called Slav people, which for the moment is only held together in an external way by a despotic government which is to be swept away. I am using the terms which are customary within these secret brotherhoods.

After saying so many positive things about the Slavs, let me just add in parentheses: it is true that these peoples are still tribal in a certain way. This became evident at the Slav Congress in Prague in 1848. Each group wanted to speak in their own language, but this proved impossible because they were then incomprehensible to the others; so they were forced to use standard German instead. I do not say this to amuse you but in order to show that what is taught in the West about the Slavs does have a certain basis of truth.

It is said further in the English brotherhoods that the Poles have evolved ahead of the other Slavs, for they have developed a homogeneous cultural and religious life of a relatively high calibre. The destinies of the Poles are described to some extent, but it is then maintained that they really belong to the Russian Empire. Then the Balkan Slavs are discussed. Of them it is said that they have thrown off the yoke of Turkish oppression and formed themselves into individual Slav states which, however—and this is repeated over and over again—are destined to remain as they are only until the next great European war. In the nineties particularly, these brotherhoods held this great European war to be imminent, and it was linked especially to evolutionary impulses which were to emanate from the Balkan Slavs, born of the fact that these states, which had come into being as a result of their disengagement from the Turkish Empire, had to undergo a transition to new forms. Only until the next great European war, it was said, would these Balkan Slavs³ be able to maintain their independence. After that they would meet with quite other destinies.

These peoples are at present, so it is taught, in their infancy. So it is hinted that since they are the future sixth sub-race, while the Britons are the present fifth sub-race, the Britons will have to play a role towards them similar to that played by the Romans towards the northern Germanic peoples, namely that of wet-nurse; to be a wet-nurse to these peoples is their primary task. This role of wet-nurse will cease to be necessary, it is said, at the moment when these peoples will have reached a point when the Russian Empire no longer exists and they have succeeded in creating their own forms out of their own dawning intelligence. But gradually the wet-nurse must be replaced by the guardian. This means that in the West a kind of papacy must develop out of those who form the fifth sub-race. For this, a strong spirituality must develop and, just as the Papacy stood in relation to Central Europe, so a configuration will have to come about which works comprehensively from the West over towards the East. This must result in the East being used as a place where certain institutions can be created in a manner similar to that in which the Papacy created its institutions in Europe.

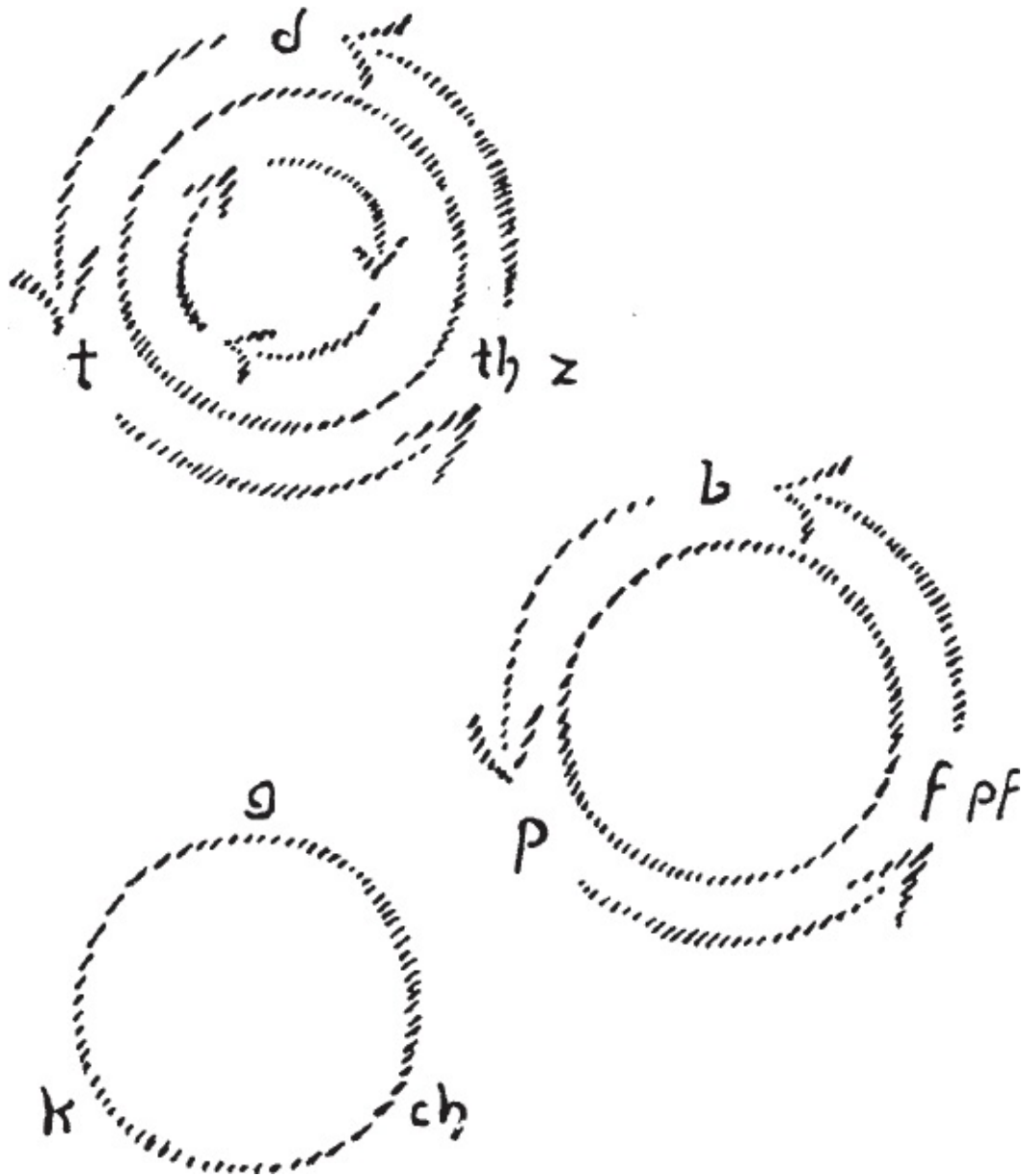
Of course we have now progressed by one sub-race. The Papacy created churches and religious communities of all sorts. But now the western 'papacy', which is to develop out of the British element, will have the task of carrying out certain quite definite economic experiments, that is, of instituting a certain form of economic society of a socialist nature which, it is assumed, cannot be founded in the West because there the fifth and not the sixth sub-race has its being. The East, experimentally at first, must be used for such experiments for the future. Political, cultural and economic experiments must be carried out.

Of course these people are not so stupid as to maintain that the dominance of the West will last forever, for no serious student of spiritual matters would believe that. But they are quite clear about the fact that just as at first the services of the wet-nurse were offered, so must these be metamorphosed into the role of the guardian—in other words a kind of future 'papacy' on the part of western culture.

I have been reporting, my dear friends! These things are buried deeply in the teachings of western Freemasonry and it is a matter of recognizing whether the ones I have mentioned, which are very influential, are really justified as being for the good of mankind in general in its evolution, or whether it is necessary to think of them as needing correction in some way. This is what we are concerned with. We shall return to all this again.

Now I want to point out that certain stages of evolution are really not mere fantasy, but that the more deeply one enters into the real facts, the more does it become possible to prove in the external world what was found at first by spiritual means. External science, even today, is occupied with the search for theories which prove that evolution takes place in stages which follow one another. That there is really something correct in what the spiritual scientist says can today be confirmed in some of the symptoms of ordinary science, if only one has the goodwill to search for them.

Let me mention in this connection something of which I have repeatedly spoken already. Although external culture cannot comprehend these things there is, in spiritual development, something which is expressed in laws which are as definite as the laws of nature. I once drew your attention to a linguistic law. Human evolution from the fourth post-Atlantean period up to the present shows that Greek and Latin represent a particular stage of linguistic development; the next stage was then Gothic, and the one after that New High German. Evolution takes place here in a perfectly regular manner. I can only sketch this for you, but these things follow laws which are every bit as absolute as those of nature, and exceptions merely seem to be so.



The sound D in Greek or Latin is transmuted into T and this again into Th which, because of certain language laws, can also be Z. A Greek Th or Z becomes a Gothic D, and this becomes T in New High German. A Gothic Th or Z becomes a New High German T, and so the circle continues. Similarly, a Graeco-Roman B becomes a Gothic P, and this in turn a New High German F or Pf. A Greek F or Pf would be a Gothic B and a New High German P. There is another circle which goes from G to K to Ch. Take for example treis, three, drei: T / Greek; Th / Gothic; D / New High German. This is so in every case and exceptions can be explained by special laws which complement the main laws.

We have three stages, one above the other: Greek-Latin, Gothic—which corresponds to the time when the Roman Empire was coming up against the Germanic tribes—and the further stage of New High German. The strange thing is, as I have said before, that English has remained behind at the Gothic stage. So if you want to find the English for a New High German word, you have to go back a stage. Take 'Tag'; to find the English for this you have to go, not forwards, but backwards: 'day'. Take 'tief'; again you have to go backwards to 'deep'; take New High German 'zehn'; if you want the English you have to go backwards: 'ten'. Take 'Zahn'; you have to go backwards if you want the English: 'tooth'; take 'Dieb'; here too you have to go backwards: 'thief. New High German 'dick', if you go backwards, becomes 'thick'. So, to go from New High German to English, the

direction is opposite to the normal.

So we can say quite objectively: If we seek to find the evolution of language as a folk element in respect of English, we have to go back to the Gothic stage. New High German has risen in evolution to become a special element. This is not said out of any patriotic or nationalistic feeling but simply because it is true, just as there is no need to say the polar bear is white out of any sympathy or antipathy for him. The law I have demonstrated to you is a well-known linguistic law, Grimm's law. I have only demonstrated it with regard to some voiced and unvoiced plosives and some aspirated sounds, but it can be done for the whole system of sounds.⁴ The evolution of language proceeds in accordance with strict laws and it corresponds to the impulses that rule in human evolution. Little by little natural science discovers these things, though sometimes only sporadically. In spiritual science you may find the deeper foundations for all these things.

We shall come to other aspects of spiritual and cultural life which will show that what applies to the realm of language holds sway in other fields as well. Something unconscious, when it is brought to light, bears witness to objective laws. This cannot be turned and twisted according to sympathy or antipathy!

Do not imagine that this Grimm's law on sound-shifts is unknown to those secret brotherhoods of whom we have spoken. Tomorrow we shall see how they come to terms with such matters and how they have relevant things to say about them too. What they have to say is not foolish but perfectly in keeping with a certain kind of occultism. It will be up to you to decide, when you know more about it, how you want to judge it and whether it is something legitimate or not. Through the karma of human evolution it will come about that certain things are made more easily accessible to the public at large, in particular as a result of the circumstance that a certain amount of confusion has entered into the Masonic orders. Because of these circumstances a variety of things are coming to light for the outside world. We, however, want to understand, above all, the deeper foundations of all this.

Some quite bizarre symptoms are indeed coming to light. For instance there exists today an interesting dissertation⁵ by a man who met his death—this too is a remarkable karmic circumstance—on the battlefield of the present war. It is about the parallelism that exists between French politics and French secret societies, and it shows how the two run entirely parallel, how the same forces live in both. Much more intimate and concealed are the circumstances of English politics which are totally under the influence of what lies hidden behind them in this way. Here the main concern is to find ways of placing suitable people in the right places. The people in the background who are involved in occult manipulations are often like a number one; they do not amount to much on their own. They need something else: a nought. Noughts are not ones, but the two together make ten. If more noughts are added, so long as there is a one somewhere as well, a great deal can result—for instance a thousand—though every nought remains a nought. And if the one remains hidden, then only the noughts are visible. So the aim is to combine the noughts in a suitable way with the ones, whereby the noughts have no need to know much about the way in which they are combined with the ones.

There is, for instance, a certain man who is a perfectly honest fellow. I have often said that I in no way look on him as the wicked ogre—for which many in Central Europe want

to take him. I think he is an honest, nice man who, in his own way, longs to speak the truth. Yet this does not prevent him from being a nought. This man's education began at Winchester public school, whence he proceeded to Balliol College, Oxford. Then he won something very important, the Marlylebone Cricket Prize, followed by the Queen Anne Tennis Prize. At the age of twenty-three he became a member of parliament. At that age one is susceptible to all kinds of influences. At thirty he became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He had long been Foreign Minister when he set foot outside England for the first time in order to accompany the King of England on a journey to Africa. He also wrote a little book on angling entitled *Fly Fishing*. Sir Edward Grey then ascended the social ladder before sinking into obscurity. A fellow student at Oxford, ten years his senior, was Asquith,⁶ with whom he spent his years there.

This is how those appear who are the visible accomplices. We shall proceed thus far today and carry on tomorrow.

LECTURE SEVEN

Dornach, 18 December 1916

Let me begin by repeating yet again my urgent request that you do not take notes during these lectures.¹ It is mystifying that my wish in this respect seems to meet with absolutely no compliance. Yet I must make this request particularly with regard to these lectures. Firstly, the current situation gives no opportunity for someone who is seriously concerned with human evolution to give properly rounded-off lectures; at best only isolated remarks are possible. Secondly, we all know what misunderstandings came about at the beginning of this painful time because parts of my lectures were taken down and disseminated in every direction, in some cases with the praiseworthy intention of saying: Look, the things he says aren't as bad as all that— but in others with the less praiseworthy aim of raising people's hackles so that they might build up all sorts of resentments.

Isolated sentences quoted out of context, especially when taken from a series of lectures, can never mean anything and can be interpreted in all manner of ways. I am concerned solely with the quest for the truth, in this case particularly because a number of our friends have requested discussions of this sort and have a real desire for them. I am not concerned that it might be possible to report here or there that what I have to say is really not so bad after all. What I am concerned with is the truth. Surely all those of us who take spiritual science seriously, and who are concerned with the findings of spiritual science with regard to human evolution in our time, should be concerned with the truth.

I shall continue today to give you some more of the viewpoints which furnish a basis on which to form a judgement fitting for today— that is, not for the next few days or weeks, or even for the next year, but for the present time in the wider sense. Let us remember above all that spiritual science is a serious matter and that to understand it in the proper way we must take it more seriously than anything else. If, on the other hand—as is so frequently the case when there is a society which serves as an instrument for the endeavours of spiritual science—if spiritual science is approached with all sorts of prejudices and premature feelings which lead to a state of furious zeal over all manner of things, then this proves a lack of readiness for spiritual science. Yet it is perfectly possible to understand today that spiritual science alone is suitable for the development of that earnestness which is so needed in these tragic times.

Each individual must set aside his preferences for one direction or another and endeavour to accept things without any prejudice. It is impossible to say certain things without making one person or another feel uncomfortable. There are plenty of people today who regard it as a sin even to hint at certain facts, because they imagine that the mere mention of some fact or other is tantamount to taking sides— which is, of course, not the case at all. Some facts must be looked calmly and squarely in the face because only then can a valid judgement be reached. Of course, perhaps a person does not want to reach such a judgement, but he could reach it if he wanted to stand on the foundation of spiritual science.

I shall now present you with a number of preparatory remarks in order to bring forward,

at the end of today's discussion, some points which may awaken an understanding for the manner in which certain—shall we say—occult knowledge is forcing its way into the present-day spiritual development of mankind. Actually, this knowledge is forcing its way to the surface of its own accord as a result of the process of human evolution, so that it is not necessary to make any extra effort to place it within the development of mankind. I shall take my departure from certain details, which I beg you will simply accept as the groundwork, so that later the main emphasis can be placed on what I shall put forward as the outcome of these considerations.

At the beginning of these discussions I said: If, as a good European, one makes every effort to go thoroughly through all the events and facts that have been taking place over decades and have also come to be known recently, if one makes the effort to go thoroughly into them without prejudice, and if one then examines the judgements made on the periphery as a matter of course—and I mean as a matter of course—by people who have rightly borne famous names during the period leading up to today's painful events, then one cannot but reach a certain conclusion. This conclusion is that certain judgements are such that, whatever one might say or assert, the answer is always the same: Never mind, the German will be burnt—after the old pattern: 'Never mind, the Jew will be burnt.' Many, many judgements contain nothing but a certain aversion—whether justified or not is open to question—against anything in the world that might be called German. I am weighing my words carefully.

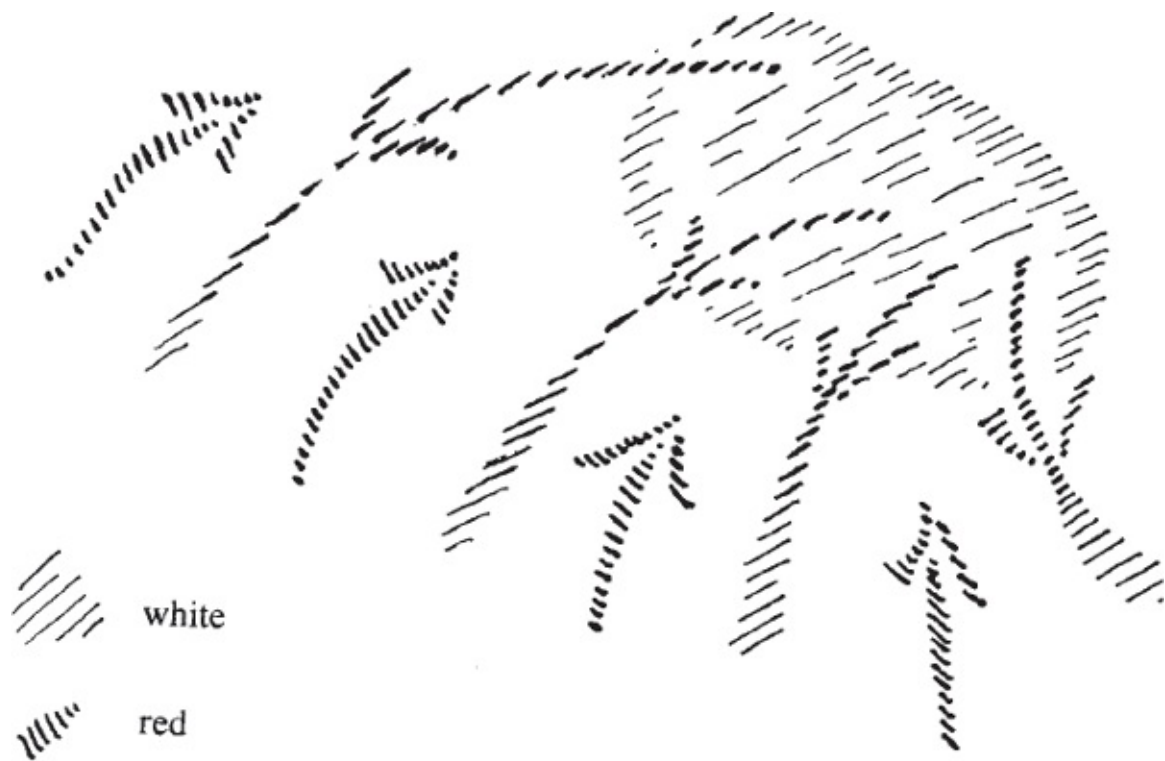
This aversion has recently intensified into a burning hatred which has no inclination whatsoever to scrutinize anything carefully, nor to accept anything that has been carefully scrutinized, but which finds its total justification simply in hating. Yet advantage is not necessarily taken of this justification. If someone says: I hate—and if he really wants to do so and announces that he intends to do so, then why not? Everyone has the right to hate as much as he likes; no objection can be made to it. But very many people are most concerned not to admit to their feelings of hatred in such a situation. They try to lull themselves into forgetting about them by saying all sorts of things which are supposed to wipe away the hatred and put in its place a supposedly objective and just judgement. But this puts everything into a false light. If someone admits honestly: I hate this or that person—then you can talk with him, or perhaps not, depending on the intensity of his hatred. Truthfulness, absolute truthfulness towards oneself and the world in all things is necessary, and if we fail to comprehend that truthfulness is necessary in all things, then we shall be unable to make what spiritual science ought to be for mankind into the most intimate impulse of our own heart and of our own soul. We then say: Certainly, we want a part of spiritual science, that part which is not concerned with our sympathies or antipathies, that part which is useful for us; but we shall reject those parts which do not suit us. It is possible to take this stance, but it is not a standpoint that is beneficial today for human evolution. What I have to say is based on certain remarks, but truly without anger!

It is a well-known fact that very many people see a connection between today's events and the foundation of the German Reich which lies in the centre of Europe. It is not my task to speak about the politics of the German Reich or about any other politics, and I shall not do so. I simply want to give you certain isolated facts as a foundation. It is possible to form an opinion about the events which led to the foundation of this German Reich. It is also possible to form the opinion—whether justified or not—that it is a calamity for

mankind that Germans exist at all. Even this is open to discussion. Why not, if someone is open and honest enough to admit that he holds these views? But this is not our concern at the moment.

Let us look at the fact that this German nation led to the founding of the German Reich during the final third of the nineteenth century. There are people who challenge the founding of the German Reich from quite another point of view. They consider that the founding of this empire was not good for human evolution. But people who share the standpoint of the western empires have no right to form a judgement of this kind. For let us not forget that these very nations of the West are exceedingly attached to the concept of empire, the concept of the state, and that their way of thinking with regard to nationality is very much linked to the various ideas about the state. Therefore, those who unite patriotism with the idea of the state, as do the western nations, have no right to question the idea of an empire at all. If they did they would be quite illogical, for they would be stating that another nation has no right to do what their own nation has done. In a discussion you have to take up a standpoint which provides a basis for discussion and also makes it possible to remain logical. It would be easy to have a discussion with Bakunin² about whether a German Reich in Central Europe is something beneficial. But the basis for such a discussion would differ greatly if it were held, not with statesmen but with almost any member of a western nation, because they are so immersed in the idea of the state. So there must be one presupposition, namely, that the idea of empire as such is not rejected out of hand, otherwise there is no basis for discussion. But one's presuppositions must be known if one wants to arrive at valid judgements.

People today no longer think of the historical impulses out of which this empire in Central Europe arose. They do not consider, for instance, that the soil on which this empire has been founded was for many centuries a kind of reservoir, a kind of fountain-head for the rest of Europe. You see, something Roman, in the sense of a continuation of what used to be Roman, no longer exists today. What used to be Roman has, if I may say so, evaporated and has only entered into other folk elements in the form of isolated impulses. Take the soil of Italy. During the course of the Middle Ages all sorts of Germanic elements kept migrating to Italy. I might have an opportunity to define this more closely later on. In today's Italian population, even in their very blood, there flows a tremendous amount of what can be called Germanic. This was instilled into them by the Roman element, but not in any way which might make it possible today to call the people of present-day Italy a continuation of the old Roman people. It was always the case that from Central Europe, as from a reservoir of peoples, all sorts of tribes migrated to the periphery, to Spain, North Africa, Italy, France, Britain. And as the peoples rayed out in this way, something not of these peoples came to meet them: the Roman element. In the middle, as it were, was the reservoir:



A man such as Dante, about whom I spoke to you yesterday, is simply a characteristic expression of a general phenomenon. Who are today's French people? Not merely descendants of the Latin element. Franks, in other words former Germanic tribes, spread out over this land. Their make-up became mingled with folk elements no longer their own, elements containing Latin aspects, via Roman civic attitudes, mixed with ancient Celtic aspects; the result of all this being something in which many more Germanic impulses live than might be imagined. A great many Germanic impulses live in today's Italian population as well. If we wanted to, we could study the migration of the Lombards into northern Italy, a Germanic element which simply absorbed the Roman. Britain was originally inhabited by elements which were then pushed back into Wales and Brittany and even as far as Caledonia, but not before they had sent out messengers to draw the Jutes, Angles and Saxons over to the island so that they might deter the predatory Picts and Scots. Out of all this an element emerged in which the Germanic obviously predominates.

This spreading out took place in all directions. In Central Europe the reservoir remained behind. Connected with the fact that the centre had to develop differently is that jump—which I do not want to brag about as a jump forward—which is expressed in Grimm's law of sound shifts. This law need not be measured with the yardstick of sympathy or antipathy, for it is simply a fact. Anyone can imagine what led to it, but this need not be confused with sympathy or antipathy.

When the Roman Caesars were carrying out their campaigns against the Germanic tribes, those who were first conquered formed by far the greater part of the army, so the Romans fought the Germanic tribes with Germanic tribesmen. Even in later times the massed peoples of the periphery stood by what was to be found in the centre to the extent that it became necessary to form the empire which, in its final phase, was the Holy Roman Empire. You know the passage in *Faust*³ where the students are glad that they need not worry about the Holy Roman Empire. But, on the other hand, it also came about that the

periphery made terrible war on the middle element, it was constantly rebelling against the middle element. One must also take into account that much of what is present in the consciousness of Central Europe is linked with the way the soil of this empire in Central Europe has constantly been chosen as the scene of battle for all the quarrelling nations. This was particularly the case in the seventeenth century, during the Thirty Years War, in which Central Europe lost up to one third of its population through the fault of the surrounding peoples. Not only towns and villages but whole tracts of countryside were destroyed. The peoples of Central Europe were utterly flayed by those of the periphery. These are historical facts which must simply be looked at squarely.

Now it is not surprising that in Central Europe the inclination arose to want something other peoples had already achieved, namely an empire. But the population of this soil has far less of a relationship to the idea of empire than has that of western Europe, which clings particularly strongly to it, regardless of whether it is a republic or a monarchy. This is irrelevant. You have to look beyond the mere words and see how the individual, whether in a republic or some other form, stands in relation to the state he belongs to, whether his feeling for the way he belongs to it is of this kind or that. I said it is not surprising that the impulse arose in Central Europe to want an empire, a state which makes it possible, on the one side, to build up some protection against the centuries of attack from the West and, on the other, to put up a barrier against what comes from the East—which is something that is still necessary for Central Europe though not, of course, for the East. These things are, I believe, comprehensible.

The Central European population has a different relationship to what might be called the idea of a state; that is it differs from that of the Western European, especially the French, population. In Central Europe the idea of a state has not been living for centuries as it has, for instance, in France, and furthermore the idea of a state as it exists in France is not suitable for what has remained in Central Europe. On the other hand, in what has remained in Central Europe something developed around the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century which is of such spiritual stature that it will even be admired in the West when one day the hatred will have abated somewhat. And this spiritual stature, which mankind will continue to savour for centuries to come, was achieved in Central Europe at a time when the West was making it utterly impossible for Central Europe to build a coherent state structure. Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, Herder and all the others who are connected with this stream did not become great within a coherent state structure. They became great despite the absence of a proper state structure. It is hardly possible to imagine how different it was for Goethe, who became great without any coherent state structure, compared with Corneille, or Racine, who can scarcely be imagined without the background of that state structure which was given its brilliance and eminence by Louis XIV, the king who said: 'L'état, c'est moi!' These things should be looked at together.

However, during the course of the nineteenth century impulses arose among the inhabitants of Central Europe which were at first entirely inward, impulses which gave birth to the inclination to want some form of state structure also. This inclination first came into being in an intensely idealistic way, and those who are familiar with the development of the nineteenth century know that the idea of a state which moved the inhabitants of Central Europe was at first anchored, above all, in the heads of all sorts of idealists, people who were more idealistic than practical, who were most unpractical with

regard to the idea of a state, compared with the practical westerners.

So we follow the development of the endeavours to form a German Reich which could encompass the German peoples of Central Europe. We see, particularly in the year 1848, how the idea takes on certain forms which have a definite idealistic stamp. But because the nineteenth century was the age of materialism, anything of an idealistic stamp was not favoured with much luck. The blame for this bad luck lay not so much with the nation as with the materialism of the nineteenth century. So then it became necessary to achieve in a practical way what could not be achieved in an idealistic way; in other words it had to be achieved just as it had always been achieved during the course of European history. For how did states come into being? States came into being through wars, and through all the other things which also led to the German Reich between the years 1864 and 1870.

Those who experienced the days when the new German Reich was being founded know how pain-filled were the hearts of the ones who were still imbued with the ideas of 1848, when the aim was to found this Reich out of feelings and ideals. There were, in the sixties and seventies, those who favoured a 'great German' arrangement, while others favoured a 'little German' arrangement. Those who favoured a 'greater' Germany stood by the old idealistic principles and hoped to found the Reich on idealistic foundations and impulses. They did not want to make any conquests; they simply wanted to unite everything that was German, including Austria, in a common Reich or state. Anyone who imagines that these people desired to make even the smallest conquest has failed to grasp the degree of national idealism that lived in them. For a long period they were in bitter opposition to those who favoured a 'little' Germany, and who, under Bismarck, founded the present German Reich—that is, the German Reich under the leadership of Prussia. But in the end the 'greater German' party made their peace with the others because they came to understand that in Central Europe in the nineteenth century things had to go the way they did. They came to terms with this and realized that in the end Germany had to be founded in the same way as had been France and England. In this way those who favoured a 'greater' Germany gradually came to terms with something that went utterly against their ideals. These things have to be taken into consideration.

Consider further: whatever opinion one might have about the events that took place between 1866 and 1870/71, whomsoever one might blame or not blame for the war of 1870, one must not forget that on the side of France efforts were made to prevent the foundation of the German Reich,⁴ that French politics were aimed at preventing the creation of a German Reich. Of course this can be denied, but things which are denied nevertheless remain true. When I speak of the French side, or the English side, I never mean the people themselves. I mean the cohesion of those who are at the helm at any given time, those who cause the external events to happen. People may think what they like about the Spanish succession, or about a French or a German party in favour of war. But there is no disputing the fact that there were people in France who made every effort to implement their judgement: namely, that the creation of an independent German Reich in Central Europe was not in keeping with the 'gloire' of the French state. This was one of the causes of the war of 1870/71. As a counter-stroke another impulse developed, about which once again one may think what one likes. This was the opinion that the German Reich might just as well be founded in the same manner as the French Empire, namely, by making war on a neighbour. These things must be looked at in cold blood.

So this German Reich was founded in the manner with which you are familiar, though there is little inclination today to examine the historical facts minutely. However, most of you know them, at least in outline. So we can say: The German Reich was founded, while France and Germany were at war with one another, in such a way that the forces generated by this war were those that brought the German Reich into being.

Let us look at the moment when Paris was not yet under siege but when the German victories were already making the founding of the German Reich seem a possibility. There was cause to view the resistance to the founding of this German Reich as broken, and so in Central Europe the idea arose to set in motion the founding of the Reich favoured by the 'little' German party. We are looking approximately at November 1870. In doing this we come up against the fact that, out of all that took place in what later became Germany—that is, the German Reich—there arose the feeling that this way of founding the German Reich has done great damage to Europe, the feeling that the structure of this Reich is a structure of menace. To speak of 'Germany' is no more than a want of tact on the part of those who live in the periphery. There is no Germany today, any more than there is a Kaiser of Germany. There are individual German states and the one who has been chosen to represent these states before the rest of the world is expressly not called 'Kaiser of Germany' but 'German Kaiser', which is something quite different. This has come about out of certain characteristics of the nature of Central Europe. I might point out that when the new Romanian state was recently formed there was much discussion on whether the king should be entitled 'King of the Romanians' or 'King of Romania'. Such things come to mean a great deal the moment one starts to look at realities and not only illusions. The title 'King of Romania' was chosen for quite specific historical reasons in place of the originally intended 'Romanian King' or 'King of the Romanians'.

Now if we allow judgements which have been in the making for some time to work on us, judgements which have recently in some cases reached new peaks of folly—again, we are not discussing what is justified, for everything is, of course, always either justifiable or unjustifiable in its separate parts—if we summarize these judgements we find that there has come into a being a feeling that great damage has been done to Europe by the founding of the German Reich, a feeling that the structure of this Reich in Central Europe is, in a way, a structure of menace. In order to make this clear I should like to read to you a text which, in addition, contains a number of other things I am also concerned with at present. It has been said: Germany, or the Germans, feel themselves to be threatened in some way, and yet in fact it is Germany that poses a threat to the whole of Europe. A judgement has been expressed which is rather significant in connection with this. It was printed in the journal *Matin* dated 8 October 1905. Do not forget that when we are concerned with realities we need to know that behind the opinion of one person there always stand the judgements of countless others, and also that realities always proceed from realities. In *Matin*⁵ of 8 October 1905 we read:

'If Herr von Bülow wants to complain that Germany is being isolated, he ought first to ask himself whether perhaps Germany has not isolated herself from the rest of Europe by her actions. The authors of the mistrust and the suspicious hatred which are squeezing the German Reich ever more tightly by the day are not called Delcassé, Lansdowne, Edward VII or Roosevelt, but Bismarck and Moltke, Wilhelm II and von Bülow. These are the ones who have created and developed this prickly, irritable and

provoking Reich, bristling with weaponry, which has been casting challenging glances at Europe for the past quarter century and which Europe in the end cannot help looking at with envy. By making her ever more Prussian, they are the ones who are turning away the sympathy which she was guaranteed in earlier days by her active scientific ways and her sober modesty. They are the ones who are sending out sparks of barbaric menace or brutal passion in this time of weariness. Europe is afraid of the fire that never stops smouldering in Berlin; Europe is taking precautionary measures.'

So where do we stand with this judgement that the German Reich poses a threat for the whole of Europe?

Among those in the West who express opinions today there are unlikely to be any who do not see Germany as a threat for the whole of Europe, or who do not consider that the worst thing that could possibly have happened was to turn this people, who formerly shone through their sciences and their sober modesty—as is so aptly expressed here—into a threat for the whole of Europe. For that this is what it has become is repeated over and over again by countless voices and in rivers of printers' ink.

It is easy to say what is often said, namely that this Reich was not created out of a historical necessity but out of 'Germanic arrogance'—a misuse, incidentally, of the word 'Germanic'—and further that it is filled with people who never cease stressing that Germans lead the world, Germans are the saviours of the world, and so on. Countless times we have heard it said: The Germans have grown arrogant, they think they have been called to rule the world, they consider the Reich they have founded to be something urgently needed in modern times, and so on; the pride, the arrogance of the Germans has become utterly insufferable. Such are the judgements which one hears in ever-changing forms.

I have no intention of glossing over anything, but I now want to read to you a judgement which was made at the time the Reich was founded, a time I have already mentioned. I said: Let us return to November 1870. What I want to read to you might make some people jump up and down with impatience—pardon the flippant expression—and say: There you have it! This is the kind of idea people have about the importance of this German Reich! It had hardly come into being, indeed was still in the process of being founded, and already it was being presented as something beneficial, not only for Germans but for the whole of Europe, indeed for the whole world—even for the French themselves! To show you that I am not glossing over anything I shall read to you a judgement expressed in the year 1870:⁶

'No nation ever had so bad a neighbour as Germany has had in France for the last four hundred years; bad in all manner of ways; insolent, rapacious, insatiable, unappeasable, continually aggressive... Germany, I do clearly believe, would be a foolish nation not to think of raising up some secure boundary-fence between herself and such a neighbour now that she has the chance. There is no law of nature that I know of, no Heaven's Act of Parliament, whereby France, alone of terrestrial beings, shall not restore any portion of her plundered goods when the owners they were wrenched from have an opportunity upon them. .. The French complain dreadfully of threatened "loss of honour"... But will it save the *honour* of France to refuse paying for the glass she has voluntarily broken in her neighbour's windows? For the present, I must say, France looks more and more

delirious, miserable, blameable, pitiable, and even contemptible. She refuses to see the facts that are lying palpable before her face, and the penalties she has brought upon herself... Ministers flying up in balloons ballasted with nothing but outrageous public lies, proclamations of victories that were creatures of the fancy; a Government subsisting altogether on mendacity, willing that horrid bloodshed should continue and increase rather than that *they*, beautiful Republican creatures, should cease to have the guidance of it: I know not when or where there was seen a nation so covering itself with dishonour... The quantity of conscious mendacity that France, official and other, has perpetrated latterly, is something wonderful and fearful... It is evidently their belief that new celestial wisdom is radiating out of France upon all the other overshadowed nations; that France is the new Mount Zion of the universe... I believe Bismarck will get his Alsace and what he wants of Lorraine; and likewise that it will do him, and us, and all the world, and even France itself by and by, a great deal of good... Bismarck seems to me to be striving with strong faculty, by patient, grand, and successful steps, towards an object beneficial to Germans and to all other men. That noble, patient, deep, pious, and solid Germany should be at length welded into a nation and become Queen of the Continent, instead of vapouring, vainglorious, gesticulating, quarrelsome, restless and oversensitive France, seems to me the hopefulest public fact that has occurred in my time... The appearance of a strong German Reich brings about a new situation. If the military states of France and Russia were to join forces, they could crush a splintered Germany lying between them. But now their arbitrary actions are faced with a considerable restraint...'

Now I am going to omit a phrase for a reason which you will understand in a moment:

'What every English statesman has longed for has left the realm of ideas and become reality... '

You could ask, is this megalomania? Dear friends, I have just read to you a leading article which appeared in *The Times* in November 1870, but I omitted one word in the final sentence. The complete sentence reads:

'But now their arbitrary actions are faced with a considerable restraint. The strong Central Power every English statesman has longed for has left the realm of ideas and become reality.'

As you see, it is necessary to look at things as they really are. Those who read *The Times* today should to some extent take into account the opinion of *The Times* of November 1870. They might even attain to an unusual view of that most ghastly phrase ever coined, that of 'German militarism', if they were to think a little about what was said from the English side at that time: that the appearance of a strong German Reich brings about a new situation. If the military states of France and Russia joined forces, they could crush a splintered Germany lying between them.

Times change, as you see. But people still believe they can make absolute judgements, and they are so happy in their absolute judgements. It is truly not enmity towards the English being and the English people if one passes a judgement which may seem wrong to many people from England, such as the one I passed yesterday about Sir Edward Grey. Those English who think it is enmity are, in fact, their own worst enemy. But I am not in

the habit of passing judgement without any support from what can be regarded as a reliable source. You could say that whoever said what I said about Sir Edward Grey was no Englishman and cannot have known him. So now let me read to you a judgement about him by an Englishman who knew him well because he was a fellow minister. During the winter of 1912/13 this man⁷ said about Sir Edward Grey:

‘It is amusing for those of us who have known Grey since the beginning of his career to note how much he impresses his Continental colleagues. They seem to assume there is something in him which is, in fact, not there. He is one of the foremost sporting anglers of the kingdom and also quite a good tennis player. He does not, however, possess any political or diplomatic capacities, unless a certain wearisome tediousness in his manner of speaking and also an extraordinary tenacity, were to be seen as such. Earl Rosebery once said of him that the impression he gives of great concentration stems from the fact that there is never a thought in his head which might distract him from whatever paper he is studying. When recently a somewhat more lively diplomat expressed admiration for Grey’s modest bearing, which never reveals what might be going on in his head, a rather pert secretary said: “A money box filled to the brim with gold sovereigns does not rattle when you shake it. Neither is there a sound if it contains not so much as a single penny. In the case of Winston Churchill, a few coppers rattle so loudly that it gets on your nerves. In the case of Grey there is not a sound. Only the one who holds the money box in his hand can tell whether it is full to the brim or completely empty!” Though impertinent, this is well put. I believe that Grey has the most decent character, though he does sometimes allow a rather unfortunate vanity to mislead him into getting involved with affairs which it would be better to leave alone in the interest of keeping his hands clean. He is always excused by the fact that on his own he is unable to comprehend or think anything through properly. On his own he is no kind of schemer, but the moment a skillful schemer takes possession of him he can appear as the most accomplished schemer. This is why political schemers have always been tempted to choose precisely him for their tool, and to this alone he owes his position.’

We must take note of these things so that we are not tempted to believe that the peace of Europe in July 1914 was in particularly good hands. By using a number of documents referred to in various books anything can be proved. What matters is whether these things were used in the right way in the handling of those forces which are important.

Another thing you must note is that historical processes grow out of one another, they gradually take shape. What led to the events of 1914 had been in preparation for a long time, a very long time. Much has been said about this preparation, for instance, that the countries of the Triple Entente did not have any agreement which was against Central Europe; that the only purpose of the Triple Entente was to cultivate peace in Europe. All sorts of facts have been paraded as ostensible proof for this supposition. I would have to tell you some very long stories if I wanted to prove fully what I have to say. This is not possible, but I want to give you a few points of reference. For instance, I should like to read you some passages from a speech made in France in October 1905, because in the future this will have a certain part to play in history. Such speeches are always one-sided, of course, but if one bears everything in mind—and here there are a number of important points to bear in mind—a judgement can be made. A number of important things may be taken from this speech by Jaurès⁸ from the year 1905. I am able to choose this example

because I have recently spoken about Jaurès in quite another context. As you know, Jaurès was a democrat, indeed a social-democrat and, whatever else one might think of him, he was certainly a man who was seriously concerned not only with peace which would have been so necessary for Europe, or at least western Europe, but with calling together all those people in the world who seriously longed to keep peace. So in a way Jaurès had a right to speak as he did. In October 1905, shortly after the French democratic government had ditched Delcassé—pardon the flippant expression—when it had become apparent during a session of the chamber that he was capable of endangering peace in Europe in the near future, Jaurès commented as follows:

‘England has recognized Delcassé’s dream and is quietly preparing to make use of it. The threat posed by German industry and German commerce, in all markets of the world, to English trade and English profits, is increasing daily.

It would be cynical, it would be scandalous, if England were to declare war on Germany merely in order to annihilate her military might, destroy her fleet and send her trade to the bottom of the ocean.

But if one day a conflict were to arise between France and Germany in which France brought forward legal reasons and the demand for the restoration of her national integrity, then behind these splendid pretexts the calculations of the English capitalists, who want to remove German competition by force, could creep in and use this as a means of achieving their aim.

So when difficulties arose in the Moroccan affair between France and Germany, and the latter, suspecting a coalition between France and England, made a brusque intervention in order to force the two to make declarations, it turned out that England—I have to say this I’m afraid—was all too inclined to fan the flames. It is a fact that, at the very moment when events were reaching a climax, England offered France an offensive-defensive pact in which she guaranteed us the fullest support and committed herself not only to sink the German fleet but also to occupy the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal and land one hundred thousand troops in Schleswig-Holstein. If this pact had been signed—and Monsieur Delcassé wanted to do so—this would have meant immediate war. This is the reason why we socialists demanded the resignation of Monsieur Delcassé, and by doing so we have rendered a service to France, Europe and mankind in general.’

Above all, Jaurès knew those things which many people do not know when they arrive at judgements—most essential and important things. He was even careless enough to express these essential and important things in such a way as to hint that he might say more in the future. It is well known to occultists that in the last third of the nineteenth century a member of a certain brotherhood made known to the world certain things which, in the opinion of the brotherhood, should not have been made public. One day soon after he had done this he disappeared; he had been murdered. Jaurès was not an occultist, but we may be excused for being curious as to whether the world will ever hear what led to his death on the eve of the war.

The things which Jaurès said go back to the session of the chamber during which Delcassé, the creature of Edward VII, as well as other creatures who worked behind the scenes, was ditched by the government, perhaps not so much because he wanted to smooth

the way for war as for quite another reason.

We are in the year 1905. Russia is still engaged over in the East and it is, therefore, to be hoped that if the flames being fanned by Delcassé in the West really start to flare up the outcome will not be what it would be if Russia were no longer busy in the East. But Delcassé is not a person who takes things lying down. When those who did not want a war accused him of driving matters to the brink of war, he replied that England had let it be known to France that she was prepared to occupy the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal and attack Schleswig-Holstein with 100,000 troops and, if France so wished, this offer would be repeated in writing. This piece of news, which Delcassé presented to his ministerial colleagues who were about to turn him out was, of course, the upshot of negotiations he had been conducting behind their backs and in which King Edward VII had also been heavily involved.

I could quote many items which would verify this fact, which was published in *Matin*, and later also in other journals. But I only want to draw your attention to the fact that at least there was someone, even at the time, who looked at the matter more closely and found it suspicious. This was a personality who is possibly not at all liked by people, particularly in France. He was the clerical senator Gaudain de Villaine⁹ who, on 20 November 1906, when Clemenceau's ministry had already begun, asked what was the situation between France and England about which so much was being heard. Clemenceau answered that so far as the idea of revenge was concerned, he was indignant that a French senator could have set such a trap for him, obliging him either to disappoint the Orange Lodge or make a declaration of war, and he would therefore refuse to reply. So Clemenceau responded to the question from a senator as to whether anything existed in the way of a coalition between France and England, which could lead to a European war, by refusing to reply. For if he were to reply he would either have to disappoint the Orange Lodge with regard to the idea of revenge, or he would have to make a declaration of war. So you see: if Clemenceau had been open about the relationship at that time between France and England he would have had to make a declaration of war—not a declaration of peace but a declaration of war. He said this himself in 1906.

We must not forget that what works in every case in the world is what one person hears from another. Can you imagine that it was possible in Central Europe to believe in the 'peaceful' intentions of western Europe, while at the same time having to listen to not one, but to countless such facts? To judge such things a number of factors must be taken into account. One of these is the utter absurdity of speaking of Central European militarism in the context of Central Europe in its widest sense. For any such militarism is an obvious consequence of being sandwiched between two military states.

People with absolutely no sense of reality might ask: Were not all sorts of proposals made about disarmament? You need only look at these suggestions for disarmament! A particular goal can be achieved by quite a number of different routes. Of course some people—I do not say nations, I say people—in western Europe would have preferred to achieve what they wanted, and still want, without a war which would spill the blood of hundreds of thousands on all sides. They would have preferred to gloat gleefully and say: Look, we have created peace!

One of the means preferred by western European politicians of a certain calibre was the

disarmament proposal,¹⁰ for this was simply a different means of achieving the goal. When it turned out that no headway was made with disarmament proposals, this particular route had to be abandoned as impassable. If it had been possible to fetter Central Europe by means of disarmament this would, of course, have been preferred. But this was only one of several possible methods.

One must not be misled by words or by illusions; one must be clear about what people want. So ever and again it is necessary to stand up for people with a healthy way of thinking, people who really want what they say they want, even if, under the influence of hate and all sorts of other feelings, they are identified as those who are to blame for something. One must stand up for them and be clear about how unfair it is to say: The English did this or that, the English are to blame for this or that. This is not a sensible judgement. But neither is it sensible if an English person feels hurt when facts such as the one just discussed are revealed. One must sit up and take notice when, on a basis of good sense, fingers are pointed to certain factors in the great complex of causes. Thus we find under the heading 'The German Scene' in the *Daily News*¹¹ of 13 October 1905 a declaration that says the following about the British government of the time, which bears so much of the blame for what is still going on today. I must add that Sir Edward Grey's predecessor was not a nought. Lord Lansdowne knew much more about what was what. But from a certain point onwards, those who stood behind the scenes needed a nought, in order to be able to operate more easily:

'And it is high time that Lord Lansdowne should explain and defend this chapter in the diplomacy for which he and his colleagues are constitutionally responsible. There has been a tendency of late to place Lord Lansdowne upon a pinnacle, but the country will have little reason to thank him if it be found that he has permitted this country to drift into entanglements directly involving a risk of European war... The best of courts will sometimes harbour fleeting family feuds, but what have the people of Great Britain or the people of Germany to do with these things?... The anti-German hotheads in this country and the anti-British hotheads in Germany alone stand in the way of such a consummation [of friendly and stable relations] and for their tempestuous fads vast populations may one day have to suffer dearly.'

You have to take into account the essential things in the right places. But never mind all the facts; good sense alone could prove that the two Central European states had not the least cause to bring about a war. How would the prospect of war have seemed to those who thought about it? France would have had to say that in the event of a European war, unless certain conditions came about, she would be likely to suffer a great deal. However, this was not believed in France because there was still such a strong faith in the France which had ruled Europe for centuries. In Italy the conditions are rather special. Perhaps if we have time we shall discuss them further in another connection. But Italy also, under certain conditions, could not imagine that any great advantages would come of a war which would throw everything in Europe into chaos. In Russia, too, conditions are rather special, as I have already told you in connection with Russia's relationship to the Slav peoples, the Slavrace.

This gives me an opportunity, by the way, to quote you an example of the depths of Sir Edward Grey's thoughts. What did his colleague Rosebery say? That the impression he

gave of great concentration stemmed from the fact that he never had a thought in his head to distract him? Well, once a thought was infiltrated into his meditating mind by those who worked by infiltrating thoughts into his mind, the upshot was that he suddenly said: The Russian race has a great future and is destined to accomplish great things. He had forgotten that it was the Slav peoples who had been meant and that there is no such thing as a Russian race. When speaking of realities it is absolutely necessary to distinguish between Russianism and the Slav peoples.

In Russia only those who represented Russianism could imagine any great outcome for a European war, namely, the realization, at least partially, of the testament of Peter the Great. Apart from that, a great deal of suffering was expected, but not that suffering on which the representatives of Russianism would have placed any value.

England was able to say to herself that she would lose and risk the least. Now that the sorrowful events of war have been going on for many months, if an assessment were to be made of who had suffered least, or indeed hardly at all—at least in regard to the opinion of world history—the answer would be: England. England will be able to continue waging war for a long time without suffering to any great degree.

But the so-called Central Powers would most certainly have had nothing to gain from a war and they had no desire for such a war. They always displayed two tendencies. On the one hand there was a certain carefree air which arose, not out of a knowledge of what was going on but out of a basic characteristic; for the Austrian character is fundamentally carefree. On the other hand emphasis was always placed on the statement that all they wanted was to keep what they already had, and that any other suggestion was nonsense. There is no question, for instance, that any part of Serbia was to be annexed, if those who attempted to do so had succeeded in localizing the war between Austria and Serbia.

If England had been led by a statesman who had not said as early as 23 July: If Austria makes war on Serbia, this could lead to a European war; if England had been led by one who had said: We shall do everything possible to make sure that the war is localized; then events would have taken quite a different turn. But this would have had to be someone who formed his judgements in a different way from Sir Edward Grey, who was hypnotized from the start by the thought: If Austria makes war on Serbia, there will be a European war. He never asked what Russia had to do with the whole matter of war between Austria and Serbia. This never occurred to him and the suspicion cannot be detected in anything he said. All he ever saw was the justification for Russia's influence in Serbia, a justification for an influence which had been prepared in a remarkable way and was borne on remarkable currents, as I have shown you.

Nothing that has taken place in this connection, including the 364 assassinations between the years 1883 and 1887, has anything whatever to do with any kind of judgement about the Serbian people. All they have done is to fight bravely, and in their present condition they are still doing so. To them alone is owed the only success achieved in recent weeks down there by the Entente.¹² No one who understands these matters will judge against any people, let alone one who, right into its most tragic days, has shown that it is not only willing—to the extent of sacrificing its own blood—but also able to stand up for its true nature, always present and at the ready in grave times, if only it is allowed to be. But we must remember also that the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand was

only the last great blow in a whole series of assassination attempts against Austrian government officials to have taken place within the space of a few months. This was in fact a particular campaign, which was even quite comprehensible and in keeping with certain people. You remember what I told you about the occult background of this individuality, Archduke Franz Ferdinand. You also remember that it is a fact, a paradoxical fact, that this couple, kindly disposed towards the Slavs in the highest sense, were slain by Slavs—or seemingly so. The deeper connections are made more approachable by a certain understanding of the heart. We see a human being, kindly disposed in the highest sense towards the Slavs, slain—together with his wife—by Slav bullets. At the last moment the Duchess spies from her carriage a young female standing quite near; smiles at her, seconds before the bullets strike, because she notices she is a Slav woman, and exclaims: ‘Look, a Slavka!’¹³ Then the bullets strike. What a strange karma this reveals! Before the bullets strike her down, the Duchess exclaims in delight, because her eye has fallen on one of her beloved Slav people.

I described earlier the far-reaching connection existing between machinations in the Balkan countries and a number of well-prepared situations on the Apennine peninsula. And I now want to ask once again a question I have already put to you: Why was it written in a rather inferior Paris journal¹⁴ in January 1913 that it was necessary for the good of mankind for Archduke Franz Ferdinand to be killed? Why was it said twice in this so-called ‘Occult Almanac’ that he would be killed? It is necessary to look at all the facts at once. We will find that the alchemy of the bullets which were used for this assassination was exceedingly complicated and that, although they stemmed from a Serbian arsenal, they had been ‘anointed’ from quite another quarter—if I may put it symbolically.

These are things which expressed themselves in what could be seen, for instance, in Austria. Imagine Switzerland surrounded only by those who hate her. I doubt whether this would have a particularly reassuring influence, especially if the hatred were expressed in sayings such as those which have become current in Romania: *Jos Austria perfida!*—That is: Down with perfidious Austria!; or: Rather Russian than Austrian!—and so on. If this is how things stand, and if you consider all the things that were written in Italy quite a long time before the war against Austria broke out, then you will understand that the situation was far from reassuring. In this way an extensive campaign was organized which spread far and wide in the countries surrounding Austria. I am not defending any particular state, but merely mentioning facts.

Consider, for instance, also the following: at the Berlin Congress, Austria received, through the significant influence of Lord Salisbury,¹⁵ a mandate to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina. When England gave Austria the mandate to undertake this action in the Balkans during the seventies, it turned out that in Austria there was passionate opposition to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina because the Germans in Austria said: We have enough Slavs already; we cannot possibly absorb any more Slavs. If the idea had arisen in Austria to seize some fragment of Serbia by an act of war it would have met with the sharpest opposition in the interests of Austria, which were well understood, for nothing would have been more stupid than to covet some fragment of Serbian territory. The only desire was to hold the empire together in order to counteract the campaign. This was perfectly honest, though it may have been careless. Seen objectively, it becomes perfectly

obvious that the war would not have started as a consequence of the ultimatum of Austria to Serbia if Russia had not taken up the stance we all know about, despite knowing perfectly well that Austria was not bent on any form of conquest. In all this, however, we must remember the moods. The consequence of everything we have been discussing was that moods arose, not only in the periphery but also in Central Europe.

Now I want to give you a small example to show you how, despite everything, it is possible to form a judgement about these things if one really sets out in earnest to achieve a valid judgement. It is interesting to look at certain points at definite times, for only in this way can one recognize something. For example, we might ask: What must it have looked like in the soul of someone who felt responsible for Austria, let us say round about the time of the assassination of the heir to the throne—I mean immediately before and immediately after this?

In order to reach a valid judgement with regard to the mood amongst honest people in Austria, the best moment to choose would be that which immediately preceded the assassination, for people were not then influenced by what happened in the aftermath of the assassination. You see how cautious I am trying to be. I am not going to consider the nervous and anxious souls as they were immediately after the assassination. Instead, let us look at what lived in the soul of the honest Austrian under all the influences which, since Delcassé, had made themselves felt coming from western Europe and connecting up with eastern Europe, with Russia. Now, I can place before your souls such a judgement by reading to you a passage from an essay¹⁶ which was written just at the moment in question. Though it appeared after the assassination it was already in the process of being printed when it happened. So it was written by an Austrian in the weeks immediately preceding the assassination:

[Gap in the shorthand report.]

Here you have the judgement of a man whose thoughts are based on common sense, someone who saw all the factors at work in Europe just before the final event, the assassination, took place. Everyone knew that at the instigation of Russia the Balkan states would be forced to declare war on Austria. Therefore, the right thing to do in order to avoid war would have been to start just at this point with attempts to localize the situation, for externally the prospects looked quite good.

It is necessary when making judgements according to one's own feelings—for us, judgements are facts—to look at the facts themselves and use them as the foundation. Today I have only been able to give you a few isolated facts in order to explain what I mean. But I gave them to you expressly for the purpose of developing the facts; nothing more. Let us be clear about the purpose of introducing such facts: the purpose is to promote the truth. The truth, even if, paradoxically, it may be damaging, can never be as damaging as an untruth.

Those who understand the facts know what unending lies were fabricated, from the moment it became possible to lie, unhindered, as a result of the possibility of making oneself heard above the other side—that is, of drowning out the other side by means of the various methods which came to the fore in such a grievous way. But we are concerned with truth and with the admission of the truth. It is quite definitely not the truth to

maintain that this war was provoked by Central Europe. Perhaps people cannot speak the truth because they do not know it. Obviously, when something like this war comes about, both parties are usually partly to blame, but in different ways. But I am not talking about blame, I am talking about the uselessness of judgements which have been made, which take no account of the actual truth of the matter. Of course, I do not expect that these judgements will cease to be made, for obviously I know what happens in the course of human evolution and that, especially in our time, there is no inclination to base judgements on valid foundations; for there is so much in our time that prevents judgements being based on valid foundations. But one really ought to state properly what one is talking about.

Those who are connected with certain sources of these grievous world events, which from sheer negligence of thought still tend to be called 'war', those who therefore feel connected with what is emanating in the periphery from certain centres, should admit quite openly: Yes, we want what certain centres in the periphery want, we want the people of Central Europe to be partly exterminated and partly condemned to serfdom.

Certain people in these centres, however, do not want the cultural life of Central Europe to perish. They talk of the wonderful science and culture and of the sober modesty which used to exist. In other words, they would be happy to lord it over these territories of culture and modesty by acting in the way the Romans behaved towards the Greeks. Obviously, Greek culture was higher; and the Romans did not destroy it. Similarly, no one in the Entente wants to destroy German culture. On the contrary, these people will be only too pleased if German culture continues to flourish vigorously, but they want a relationship similar to that of the Romans to the Greeks: that is, they want to make a kind of cultural helotry out of what exists in Central Europe. All right, then let them say so! Why deck it out with something so utterly ridiculous! For German militarism—which is not to be denied—has its true origin in French and Russian militarism. Without French and Russian militarism there would be no German militarism.

Let them say that what they want is to helotize Central Europe! Let them say they would be quite content if this could be the outcome! Let them admit that they hate the presence of such a people in the middle of Europe who want to do what all the other surrounding peoples are doing! If someone says: I hate everything German; I do not want the Germans to have what other peoples have—well and good. You can then talk with him about it, or not if he does not want to, but he is nevertheless telling the truth. But if he keeps repeating: I want to destroy German militarism, I don't want the Germans to oppress other peoples, I want the Germans to do this or that—as is said today and has been constantly repeated for years—then he is lying. Perhaps he does not know that he is lying—but he is lying, he really is lying. Objectively he is lying, even though perhaps subjectively he is not.

What matters is to stand on the foundation of truth, even if this truth is perhaps harmful, even if it is embarrassing. It is necessary to admit these things and not anaesthetize oneself with empty phrases about German militarism for which one has a hatred to which one does not want to admit, even to oneself. One must admit that one wants to helotize the German people, yet cannot face up to wanting this. Perhaps an anaesthetic is needed; but it is not the truth! It is most important to stand on the foundation of truth. To have the

courage to face the truth always leads one a little step further. But one must have the courage to stand by the truth.

It is a fact that every people, as a people, has a mission within the total evolution of mankind. Every people has a mission, and all these various missions together create a whole, namely, the evolution of mankind. But it is equally true that certain individuals, especially those who come to be familiar with the mission of mankind, have the arrogance to set in train certain things which are in the interest of a limited group, and for this they make use of what lies in human evolution.

Let us take the English people. If what is necessarily meant to come about in the fifth post-Atlantean period through the English people really does come about, then it will never be possible, through the very nature of this English people, for England to start a war. For the true being of the English people in their mission in world history is opposed to any kind of warlike impulse. The real nature of the English people makes them the least warlike nation possible. And yet for centuries there have never been ten consecutive years during which England has not been involved in war. We are living, after all, in the realm of maya. But despite this, truth is truth. In the nature of the English people lies the exclusion of any kind of war, just as for centuries it has been in the nature of the French people—not any longer; now it has to be artificially incited—to conduct war over and over again. It is not in the nature of the English people to wage war, and the reason for this is that the special configuration of the English folk spirit means that its purpose is to evolve what is to be incorporated into the consciousness soul of the fifth post-Atlantean period. This in turn is achieved through all those connections between people arising from logical and scientific thinking on the one hand, and on the other, from commercial and industrial thinking. And when Brooks Adams placed before the world the ideas I mentioned to you earlier, this was an advance thrust, coming from America, pointing towards what the English people must recognize as their mission in world history, based on their deeper nature which contains none of those warlike and imaginative characteristics such as those present, for instance, in the nature of the Russian people.

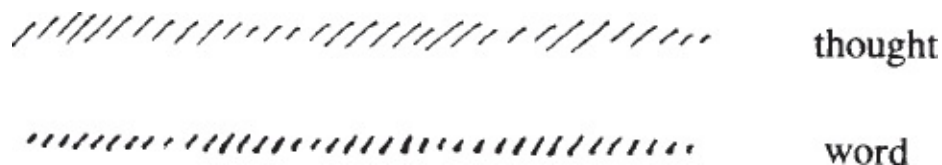
Now much will depend on whether this deeper nature of the English people will one day come to be understood in a deeper, spiritual scientific sense. In a more external way some individuals have understood it. The work of Herbert Spencer¹⁷ and John Stuart Mill¹⁸ shows that the most inspired spirits have fully understood it, though from their more materialistic standpoint and not, as yet, from a spiritual scientific standpoint. I can recommend that you read with some enthusiasm the political essays of Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill, for you can learn a very great deal from them. This spirit of peace which, among other things, makes possible in a special way a certain kind of political thinking, in the manner I have already described, has indeed overflowed to Europe from England. Someone who has entered into European life, from as many and varied points of view as I can really claim to have done, knows, for instance, that all the political sciences of Central Europe have certainly been influenced from the direction of England. And it is no coincidence that the founders of German socialism, Marx and Engels, founded this German socialism from England.

It happens very easily that the nature of Central Europe is misunderstood. The true nature of Central Europe is still almost always misunderstood in western Europe. How

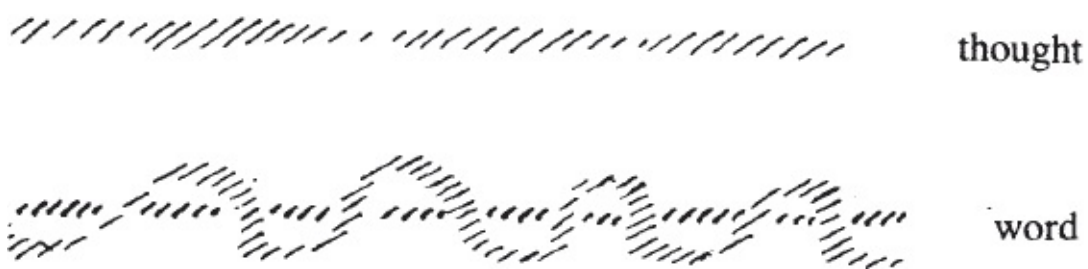
might it be otherwise? The culture of Central Europe was so permeated by the French element that one of the greatest, most important works of German literature, one which set the tone at the zenith of German culture, Lessing's *Laokoon*,¹⁹ had a peculiar destiny: Lessing considered seriously whether he should write it in German or French. Educated people in Central Europe in the eighteenth century wrote German badly and French well. This must not be forgotten. And in the nineteenth century Central Europe was in danger of becoming totally anglicized, of being fully taken over by Englishness. It is no wonder that the nature of Central Europe is so little known, since it is constantly being submerged from all sides, even spiritually and culturally. Think, for instance, of Goethe's theory of evolution in respect of animals and plants. This is truly a stage in advance of Darwin's materialism just as, in respect of Grimm's law, the German language is a stage ahead of Gothic-English. Yet in Germany herself materialistic Darwinism was favoured by fortune, and not her own German Goetheanism. So it is not surprising that the German spirit is poorly understood and that little effort is made to really understand it as it should be understood, if justice is to be done to it.

As I said, the political sciences, in particular, were strongly influenced by the English way of thinking. But what is urgently needed now is that the different peoples should come to a certain degree of self-knowledge. Without this self-knowledge, for which Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill are not adequate—but which must be based on spiritual science and on a sense for what spiritual science can give—without this, no healing can come.

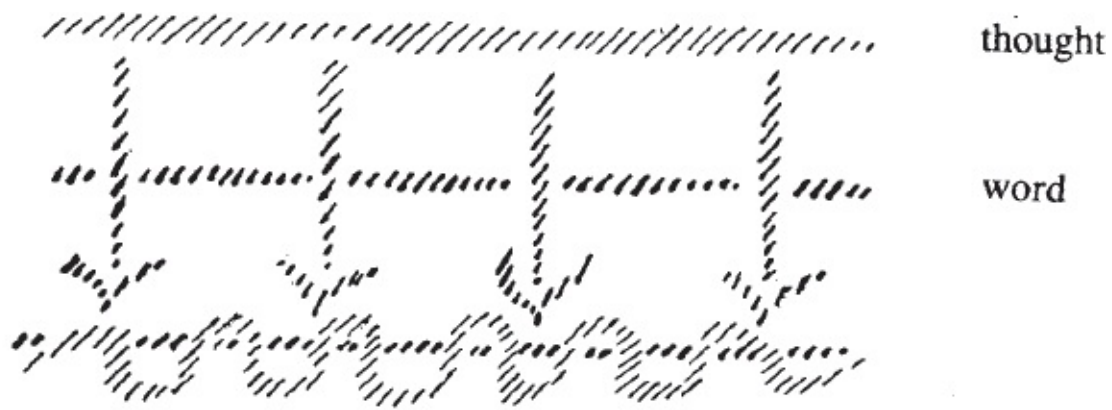
Just consider how difficult it is, for example, to grasp the following—whereby no arid theory is meant, but something at the basis of life: There exists in the soul a certain relationship between the thought and the word. This is a fact. Let us imagine that in the structure of the soul the word lies in this field, and the thought in this one:



The French people have the tendency to push the thought right down to the word; thus, when they speak, the thought is pushed right into what they are saying. That is why, especially in this field, there is so easily an intoxication with words, with phrases—and I mean phrases in the best sense:

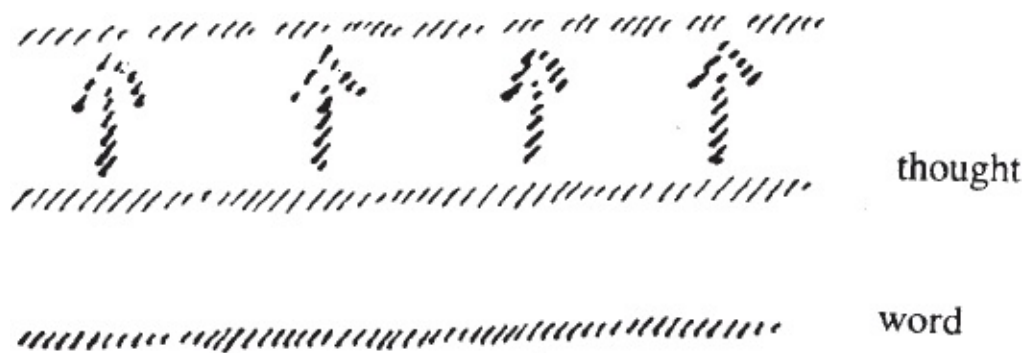


The English people press the thought down below the word, so that the thought mingles with the word and seeks reality beyond the word:



The German language has the peculiarity of not taking the thought as far as the word. Only because of this was it possible for philosophers such as Fichte, Schelling, Hegel—who it would be impossible to imagine anywhere else in the world—to do their work. The German language does not take the thought as far as the word, it retains the thought in the thought. Because of this, however, people will very easily misunderstand one another. For a true translation in this situation is impossible, it is always only a substitute. It is not possible to say what Hegel said, in English or French. It is impossible; such translations can only ever be a substitute. The fact that some understanding is possible comes about solely because certain basic Latin elements are common to more than one language, for it is the same whether you say ‘association’ in French, or ‘association’ in English; both go back to the Latin element. Such things build bridges. But every people has its own special mission and it is only possible to approach this through a longing to attain such an understanding.

The Slav people push the thought inwards so that it is here:



There, the word is quite far away from the thought. It floats, separately.

The strongest coincidence of thought with word, so that the thought disappears over against the word, is in French. The strongest independent life of the thought is in German. Therefore, a saying formulated by Hegel and the Hegelians: ‘The self-consciousness of thought’, is meaningful only in German.²⁰ Something that is an abstraction for non-Germans is, for a German, the greatest experience it is possible to have, if he understands it in a living sense. The German language sets out to found a marriage between what is of itself spiritual and what is spiritual in the thought. Nowhere in the world, by no other people, can this be achieved except by the German people.

This has nothing to do with any kind of a Reich, but it will be endangered for centuries to come if people reject what is at present going through the world as the thought of peace. For then not only will a Reich in Central Europe be endangered but also the whole essence

of what is German. That is why these times are heavily pregnant with destiny for those who understand these things. Let us at least hope that things will be judged differently this time, differently from the previous time when an impulse of destiny came into play, an impulse of destiny to which much thought should have been given—but was not—when Austria voluntarily declared her willingness²¹ to give to Italy what she needed to help her extricate herself from Irredentist ideas and the Grand Orient. But there was no thought in the periphery for what it meant at that time to think little of what Italy, or rather those three people, were doing.²² Let us hope that, whatever happens, the world will be more inclined this time to take these things seriously.

The German element has its particular task because of the special situation of German thought. If this independently living thought is not brought into play it will never be possible to accomplish the spiritual evolution which must be accomplished. Things must be seen as they really are. The English folk element makes it to a certain extent necessary to materialize what is spiritual. This is not something to be held against the English people; it is simply a fact. Within the English folk element things that are spiritual have to be made material to a certain degree. That is why there will be a greater understanding there for what comes from the folk element as opposed to the element of mankind as a whole, namely mediumistic and other atavistic activities. It is just there that ancient things have their source: the ancient Rosicrucians, the ancient Indians, and so on. This must always be revered there in a certain way, just as the language itself has remained behind at the Gothic stage, where ‘remained behind’ is not a moral judgement, nor one involving sympathy or antipathy, but simply an indication of a position in relation to others. It is a question of how things are arranged, not of getting left behind in evolution.

Let us take things as they are. Obviously every nation today can understand everything. Yet it is true to say that all really fruitful English spiritualism, in the best sense of the word, stems from Central Europe and has been imported. Its origin is in Central Europe, or else it is taken from elsewhere. Since intellectuality is so well-developed in England, this is where spirituality can be systemized, organized. A mind such as that of Jakob Böhme²³ would be impossible, for instance, in France. But while Jakob Böhme was born entirely out of the spiritual thought of Central Europe, he gained a great following through Saint-Martin,²⁴ the so-called *philosophe inconnu*, the unknown philosopher, the follower of Jakob Böhme.

Thus, these things have to work together, so there is no point in making judgements on the basis of national feelings. One has to take what is presented to mankind at face value. The moment one takes into account that karma is something serious, that one is connected to one's nation through karma in the way I described yesterday, the moment one sees these things from the point of view of karma and not of passions, one will find the proper attitude. I can imagine a time when even a people as passionate about national matters as the French will come to understand the fact of nationality as something karmic. I can even imagine that with their great talent for spirituality the English nation will come, through a certain science of the spirit, to recognize that there exist other nations who might be accorded some degree of equal status, something for which at present there is not the slightest understanding. This is not a reproach; least of all is it a reproach! But one never knows how often one keeps on saying things which one understands perfectly well

oneself, while others think them curious beyond belief. That attitude is surpassed by that of the Americans. With them the total lack of awareness, that there might be others who intend to evolve in accordance with their own characteristics, is even more paradoxical; of course, only for those who do not share the same standpoint.

Because of the great talent possessed particularly by the English people for spirituality, a good deal could be expected to enter this people via the detour of spirituality, especially taking into account that in them there also lies the greatest talent for purely logical, that is, unspiritual thinking, as well as for systemizing everything. Nothing could be a better expression of this organizational talent than the writings of Herbert Spencer. In regard to everything scientific the English people have the greatest organizational talent. That is why they have such a flair for instituting systems for everything all over the world. Only those who prefer empty phrases can say that the Germans have a particular talent for organization. Such people leave unconsidered the fact that the talent for organization is most removed of all from the true nature of the German people.

It must not be forgotten that what has seemingly been achieved recently by Germans in certain directions, both territorially and culturally, has come about as a result of the way Germany is wedged between East and West. Because of this, during the course of the nineteenth century certain characteristics came to be developed more precisely in Germany than among those peoples to whom they really belong. This is eminently understandable. Self-knowledge has not penetrated to every corner yet, and since the Germans are so capable of assimilation and are able to take in and absorb so much in certain respects, the peoples of the West—not the East—have had an opportunity to discover, in certain respects, much about themselves through what the Germans have absorbed from them. Such characteristics, when seen in oneself, are always found to be excellent and obvious—naturally enough! But when they are met in another, one notices for the first time what they really are. You have no idea how much of what the West finds objectionable in Central Europe is no more than a reflection of what has been absorbed from there by Central Europe.

People have no idea what mystery lies hidden here. Looking at the matter objectively, it is most remarkable to discover how some members in particular of the French nation are quite incapable of seeing in themselves things which they find terribly objectionable in others who had absorbed them under French influence in the first place. Perhaps it is not all that nice if it comes to meet you as an imitation. But if mankind is to progress at all then, as I described it in my recent book *Vom Menschenrätsel*,²⁵ it will be essential for this collaboration of Central European thought to take place. This is necessary and it cannot be eliminated; and it must not be brutally destroyed either.

Mankind is now faced with having to solve certain quite specific problems.²⁶ This applies, above all, to something I have already spoken about, which is connected with today's much-admired technology—a consequence of natural science—which is also much admired by spiritual science. In the comparatively near future, this much-admired modern technology will reach a final stage where it will, in a certain way, cancel itself out. In contrast, something will come into being—I have mentioned it in passing here—which will enable people to make use of the delicate vibrations in their etheric bodies as a driving force with which to run machines. Machines will exist which are dependent on

people and people will transfer their own vibrations to the machines. People alone will be capable of setting these machines in motion by means of certain vibrations stimulated by themselves. People who today see themselves as practitioners of science will, in the not too distant future, find themselves faced with a complete transformation of what they today call the practical application of science; for the human being is to be tuned in with his will to the objective sphere of feeling in the universe. This is one of the problems.

The second is, that people will, in a certain way, understand what we call the forces of coming-into-being and dying-away, the forces of birth and death. First of all they will have to make themselves morally ready for this. And to this will belong the gaining of insight into things about which nothing but nonsense is talked today. I have pointed this out before in connection with the questions people ask about how to improve the birthrate when it is declining. But they talk utter nonsense because they know nothing about the matter, and because the methods they suggest will certainly not achieve what they are talking about.

The third matter I want to mention is, that in the not too distant future a total reversal in the whole way people think about sickness and health will become apparent. Medicine will become filled with what can be understood spiritually when one learns to see illness as the consequence of spiritual causes.

I have already said it is not as yet fair to say to the spiritual scientist: Show us what you can do with regard to sickness and ill health! First his shackles must be removed! So long as the field is still totally occupied by materialistic medicine it is impossible to do anything, even in individual cases. In this field it is indeed necessary to be truly Christian—that is Pauline—and to know that sin comes from the law and not, conversely, the law from sin.²⁷

But none of these things which are supposed to come to mankind within the fifth post-Atlantean period will, in fact, come unless an effort is made to allow the spiritual thinking to work with us on human evolution. We need this spiritual thinking. But for it to be possible it will have to cease being the preserve of the few and become common knowledge. Thus it is necessary, particularly in the English folk element, that a basic reversal in a definite direction should take place. To show you that what I am saying is founded in reality, I want to quote to you a judgement by Lord Acton²⁸ which you will find very revealing. Lord Acton says: The foreigner has no mystic fabric in his government, and no *arcanum imperii*. We see how, in the nineties of the last century Lord Acton was thinking in a healthy way by combining most beautifully English rationalism with the English capacity for what is spiritual—even though he himself does not yet possess anything spiritual: he sees the mystic element that underlies English imperialism. Imperialism is a product of recent times; but it has received its stamp from the mystic appearance it gains from English imperialism. And this mystical element—strange though it may seem that I call it ‘mystical’, nevertheless it is correct to do so—has also found expression in external events.

Right up to the nineties, England was the perfect example of honest and upright parliamentarianism, since it was the task of Parliament to give its impulses to external politics. Through the various parliamentary institutions in England the people were able to play a genuine part in external politics. During the time when the things I have hinted at

were beginning to take a hold it became necessary to create a special institution, for it was not possible to pull all sorts of strings if everything had to come before Parliament. For this reason the conduct of foreign affairs was taken away from Parliament and also from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and made the preserve of a committee whose members consisted exclusively of the Cabinet and certain officials in the Foreign Ministry. In such a committee far more goes on than what seems to be presided over by someone like Grey. In the nineties the place where all the threads came together was separated from 'external' politics, which became nothing much more than a kind of shadow politics, no longer having anything much to say and revealing only what was really going on if one happened to look at it at the right moment. So, at the moment when it became necessary to commence pulling threads, the scene of action was transferred from external view to a hidden place,²⁹ to a so-called committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Lord Acton said:

'The foreigner has no mystic fabric³⁰ in his government, and no *arcanum imperii*. For him, the foundations have been laid bare; every motive and function of the mechanism is accounted for as distinctly as the works of a watch. But with our indigenous constitution, not made with hands or written upon paper, but claiming to develop by a law of organic growth; with our disbelief in the virtue of definitions and general principles and our reliance on relative truths, we can have nothing equivalent to the vivid and prolonged debates in which other communities have displayed their inmost secrets of political science to every man who can read. And the discussions of constituent assemblies, at Philadelphia, Versailles and Paris, at Cadiz and Brussels, at Geneva, Frankfort and Berlin, above nearly all, those of the most enlightened States in the American Union, when they have recast their institutions, are paramount in the literature of politics, and proffer treasures which at home we have never enjoyed...'

And, despite this, it is the country with the perfect example of parliamentarianism, the country with the perfect example of political life, because none of this is actually necessary, since it could be mystical if only it were devoted to the people themselves, the people who, since the nineties, have been left out of account.

Because England has a quite specific task with regard to the consciousness soul of the fifth post-Atlantean period, certain ways of thinking belong to the people as a whole; they need not be the way of thinking of individuals, they belong to the whole people. This is something for which there is no place at all in Central Europe. Let me give you an example.

One of the greatest spirits of all time is Faraday.³¹ Michael Faraday expressed how he, as a natural historian, related to matters of religion and his sentences are, I really must say, monumental:

'Before entering upon this subject, I must make one distinction which, however it may appear to others, is to me of the utmost importance. High as man is placed above the creatures around him, there is a higher and far more exalted position within his view; and the ways are infinite in which he occupies his thoughts about the fears, or hopes, or expectations of a future life. I believe that the truth of that future cannot be brought to his knowledge by any exertion of his mental powers, however exalted they may be; that it is made known to him by any other teaching than his own, and is received through

simple belief of the testimony given. Let no one suppose for a moment that the self-education I am about to commend, in respect of the things of this life, extends to any considerations of the hope set before us, as if man by reasoning could find out God. It would be improper here to enter upon this subject further than to claim an absolute distinction between religious and ordinary belief. I shall be reproached with the weakness of refusing to apply those mental operations which I think good in respect of high things to the very highest. I am content to bear the reproach. Yet even in earthly matters I believe that “the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead,” and I have never seen anything incompatible between those things of man which can be known by the spirit of man which is within him, and those higher things concerning his future, which he cannot know by that spirit.’

With convictions similar to these, Darwin,³² too, was able to found his materialistic Darwinism and yet remain a pious man in quite a bigoted sense. Newton³³ was the most bigoted man in the world in a dogmatic sense. When Darwinism had been carried to Central Europe and taken up by Haeckel³⁴ it could no longer be separated from religious feelings. This was because of the characteristic nature of thought in German. In the thinking of Haeckel, Darwinism became a religious system. All these things have the deepest foundations. They show us how people can work together without differentiating between religions, nationalities and so forth, if they are able to distinguish between the missions of the different peoples. Mankind as a whole will have to come to an understanding of this. When this has been achieved, on the one hand justice will be done to the deeper natures of the different peoples and, on the other hand, sad times such as those of today will no longer occur: times which are sad, not only because of all the blood that is being spilt but also because they prove how little sense for truth there is in mankind quite generally. This is why we are allowed to speak about such things here. For our motto is: ‘Wisdom lies solely in truth’. Especially in times as grave as these it is permitted to draw attention to such things, times in which our hearts bleed terribly. Instead of passing time with all sorts of things people do under the influence of journalism, it would be more useful to make a start on a great many other things.

One positive thought on which to found a judgement is, for instance, the terrible fact that this war is not only being waged from the periphery but is being waged in such a way that it is lasting longer than it need, not because of unavoidable circumstances but because of culpable actions. This is utterly scandalous when you consider how much it matters that the war should not last too long, if it has to be waged in the first place. The war is being conducted from the periphery, not merely conducted, but conducted in a way that would never be possible if only people would see that, under the influence of their own dilettantism and incapacity, they keep avoiding any useful action, and by the very fact of doing nothing they are causing it to drag on so endlessly.

But a time has now come which could reveal whether those who matter—not the people themselves, who will only show whether or not they have learnt anything in all these months of war—whether those who matter are expressing even the semblance of a spark of truth when they say that they, too, want some kind of peace. I say a semblance, for in reality it is something else. For if peace does not come very soon, every child will be able

to see who does *not* want peace! Indeed every child can already see how laughable are the excuses being made at this moment. There is no need to go so far as to set any store by a report in a journal in one of the Entente countries—and the story seems to be true—that, among others, the sentence was printed: To all the missiles Germany has sent us is now added the worst missile of all—peace.

There was no need for it to come to such excesses of madness as are expressed in the saying that peace is the worst missile of all. It would be enough to say that the Germans have invented this or that refinement, have this or that intention. Briand³⁵ or Lloyd George would be quite capable of thinking up all sorts of motives the Germans might have, but it is not a question of these motives; indeed, they might just as well be presumed to exist. If you were to take the trouble to analyse all the different motives which have so far been mentioned, you could not fail to reach the conclusion: if things really are as Monsieur Briand, or whoever else, presumes them to be, then any true friend of peace must be longing to achieve peace as soon as possible! If only, my dear friends, far from influencing people's judgements, it were possible at least to clear away the huge mountains of rubble piled on top of people's ability to judge!

You cannot imagine how the hearts of those who see what is going on bleed when they see people still capable of listening to or reading, without any kind of holy indignation, what is written so paradoxically today. For if these things were not rooted in something that exists, they could not be written. So merely to complain about the journalists will not get us very far either. It is perfectly possible, perhaps not exactly to throw sand in certain people's eyes, but certainly to obscure the eye of their soul by saying: Watch out, they are about to scatter poison amongst us! It is child's play to convince oneself what nonsense this is, for even if one assumes it is true—why not assume it?—it is still no reason for not doing what must be done for the good of mankind, namely, bringing the bloodshed to an end! None of the allegations that have been made so far have been sufficient reason for not doing this.

I can only think of one category of people who, as a result of their delusions, would not come to their senses, namely, those who still exist even now and who say: We want absolutely permanent, totally perfect peace, and until we can have that we cannot end the war. There are many such people; quite often they call themselves pacifists. Some have just begun to be ashamed of their extreme views and are starting to express more sensible judgements. But it really has happened during all these terrible events that people have said: We are fighting for permanent peace. They do not notice that this is rubbish, for it is quite possible to talk rubbish while giving the impression of proclaiming the highest ideals.

No, my dear friends! The ideal of perfect peace can never be achieved if even the smallest drop of blood is shed by means of an instrument of war. Perfect peace must come into the world in quite another way! And whoever says he is fighting for peace, and must continue to make war till the enemy is annihilated in order to achieve peace, is lying, even if he does not realize it, and regardless of who he may be!

These are things which are hardly considered today. What we all need is spiritual science to be our teacher in forming judgements. Therefore, I do not hesitate from time to time to call a spade a spade and express a judgement that has truly not been arrived at

lightly. However, we had better not go on till midnight today, so let us draw to a close for the moment.³⁶

LECTURE EIGHT

Basel, 21 December 1916

Many people have the custom of celebrating every year the physical birth of that Being Who entered into earthly evolution in order to give meaning to this earthly evolution. In keeping with the task of our spiritual scientific movement, a task of which we must never cease to be aware, and in an effort to avoid falling into a merely routine celebration such as is found in many places today, it will be fitting to bring before our souls in these grave times some aspects of what is connected with the meaning of the physical birth of Christ Jesus.

We have often contemplated with the eyes of our spirit the fact that in Christ Jesus two Beings flow together to form one: the Christ-Being and the human Jesus-Being. This is something that people on earth are capable of experiencing. As Christianity has developed, there has been much conflict, much dogmatic conflict about the significance of the uniting of Christ with Jesus in the body whose physical birth we celebrate in the Christmas festival. Let us start with what we know. In Christ we recognize a cosmic, super-earthly Being, One Who came down from spiritual worlds in order to give meaning to earthly evolution by being born in a physical human being. And in the human being Jesus we recognize one who was destined, in the manner known to us, to unite as a human being with the Christ-Being, to take this Being into himself after thirty years of preparation.

Not only is much argument, much dogmatic conflict connected with the manner in which Christ united with Jesus. There is also, in the relationship of Christ to Jesus, an indication of important mysteries relating to the whole of mankind's evolution on earth. In endeavouring to pursue what has happened so far, so as to understand something about this uniting of Christ with Jesus, and in considering what must still happen in human evolution in order to bring this relationship into a proper focus, we find ourselves touching on one of the greatest mysteries of human knowledge and human life.

As the time approached when human evolution was to take into itself the Christ-Being there came about a possibility, like an inheritance from the ancient days of clairvoyant wisdom, of gaining a picture, an idea of the whole lofty stature of the Christ-Being. There existed at this time a wisdom about which people often speak today in what could be called a sacrilegious way, though they have scarcely any idea of what it represented. It was something which has now been eliminated from human evolution by certain streams which are opposed to more profound Christian revelation. This was Gnosis,¹ a wisdom into which much of the knowledge revealed to mankind by ancient, atavistic clairvoyance had flowed. Every last fragment of Gnosis, both verbal and written, had been rooted out by western dogmatic Christianity, but not until Gnosis had also endeavoured to find an answer to the question: Who is Christ?

Today there is no longer a question of returning to Gnosis for, of course, the light of Gnosis has meanwhile gone out. But the elimination of Gnosis, root and branch, though a consequence of evil, ignorance and hostility towards knowledge and wisdom sprang,

nevertheless, in a way from a necessity of earthly evolution. So the accusation that anthroposophical spiritual science intends to warm up ancient Gnosis is nothing more than one of the many malevolent attacks now being made on us. This accusation is made by people who know nothing about Gnosis and, similarly, little about Anthroposophy. We do not want to warm up Gnosis, but we do want to recognize that Gnosis was something powerful, something great, for that time nineteen centuries ago when it endeavoured to give some kind of an answer to the question: Who is Christ?

The eye of the Gnostic—his spiritual eye—saw the spiritual worlds. He thought of the spiritual hierarchies arranged in a wonderful way, rank upon rank. He also saw how Christ strode down through the world of the spiritual hierarchies in order to enter into the enveloping bodies of a mortal human being. All this was revealed to the soul of the Gnostic. And this soul strove to gain a picture of how Christ came down from spiritual heights and was received on earth. You can gain an idea of the scale of these events if you imagine that everything that has come into the world since the elimination of Gnosis has been small and petty in comparison with the mighty Christ-picture of the Gnostics. The Mystery-wisdom that lies behind the Gospels is infinitely great, greater than anything that subsequent theology has been capable of finding in them. In order to understand how small and insignificant is today's customary understanding of the Christ-Being compared with that of Gnosis, you might try to immerse yourselves in the Christ-idea of the ancient Gnostics. When you place this before your soul you will grovel in the dust before the greatness of this picture of the Christ-Being Who came down from spiritual heights, spiritual distances, spiritual breadths into a human body.

So, long ago, there was once amongst human beings a lofty concept of Christ. It has receded now. For all those dogmas that came into being subsequently, the creeds of Arius or Athanasius or whatever,² are trifling compared with the Gnostic concept which combined wisdom about the structure of the universe with the view of the Christ-Being. Only remnants of this great Gnostic concept of Christ remain.

This is one aspect of the relationship of Christ to Jesus, namely, that Christ came into the world at a time when the wisdom which could have comprehended Him, which had endeavoured to comprehend Him, had already been stamped out. Yet, all along, those who spoke of Gnosis as an oriental fantasy which had to be stamped out for the good of western man considered themselves good Christians. In truth, it was only the incapacity of that time, its incapacity to link earthly concepts with heavenly concepts. You really need a sense of tragedy if you want to understand human evolution.

How long was it after the event of the Mystery of Golgotha that the Temple of Jerusalem, the place of peace, was destroyed? The city of Jerusalem surrounded the Temple of Solomon. What Gnosis was as wisdom, the Temple of Solomon was as symbol. In the Temple of Solomon were symbolized all the mysteries of the universe. The purpose was that those who entered the Temple of Solomon, where they were surrounded by pictures which were mirrored in their souls, should there absorb something into their souls which only then transformed them into true human beings. The Temple of Solomon was to pour the meaning of the universe into the souls of those who were permitted to enter there. What the Temple of Solomon contained was not directly contained anywhere on the earth, for it contained everything in the way of universal mysteries that shone down into the

earth out of the breadths of the cosmos.

Why was the Temple of Solomon built? My dear friends, if you had asked an ancient initiate who knew about the Temple he would have replied: So that there shall be a sign here on earth which may be seen by those powers who accompany the souls who are seeking a way into earthly bodies. Let us grasp this rightly. These ancient initiates of the Temple of Solomon knew, as they accompanied the human beings down through all the signs of the Zodiac into their earthly bodies, that they must guide special souls to those bodies which were capable of mirroring in themselves the symbols of the Temple of Solomon.

Naturally enough, this could become a reason for succumbing to arrogance. If this was not taken in with humility, with the humility of the Essenes, it became a reason for succumbing to the wisdom of the Pharisees! But the truth is as follows: the earthly eye looks up to the heavens and sees the stars. The spiritual eye of those who led souls down to the earth from the breadths of the universe was directed downwards and saw the Temple of Solomon with its symbols. It was for them a star by whose light they could accompany the souls into bodies of a calibre capable of comprehending the meaning of the Temple of Solomon. It was the star at the mid-point of the earth which shone out strongly into spiritual heights.

When Christ Jesus had come to the earth, when the Mystery of Golgotha had taken its course, then this great Mystery of Golgotha was to be mirrored in every single human soul: 'My kingdom is not of this world!' So the external, physical Temple of Solomon first of all lost its significance, and its destiny fulfilled itself in a tragic way. Basically, there was no one left at that time who, by mirroring all the symbols of the Temple of Solomon, could really take in the full extent of the Christ-Being. But the Christ-Being Himself had entered into earthly evolution and was now within it. This—as has so often been repeated in our circles—is the fact which matters. The Gnostics were the last stragglers of those bearers of that wisdom which was extensive and intensive enough to understand something of Christ out of man's ancient, atavistic earth-wisdom.

That is one side of the relationship between Christ and Jesus. At that time the Christ-Being could have been comprehended by Gnosis. But this was not part of the plan of evolution, although in what had been Gnosis there had been contained the full wisdom of the Christ. But now it can be said that the path taken by Christianity through the countries of the South—through Greece, Italy, Spain and so on— was suited to extinguishing more and more the knowledge of what Christ really was. Rome in decline, Rome in disintegration was destined to extinguish the understanding of Christ.

It is a remarkable thing that, on the one hand, the relationship of Christ to Jesus worked in such a way that, in Gnosis, a high concept of Christ shines out and then dies away as Christianity passes through the Roman element, and that, on the other hand, when Christianity meets the peoples coming down towards it from the North, the concept of Jesus starts to take shape. The concept of Christ has died away in the South. Then, in the North, the concept of Jesus appears, certainly not in a lofty way, but in a way that speaks to the souls of human beings; something wonderful enters human souls at the thought of how a child is born in a consecrated night, a child who will take the Christ into himself. Just as in the South the concept of Christ was inadequate, so in the North was the feeling

for Jesus. Nevertheless, the feeling was such that it deeply moved people's hearts; yet, in itself, it is not fully comprehensible. You have only to compare the greatness and majesty of what Christ Jesus means for human evolution with all the sentimental trifles contained in so many poems and songs about the 'darling infant Jesus', which move the hearts of those who, in their egoism, believe that they are experiencing heavenly ecstasies. If you make this comparison you gain an immediate impression of something that wants to enter into life but cannot quite do so, something that combines with that other in such a way that the whole deeper meaning and significance remains in man's subconscious.

Now what is it that remains in man's subconscious while the concept of Jesus, the feeling for Jesus, the experience of Jesus rises to the surface? It is extraordinary how this happened! The understanding of Christ sank down into the subconscious and the understanding of Jesus began to glow in the subconscious. In man's subconscious, not in consciousness, which was powerless, there was to be a meeting and a balancing out of the Christ consciousness which was fading and the Jesus consciousness which was beginning to glow in the subconscious. Why did the peoples who came down from Scandinavia, from what is today northern Russia, not take up in Christianity the Christ idea which, to begin with, remained utterly unknown to them? Why did they take up the Jesus idea in Christianity? Why was it the Christmas festival which, above all, spoke to human hearts, awakening in them infinite feelings of holy tenderness? Why was this? What was there in this Europe which received from the South what was basically an utterly disfigured Christianity? What was there in this Europe that caused that idea to light up in people's hearts, that idea in which the Christmas festival with its deep, deep content of feeling is experienced?

The people had been prepared but, to a certain extent, they had forgotten what had prepared them. They had been prepared out of the ancient northern Mysteries. But they had forgotten the meaning of the ancient northern Mysteries. To discover, out of the inner meaning of the northern Mysteries, that deep secret of how the feeling for Jesus entered into European soul life it is necessary to go very far back indeed.

These northern Mysteries were founded on something utterly different from the foundation of the Mysteries of Asia Minor, the Mysteries of the South. These Mysteries of the North were founded on something that was more intimately bound up with the life of the stars, with nature, with the earth's growth forces, rather than that which was shown in the symbols of a temple. Mystery-truths are not the trifles certain mystic sects play around with today. Mystery-truths are grand and powerful impulses within human evolution. Just as we cannot find our way back today through Anthroposophy to Gnosis, to the ancient Gnostics, neither can mankind return to what the ancient Mysteries of the North once meant for human evolution. It would be a foolish misunderstanding to believe that such Mystery-truths are being revealed now because of a desire to return in some way to what lived in them. For the sake of self-knowledge it is necessary for mankind today to know what lived in such Mysteries. For what in the northern Mysteries involved the whole evolution of the universe was connected with what came from the earth, whereas the Gnostic wisdom inspired by the cosmos was connected with what took place in the far reaches of the universe. The mystery of mankind in its connection to all the mysteries of the cosmos, how it works when man enters on the physical earth into his physical existence, all this, at a certain period of earthly evolution, lay more deeply than anywhere

else at the basis of these ancient northern Mysteries.

But it is necessary to go a very long way back, approximately to the third millennium BC or perhaps even further, in order to understand what lived in those souls who later took into themselves the feeling for Jesus. Just about where the peninsula of Jutland is part of Denmark today, there existed a centre from which emanated in those ancient times very important Mystery-impulses. However people may judge this with their modern understanding, I can tell you that these Mystery-impulses were connected with the fact that, in the third millennium BC in this northern region, there lived certain tribes who only considered those people to be proper residents of the earth who were born during certain weeks in winter time. This came about because the temple priests of this secret Mystery centre on the Jutland peninsula decreed that in certain tribes, the Ingaevones³ as Tacitus called them, the sexual union of human beings must only take place during the first quarter of the year. Every sexual union outside this period decreed by the Mystery centre was taboo; and anyone not born during the season of the darkest nights, in the coldest season towards the new year, was considered by these tribes of the Ingaevones to be an inferior human being. The impulse was sent out by the Mystery centre at the time of the first full moon after the spring equinox. This was the only time when those who felt truly connected with the spiritual worlds were allowed to practise sexual union. The forces which are used up in sexual union were saved for the whole remainder of each year and thus contributed to the growing strength of the people. Therefore, they were able to develop that remarkable power of which even the dying echo so astonished Tacitus—writing a century after the Mystery of Golgotha.

In this way the tribes of the Ingaevones, and the other Germanic tribes to a lesser extent, underwent at the time of the first full moon after the spring equinox a particularly strong experience of the process of conception, not in a state of waking consciousness but through a kind of dream annunciation. They knew what this meant with regard to the connection between the mystery of man and the mysteries of heaven. A spiritual being appeared to the one who was conceiving and announced to her, as through a vision, the human being who was to come to the earth through her. There was no consciousness, only a semi-consciousness in that sphere which human souls experienced during the process of entering into physical, earthly reality. Subconsciously the people knew themselves to be ruled by gods, the Vanir.⁴ They were not fully conscious in their intellect but lived in a ‘knowing dream-consciousness’.

Practices which exist at a certain time, and are fitting for that time, often survive into later times in external symbols. In olden times the holy mystery of birth was shrouded in the subconscious, which in turn meant that all births were crowded together in a certain part of the winter season, and it was regarded as sinful if human beings were born at other times. Later on this was partly preserved, but only fragments passed over into later consciousness, fragments of which the meaning has so far remained undiscovered by any learning. Indeed, it is openly admitted that no scholar has succeeded in discovering any meaning. Fragments remain in the so-called Ertha saga. Except for a few notes, everything now known externally about the Ertha, or Nerthus saga is contained in the writings of Tacitus, who reports about it as follows:⁵

‘The Reudigni, the Aviones, the Anglii, the Varini, the Eudoses, the Suardones, and

Nuithones, Germanic tribes who are fenced in by rivers or forests’—these are more or less those tribes who together constitute the Ingaevones—’venerate Nerthus, Ertha, or Mother Earth and believe that she interposes in human affairs, and visits the nations in her chariot.’

In olden times every woman who was to give the earth a new citizen knew in her dream consciousness, through the religious worship of the Vanir, that the goddess later worshipped as Ertha or Nerthus would appear to her. This godly being was perceived as male-female rather than purely female. Only later did a corruption lead to Nerthus becoming a wholly female principle. Just as the Angel Gabriel came to Mary so, in ancient times, did Nerthus come in her chariot to those who were to give the earth a new citizen. The women who were going to give birth saw this in spirit. Later, when the Mystery-impulse in this form had long faded away, the people still celebrated the dying echo of this event in symbols. This is what Tacitus saw, and described as follows:

‘In an island of the ocean there is a sacred grove, and within it her consecrated chariot, covered over with a garment. Only one priest is permitted to touch it.’

This priest was thought of as the initiate of the Ertha Mystery.

‘He can perceive the presence of the goddess in this sacred recess, and walks by her side with the utmost reverence as she is drawn along by heifers. It is a season of rejoicing, and festivity reigns wherever she deigns to go and be received. They do not go to battle or wear arms; every weapon is under lock; only peace and quiet are known and welcomed at these times, till the goddess, weary of human intercourse, is at length restored by the same priest to her temple.’

This was exactly what the vision was like. Such ancient documents describe things really quite exactly, only people no longer understand them. ‘It is a season of rejoicing and festivity. They do not go to battle or wear arms; every weapon is under lock.’ Thus it was indeed at the season which is now our Easter time. Out of their inner soul life people believed the season of the earth’s fruitfulness to have come for them too, and those souls were conceived who were later born in the season which is now our Christmas time. The season of Easter was the time for conception. This was seen as a holy mystery of the cosmos and later it was symbolized in the worship of Nerthus. All of it was shrouded in the subconscious and was not allowed to break through into consciousness. This shimmers through in what Tacitus says about this worship:

‘Only peace and quiet are known and welcomed at these times, till the goddess, weary of human intercourse, is at length restored by the same priest to her temple. Afterwards the chariot, the vestments and the divinity herself are purified in a secret lake. Slaves perform the rite, who are instantly swallowed up by its waters.’ A penalty to ensure that all who know about these matters are submerged in the night of the unconscious. ‘Thus reigns a mysterious terror and a pious ignorance concerning the nature of that which is seen only by men doomed to die.’

Everything that takes place in the world comes to have a luciferic and an ahrimanic counter-image. The practices of the Ingaevones, which fitted properly into human evolution, related to the time of the first full moon after the spring equinox. But owing to the precession of the equinox, what remained in ancient times of what had once been a

dream experience took place later and later, and thus became ahrimanic. When the events of true, ancient Ertha worship had gradually moved to a time approximately four weeks later, they had become ahrimanic. It was ahrimanic because the union of the human woman with the spiritual world was sought in an unlawful way, that is, at an unlawful time. This then came to be caught and held in 'Walpurgis Night'⁶ which falls on the night of 30 April to 1 May. This is purely the consequence of an ahrimanic time-shift. You know that a luciferic time-shift goes backwards; an ahrimanic one is the opposite, so here the equinox is shifted forwards so that the remnant from earlier times manifests later. Thus the ahrimanic, mephistophelean reverse side of ancient Ertha worship, its reversal into something devilish, later became 'Walpurgis Night', which is connected with the most ancient Mysteries of which only this weak echo remains.

Much of these Mysteries lived on in the Scandinavian Mysteries.⁷ There in place of Ertha is Frigg, who in the symbolism of later ages— as spiritual science reveals—actually appears as a traitor to what really lay at the foundation.

Something else also should be mentioned in connection with the customs of these Mysteries. From the time of the spring full moon until the depths of winter the fruit ripened in the mothers' wombs. Then one such human being was the first to be born in the holy night. Among the tribes of the Ingaevones this human being, the first to be born in the holy night, was chosen to become, at the age of thirty, the leader for three years, for only three years. In most ancient times this occurred every third year. What then happened to him I might be able to tell you later on.

Careful research reveals that not only is Frigg, Frea, Frija a kind of secondary name for Nerthus, but that the name Ing, after whom the Ingaevones named themselves, is also a secondary name for Nerthus. Those connected with this Mystery centre called themselves 'the ones who belong to the god, or goddess, Ing': Ingaevones. In the external world only fragments remained of what was actually experienced. One of these are the words of Tacitus which I have read to you. Another fragment is the famous Anglo-Saxon rune-song⁸ consisting of only a few lines. Every student of German philology knows it but none understand its meaning:

'Ing was first seen by the men of the East Danes. Later he went eastwards. Across the waves he strode, and his chariot followed after.'

This Anglo-Saxon rune-song contains an echo of what had happened in the ancient Mystery-custom of conception at Easter with the view to a time of birth at Christmas. What took place in this connection in the spiritual world was known, above all, on the Danish peninsula. That is why the rune song says quite rightly: Ing was first seen by the men of the East Danes.' Then came times when this ancient knowledge fell more and more into corruption, so that only echoes and symbols remained. Altogether human evolution became more suffused with what came from warmer climes. From warmer countries comes something which is unlike what comes from colder climes, where the season of the year is intimately linked with what human beings experience in their inner being. In warmer climes the seed of man was sown all the year round. Of course this happened also in the colder countries even while the old atavistic clairvoyance still existed, but it was suffused in the ancient principles. It came to the northern regions when the Vanir were being replaced by the Aesir and when, in the southern regions, the nature Mysteries had

long been replaced by the temple Mysteries. It came northwards, of course still mixed with the ancient ways, when the Vanir were being replaced by the Aesir. Just as the Vanir were connected with 'imagining', so were the Aesir connected with 'being', with being or existing in the material world which external understanding wishes to grasp. When the northern people had entered an age in which individual intelligence was beginning to develop, when the Aesir took the place of the Vanir, the Mystery-custom became corrupted. It migrated to isolated, scattered Mystery-communities in the East. One alone remained. The one in whom the whole meaning of the earth was to be renewed, the one in whom the Christ was to dwell, was chosen to unite within himself what had once been the content of the northern Mysteries.

So in contemplating in the Luke Gospel the story of how the Archangel Gabriel appears to Mary, we may seek its origin in the true visions which occurred in what was later mirrored in the Nerthus Mystery with its symbols. This had migrated over to the East. Spiritual science now reveals it and only spiritual science can find a meaning for the Anglo-Saxon rune song. For Nerthus and Ing are one and the same. And of Ing it is said: 'Ing was first seen by the men of the East Danes. Later he went eastwards. Across the waves he strode, and his chariot followed after.' He strode, of course, across the waves of the clouds, just as Nerthus strode across the waves of the clouds. What had been general in the colder regions became singular, a single event. It took place as a single event and as such comes to meet us again in the description in the Luke Gospel.

Now once something is there, once it has become customary and firmly anchored in the soul, then it remains there, it remains firmly in the soul. So when the people of the North received the tidings of Christianity from what had been ancient Rome in the South, these tidings were linked with old Mystery-customs which lived no longer in full consciousness but in the subconscious and were thus only dimly sensed. That is why the feeling for Jesus could be especially strongly developed there. What had lived in the old Nerthus Mystery had sunk down into the subconscious where it was still present, where it was sensed and felt.

In those distant days in the far North, when the earth was still covered in forests in which lived the aurochs and the elk, the families gathered in their snow-covered huts in the lamplight around a newborn child. They spoke of this new life and of how it brought to them the new light which the heavens had announced to them in the days of early spring. This was the ancient Christmas, the consecrated night. When they later received tidings of one who was born in the holiest hour and who was destined for great things it reminded them of another who had been the firstborn after the twelfth hour of the consecrated night. The ancient knowledge was gone, but the ancient feelings lived on when the tidings came of such a one born in distant Asia, one in whom lived the Christ Who had descended to the earth from the starry heavens.

It is our duty in the present time to understand such things more and more so that we may learn to grasp the meaning of earthly mankind's evolution. Holy Writ is filled with what is unimaginably great, not with the kind of triviality so often discussed in religious tracts. It is filled with holy truths which run through the whole of human evolution and thrill us to the marrow, flooding our hearts with wonder. All this resounds in what the gospels contain. Once spiritual science has revealed the profound background to what

lives in the gospels, these gospels will become for mankind something inestimably dear and valuable. One day mankind will know why it is said in the Luke gospel:

‘And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David): To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.’

For Him, the firstborn among those who were to find one another in the soul, the ancient Mystery-forces had migrated to the distant East from the Danish peninsula.

‘And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.’

In the same way had Ertha, who rode through the countryside in her chariot, brought tidings of the arrival of human beings on earth in a way fitting for the ancient consciousness of the Vanir, that is, for subconscious, atavistic clairvoyance.

‘And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,’

Saying what the Ertha priest had spoken in the ancient northern Mystery to the woman who was to conceive:

‘The revelation of the divine comes from on high in the time of peace among those who are of good will!’

As Tacitus says: ‘It is a season of rejoicing and festivity. They do not go to battle or wear arms; every weapon is under lock.’

It is to this greatness that human beings must ascend: they must look deeply into the course of human evolution. For even the Mystery of Golgotha, which gave a deeper meaning to the whole of earth evolution, only becomes fully comprehensible when it is shown how it stands within human evolution as a whole. When materialism has disappeared and people want to know, not only in the abstract but also quite concretely about their divine origin, there will once again be an understanding for the holy Mystery-truths of ancient days. Then will the interval of time be over in which Christ, though He lives on the earth, can only be minimally understood in full consciousness. For the understanding of Christ among the Gnostics faded away; and the understanding of Jesus grew only unconsciously in connection with the ancient worship of Nerthus. In the future mankind will have to bring into consciousness and bind together both these unconscious streams. Then an understanding of Christ will gain more and more prominence on the

earth, and this will be the link between ancient Mystery-knowledge and a renewed great flourishing of Gnosis.

Those who take seriously the anthroposophical view of the world, and also the Movement connected with it, will see that the things it has to say to mankind are no childish games but great and serious truths. We must allow our souls to be deeply moved, because these things are *meant* to move us deeply.

The earth is not only a great living creature. It is also a lofty spiritual being. Just as a great human genius cannot evolve to full stature without suitable development through childhood and youth, so the Mystery of Golgotha could not have taken place, the divine could not have united with earth evolution if, in the days of earth's beginning, other divine beings had not descended in a different, though equally divine way. The revelation of the divine on high incorporated in the worship of Nerthus differed from the way it was later understood; but it existed.

The knowledge contained in this ancient wisdom is solely atavistic, yet it is infinitely higher than the materialistic world view which is today making human beings into animals as regards the level of their knowledge.

In Christianity we are concerned with a fact, not with a theory. The theory has to follow after the fact and it is important for the human consciousness that is to develop during the further course of earth evolution. But Christianity as such, the Mystery of Golgotha, exists as a fact, and it was necessary that it should enter at first into the unconscious streams. This was still possible in Asia Minor at the time when Christ united with the earth.

Shepherds, people resembling those among whom the worship of Nerthus lived, are also described in the Luke gospel. I can only sketch all this for you. If only we had more time I could show you how deeply founded are the things I have to tell you today. It is because man came down from spiritual heights that the revelation of the divine came from the heavens. It had to be expressed in this way to those who knew, from ancient wisdom, that the destiny of man is linked with what lives in the stars of the heavens. But what is to live on the earth as a result of the incarnation of Christ into a human being will have to be understood gradually. The tidings are twofold, they are in two parts: 'The revelation of the divine from on high' and 'Peace to earthly souls who are of good will.' Without this second part, Christmas, the festival of the birth of Christ is meaningless!

Not only was Christ born for mankind; mankind also crucified Him! There is a necessity for this, too, but it is no less true that mankind did crucify Christ. And it may be known that the crucifixion on the wooden cross at Golgotha was not the only crucifixion. A time must come in which the second part of the Christmas words may be understood: 'Peace to men on earth who are of good will!' For the negative, too, may be felt and sensed, namely, that mankind today is far removed from a proper understanding of Christ and the Christmas Mystery.

Surely it must cut us to the quick that we live in an age when mankind's longing for peace is shouted down.⁹ It is almost dishonest in these days, when mankind's longing for peace is shouted down in the way it is, to celebrate Christmas at all. Let us hope, since we are not yet confronted with the absolute worst, that a change of soul may take place so that, in place of the shouting-down of the longing for peace, there may come Christian

feelings, a will for peace. If it does not, it may not be those who are striving in Europe today but, instead, others who come over from Asia who will one day take revenge for the shouting-down of the longing for peace and bring tidings of Christianity and of the Mystery of Golgotha to the ruins of European culture and spiritual life. Then the record will be indelible: at Christmas in the nineteen hundred and sixteenth year after the annunciation of peace on earth to human souls who are of good will, in the nineteen hundred and sixteenth year after the tidings of Christmas, mankind succeeded in shouting down the longing for peace!

May it not come to this! May the good spirits who work in the Christmas impulses guard Europe's unfortunate population against this!

LECTURE NINE

Dornach, 24 December 1916

Today I would like to request you¹ once again, without exception, to refrain from taking notes. This applies to all three days.²

Most of you were present last Thursday at our discussion in Basel.³ I now want to bring to your attention once more quite a short extract of what we talked about then, as I consider it not unimportant for these thoughts to become known to us.

I described how the wisdom about Christ was destroyed root and branch by dogmatism, namely, that wisdom which was present in Gnosis which itself was rooted out, since what remains of it now is no more than a fairly good number of fragments. Gnosis was a remnant of ancient wisdom arising out of an atavistic knowledge of the spiritual worlds in the days of early mankind. Those who possessed this ancient wisdom, which was still understood by the Gnostics at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, knew that it contained a view—the names were different then—of the hierarchies which underlie the creation of the world, and they were thus able to conceive of the significance of Christ. Together with Gnosis there disappeared the possibility of comprehending the Christ-Being as a cosmic being. Instead there remains dogma which has perpetuated certain incomprehensible concepts—the Credo and so on—about the Christ-Being.

What was important in centuries now gone by was not so much the wisdom about Christ as the fact itself, the fact that Christ turned towards the earth and fulfilled the Mystery of Golgotha. A true understanding of the Christ-Being will first have to be won through the new Gnosis, which is something entirely different from the old Gnosis, for it is anthroposophical Spiritual Science.

More important for our point of departure today is something else I introduced last Thursday, namely that in the North in very early pre-Christian times—I said 3000 years BC—there was a certain custom among peoples whom Tacitus called the Ingaevones. This custom was guided by Mystery priests in a Mystery centre focused on what is today Jutland, part of Denmark. This Mystery centre was able to work at that time and in those parts because all the climatic conditions in those colder regions differed from any in the southern, warmer regions—for all material conditions also have their own spiritual background. While the warmer regions were more suited to developing an understanding of the Christ-Being in Gnosis, the colder parts lent themselves more to evolving feelings about Jesus because of ideas still prevalent about ancient customs.

Thus it was that, in the South, Gnosis had more of an understanding of the Easter Mystery, the Christ Mystery. But the understanding, as I have said, was destroyed root and branch by dogma. In the North, in contrast, there was more of a comprehension of the Jesus Mystery, a feeling for the child who comes into the world to save mankind. This was based not so much on actual ideas, which had died out, but on feelings which live longer than ideas. The feeling of these ancient customs made comprehension possible. So it came about that in the South it was the task of the church to root out the Christ Mystery,

whereas in the North it was its task to root out the Christmas Mystery, to transform it into something innocuous. Thus later, in the Middle Ages, the idea of Christmas came into being which, one might say, reckoned with the rise of bourgeois values of more recent times, which appeared increasingly as the age of materialism dawned. For bourgeois values in the widest sense are a concomitant of materialism. We have to be clear, though, that greater, more significant ideas, in the form of feelings, lived in Central Europe right into the eighth, ninth and even the tenth centuries, for these feelings originated from prevalent usages, such as processions and other folk customs.

Let me briefly sketch these ancient customs once again. Among the Ingaevones the life of the people was firmly guided by the Mystery centre which laid down the season when provision could be made for procreation. The union of man with woman was permitted only in the days of spring, around the first full moon after the spring equinox. It was approximately the time we now call Easter time. The remainder of the year was taboo as far as human reproduction was concerned, and those born at a time which showed that their conception had been out of season were regarded, in a way, as not quite proper people.

So the births of people conceived at the correct time all came together in the middle of winter, just after our present Christmas time. All those regarded by the Ingaevones as fully human had to be born at this time. The births had to fall at the time of the darkest winter days, when the trees were covered in snow and the people confined to their primitive homesteads. To use the language of today, every child was in a way a Christmas child, a child of the winter solstice.

This affected people's frame of mind and soul. Because nothing to do with procreation occurred at other times of the year, the old dream-conscious clairvoyance was preserved. And when the time of conception approached as the permitted spring days drew near, conditions of unconsciousness took over. Conception was brought about in a state of unconsciousness, not in waking consciousness. The woman who was conceiving was truly conscious, however, of the visionary appearance of a spiritual being descending from spiritual worlds to announce the coming child. These women even foresaw the face of the coming child. And this annunciation, as we saw, is echoed in the time of the Luke gospel in the annunciation to Mary by the Archangel Gabriel. We saw that there even exists a fragment of an Anglo-Saxon rune song which tells of what existed in the old consciousness and that on the Jutland peninsula there really was a Mystery centre which then migrated eastwards.

Now mankind is, of course, developing, and development is a part of mankind. So this Mystery centre could only exist in most ancient times, for, had it persisted, there would have been no development of the type of consciousness needed as the task of the fourth, and then of the fifth post-Atlantean period. To clairvoyant consciousness the custom is hardly to be found anywhere in northern regions, where it flourished, even in the second millennium BC, and it is seen to have disappeared fully by the first millennium BC. By then, human conception and birth were spread more or less over the whole year and there is no more knowledge of a coming-down out of cosmic worlds via the starry constellations, nor of how much depends for a person's destiny on earth on the constellation under which he is born. Human conception and birth are spread over the

whole year.

Parallel with this development is the rise of a new consciousness, the rise of the possibility of freedom for the human being and so on.

One last thing remained, however. Something had existed in the region where Denmark is today; it migrated from tribe to tribe until it reached the East, where the Christ-Being was to be incarnated in one last body still seen in connection with the constellations. The firstborn of many brothers became the last-born of those who were seen in connection with the starry constellations. In evolution the last remnant of the old always links up with what is new.

Because in northern regions the feeling had evolved that the human being appears on the earth during the consecrated season, it came about that here, too, surrounded by the echo of those atavistic feelings, the feeling for Jesus could evolve. Thus you will find in these northern regions that the paramount feeling and better understanding was for the Luke gospel, and that the Christmas Mystery worked more strongly than the Easter Mystery, which was imprisoned among the secrets of the church, whereas the Christmas Mystery became quite general.

I hinted last Thursday, and shall perhaps be able to follow through in more detail during these three days, that every three years special attention was paid to the one born first after the twelfth hour of the night that we now call Christmas Eve, the first-born of every fourth year, the first to be born after three years. This first-born was destined to undergo certain procedures until his thirtieth year. Until his thirtieth year he was kept apart and brought up by the Mystery priests. His soul was given a distinct direction. His soul was destined to undergo experiences in a quite special way during the first thirty years of his life. These experiences and procedures were to lead him—this is barely comprehensible today—in his thirtieth year to an inner understanding of the link between the human being and the surrounding spiritual world. Certain quite specific inner experiences during these thirty years were to lead him gradually to this point.

First of all this first-born was to understand, even as a tiny child, how the human being is linked to the spiritual world through his angel. Separated from the rest of the world, undisturbed by the concepts which usually enter a child's soul from his environment, he was to remain close to spiritual workings and spiritual events and, to start with, develop a profound awareness of his links with the angel-being who was his guide—his angelos. In this way this child was equipped with a soul which was taught something very special, about which we may perhaps speak during the next few days. This special learning was expressed by saying that the child had become a 'raven'. This was a stage of initiation which was disseminated over wide regions and was contained particularly in the Persian Mithras initiation, of which I have spoken in past years. Then this soul was to ascend to an even more intense feeling for its connection with the spiritual worlds; this first-born was to relive in his soul the secrets of the spiritual worlds.

This would not be possible today, for our consciousness develops under different conditions. But, in those ancient times, when it was possible to develop a dream consciousness this was still perfectly possible. When the child had grown into a youth—it was always a boy, a girl did not count—he was given the leadership over individual

districts, smaller sections of the tribe. Finally, he had to serve in the administration and government of smaller communities. But it is important to remember that these affairs of government were always conducted in such a way that the youth was ever protected from external influences, especially shielded from the influences of various egoisms; he was most carefully shielded from the influences of egoisms, from influences which came about on the basis of external experiences.

Thus it was achieved that, towards the end of these thirty years, he could take on the role of representative of the whole tribe. When he reached the age of thirty he was ready to absorb consciously the connections of man with the whole cosmos. He became what is called in the Mystery centres a 'sun hero'. Now he was destined to rule the tribe for three years. None but a 'sun hero' could rule the tribe. He was permitted to rule for only three years. At the end of the three years something else, about which I shall speak, was done with him under the guidance of the Mysteries. In particular, in all the arrangements that emanated from the tribe of the Ingaevones, nobody was allowed to be king for longer than three years, and none was allowed to become king who had not undergone what I have described.

You see, forming in these tribes, as it were the skeleton, out of which the gospels later created the life of Christ Jesus. These communities lived in very ancient times. Only symbols of what had gone before come down to later ages. Thus the vision of the annunciation of the child to the mother came down to later ages as the worship of Nerthus, of Ertha. And the fact that the act of conception had to take place unconsciously in olden times is still hinted at in the Nerthus myth told by Tacitus a hundred years after the birth of Jesus. He describes how Ertha—who is male-female, not only female, for she is the same as the god Nerthus—arrives in her chariot; in other words, she is none other than the angel of the annunciation. Then those who have served her have to be drowned in the sea—slain. This is an echo of the submergence into unconsciousness of the act of conception in those ancient days.

In this myth of Ertha in her chariot and the slaves who accompany her but are drowned as soon as their service is concluded, in this myth of Nerthus, we have in the feeling-life an echo of something that was formerly an astral reality, something that had been experienced astrally. Nerthus processions were held in some districts until quite recently in history, right into the early Christian centuries. There were Ertha processions even in Swabia. These were echoes of ancient days. Those who in olden times, through certain rites which still existed as an echo of ancient heathen times, knew something about these earlier millennia, felt and thought about these processions of Ertha in her chariot: this is what our ancestors did. And when that single event then occurred which was the life of Jesus, it was brought into connection with what had been more general in ancient times. This was then better understood in the feelings, at the level of the feelings.

Therefore the monks and priests made every effort to root out anything which might remind their flocks of these things. Such things were rooted out just as carefully in the North as was Gnosis in the South. Otherwise people would have known, by bringing together these ancient customs with the Mystery of Golgotha, that this Mystery, in so far as it is a Christmas Mystery, was not an ancient, natural custom brought into the present but rather that it was replaced in the feeling for the Christmas Mystery by something at a

higher level of consciousness. But this was not to be known consciously. This was to be suppressed into the subconscious, for there are always certain powers who reckon with the unconscious. A great part of what happens in history comes about because things conscious and things unconscious are brought together by those who know how to bring such things together.

We rightly speak of what happens in going from the fourth to the fifth post-Atlantean period. But even in the transition from the third to the fourth there was a step forward in human consciousness towards increased ego-consciousness, increased waking consciousness. The ancient dream visions of the spiritual world have disappeared. In the North this was expressed by saying that the Vanir,⁴ who were connected with what is given in visions, had been replaced by the Aesir, who are indeed gods for a well-developed day consciousness. This is what was said in the North during the fourth post-Atlantean period, until all such memories had been rooted out by the priests. In the fifth post-Atlantean period, when materialism, or rather 'Christianityism', appeared, these things had already disappeared. While in the South the Greeks had their gods: Zeus, Apollo and the others, the people of the North had the Aesir,⁵ a word which is connected with *esse*, to be, which in turn is connected with being seen, being seen with the eyes. But during the third post-Atlantean period the ancient peoples who inhabited the North of Europe had the Vanir. These Vanir were far closer to the people. Nerthus, which became Nört in the North, is one of the Vanir, who announced every conception or birth.

Now I said that what had existed earlier was always preserved in later times in symbols. Thus something that I have so far only sketchily described to you and which we may be able to go into more deeply in the next day or two, namely, the knowledge bound up with becoming 'king', becoming the 'sun hero', was carried over first into the cult-myth and then into the myth. We have to distinguish between the cult-myth and the myth as such. The cult-myth is something that is still performed in external customs like a 'dream performance' of what reminds people of the ancient clairvoyant visions.

Thus, at a time when what I described to you no longer worked, we have in the Baldur myth, the myth of the god Baldur which was performed in many tribes as a mystery play, an echo of what was involved in 'becoming king'. First it existed as a reality. Later it was performed as a mystery play. Then it became a myth that was merely recounted. And finally it was rooted out by the monks and priests. Baldur is one of the Aesir, that is, he was one of the ruling spiritual powers at a time when man had already awakened to ego-consciousness. The Vanir had already faded, and yet Baldur remains as a representative of that being who was to become king, the firstborn who came every three years.

It is told that, at a certain time in his life, Baldur had dreams announcing his death. Later these dreams came true. But this did not mean merely that he had felt the approach of his physical death. It meant that, having accomplished three years of service as king, he was raised from the consciousness appropriate for that, to a higher level of consciousness. Until then he had been shielded from contact with the outer materialistic world. A king such as this was to live within the priesthood so that all egoism should depart from his soul and none could enter in. He was not permitted to be king for more than three years. Towards the end of the three years Baldur sensed the approach of the end of his time of kingly dignity. This meant, according to the ancient beliefs, that he was ready for contact

with the outside world. First he had to rule, but he had to do this solely in accordance with the wishes of the spiritual world. After that he was to become something else; he was to enter the outside world.

For someone who had never had such contact before this was, in truth, a kind of death. This is what was expressed in his dreams. The myth describes how the gods heard about these dreams and became uneasy. We must always think of the human element in relation to the divine element in the way that the two are united in the ancient Mysteries. When, towards the end of his time as king, Baldur felt the moment approaching, the gods—that is the Mystery priests—became uneasy and made all the creatures and all the conditions of the earth swear that they would not harm Baldur. They forgot only one insignificant little plant—mistletoe, the Christmas plant. Loki, the enemy of the Aesir, found the mistletoe. And he made use of it at the festival of the gods, that is, at the event of the god Baldur's first contact with the outside world.

Here we have an ancient Christmas festival, and the mistletoe custom linked with Christmas is still today a memory of this ancient custom which had to do with establishing a new king in place of the old. The contact of the old king with the material world is depicted in the mystery play and the myth. All created things have sworn not to harm Baldur. They are now used by the gods who throw them at Baldur and shoot them at him. Nothing—no plant, no animal, no illness, no poison—can harm him. Only Loki has discovered the mistletoe, which he has brought amongst the community of gods—that is, the priests—and given to the blind god Hödr. Hödr says: What shall I do with the mistletoe? I am blind and cannot see where Baldur is standing, I cannot shoot at him as the other gods do. But Loki showed him the direction and he shot at Baldur with the mistletoe twig. Baldur was wounded and died.

So Hödr is the one who appears as the representative of the outside, material world, in so far as this material world is not comprehended in its connection with the spiritual world but lives like a parasite. 'Höd' is the ancient name for battle or war, while 'Baldur', as it still exists today, can be traced back to another designation of which the best, still preserved, appears in Anglo-Saxon. As I showed recently, 'Tag' appears at an earlier stage of the sound shift as 'day'. 'Bal day' is a possible name, even though Anglo-Saxon. It means 'shining day', which expresses Baldur's connection with daytime consciousness, that consciousness which did not come to mankind until the fourth post-Atlantean period. Hödr is a representative of matter, of darkness, but also of battle and conflict. Baldur is the representative of understanding, of knowledge, of light—namely, that light which shines in the human soul in the state of consciousness which has developed since the fourth post-Atlantean period.

So in the Baldur myth we have a special version of the Christmas Mystery. Awareness of the connection between the Baldur myth and the Christmas Mystery was also rooted out by the monks and priests. For Baldur has some of the good qualities of Lucifer, and Hödr has some of the good qualities of the later Mephistopheles-Ahriman. I do not mean 'good' in the moral sense but rather in the sense of what is necessary for evolution. Such things, too, are connected with evolution as a whole. During the fourth post-Atlantean period it was still possible for a human being to be guided into the spiritual world in the ancient way as was the case in the old northern Mysteries. This had to be changed as time went

on, for the tentative way, later only present in an atavistic form, the tentative, clairvoyant way—still with a certain echo of dream consciousness, which was fitting for the fourth post-Atlantean period—could not resist the more robust demands of the materialistic age. This relationship of ancient clairvoyance from the fourth post-Atlantean period to what came later is expressed in the myth depicting the contrast between Baldur and Hödr. What is working here, what is behind the fact that Baldur—the representative of human consciousness, which can be illuminated by the divine—can be killed through the influence of the evil power of Loki over Hödr, the god of battle, of war and of darkness? Behind all this lies the fact that in our age, as it has been for a long time and as it will still be for some time to come, there must always be a working together of light and darkness. To try and make people believe that anything in the physical world, the world of maya, can be totally good, is nothing but religious egoism. Every light has its shadow, and a thorough comprehension of this fact is extremely important and significant.

Let us take an example. Under the influence of the Christmas Mystery it will be possible for us to go more deeply into a number of matters we have discussed recently. So let us take an example. I have often suggested that if Spiritual Science comes to be taken up more fully by people then, for instance, it will influence medicine, the art of healing. Certain more physical methods of healing will be found for sicknesses of the soul, and more spiritual methods for bodily illnesses. I told you why this is not yet possible: it is simply because the sins have been created by the law and not the law by the sins.⁶ So long as the laws work in such a way that materialistic medicine is considered to represent them—and that is the case today—so long will individuals, however thorough their insight, be unable to do anything and, indeed, they ought not to do anything. But a time will come in the not too distant future when medicine, the art of healing, will incorporate the impulses which come from spiritual knowledge. I merely want to point this out for the moment, since I am actually leading up to something else. Knowledge of the healing forces is inseparable from knowledge of the forces of sickness. One cannot be taught without the other. No one in the world can gain knowledge of the healing forces, without at the same time learning about the forces of sickness. So you can see how important it is for people to be morally good through and through as regards such serious matters. For someone who can heal a person's soul can also make a person's soul sick in the same degree. Therefore such truths may not be imparted by the gods to man until a stage of morality has been reached at which the healing medicine cannot be transformed into poison.

This applies not only to the situation in which we are dealing with abnormal states of body or soul but also to what goes on in social life. In what has been said in recent lectures you will have seen quite clearly that impulses work in the social life of human beings, good and bad impulses, which can be guided by those who understand such things, and are indeed often guided in rather extraordinary ways. You will realize that it is simply necessary for this to be so, for mankind must learn on its own account how to achieve the good. I know very well how little these things are taken seriously, even in our circles, and how narrow-minded are the excuses and objections. But this also has to be so at present.

As with the individual, so is it also in social life: certain impulses can be steered and guided to one side or the other. In social life, in particular, it is still possible nowadays to make use to a considerable extent of the unconscious, for every age has its unconscious aspect. As soon as you start to reckon with the unconscious or the subconscious it is

possible to achieve effects which differ considerably from what can be done consciously, for today's consciousness will not achieve its natural connection with the cosmos until the sixth post-Atlantean epoch. Today, those who reckon with the unconscious bring things over from the fourth post-Atlantean epoch in either a mephistophelean or a luciferic way. Now, it fits in well with our present endeavours in these grave times to apply general truths of this kind to specific situations, for it is appropriate not just to play theosophical games but to gather serious knowledge which affects reality, even though this serious knowledge might make demands as to the degree of prejudice existing in our feelings. Also, we are in accord with a feeling for Christmas if we make the decision to approach the earnestness of life. Nowadays we cannot allow ourselves to indulge luxuriously in sentimental Christmas-tree feelings, for a true Christmas mood involves feeling one's way to its connection with the grave and shattering experiences of the present time.

You can see, particularly in people's everyday lives, what happens if they are being influenced at a subconscious level. You can hypnotize an individual person, so that once he is hypnotized he is in your power, and you can make him do things he would never even consider doing in a waking state. You can hypnotize him, which means putting him into a state of consciousness belonging to ages long past, and you may have all sorts of intentions for doing so. In the same way it is possible to hypnotize whole communities. An individual person is stronger in the physical world than is a group, and it is therefore necessary to lower his consciousness considerably more in order to work through him while he is in this other consciousness. In the case of a community or group of people the lowering of consciousness need not even be noticeable, for it can be far more slight. Yet certain things would not be achieved by continuing to speak, for instance, in the way we speak with one another. Therefore I must stress again and again: I shall never consider speaking other than in difficult concepts which require intellectual understanding, so that each person is forced to follow the line of thought and form concepts of what is being said. If we take the fifth post-Atlantean period and its requirements seriously, there can be no question of wishing to bring about any kind of intoxication, or of intending to work on anything other than the intellect. Even someone who knows nothing of Spiritual Science, but has a certain awareness of what it means to be in the fifth post-Atlantean period, will respect the inner freedom of the human being and speak in a way which does not dupe the feelings or create disturbances in the soul.

It would be different with a person who wanted to achieve effects different from those I have described, that is, if someone wanted to make use of a lowered consciousness, which can be achieved far more easily with a crowd than with an individual, since for a crowd no hypnosis is needed. You know how a crowd, a group, can be seized by a certain intoxication if it is handled in a suitable way. I have said on earlier occasions that I have met orators who knew by instinct how to speak in a way which does not directly address the intellect but uses slogans and telling images to speak to a consciousness that is somewhat askew, somewhat delirious. As I said, the approach has to be stronger in the case of an individual, but for a crowd no more is needed. I have given you examples of this.

It is entirely fitting to contemplate these things in a mood of inwardness which befits these days, for they are deeply bound up with the Christmas and Easter Mysteries. I described some time ago how I was moved in my youth when I met with such an effect in

a certain situation. I have recounted this example quite often: my karma led me at the right time to hear the sermons of a very important Jesuit father.⁷ I could watch as a certain image was intensified in the people by means of particular words; I saw them being convinced in a manner that did not involve their intellect but brought about a certain kind of delirious mood. Let us look at the example. The Jesuit was preaching about the necessity of believing in the Easter confession and he said, in effect, the following: Well, of course non-believers think that the Easter confession was instituted by the Pope or the college of cardinals. What an idea, my dear Christians! Someone who maintains that the Easter confession has been established by the Pope and the priests might be compared with somebody watching a trooper standing beside his cannon, with an officer next to him giving orders. The trooper only has to light the fuse and the cannon goes off. My dear Christians, compare the trooper with the Pope in Rome and the officer giving the orders with God! Just imagine the officer standing there shouting 'Fire', and the trooper lighting the fuse without any will of his own. The cannon goes off. This is what the Pope does. He listens to God's commandments. God commanded—the Pope was like the trooper who lit the fuse—and there was the Easter confession. Would you say that the trooper standing by the cannon and lighting the fuse had also invented the gunpowder? It is as unlikely that you would say the trooper invented the gunpowder as it is that you would maintain that the Pope invented the Easter confession! And all the people were convinced, of course! It was perfectly obvious.

In certain communities these things have to be learned, namely, how to describe things in pictures, how to use images, bring about intensifications, and employ comparisons. This is a special art which is diligently practised in the grey brotherhoods. But there is no need to belong to a grey brotherhood in order to practise such an art. One can be dependent in one way or another on the grey brotherhoods, perhaps without even knowing how dependent one is, and then one can use these methods.

What is all this based on? It is based on the fact that a different kind of soul life is present when we speak with one another in a manner suited to the fifth post-Atlantean period, for then we direct ourselves to the intellect and not to a kind of delirium which would be brought about if we used some of the means I have just sketched. In the fifth post-Atlantean period we have to learn to withstand Hödr, we have to learn to withstand the remnants of an earlier time that resemble the mistletoe which has become a parasite in the plant world. We have to learn to withstand Hödr, the unconscious one, the blind one, the passionate one, the delirious one.

We can only win this capacity by making our understanding such that we feel quite isolated from the world, whereas those who develop a delirious type of consciousness immediately attract to themselves cosmic effects; they draw cosmic effects down into the present. With the consciousness of the fifth post-Atlantean period we stand in isolation on the earth. In a delirious consciousness, cosmic effects are drawn into the soul. And these, of course, have to be utilized in an appropriate way. Let us take an actual case.

Someone who today wants to work on others, on those whose consciousness is delirious, with the aim of achieving a particular end, can do the following: he can remember when something similar existed in an earlier age when the starry constellations were also similar. Now since everything goes in waves in the world, so that a particular

wave returns to the surface after a certain time, in order to achieve certain effects he can make use of an event which under similar cosmic conditions is like a copy of an earlier event; he can make it a copy of an earlier event. Let us assume that someone wants to achieve something by influencing others in their delirious consciousness, by carrying out certain procedures involving certain facts. He goes back in history and recalls something which happened at an earlier date under a similar starry constellation.

Assume someone wants to bring something about on a day in the spring of a particular year. Having established that it is Whitsuntide, he goes back through time until he finds an event that is similar to the one he wants to bring about. And it must fall in a year when the date of Whitsun fell approximately on similar days of the month. Then the starry constellation will also be roughly the same. By utilizing all this it will then be possible to work on those in a delirious state of consciousness. In a sense it will be possible, by bringing about a state of delirious consciousness under a particular starry constellation, to hit the target of a group of people who are always a kind of Baldur in the fifth post-Atlantean period; in other words, to play Loki with blind Hödr, or through blind Hödr.

Now let us take an actual case: in an earlier age Whitsuntide fell on 20 May 1347. At this time on a particular day the heralds, flourishing their trumpets, marched with a crowd—it does not matter that their relationship to the Whitsun Mystery differed from ours today—leading Cola di Rienzi,⁸ who made the proclamation, from that important place in Rome under that very starry constellation which fell on 20 May, which was to give him the title of tribune of Rome. The impression he made was comparable to the impression made on a group or crowd in a state of delirious consciousness. For the crowd believed that Cola di Rienzi had brought the Holy Ghost; and utilization of the starry constellation of the time made it possible, though for a very short time only, for him to achieve what he intended.

A remarkable copy of this event took place under the same starry constellation in 1915 when, not Cola di Rienzi, but Signor d'Annunzio⁹ called together a crowd on the same spot in a very similar way! Again a delirious consciousness was affected by ideas and symbols which conjured up pictures that were eminently suitable for speaking to this delirious consciousness. I am not criticizing anybody's consciousness but merely reporting facts—facts which, if you like, have been pushed as far as possible down into the unconscious. But this does not alter their effectiveness. On Whitsunday 1915 the same happened in Rome as had happened on Whitsunday 1347, which also fell on 20, 21 May. One day makes no difference. On the contrary, the constellation was all the more identical. At Whitsun 1915 there was a repeat performance of what had happened under Cola di Rienzi in 1347. The new event was thus particularly effective, for it was borne on the same vibrations, the same waves, the same conditions.

History will only be understood when such facts are known, when it is known what can be achieved with the help of such facts. Regardless of what the influences were, Signor d'Annunzio, through the life he had led so far, had the potential of succumbing to all sorts of influences, and he had the strength to put these influences to use. Let me remark merely that, because of his earlier poetry, this poet was called by a number of critics representing the healthy side of Italy 'The singer of all shameful degeneracy'. In ordinary life his name was Rapagnetta, which I am told means 'little turnip', but he called himself d'Annunzio.

Under this starry constellation Signor d'Annunzio gave a speech¹⁰ which you may judge for yourselves because I am going to read it aloud to you to the best of my ability. To put you in the picture: there were two parties in Italy at that time, the Neutralists and the Interventionists, and Signor d'Annunzio set himself the task of transforming all the Neutralists into Interventionists. The Neutralists wanted to preserve neutrality, and Giolitti,¹¹ a man who had been very active in Italian political life for a long time, was for neutrality. That speech by d'Annunzio, which was like a repetition of the one made long ago by Cola di Rienzi under the same starry constellation, went as follows:

‘Romans!

Yesterday you presented a noble show to the world! Your never-ending, well-ordered procession resembled those solemn processions of ancient days which gathered here in the temple of Jupiter Maximus; and every street through which such power marches, such power coupled with such dignity, becomes a Via Sacra. Invisible in your midst you drew, on an invisible carriage, the statue of our great mother.

Blessed be the Roman mothers I saw in the procession yesterday, the mothers who bore their sons in their arms and wore on their foreheads the mark of resigned courage and silent sacrifice.

Is there any need for exhortations when the very stones are eloquent? The people of Rome were prepared to tear up the paving stones trampled by the horses which ought long since to be standing firm at the borders of Istria, instead of remaining here, humbled by shame, to defend the nests of poisonous creatures, the houses of traitors! What must have been the sadness of our young soldiers!—What a show of discipline and self-denial they gave, when they protected, against the just anger of the people, those very men who denigrate and slander them, humiliating them before their brothers and before the enemy. Let us cry: “Long live the army!” That is the call of this hour! Of all the vile actions committed by Giolitti and his pack this is the vilest: the denigration of our arms and of our national defence. Until yesterday they got away with the dissemination of doubt, suspicion, and disregard for our soldiers—our handsome, good, strong, brave, impetuous soldiers, the flower of our people, the reliable heroes of tomorrow. With what heavy hearts did they fix their bayonets in order to repulse the very people whose only purpose was to avenge them!

O my admirable comrades! Today every good citizen is a soldier for the freedom of Italy! Through you and with you we are victorious, we have brought confusion to the ranks of the traitors. Hear, O hear! The crime of high treason has been declared and proved, and publicly announced. The dishonourable names are known; punishment is needed!

Do not be taken in, do not be moved to pity. A rabble like that has no twinges of conscience, no remorse. Who can teach another taste to the beast who is accustomed to the filth in which he rolls and the trough from which he gorges?

On the twentieth of May in the solemn gathering of our union,¹² we shall not tolerate the shameless presence of those who, for months, have been negotiating the sale of Italy with the enemy. Clowns may not be permitted to clothe themselves in the tri-coloured mantle, and bellow from unclean throats the holy name of the fatherland. Write out your

list of proscription without pity. It is your right, it is your duty! Who saved Italy in her hour of darkness, who but you, her people, pure and profound?

Never forget that! The others may escape punishment only by flight! Let them go! This is the only leniency permitted towards them. Was not a certain one, even this morning, still inclined to join in the plots whose net is being spun among the blossoming rosebeds of the villa on the Pincio¹³—now to be confiscated—by the fat German spider who lives there? We never believed for one minute, of course, that a ministry formed by Herr Bülow could have received the approval of the King—or rather, that the King could have become an accomplice to such a thing.

In his great heart the King has heard the exhortation of Camillo Cavour: The hour of the House of Savoy has come!

The hour has come. It tolls under the high heavens which arch over your Pantheon, O Romans, and over this eternal Capitol! Here, where the plebeians held the meetings of their council; here, where every increase in the empire of Rome was consecrated, where the consuls exacted the levies and received the oaths of the soldiers; whence the magistrates of the republic departed to take over command of the armies and control the provinces; where Germanicus set up the trophies of his victory over the Germans; where the triumphant Octavian solemnly confirmed Roman dominance over the whole of the Mediterranean basin; here, at this place, the starting point and the goal of all our victories, we celebrate the voluntary sacrifice, we cry the words of consecration and desire: Long live the war, long live Rome, long live Italy, long live the army and the fleet, long live the King! Glory and victory!’

Thus spoke the new Cola di Rienzi. Then he received the dagger presented to him as a special souvenir of Nino Bixio. This dagger stemmed from ancient days and had been treasured by the Podrecca family. The dagger is presented—pardon me, but this is really true—by the editor of *Asino*! *Asino* is a particularly obscene satirical journal. But d’Annunzio takes hold of the dagger, kisses it solemnly, strides through the crowd and enters—not, like Cola di Rienzi, a horse-drawn triumphal chariot, for times have changed—he enters a motor car, having first commanded all the church bells to be rung. The delirious consciousness must not be allowed to fade too soon. All the bells are rung to keep it going a little longer. Then d’Annunzio halts his car at the telegraph office and sends a telegram to the editor of *Le Gaulois* who answers—I am sorry I do not know how to pronounce this in French so I shall have to say it in the German way—who answers to the name of Meier:

‘Rome, 1 p.m., great battle fought. Have just spoken on the Capitol to an enormous, delirious crowd. The bells are sounding the alarm, the cries of the people rise up to the most beautiful sky in the world. I am drunk with joy. After the French miracle I have now witnessed the Italian miracle.’

Without making any comments or taking sides I simply wanted to point out certain facts in order to show, by the way in which they are connected, how things happen that are hardly noticed by our unobservant contemporaries. I wanted to show that although the ‘singer of all shameful degeneracy’, as he was called in Italy, probably did not believe very strongly in the miracle of Whitsun, he nevertheless succeeded very well in working on certain

unconscious impulses by using a repetition of an event which made available considerable forces within a delirious consciousness. This man, who in his own country is called ‘the singer of all shameful degeneracy’ and who has succeeded in writing a novel which trumpets forth his relationship with a famous woman in the most contemptible way—this man found another whole series of effective images in another long speech, this time in the Constanzi theatre. The image of the cannon, which I have already mentioned, is rather less significant. I cannot read the whole speech to you as this would take too long. Let me give you a passage from the beginning and another from the end. It begins:

‘Romans, Italians, brothers in faith and in yearning, my new friends, and my companions of old!’

Well, so he says ‘of old’!

‘Your greetings of warm kindness, of generous recognition, are not intended for me. It is not the homecomer in me you are welcoming, I know, it is the spirit that leads me, the love that fills me, the idea that I serve.

Your welcome goes through me and beyond me to a higher goal. I bring you the tidings of Quarto, Roman tidings to the Rome of the Villa Spada and of Vascello.

This evening the daylight has not gone from the Aurelian walls and it will not go: the glimmer remains on San Pancratio. Let us this evening confront cowardice with heroism and remember that sixty-six years ago today the leader of men led his legion, already destined to become the June miracle, from Palestrina back to Rome. Let us this evening confront shame with fame and remember that fifty-five years ago at this very hour the thousand on the march from Marsala to Salemi were bivouacking, their muskets stacked together, eating their bread or sleeping quietly. In their hearts they carried the stars and the words of their leader which still sound vital and commanding to this day: “If we unite, our task will be easy. To arms!” It was the call of Marsala, which continued with the robust threat: “Those who do not arm are cowards or traitors!” If he, the saviour, could but descend from the Janiculus into the plain, would he not brand with one or the other of these signs and charge with shame all those who secretly or publicly work towards disarming Italy, shaming our fatherland, returning it to a state of servitude, nailing it back on its cross or leaving it to die in a bed that has sometimes seemed to us a grave without a cover?

Some need fifty years to die in their beds, some need fifty years to complete their disintegration in their beds. Is it possible we would allow strangers in our midst or from without, enemies who live in our house or who have entered it forcibly, to impose this kind of death on a people who yesterday raised with a shudder of power an image of their highest myth upon their shore, a monument of their true will, their Roman will, O citizens? For three days now an indefinable stink of treachery has been seeking to suffocate us.’

And so it goes on. Then, at the end we find a new, warmed-up version of something we know so well from the gospels.¹⁴ D’Annunzio of all people dares to speak the following words:

‘Blessed are they who have more, for all the more shall they give, all the more shall

their enthusiasm be inflamed!

Blessed are they who have for twenty years a pure spirit, a hardened physique, a courageous mother!

Blessed are they who refrained, waiting and trusting, from squandering their strength, preserving it instead with a warrior's discipline!

Blessed are they who scorned unfruitful dalliance, saving their virginity for this first and last love!'

D'Annunzio of all people says: 'Blessed are they who scorned unfruitful dalliance, saving their virginity for this first and last love!'

'Blessed are they who shall tear out the hate rooted in their breast with their own hands and then offer their sacrifice!

Blessed are they who yesterday still resisted the event, yet today silently accept it as a profound necessity, desiring now to be no longer the last but the first!

Blessed are the young men who hunger and thirst for glory, for they shall be satisfied!

Blessed are the compassionate, for they shall wipe away the shining blood and bind up the lustrous pain!

Blessed are the pure in heart, blessed those who return victorious; for they shall see the new countenance of Rome, the re-crowned head of Dante, the triumphant beauty of Italy.'

So even in our own time such things are sometimes said! And it is so important, my dear friends, not to pass by these things. For not all people act in accord with the One Whose birth we celebrate in the holy night—not those who scream out such beatitudes into the world. To belong, not to the darkness, but to the light which has entered into the world: this is a feeling with which to fill our souls at the time of this holy feast. To dedicate ourselves to the light, instead of to that inattentiveness which brings us only darkness: this too, can be something in these grave times which it is important for us to inscribe in our souls on Christmas Eve.

LECTURE TEN

Dornach, 25 December 1916

Yesterday we began by considering the Baldur myth which, as we saw, goes back to ancient customs, and it is precisely such considerations that make clear for us how Christianity had to, and indeed should, link on to what mankind had previously understood. The three great festivals of the year, as they are still celebrated today, are very much linked with things which have slowly and gradually come about during the course of human evolution. We can only completely understand what still wants to express itself in the Christmas, Easter and Whitsun Mysteries if we do not shy away from linking these things with the thinking and feeling and experience of mankind gradually developing during the course of evolution. We saw how the Christ idea goes back to early, early times.

To understand this more exactly you only need to call before your soul what is contained in the book *The Spiritual Guidance of Man and Humanity*.¹ There you will learn how the foundation of the Christ idea can be traced back to the mysteries of the spiritual worlds. In the book is shown the path followed in the spiritual worlds by the Being Who underlies the Christ idea before He revealed Himself in physical human incarnation at a certain point in earthly evolution. In coming to grips with these concepts concerning the spiritual guidance of mankind it is possible to sense what connection, or even lack of connection, there exists between anthroposophical spiritual science and ancient Gnosis. To describe the path of Christ through the spiritual worlds in the way it is done in *The Spiritual Guidance of Man and Humanity* would not yet have been possible for ancient Gnosis. But this ancient Gnosis also had its own image of Christ, its Christ idea. It was capable of drawing sufficient understanding out of its atavistic or clairvoyant knowledge to comprehend the Christ in a spiritual way, saying: In the spiritual world there is an evolution; the hierarchies—or, as Gnosis put it, the aeons—follow one another; and one such aeon is the Christ. Gnosis showed how, as aeon after aeon evolved, Christ gradually descended and revealed Himself in a human being. This can be shown even more clearly today, and you may read about it in the book *The Spiritual Guidance of Man and Humanity*.

It is good, in our spiritual scientific Movement, to feel many aspects of the deeper connections in order to free oneself of purely personal affairs. For in this fifth post-Atlantean period mankind has reached a stage in evolution at which it is very difficult for the individual to escape from his personal affairs. The individual is in danger of mixing up his personal instincts and passions with what is common to mankind as a whole.

Even the various festivals have deteriorated into purely personal affairs because mankind has lost the earnestness and dignity which alone make it possible to approach the spiritual world in the right way. It is perfectly natural in our fifth post-Atlantean period, in which man is supposed to comprehend himself to a certain extent and become independent, that there should exist such a danger of man to some extent losing his connections with the spiritual world. In earlier times man was aware of his connections with the spiritual world, yet unaware of certain other things, such as I pointed out yesterday. Today man is, above all, unaware of those things I have mentioned in these

lectures by saying: People are no longer inclined to pay attention to them; they allow them to pass by without being concerned about them.

It is a good thing on occasions such as the Christmas festival to say to oneself: Spiritual impulses, both good and evil, play into the evolution of our world. We have seen how these impulses can be used in an evil way by individuals who know about them either for some personal, egoistic purpose, or in the interests of the egoism of a group. We must learn to adjust our feelings to more comprehensive affairs and more comprehensive conditions. Even though we cannot always advertise such feelings, we must nevertheless cultivate them.

I am now going to give you the opportunity—in connection with a certain matter—to, as it were, tear your soul away from any sort of personal interpretation of Anthroposophy and turn instead towards something general which is connected with our Anthroposophical Movement. If you understood properly what I said yesterday, you will say to yourself: That twentieth day of May in 1347, that May Whitsuntide when Cola di Rienzi accomplished his important manifesto in Rome, was repeated in a certain way at Whitsuntide in the year 1915. Those who have been following the events will soon notice, or would soon notice, that this May Whitsuntide was selected entirely purposely and entirely consciously by those who brought this about. It was known to these people that these old impulses would once again revive, and that the hearts and souls who succumb to the blindness of Hödr can be caught when Loki approaches them. But people can only be caught so long as they do not have the will to accustom themselves to look at, and be impressed by, connections that are perfectly obvious and comprehensible. One is only at the mercy of connections that remain in the unconscious so long as one is so tied up in personal matters that one cannot see proper connections—connections in the good sense—so long as one has no interest for those things which involve mankind as a whole, which are things that inevitably lead into the spiritual realm.

I explained to you that in Gnosis there was still an understanding of the Christ idea; that when Gnosis was rooted out the Christ idea degenerated into dogma and that, in the South, therefore, the genuine Christ idea more or less disappeared. Now spiritual science has the task, in accordance with spiritual evolution, of once again comprehending this Christ idea, of forming a Christ idea that is not an empty phrase but filled with content, with real content.

In the North the very thing that could take root there has disappeared, namely, the feeling for Jesus. As I said the day before yesterday, the feeling for Jesus was really formed in the North and lingered on into the eighth, ninth, tenth centuries after the Mystery of Golgotha. In ancient times the Christ-child was welcomed wherever a birth took place, wherever a worthy new member could be taken into the tribe, especially among the Ingaevones, while those born at the wrong time were out of place—of course I am not being pedantic. We then saw how, as external Christianity spread, all things connected with the ancient feeling for Jesus, even the myths and processions—in other words, any remnants of religious customs—were pushed aside. We also saw how, since the Middle Ages, strenuous efforts have been going on to obliterate all that spread from Jutland across Europe, especially Central Europe.

Situated in the region of Denmark was the chief Mystery centre which laid down and

watched over the conditions which then appeared in the regulation of conception and birth. There it was that a general consciousness of the social connections of human beings grew up, connections that were also sacramental, a true social sacrament. The year as such was arranged as a sacrament and human beings knew they were contained within this sacrament of the year. For people in those days the sun did not for nothing go in different ways across the dome of heaven at different seasons, for what took place on earth was a mirror image of heavenly events. Where human beings as yet have, or can have, no influence, where elemental and nature beings still regulate what is now regulated by human beings in social life—there the sacrament can exist. Today, though people are not as yet aware of it, quite strong ahrimanic impulses live in individual human beings. I mean it when I say that people are not yet aware of this. These ahrimanic impulses are directed towards seizing from certain elemental nature spirits their sacramental influence on earthly evolution.

When modern technology has made it possible to warm large areas with artificial heat—I am not finding fault but merely telling you of something that will of necessity come about in the future—then plant growth, above all that of grain, will be taken away from the nature and elemental spirits. There will be heating installations, not only for winter gardens and smaller spaces for plants to grow, but for whole cornfields. Deprived of cosmic laws, grain will grow in every season, instead of only when it grows of its own accord—that is, when it grows through the working of the nature and elemental spirits. For the seeds this will be similar to what happened when the ancient consciousness of sacramental laws about conception and birth faded so that these events came to be spread over the whole year. The task of Mystery centres such as that in Denmark, which I described as regulating, as a sacrament, the social life of the people, was to search for ways in which spiritual beings could work in the social and sacramental field, just as they work on the sprouting and growing of plants in the spring and their fading in autumn. From this centre in Denmark there spread what we were able to find in the third millennium before the Mystery of Golgotha, but which then faded gradually to make way for something new, without which human beings would have been unable to ascend to the use of their intellect. These things are necessary and we ought to recognize them as such, instead of trying to meddle with the handiwork of the gods by saying: Why have the gods done it like this, why did they not arrange things like that?—which always means: Why have they not made things more comfortable for human beings!

So in Jutland, in Denmark, originated the receptivity for the feeling for Jesus. You see, it is important to think about what is happening, not only in connection with events which are more or less important, but also to consider the connections. But this thinking must be straight and true, not full of fantastic aberrations. Many people like to brood on the weird and wonderful, but proper thinking means to consider how actual events are linked and then to wait and see what arises in the way of understanding.

After all I have said in the last few days it might occur to you to ask the following question, and those of you who have already asked yourselves this question have definitely sensed in your soul something that is right. If you have not yet asked it, you could strive in future to ask yourselves this kind of question. For such questions are to be found everywhere when there is determination that there shall be truth, not only in what is said, but also in what is done. The World Logos, Whose birth we celebrate in the

Christmas Mystery, can only be understood rightly if we think of It as being as general and universal as possible, if we think of this World Logos actually vibrating and pulsating in all things that happen, in every event. And when we have the humility and devotion to feel ourselves interwoven with this universal process, then we recognize the connections and links which hold sway.

What is the question our soul might place before us? In recent days you soul might have thought: We have now seen that in Gnosis there was an important Christ idea; it disappeared in the South and, in a certain way, was unable to make its way to the North. To meet it came the Jesus idea, which is linked as a feeling to the Mysteries of Jutland. This is what we have seen.

Having recognized this and having seen the links between these two, would it not be natural to have the desire to bring together what has been unable to come together? In the world evolution of the West the Christ idea has been unable to come together with the Jesus idea. Out of this must surely come the desire to unite them.

In all modesty, modern Anthroposophy is to take on this task. It is the affair of Anthroposophy to endeavour to do what is right in this matter and bring these things together to some extent in the constellation of the universe. So in attempting to describe how modern Anthroposophy, as a Gnosis brought forward into the present day, can once again understand the Christ, the wish might arise to unite this Christ idea with something that can live again in a certain place where once it lived as the feeling for Jesus in such an intense way. To do this, one would endeavour to speak about the Christ idea and how it fits in with the spiritual guidance of man exactly at that spot, or as near to that spot as possible, whence the feeling for Jesus originally emanated.

This is why, years ago, in response to an invitation from Copenhagen² I spoke particularly there about the path of Christ through the spiritual evolutions. Why did the need arise just at that time, to develop at that particular place the theme of the Christ idea as it is woven into *The Spiritual Guidance of Man and Humanity*? It is a statement, expressed not in spoken words but in the constellation! It is up to people to understand such things. There is no need to speak about it publicly everywhere, but one must understand that not only what is said but also what is done will bring things to expression, and that in these things the Universal Logos lives in a certain way.

It seems to be the case nowadays that people obviously bring more feeling to bear on what is not right, on what is evil, seen universally, than they do when, by expressing a real fact, one endeavours to incorporate something that is essentially good in the sense of human evolution. But the feeling one really wants to inspire, especially now in connection with the Christmas Mystery, is that of participation in the Anthrosophical Movement, the feeling of living within something that is above mere external maya. Also one hopes that people will take seriously the knowledge that what happens on the physical plane, the way things happen on the physical plane, is maya, and not reality in the higher sense.

Not until we feel that what takes place on the earth also, in a way, takes place in 'heaven'—to use a Christian expression—not until we feel that the full truth only comes about when we bring the two together in the human spirit—that is, in this fifth post-Atlantean period, the human intellect—are we seeing the full reality. The full reality lies in

the bringing-together of what happens on earth and in heaven. Without this, we remain held fast in maya. We have, today, this great desire to remain held fast in maya because, in the fifth post-Atlantean period, we are far too exposed to the danger of taking the word for the fact. To a great extent words have lost their meaning, by which I mean the living soul-connection of the word with the reality that underlies the word. Words have become mere abbreviations, and the intoxication in which many people live with regard to words is no longer genuine ecstasy, because only a deepening as regards the spiritual world can make genuine the words we speak. Words will only regain real content when human beings fill themselves with knowledge of the spiritual world. Ancient knowledge is lost, and for the most part we speak in the way we do just because the ancient knowledge is lost and we are surrounded by maya, which gives us nothing but mere words. Now we must once again seek a spiritual life which gives the words their content. We live, in a way, in a mechanism of words, just as externally we shall gradually completely lose our individuality in a mechanism of technology until we are at the mercy of external mechanisms.

It is our task to bring together what lives in the spiritual world with what lives in the physical world. To do this we have to tackle very seriously the grasping of reality. In this materialistic age people are too much accustomed to living within narrow horizons and to seeing things confined within these horizons. They have even arranged their religion so comfortably that it gives them a narrow horizon. People today avoid wide horizons and do not want to call a spade a spade. That is why it is so difficult for them to understand how a karma could come about that is as terrible as that besetting Europe today. Everybody regards this karma—today, at least—from a narrow national standpoint, as it is called, although there is much that is untrue in this too. But at the foundation there lies the karma of mankind as a whole, something that is everybody's concern, which can be expressed in a single sentence with regard to one particular point—though there are many other points as well. People are inclined to pass by the very thing that matters. This thing that matters is the flight from truth into which souls have fallen today! Souls run away from the truth; they have a terrible abhorrence of grasping the truth in all its strength and intensity.

Consider the following: we have gradually built up a picture for ourselves of the evolution of mankind and we now know how to assess the fact that, during a certain period in this evolution, wars came upon the scene, that wars were what fired mankind. But it was a time when mankind believed in war. What do I mean when I say that it was a time when mankind believed in wars? What does it mean: to believe in wars? Well, a belief in wars is very similar to a belief in the duel, in the fight between two. But when does a duel have a real meaning? It has a meaning only when the two concerned are inwardly fully convinced that, not chance, but the gods will decide the outcome. If the two who take up their positions in order to fight a duel fully believe that the one who is killed or wounded will receive his death or wound because a god has sided against him, then there is truth in the duel. There is no truth in the duel if this conviction is lacking; then, obviously, the duel is a genuine lie. It is the same in the case of war. If the individuals who constitute the warring peoples are convinced that the outcome of the war is divine, that the gods govern what is to happen, then there is truth in the actions of war. But then the participants must understand the meaning of the words: A divine judgement will come about.

Ask yourselves whether there is any truth in such words today! You need only ask: Do

people believe that actions of war express divine judgements? Do people believe this? Ask yourselves how many people believe that the outcome is divine! How many people truly believe this, how many honestly believe this? For among the many lies buzzing about in the world today are the prayers to the gods, or to God, offered up—naturally—by all sides. Obviously, in this materialistic age there cannot be a real belief that a divine judgement is going to take place. So it is necessary to look seriously and soberly at this matter, and admit that one is doing something without believing in its inner reality. One does not believe in this inner reality, and one believes all the less in this inner reality the further westwards one goes in Europe—quite rightly, because the further westwards one goes, the more does one enter western Europe, which has the task for the fifth post-Atlantean period of bringing about materialism.

Things are different going eastwards, however. I am not in the habit of constructing theories about such things or of saying such things lightheartedly. When I say something of this kind it is based on actual facts. It is nowadays already possible to make a remarkable discovery. Coming from the West to Central Europe you discover that here there exists a sporadic belief in divine judgement. In the West this is impossible unless it has been imported from Central Europe. But in Central Europe there are isolated individuals who have a kind of belief in destiny and who use the word ‘divine judgement’. And if you go right to the East where the future is being prepared, you will, of course, find numerous people who regard the approaching outcome as a divine judgement. For Russian people are not averse—as are the people of the West—to seeing a divine judgement in what takes place.

These things must be faced with full objectivity. Only then can we speak truly; only then do our words have meaning. Mankind has the task of learning to give meaning back to words.

Some time ago I drew your attention to what almost amounts to a religious cultivation of something that is entirely without thought or feeling, namely, the lack of desire to know that modern religions, when they speak of ‘God’, actually only mean an angel being, an angelos. When human beings today speak of ‘God’ they mean only their angel, the angel who guides them through life. But they persuade themselves that they are speaking of a being higher than an angel. It is maya that modern monotheism speaks of a single god for, in reality, seen from a spiritual point of view, mankind has the tendency to speak of as many gods as there are human beings on the earth, since each individual means only his own angel. Under the mask of monotheism is hidden the most absolute polytheism. That is why modern religions are in danger of being atomized, since each individual represents only his own idea of God, his own standpoint. Why is this? It is because, today, in the fifth post-Atlantean period, we are isolated from the spiritual world. Our consciousness remains solely in the human sphere.

In the fourth post-Atlantean period human consciousness reached some way into the spiritual sphere, namely, as far as the region of the angeloi. In the third post-Atlantean period it penetrated as far as the archangeloi. Only in this third period could such a thing as the Mysteries of Jutland, of Denmark come into being. What kind of a being was it who announced to each individual mother the coming birth of her child? It was the being about whom the Luke gospel speaks: an archangel, a being from the region of the archangeloi.

One who can see only as far as the angeloi and calls an angel-being his god—regardless of whether he believes this is really God, for it is reality and not belief that matters—such a one is incapable of finding any connection that goes beyond the time between birth and death to those regions which are today hidden by external maya. In the third post-Atlantean period, however, he was still able to look into the region of the archangels, for there was still a living connection with that region. In the second post-Atlantean period, the ancient Persian period, what was open to human consciousness was still connected with the archai. Then man did not feel himself to be in what we today call nature. He felt himself to be in a spiritual world. Light and darkness were not yet external, material processes, but spiritual processes. In the original Zarathustra religion, in the second post-Atlantean period, this was so.

So mankind gradually came down to the earth. In the second post-Atlantean period his consciousness reached up into the region of the archai, so that he was then still able to say: As a human being I am not solely an articulated doll consisting of muscles and flesh—which is what modern anatomists, physiologists and biologists maintain—but a being who can only be understood in connection with the spiritual world, immersed in the living weaving of light and darkness, for I belong to the weaving of light and darkness.

Then came the third post-Atlantean period. Nature began to take hold of man in so far as it worked on him. For the processes of birth and death link the soul life of man with nature. For external maya these are natural processes. Birth, conception, death are natural processes for external maya. They are only spiritual processes for one who can see where spiritual reality intervenes in these natural processes, and that is in the region of the archangeloi. This connection was seen during the third post-Atlantean period.

Gradually, nature itself became reality for man. This was from the fourth post-Atlantean period onwards. Before that nature was not spoken of in the way we speak of it today. But man needed to step out of the spiritual world and dwell alone with nature, isolated to a certain extent from the spiritual world. But then he needed an event which would enable him once again to forge links with the spiritual world. In the second post-Atlantean period the divine element appeared to him in the region of the archai; in the third, in the region of the archangeloi; and, in the fourth, in the region of the angeloi. In the fifth post-Atlantean period he had to recognize the divine as man. This was prepared in the middle of the fourth period when the divine appeared as Man—in the Christ. What this means is that Christ must come to be understood ever better and better; He must come to be understood in His connection with the human being. For Christ appeared as Man so that man might find the connection of mankind with the Christ. Such things we must make especially clear to ourselves in connection with the Christmas Mystery. Mankind's connection with the spiritual world must be found in the way that has become possible since man stepped down from this spiritual world in order to dwell within nature. This was prepared, as a fact, during the fourth post-Atlantean period. Now, in the fifth post-Atlantean period, it must be understood—really understood!

Human beings must find their way to an understanding of the fact of Christ, to an understanding of this in its connection with the whole of the spiritual world. There is so much today which is *not* understood about Christ, and so much which is *not* understood about Jesus. Yet these are the two constituent parts necessary for the understanding of

Christ Jesus! Looking at the historical context we can see that the understanding for Christ disappeared when Gnosis was rooted out. Looking at the mysteries expressed in the Baldur myth we can understand how the feeling for Jesus was rooted out.

If we remain truthful we can see now, in the present, how external life corroborates what we find in history. For how many representatives of religion today believe in their hearts—not merely with their lips but in their hearts—how many believe in the true Resurrection, in the Mystery of Easter? They can only believe if they can comprehend it. How many priests do? Modern priests and pastors think themselves particularly enlightened when they succeed in disavowing the Easter Mystery, the Resurrection Mystery, if they manage somehow to discuss it to bits, to make it disappear through sophistry. They are delighted every time they discover a new reason for not having to believe in it.

First of all, the Christ idea, which is inseparable from the Resurrection Mystery, was made into dogma. Then gradually it became a subject for discussion, and the tendency now is to drop the Resurrection Mystery altogether. But the Mystery of the Birth is also not understood. People no longer want to have dealings with it because they do not want to accept its validity in all its profound depths as a mystery. They want to see only the natural side; they do not want to be aware that something spiritual came down. In the third post-Atlantean period human beings still saw this spiritual element descending, but then their consciousness was at a different level. What is today called modern religion, modern Christianity, really has no desire to comprehend either the birth or the death of Christ Jesus. Some still want to maintain a dogmatic connection. But a comprehension of these things that goes beyond mere words is today only possible through spiritual science. For this to be possible, the horizon of comprehension must be widened. But people today flee from the truth; they literally flee from what could lead them to an understanding of these things.

Only anthroposophical spiritual science is in a position to create out of itself—not by warming up ancient history—certain concepts which will now exist for conscious rather than atavistic understanding. Long ago these concepts existed atavistically; today, people no longer have any real feeling for them. Let me remind you of something I mentioned yesterday. The kingship of the ancient European tribes was connected with all those social institutions I mentioned as emanating from the Mysteries of Jutland. The first child born in the holy night in the third year was destined to be king. He was prepared for this in the way I explained and he grew up to be the man who could be king for three years. He had reached the stage I described when I said that he grew beyond his national limits—he stepped out of the context of his tribe. An individual of the fifth degree—called ‘Persian’ by the Persians—bore in every tribe the name of that tribe; he still stood within the group. The one who was to be king for three years had to be filled with the mystery of the ‘sun hero’. This was the sixth degree, and for this he had to have grown beyond his tribe or group and stand in the context of mankind as a whole. But he could only do this if his connections were not only earthly but also cosmic, if he was a ‘sun hero’, which meant that he lived in a realm governed not only by earthly laws but also by those laws with which the sun is interwoven. If man is to act on the earth he has to have contact with the earthly realm, and contact with this realm brings about a certain process. This process must be recognized. For by recognizing this process we gain an understanding for certain

transitions, for certain things into which we need insight if we are to gain insight into reality.

In ancient times a man belonging to the tribe of the Ingaevones was called an 'Ingaevoni'. But the one who ruled the tribe for three years as a 'sun hero' could not be called an Ingaevoni, because he had grown beyond his tribe. It would not have been truthful to call the 'sun hero' an Ingaevoni, because he had become something else. You see what an exact concept was attached to an earthly reality because the spiritual world was felt to be streaming in.

Nowadays, when we merely play with words instead of adhering strictly to concepts, who would take it into his head to say that it is untrue to call the Pope a Christian, since this is a paradox, just as it would have been paradoxical to call the king of the Ingaevones an Ingaevoni? If the Pope really wanted to be a 'pope', that is, if he really wanted to stand within the actual spiritual process, it would not be possible to take him for a Christian. We can only be Christians if the Pope is not a Christian. To say this would be to speak the truth.

Who would take it into his head today to want to think the truth about such important matters? And who would take it into his head to see in earthly things, which he recognizes as maya, the playing in of divine, of supernatural forces? This would be quite uncharacteristic of the present day. Only if we are forced do we recognize these things; only if forced do we bow to the laws of the cosmos. We are forced to recognize that the blade of wheat sprouts from the earth at a given season, develops ears which in turn produce new seeds; that there is a definite rotation so that what has come into being has to fade again in due season in accordance with the laws of nature. Even this we would not recognize if we were not forced to do so.

In ancient times it was recognized that the 'sun hero' called to be the leader of the Ingaevones would cease to be so after three years. These laws were felt, just as were those of the growing plants. It is important to endeavour to think of all these things resounding in unison, in harmony. Only by doing so can one come to the truth and widen one's horizons. For the truth is not a child's game to be arranged according to personal interests. To adhere to the truth is a grave and holy act of worship. This must be felt and sensed. Yet the whole tendency today is none other than to make maya absolute and declare it to be the truth.

What is the historical criticism cultivated today in historical seminars? It is a neat paring down to the bare sense-perceptible facts, and this can only lead to error. For by striving to pare things down to the sense-perceptible facts we drift over into maya. But maya is illusion. So any science of history which endeavours to exclude every spiritual element and, instead, bring maya to the fore, must of necessity lead directly to maya. Just try, by using modern seminar methods applied in historical departments today, to pare things down to the truth by eliminating anything spiritual and accepting only what takes place on the physical plane, that is, only sense-perceptible facts, and you will find that you fall a victim to maya and never reach an understanding of history. Take a modern history book for which anything supersensible is an absurdity and in which great care is taken to attach validity only to physical events, and you have in your hand the striving to bring maya to the fore. But maya is illusion. So you have to fall a victim to illusion; and this is

exactly what you do. The moment you believe history as it is written today you become a victim of maya, of illusion.

But history has not always been written in this way. The way it was done in former times is scorned today. It is a terrible aspect of human karma that even in man's view of history the spiritual element is excluded. Let us look back to the time when the attitude of the fourth post-Atlantean period was dominant. History was told quite differently then. It was told in a way which makes today's professors turn up their noses and say: These fellows were totally uncritical; they let themselves be lumbered with all sorts of myths and sagas; they had no feeling for tidy criticism which would have shown them the facts as they really were. This is what historians say today, and of course also those who copy them. The people in those days were childish, they say. Of course they *were* childish when compared with today's notions! Let us listen to the old way of telling history, of telling what countless people with the attitude of mind of the fourth post-Atlantean period saw as history. Let us listen to this today and look at it as an example which we can use as a basis for what is to be said tomorrow:

Once upon a time³ there lived in Saxon lands an Emperor whom people called 'Red Emperor', the Emperor with the red beard: Otto of the Red Beard.⁴ This Emperor had a wife who came from England and whose heart's desire it was to endow a church. So Otto the Red decided to endow the archbishopric of Magdeburg. The archbishopric of Magdeburg was to have a special mission in Central Europe. It was to link the West with the East in such a way that this very archbishopric would be the one to bring Christianity to the neighbouring Slavs. The archbishopric of Magdeburg made good progress, carrying out charitable works over a wide area, and Otto of the Red Beard saw what good effects his endowment was having in the district. He was very pleased at this. He said to himself: My deeds are sufficient as a blessing in the physical world. He always longed for God to reward him for his benevolent deeds towards the people. That was his aim: that God might reward him because, after all, everything he did was done from piety.

Once he knelt in church in prayer which rose up to become a meditation, beseeching the gods to reward him, when he died, for his endowment, in the same way as he had found his reward on the physical plane, in all the good that had come about in the environment of the archbishopric of Magdeburg. Then a spiritual being appeared to him and said: It is true, you have endowed much that is good, you have acted with much benevolence towards many people. But you have done all this with a view to receiving the blessing of the divine world after your death, just as you are now enjoying the blessing of the earthly world. This is bad and it spoils your endowment.

Now Otto of the Red Beard was very unhappy about this and he spoke with this being who was—was he not?—a being from the ranks of the angeloi. We may feel this in the attitude of mind of the fourth post-Atlantean period. He spoke with this being and this being said to him: Go to Cologne where Gerhard the Good lives. Ask where you can find Gerhard the Good. If you can make yourself more virtuous through what Gerhard the Good will say to you, then perhaps you can avoid what I have just said will happen to you. This, more or less, was the conversation of Otto of the Red Beard with the spiritual being.

With a speed which those around him could not understand, the Emperor Otto made ready to journey to Cologne. In Cologne he called a gathering of the Burgomaster and all

‘wise and benign councillors’. One of those who came he recognized by his appearance as an unusual man, the one whom he had really come to see. He asked the Archbishop of Cologne, who had accompanied him, whether this was Gerhard the Good. And indeed it was. Then the Emperor said to the councillors: I wished to consult with you, but now I shall first speak apart with this man and then discuss with you what I have gleaned from him when I have spoken with him.

Perhaps this put the councillors’ noses out of joint somewhat, but we shall not go into this. So the Emperor took aside the councillor known in Cologne as Gerhard the Good and asked: Why do people call you Gerhard the Good? He had to ask this question, for the angel had pointed out that it all depended on whether he could recognize why this man was called Gerhard the Good. For he was to be healed through him. Gerhard the Good answered: People call me Gerhard the Good because they are thoughtless. I have not done anything special. But what I have done, which is something quite insignificant and about which I shall not tell you, has become known to some extent and, because people always want to invent phrases, they call me Gerhard the Good. The Emperor said: Surely it cannot be as simple as all that, and it is extremely important for me and my whole reign that I discover why people call you Gerhard the Good. Gerhard the Good did not want to disclose anything, but the Emperor pressed him ever harder till Gerhard the Good said: Very well, I will tell you why they call me Gerhard the Good, but you must not tell anyone else, for truly I see nothing special in it:

I am a simple merchant, I have always been a simple merchant, and one day I prepared to set out on a journey. First I journeyed on land for a while, and then at sea. I travelled as far as the Orient where I purchased very many valuable materials and valuable objects for very little money. I planned to sell these things elsewhere for double, treble, or even four or five times the price, for this is the custom among merchants; this was my business, my trade. Then I continued my journey by ship. But we were blown off course by an unfavourable wind. We had no idea where we were. So I found myself off course in the wind on the open sea with a few companions and all my costly objects and materials. We came ashore and from this shore a cliff rose up. We sent out a scout to climb the cliff to see what was beyond it, for we had been stranded on the shore. The scout saw a great city beyond the cliff; it was obviously a great trading city. Caravans were approaching along roads from all sides and a river flowed past it. The scout returned and showed us the way to approach the city from a spot where we could make fast our ship.

Here we were, in a city totally strange to us. Soon it became obvious that we Christians were surrounded by heathens. We saw a busy market. I thought to myself that I would be able to sell all sorts of things in the market, for the bargaining was lively. But I did not know the customs of the country. Then I saw coming towards me along the street a man who looked trustworthy. To him I said: Could you help me to sell my wares here? The man evidently felt that I too looked trustworthy and said: Where have you come from? I told him I was a Christian from Cologne. He said: Despite that, you seem quite respectable. Hitherto I have entertained the worst suspicions about Christians, but you do not seem to be a monster. I shall assist you and will find you lodgings. After that you may like to show me your wares.

When the merchant, Gerhard the Good, had settled in his lodgings, the heathen man he

had met came one day, inspected his wares and found them exceptionally costly. He said: Though there are quite a few rich people in the town, none of them is rich enough to buy all this. I am the only one to possess anything equivalent to these wares. If you want to sell them to me, I can give you what they are worth, but I am the only one who could do this. The merchant from Cologne wanted to see for himself, so the heathen offered to show him that he did indeed possess wares of an equivalent value to those extremely costly pieces gathered from all over the world.

So Gerhard went to the home of the heathen, where he saw immediately that he was dealing with a most important citizen of the town. First the heathen led him to a chamber in which twelve youths lay chained. They were prisoners, starving and wretched. He said: See, these are twelve Christians whom we took prisoner on the high seas where they were drifting aimlessly. Now come and see the rest of the wares. He took him to another room and showed him the same number of miserable old men. Gerhard's heart bled more for the old men than it had for the youths. Then he showed him a number of women—fifteen, I believe—who had also been taken prisoner. And he said: If you give me the wares I will give you these prisoners. They are exceedingly valuable and you can have them.

Then Gerhard, the merchant from Cologne, discovered that one of the women was exceedingly valuable because she was a daughter of the King of Norway who had been shipwrecked with her women—only some of the fifteen, the others were from elsewhere—and taken prisoner by the heathen. The other women were from England, as were the youths and old men. They had set sail with William, the son of the King of England, to fetch his Norwegian bride. When he had collected his Norwegian bride from Norway they had met with misfortune and been washed out to sea. William, the King's son, had been separated from the others. They did not know what had befallen him. As far as they were concerned he was lost. But the others, the women and the King's daughter from Norway, the twelve noble youths, the twelve noble old men, and the English women who had accompanied William to collect his bride, had all been shipwrecked and fallen into the hands of this heathen prince. He now wanted to sell them to Gerhard in exchange for his oriental wares. Gerhard wept bitter tears, not on account of the wares but, on the contrary, because he was to receive such valuable commodities in exchange for them. With his whole heart he agreed to the deal. The heathen prince was much moved and thought to himself: These Christians are not at all the monsters I thought them to be. He even equipped a fully provisioned ship so that Gerhard might take the youths and the old men, the King's daughter and the maidens across the sea with him. In parting from them all he was much moved and said: On account of you I shall henceforth be very just to all Christians who come into my care.

Now the merchant Gerhard from Cologne set off across the sea, and when they came to the point where the configuration of the land showed that the passages to London and to Utrecht must separate, he said to his travelling companions: Those who belong to England may sail that way. Those who belong to Norway, the King's daughter with her few women, may come with me to Cologne and I shall see whether the one whose bride she was to be has perhaps been found so that he may come and collect her.

In Cologne Gerhard kept the King's daughter in accordance with her standing. She was most lovingly cared for by his family. Only at first—Gerhard the Good permitted himself

to remark—was his wife's nose put slightly out of joint when he arrived with the King's daughter. But soon she loved her like her own daughter. These things are quite understandable. She grew up like a daughter of the house and was cared for lovingly. Her only great sadness was that she never stopped weeping for her beloved William, for she naturally presumed that if he had been saved he would scour the world to find her. But he did not come. The family of Gerhard the Good loved her, and Gerhard had a son, so he thought to himself that this beautiful maiden might become a wife for his son. Of course, in accordance with opinions at that time, this could only happen if the son could be raised up to an equal standing. The archbishop of Cologne declared himself prepared to make the son a knight. Everything was done in a suitable way. Gerhard was very rich and everything went well. Tournaments were held and after waiting still another year in case William should turn up—the King's daughter had begged for this—preparations were made for the wedding.

During the wedding a pilgrim appeared, a man with a beard so long that it was plain to see that much time had passed since it had last seen a blade. And he was very sad. Gerhard the Good was filled with pity at the sight of the pilgrim and asked him what was the matter. It is impossible to say, said the pilgrim, for from now on he must carry his sorrow through the wide world; from today he knew that his sorrow would never cease. For the pilgrim was William who had lost all his companions, had found land at last, had wandered about and arrived at the very moment when his bride was almost married to Gerhard's son in Cologne. Then Gerhard said: Of course you shall have your rightful bride; I shall speak with my son. Since the bride loved her lost bridegroom, William, more than Gerhard's son, everything was arranged and, after her marriage to William had been celebrated in Cologne, Gerhard accompanied William, the heir to the throne of England, with his bride to England. There he left them. Since he was known in London as a merchant he walked about the town and heard that a great meeting was in progress. Everything was in turbulence and it was plain to see that a revolution might break out. He heard that this was because there was no heir to the throne. The heir had disappeared years ago. He had quite a number of supporters in the land, but all the others were in disagreement and the meeting was now to decide on a new heir.

Gerhard donned his best robe and went to the meeting. He was allowed in on account of his best robe—which was exceedingly splendid because he was such a rich merchant. There he found four-and-twenty men discussing who should replace the beloved heir, William. Gerhard saw that the four-and-twenty were the selfsame men he had rescued from the heathen prince and had sent to London at the point where the ways to London and Utrecht parted. They did not recognize him immediately. They told him that William had been lost—William, whom they loved above all others. But then they recognized each other. Now Gerhard explained that he would bring William to them. So the matter was settled. I need not describe to you the joy which now broke out all over England. At first, in the meeting, before they knew who Gerhard was about to bring to them, but having recognized him as the one who had saved them, they even wanted to declare Gerhard himself king. Now William became King of England. Then William wanted to confer on Gerhard the Duchy of Kent, but he did not accept this. Even from the new Queen, who had for so long been his foster daughter, he refused the gold treasures she wished to bestow on him, accepting only a ring and a few other trinkets to bring to his wife as

keepsakes from their foster daughter. So he departed for home.

All this has now unfortunately become known here—said Gerhard the Good to Otto the Red—and that is why people call me Gerhard the Good. But it is not for people, or even myself, to judge whether what I did was good or not. Therefore it is nonsense for people to call me Gerhard the Good, for the words can have no meaning.

Otto the Red, the Emperor, listened attentively and realized that other attitudes than the one he had developed were possible and existed, even in the heart of a merchant of Cologne. This made a deep impression on him. He returned to the council meeting and said to the councillors: Gentlemen, you may go home, for I have learned all I needed to know from Gerhard the Good. This put the noses of the wise and benign councillors thoroughly out of joint, but the attitude of soul of Otto the Red was entirely transformed.

This is how a story—history—was told in those days. What is told here is criticized, obviously, by the historians of today, whose aim is to pare history down to the facts of the physical plane, facts which have their feet on the ground. Not only this event but many others also were told, when the feeling for history was still that of the fourth post-Atlantean period, with the inclusion of not only the physical facts but also with the meaning they had in relation to the spiritual world. There was an interweaving between what happened on the physical plane and what flowed through it, giving it meaning.

There is very deep meaning in the story of Otto the Red and Gerhard the Good.

I wanted to tell you this story, which was once seen as history, so that tomorrow we can use it, among other things, as a foundation for further discussions which will widen our horizons still further.

LECTURE ELEVEN

Dornach, 26 December 1916

Yesterday I told you the story of Gerhard the Good—which most of you probably know—so that today we can illustrate various points in our endeavour to increase our understanding of the matters we are discussing. But before I interpret parts of this story for you, in so far as this is necessary, we must also recall a number of other things we have touched on at various times during these lectures. From what has been said over the past few weeks you will have seen that the painful events of today are connected with impulses living in the more recent karma of mankind, namely, the karma of the whole fifth post-Atlantean period. For those who want to go more deeply into these matters it is necessary to link external events with what is happening more inwardly, which can only be understood against the background of human evolution as seen by spiritual science.

To begin with, take at face value certain facts which I have pointed out a number of times. I have frequently said that, in the middle of the nineteenth century, an endeavour was made to draw the attention of modern mankind to the fact that there exist in the universe not only those forces and powers recognized by natural science but also others of a spiritual kind. The endeavour was to show that just as we take in with our eyes—or, indeed, with all our senses—what is visible around us, so are there also spiritual impulses around us, which people who know about such things can bring to bear on social life—impulses which cannot be seen with the eye but are known to a more spiritual science.

We know what path this more spiritual science took, so I need not go over it again. Around the middle of the nineteenth century, then, it was the concern of a certain centre to draw people's attention to the existence, as it were, of a spiritual environment. This had been forgotten during the age of materialism. You also know that such things have to be tackled with caution because a certain degree of maturity is necessary in people who take in such knowledge. Of course, not all those can be mature who come across, or are affected by, this knowledge in accordance with the laws of our time, which underlie public life. But part of what must be done at such a time can be the requirement to test whether the knowledge may yet be revealed publicly.

Now in the middle of the nineteenth century¹ two paths were possible. One, even then, would have been what we could describe by mentioning our anthroposophical spiritual science, namely, to make comprehensible to human thinking what spiritual knowledge reveals about our spiritual environment. It is a fact that this could have been attempted at that time, in the middle of the nineteenth century, but this path was not chosen. The reason was, in part, that those who possessed this esoteric knowledge were prejudiced, because of traditions that have come down from ancient times, against making such things public. They felt that certain knowledge guarded by the secret brotherhoods—for it was still guarded at that time—should be kept within the circle of these brotherhoods. We have since seen that, so long as matters are conducted in the proper way, it is perfectly acceptable today to reveal certain things. Of course it is unavoidable that some malicious opponents should appear, and always will appear, in circles in which such knowledge is made known—people who are adherents for a time because it suits their passions and their

egoism, but who then become opponents under all sorts of guises and make trouble. Also when spiritual knowledge is made known in a community, this can easily lead to arguments, quarrelling and disputes, of which, however, not too much notice can be taken, since otherwise no spiritual knowledge would ever be made known. But, apart from these things, no harm is done if the matter is handled in the right way.

But at that time this was not believed. So ancient prejudice won the day and it was agreed to take another path. But, as I have often said, this failed. It was decided to use the path of mediumistic revelation to make people recognize the spiritual world in the same way as they recognize the physical world. Suitable individuals were trained to be mediums. What they then revealed through their lowered consciousness was supposed to make people recognize the existence of certain spiritual impulses in their environment. This was a materialistic way of revealing the spiritual world to people. It corresponded to some extent to the conditions of the fifth post-Atlantean period, in so far as this is materialistic in character.

This way of handling things began, as you know, in America in the middle of the nineteenth century. But it soon became obvious that the whole thing was a mistake. It had been expected that the mediums would reveal the existence of certain elemental and nature spirits in the environment. Instead, they all started to refer to revelations from the kingdom of the dead. So the goal which had been set was not reached. I have often explained that the living can only reach the dead with an attitude which does not depend on lowering the consciousness. You all know these things. At that time this was also known and that is why, when the mediums began to speak of revelations of the dead, it was realized that the whole thing was a mistake. This had not been expected. It had been hoped that the mediums would reveal how the nature spirits work, how one human being affects another, what forces are at play in the social organism, and so on. It had been hoped that people would start to recognize what forces might be used by those who understand such things, so that people would no longer be dependent solely on one another in the way they are when only their sense perceptions come into play, but would be able to work through the total human personality. This was one thing that went wrong.

The other was that, in keeping with man's materialistic inclinations, it soon became obvious what would have begun to happen if the mediumistic movement had spread in the way it threatened to do. Use would have been made of the mediums to accomplish aims which ought only to be accomplished under the influence of natural, sense-bound reasoning. For some individuals it would have been highly desirable to employ a medium who could impart the means of discovering the knowledge which such people covet. I have told you how many letters I get from people who write: I have a lottery ticket; or, I want to buy a lottery ticket; I need the money for an entirely selfless purpose; could you not tell me which number will be drawn? Obviously, if mediums had been fully trained in the techniques of mediumship, the resulting mischief with this kind of thing would have been infinite, quite apart from everything else. People would have started to go to mediums to find a suitable bride or bridegroom, and so on.

Thus it came about that, in the very quarter that had launched the movement in order to test whether people were ready to take in spiritual knowledge, efforts were now made to suppress the whole affair. What had been feared in bygone times, when the abilities of the

fourth post-Atlantean period still worked in people, had indeed now come to pass. In those days witches were burnt, simply because those people called witches were really no more than mediums, and because their connections with the spiritual world—though of a materialistic nature—might cause knowledge to be revealed which would have been very awkward for certain people. Thus, for instance it might have been very awkward for certain brotherhoods if, before being burnt at the stake, a witch had revealed what lay behind them. For it is true that when consciousness is lowered there can be a kind of telephone connection with the spiritual world, and that by this route all sorts of secrets can come out. Those who burnt the witches did so for a very good reason: It could have been very awkward for them if the witches had revealed anything to the world, whether in a good or a bad sense, but especially in a bad sense.

So the attempt to test the cultural maturity of mankind by means of mediums had gone awry. This was realized even by those who, led astray by the old rules of silence and by the materialistic tendencies of the nineteenth century, had set this attempt in train. You know, of course, that the activities of mediums have not been entirely curtailed, and that they still exist, even today. But the art of training mediums to a level at which their revelations could become significant has, so to speak, been withdrawn. By this withdrawal the capabilities of mediums have been made more or less harmless. In recent decades, as you know, the pronouncements of mediums have come to amount to not much more than sentimental twaddle. The only surprising thing is that people set so much store by them. But the door to the spiritual world had been opened to some degree and, moreover, this had been done in a manner which was untimely and a mistake.

In this period came the birth and work of Blavatsky.² You might think that the birth of a person is insignificant, but this would be a judgement based on maya. Now the important thing is that this whole undertaking had to be discussed among the brotherhoods, so that much was said and brought into the open within the brotherhoods. But the nineteenth century was no longer like earlier centuries in which many methods had existed for keeping secret those things which had to be kept secret. Thus it happened that, at a certain moment, a member of one of the secret brotherhoods, who intended to make use in a one-sided way of what he learnt within these brotherhoods, approached Blavatsky. Apart from her other capacities Blavatsky was an extremely gifted medium, and this person induced her to act as a connecting link for machinations³ which were no longer as honest as the earlier ones. The first, as we have seen, were honest but mistaken. Up to this point the attempt to test people's receptivity had been perfectly honest, though mistaken. Now, however, came the treachery of a member of an American secret brotherhood. His purpose was to make one-sided use of what he knew, with the help of someone with psychic gifts, such as Blavatsky. Let us first look at what actually took place.

When Blavatsky heard what the member of the brotherhood had to say, she, of course, reacted inwardly to his words because she was psychic. She understood a great deal more about the matter than the one who was giving her the information. The ancient knowledge formulated in the traditional way lit up in her soul a significant understanding which she could hardly have achieved solely with her own resources. Inner experiences were stimulated in her soul by the ancient formulations which stemmed from the days of atavistic clairvoyance and which were preserved in the secret brotherhoods, often without much understanding for their meaning on the part of the members. These inner

experiences led in her to the birth of a large body of knowledge. She knew, of course, that this knowledge must be significant for the present evolution of mankind, and also that by taking the appropriate path this knowledge could be utilized in a particular way.

But Blavatsky, being the person she was, could not be expected to make use of such lofty spiritual knowledge solely for the good of mankind as a whole. She hit upon the idea of pursuing certain aims which were within her understanding, having come to this point in the manner I have described. So now she demanded to be admitted to a certain occult brotherhood in Paris. Through this brotherhood she would start to work. Ordinarily she would have been accepted in the normal way, apart from the fact that it was not normal to admit a woman; but this rule would have been waived in this case because it was known that she was an important individuality. However, it would not have served her purpose to be admitted merely as an ordinary member, and so she laid down certain conditions. If these conditions had been accepted, many subsequent events would have been very different but, at the same time, this secret brotherhood would have pronounced its own death sentence—that is, it would have condemned itself to total ineffectiveness. So it refused to admit Blavatsky. She then turned to America, where she was indeed admitted to a secret brotherhood. In consequence, she of course acquired extremely significant insights into the intentions of such secret brotherhoods; not those which strive for the good of mankind as a whole, disregarding any conflicting wishes, but those whose purposes are one-sided and serve certain groups only. But it was not in Blavatsky's nature to work in the way these brotherhoods wished. So it came about that, under the influence of what was termed an attack on the Constitution of North America, she was excluded from this brotherhood.

So now she was excluded. But of course she was not a person who would be likely to take this lying down. Instead, she began to threaten the American brotherhood with the consequences of excluding her in this way, now that she knew so much. The American brotherhood now found itself sitting under the sword of Damocles, for if, as a result of having been a member, Blavatsky had told the world what she knew, this would have spelt its death sentence. The consequence was that American and European occultists joined forces in order to inflict on Blavatsky a condition known as occult imprisonment. Through certain machinations a sphere of Imaginations is called forth in a soul which brings about a dimming of what that soul previously knew, thus making it virtually ineffective. It is a procedure which honest occultists never apply, and even dishonest ones only very rarely, but it was applied on that occasion in order to save the life—that is the effectiveness, of that secret brotherhood.

For years Blavatsky existed in this occult imprisonment, until certain Indian occultists started to take an interest in her because they wanted to work against that American brotherhood. As you see, we keep coming up against occult streams which want to work one-sidedly. Thus Blavatsky entered this Indian current, with which you are familiar. The Indian brotherhood was very interested indeed in proceeding against the American brotherhood, not because they saw that they were not serving mankind as a whole, but because they in turn had their own one-sided patriotically Indian viewpoint. By means of various machinations the Indian and the American occultists reached a kind of agreement. The Americans promised not to interfere in what the Indians wanted to do with Blavatsky, and the Indians engaged to remain silent on what had gone before.

You can see just how complicated these things really are when you add to all this the fact, which I have also told you about, that a hidden individual, a mahatma behind a mask, had been instituted in place of Blavatsky's original teacher and guide. This figure stood in the service of a European power and had the task of utilizing whatever Blavatsky could do in the service of this particular European power. One way of discovering what all this is really about might be to ask what would have happened if one or other of these projects had been realized.

Time is too short to tell you everything today, but let us pick out a few aspects. We can always come back to these things again soon.

Supposing Blavatsky had succeeded in gaining admission to the occult lodge in Paris. If this had happened, she would not have come under the influence of that individual who was honoured as a mahatma in the Theosophical Society—although he was no such thing—and the life of the occult lodge in Paris would have been extinguished. A great deal behind which this same Paris lodge may be seen to stand would not have happened, or perhaps it would have happened in the service of a different, one-sided influence. Many things would have taken a different course. For there was also the intention of exterminating this Paris lodge with the help of the psychic personality of Blavatsky. If it had been exterminated, there would have been nothing behind all those people who have contributed to history, more or less like marionettes. People like Silvagni, Durante, Sergi, Cecconi, Lombroso and all his relations,⁴ and many others would have had no occult backers behind them. Many a door, many a kind of sliding door, would have remained locked.

You will understand that this is meant symbolically. In certain countries editorial offices—I mean this as a picture!—have a respectable door and a sliding door. Through the respectable door you enter the office and through the sliding door you enter some secret brotherhood or other working, as I have variously indicated over the last few days, to achieve results of the kind about which we have spoken. So the intention was to abolish something from the world which would have done away with, at least, one stream which we have seen working in our present time. Signor d'Annunzio would not have given the speech we quoted.

Perhaps another would have been given instead, pushing things in a different direction. But you see that the moment things are not fully under control, the moment people are pushed about through a dimming of their consciousness, and when occultism is being used, not for the general good of mankind—and above all, in our time, not with true knowledge—but for the purpose of achieving one-sided aims, then matters can come to look very grave indeed.

Anyway, the members of this lodge were, from the standpoint of the lodge, astute enough not to enter into a discussion of these things. Later on, certain matters were hushed up, obscured, by the fact that Blavatsky was prevented by her occult imprisonment from publicizing the impulses of that American lodge and giving them her own slant, which she would doubtless otherwise have done. Once all these things had run their course, the only one to benefit from Blavatsky was the Indian brotherhood. There is considerable significance for the present time in the fact that a certain sum of occult knowledge has entered the world one-sidedly, with an Indian colouring. This knowledge has entered the

world; it now exists. But the world has remained more or less unconscious of it because of the paralysis I have described.

Those who reckon with such things always count on long stretches of time. They prepare things and leave them to develop. These are not individuals, but brotherhoods in which the successor takes over from the predecessor and carries on in a similar direction with what has been started.

On the basis of the two examples I have given you, of occult lodges, you can see that much depended on the actual impulses not being made public. I do not wish to be misunderstood and I therefore stated expressly that the first attempt I described to you was founded on a certain degree of honesty. But it is extremely difficult for people to be entirely objective as regards mankind as a whole. There is little inclination for this nowadays. People are so easily led astray by the group instinct that they are not objective as regards mankind as a whole but pay homage to one group or another, enjoying the feeling of 'belonging'. But this is something that is no longer really relevant to the point we have reached in human evolution. The requirement of the present moment is that we should, at least to some degree, feel ourselves to be individuals and extricate ourselves, at least inwardly, from group things, so that we belong to mankind as human individuals. Even though, at present, we are shown so grotesquely how impossible this is for some people, it is nevertheless a requirement of our time.

For example, let me refer to what I said here a few days ago. A nation as a whole is an individuality of a kind which cannot be compared with human individualities, who live here on the physical plane and then go through their development between death and a new birth. Nations are individualities of quite a different kind. As you can see from everything we find in our anthroposophical spiritual science, a folk spirit, a folk soul, is something different from the soul of an individual human being. It is nonsense to speak in a materialistic sense, as is done today, of the soul of a nation while at the back of one's mind thinking of something resembling the soul of an individual—even though one, of course, does not admit this to oneself. Thus you hear people speak of 'the French soul'; this has been repeatedly said in recent years. It is nonsense, plain nonsense, because it is an analogy taken from the individual human soul and applied to the folk soul. You can only speak of the folk soul if you take into account the complex totality described in the lecture cycle on the different folk spirits.⁵ But to speak in any other sense about the folk soul is utter nonsense, even though many, including journalists, do so—and they may be forgiven, for they do not know what they are talking about. It is mere verbosity to speak—as has been done—for instance of the 'Celtic soul and the Latin spirit'.⁶ Maybe such a thing is just about acceptable as an analogy, but there is no reality in it. We must be clear about the meaning of the Mystery of Golgotha. So often have we said that the Mystery of Golgotha was accomplished in such a way that what has been united with earth evolution ever since is there for all mankind, but that if an individual speaks of a mystical Christ within him, this is no more than idle talk. The Mystery of Golgotha is an objective reality, as you know from much that has been said here. It took place for mankind as a whole, which means for every individual human being. Christ died for all human beings, as a human being for human beings, not for any other kind of being. It is possible to speak about a Christian, about one whose attitude of mind is Christian, but it is complete nonsense to talk of a Christian nation. There is no reality in this. Christ did not die for

nations, nations are not the individualities for whom He died. An individual who is close to the Being of the Mystery of Golgotha can be a Christian, but it is not possible to speak of a Christian nation. The true soul of a nation, its folk soul, belongs to planes on which the Mystery of Golgotha did *not* take place. So any dealings and actions between nations can never be interpreted or commented upon in a Christian sense.

I am pointing out these things simply because it is necessary that you in particular, my dear friends, should understand just how important it is today to arrive at clear-cut concepts. This can only be done by applying spiritual science, and yet mankind as a whole strives to fish in muddy waters with concepts that are utterly nonsensical and obscure. So the important thing is, above all, to arrive at clear-cut concepts, to see everything in relation to clear-cut concepts, and also to understand that in our time certain occult, spiritual impulses have been working, chiefly through human beings. This is fitting for the fifth post-Atlantean period.

Now if Blavatsky had been able to speak out at that time, certain secrets would have been revealed, secrets I have mentioned as belonging to certain secret brotherhoods and connected with the striving of a widespread network of groups. I said to you earlier that definite laws underlie the rise and evolution of peoples, of nations. These laws are usually unknown in the external, physical world. This is right and proper, for in the first place they ought to be recognized solely by those who desire to receive them with clean hands. What now underlies the terrible trials mankind is undergoing at present and will undergo in the future is the interference in a one-sided way, by certain modern brotherhoods, with the spiritual forces that pulse through human evolution in the region in which, for instance, nations, peoples, come into being. Evolution progresses in accordance with definite laws; it is regular and comes about through certain forces. But human beings interfere, in some part unconsciously, though if they are members of secret brotherhoods, then they do so consciously.

To be able to judge these things you need what yesterday I called a wider horizon; you need the acquisition of a wider horizon. I showed you the forces of which Blavatsky became the plaything, in order to point out how such a plaything can be tossed about, from West to East, from America to India. This is because forces are at work which are being managed by human beings for certain ends, by means of utilizing the passions and feelings of nationality, which have, however, in their turn first been manufactured. This is most important. It is important to develop an eye for the way in which a person who, because of the type of passions in her—in her blood—can be put in a certain position and be brought under the sway of certain influences. Equally, those who do this must know that certain things can be achieved, depending on the position in which the person is placed. Many attempts fail. But account is taken of long periods of time and of many possibilities. Above all, account is taken of how little inclination people have to pay attention to the wider—the widest, contexts.

Let us stop here and turn to yesterday's story. It tells us about the time around the tenth century, when the constitution of souls was still that of the fourth post-Atlantean period. We saw how the spiritual world intervened in the life of Emperor Otto of the Red Beard. His whole life is transformed because the spiritual world makes him aware of Gerhard the Good. From Gerhard the Good he is to learn the fear of God, true piety, and that one must

not expect—for largely egoistic reasons—a blessing from heaven for one's earthly deeds. So he is told by the spiritual world to seek out Gerhard the Good. This is the one side: what plays in from the spiritual world.

Those who know that age—not as it is described by external history, but as it really was—are aware that the spiritual world did indeed play in through real visions such as that described in connection with Emperor Otto the Red, and that spiritual impulses definitely played a meaningful part. The one who wrote down this story says expressly that in his youth he had also written many other stories, as had other contemporaries of his. The man who wrote down the story of Gerhard the Good was Rudolf von Ems, an approximate contemporary of Wolfram von Eschenbach.⁷ He said he had written other stories as well but that he had destroyed them because they had been fairy tales. Yet he does not consider this story to be a fairy tale but strictly historical, even though externally it is not historical—that is it would not be included in today's history books which only take physical may a into account. In the way he tells it, it cannot be compared with external, purely physical history; and yet his telling is more true than purely physical history can be for, on the whole, that is only maya. He tells the story for the fourth post-Atlantean period.

You know, for I have repeatedly said this, that I am not taking sides in any way but simply reporting facts which are to provide a basis on which judgements may be formed. Only those who do not wish to be objective will maintain that what I shall attempt to say is not objective. Someone who does not wish to be objective cannot, of course, be expected to find objectivity in what is, in fact, objective. The fact that the spiritual world plays into human affairs is not the only important aspect of the story of Gerhard the Good. It is also significant that a leading personality receives from the spiritual world the impulse to turn to a member of the commercial world, the world of the merchant. It is indeed a historical fact that, in Central Europe, at that time the members of the ruling dynasty to which Otto the Red belonged did start to patronize the merchant classes in the towns. In Europe this was the time of the growth of commerce.

We should further take into account that at that time there were as yet no ocean routes between Orient and Occident. Trade routes were definitely still overland routes. Merchants such as Gerhard the Good who, as you know, lived in Cologne, carried their trade overland from Cologne to the Orient and back again. Any use of ships was quite insignificant. The trade routes were land routes. Shipping connections were not much more than attempts to achieve with the primitive ships of those days what was being done much more efficiently by land. So in the main the trade routes were overland, while shipping was only just beginning. That is what is characteristic of this time, for comprehensive shipping operations only came much later.

We have here a contrast arising out of the very nature of things. So long as Orient and Occident were connected by land routes, it was perfectly natural that the countries of Central Europe should take the lead. Life in these Central European countries was shaped accordingly. Much spiritual culture also travelled along these routes. It was quite different from what came later. As the centuries proceeded, the land routes were supplanted by ocean routes. As you know, England gradually took control of all the ocean connections which others had opened up. Spain, Holland and France were all conquered as far as their seafaring capacities were concerned, so that in the end everything was held under the

mighty dominance which encompassed a quarter of the earth's dry land, and gradually also all the earth's oceans.

You can see how systematic is this conquering, this almost exterminating, of other seafaring powers when you remember how I told you some time ago that in the secret brotherhoods, especially those which grew so powerful from the time of James I⁸ onwards, it was taught as an obvious truth that the Anglo-Saxon race—as they put it—will have to be given dominance over the world in the fifth post-Atlantean period. You will see how systematic the historical process has been when you consider what I have also mentioned and what was also taught: that this fifth post-Atlantean race of the English-speaking peoples will have to overcome the peoples of the Latin race.

To start with, the main thing is the interrelation between the English-speaking peoples and those whose languages are Latin in origin. Recent history cannot be understood without the realization that the important aim—which is also what is being striven for—is for world affairs to be arranged in such a way that the English-speaking peoples are favoured, while the influence of any peoples whose language is based on Latin fades out. Under certain circumstances something can be made to fade out by treating it favourably for a while, thus gaining power over it. This can then make it easy to engulf it.

In those secret brotherhoods, about which I have spoken so often, little significance is attached to Central Europe, for they are clever enough to realize that Germany, for instance, owns only one thirty-third of the earth's land surface. This is very little indeed, compared with a whole quarter of the land surface plus dominance over the high seas. So not much importance is attached to Central Europe. A great deal of importance was attached, however—especially during the period when present events were being prepared—to the overcoming of all those impulses connected with the Latin races.

It is remarkable how short-sighted the modern historical view is and how little inclination there is to go more deeply into matters which are quite characteristic of situations. I have already pointed out that what has so long been practised as a pragmatic view of history is not important, reporting as it does on one event, followed by another, and another, and yet another. What is important is to recognize the facts characterized by the many interrelationships in the events which follow one another. What matters is to point out what is characteristic about the facts, namely, what reveals the forces lying behind maya. Pragmatic history must today give way to a history of symptoms.⁹

Those who see through things in this way will be in a position to form judgements about certain events which differ considerably from those of people who reel off the events of world history—this *fable convenue*—one after the other, as is done in historical science today. Consider some of the things you know well in connection with some others about which I shall tell you. First of all, a simple fact: in 1618 the Thirty Years War began because certain ideas of a reformatory kind developed within the Czech Slav element. Then certain aristocrats belonging to these Slav circles took up the movement and rebelled against what might be called the Counter-Reformation, namely, the Catholicism from Spain which was favoured by the Habsburgs. The first thing usually told about the Thirty Years War is the story of the rebels going to the town hall in Prague and throwing the councillors Martinitz and Slavata and the secretary Fabrizius out of the window. Yet this is quite insignificant. The only interesting point is perhaps that the three gentlemen did not

hurt themselves because they fell onto a dunghill. These are not things which can bring the Thirty Years War¹⁰ to life for us or show us its real causes.

The reformative party elected Frederick, Elector Palatine of the Rhine, as counter-King of Bohemia in 1619. Then followed, as you know, the battle of the White Mountain.¹¹ Up to the election of the Elector Palatine, all the events were caused by the passionate feelings of these people for a reform movement, by a rebellion against arbitrary acts of power such as the closure or destruction of Protestant churches at Braunau and Kloster Grab. There is not enough time for me to tell you the whole story. But now think: Frederick, Elector Palatine of the Rhine, is elected king. Up to this point the events are based on human passions, human enthusiasm, it is even justified to say human idealism—I am quite happy to concede this.

But why, of all people, was the Elector Palatine of the Rhine chosen as King of Bohemia? It was because he was the son-in-law of James I, who stands at the beginning of the renewal of the brotherhoods! Here, then, we may discern an important finger in the pie if we are trying to look at history symptomatically. Attempts were being made to steer events in a particular direction. They failed. But you see that there is a finger in the pie. The most significant sign of what kind of impulses were to be brought to bear in this situation is that the son-in-law of one of the most important occultists, James I, was thrown into this position.

You see, the fact is that the whole of recent history has to do with the contrast between the ancient Roman-Latin element and that element, not of the English people—for they would get on perfectly happily with the world—but that element which, as I have described sufficiently, is to be made out of the English people if they fail to put up any resistance. It is the conflict between these two elements that is at work.

Meanwhile something else is manipulated, for a great deal can be achieved in one place by bringing about events in another.

Let us look at a later date. You might pick up a history book and read the history of the Seven Years War.¹² Of course the history of this war is read just as thoughtlessly as any other. For to understand what is really going on and investigate what forces of history are playing a part, you have to look properly at the various links between the different circumstances. You have to consider, for instance, that at that time the southern part of Central Europe, namely Austria, was linked with every aspect of the Latin element and even had a proper alliance with France, whereas the northern part of Middle Europe—not at first, but later on—was drawn to what was to be made, by certain quarters, into the English-speaking, fifth post-Atlantean race.

When you look closely at the alliances and everything else that went on at that time—those things which were not maya, of course—you discover a war that is in reality being waged about North America and India between England and France. What went on in Europe was really only a weak mirror image of this. For if you compare everything that took place on the larger scale—do extend your horizons!—then you will see that the conflict was between England and France and that North America and India were already starting to have their effect. It was a matter of which of these two powers was cleverer and more able to direct events in such a way that dominion over North America or India could

be snatched away from the other. At work in this were long-term future plans and the control of important impulses. It is true: the influence snatched by England from France in North America was won on the battle fields of Silesia during the Seven Years War!

Watch how the alliances shift when the situation becomes a little awkward and difficult; watch the alliances from this point of view!

Now, another story. It is necessary to look at these things, and once one is not misunderstood, once it is assumed that one's genuine purpose is to gain a clear picture of what is going on in the world, once one strives to be objective, it will not be taken amiss when such stories are told; instead it will be understood that our concern is for comprehension and not for taking sides. In fact, it is precisely those people who feel they are affected by a particular matter who ought to be particularly glad to learn more about it. For then they are lifted above their blindness and given sight, and nothing is better for a person than real insight into how things work in the world. So let us now take an example which can show you a different side of how things work.

Through circumstances which you can look up in a history book, the kingdoms of Hanover and England were once linked. The laws of succession in the two countries were different—we need not go into this in detail—and as a result of this, when Victoria¹³ came to the throne of England, Hanover had to become separate. Another member of the English royal house had to take the throne of Hanover. The person elected, or rather the person jostled onto the throne of Hanover was Ernst August, Duke of Cumberland,¹⁴ who had previously been connected with the throne of England. So this Ernst August came to the throne of Hanover at the age of sixty-six. His character was such that, after his departure to become the king of Hanover, the English newspapers said: Thank goodness he's gone; let's hope he doesn't come back! He was considered a dreadful person because of the whole way he behaved. When you look at the impression he made on his contemporaries and those who had dealings with him, a certain type of character emerges which is striking for one who understands characters of this kind. The Hanoverians could not understand him. They found him coarse. He was indeed coarse, so coarse that the poet Thomas Moore¹⁵ said: He surely belonged to the dynasty of Beelzebub. But you know the saying: The German lies if he is polite. So they had a certain understanding for coarseness, but they did presuppose that someone who is coarse is at least honest. Ernst August, however, was always a liar as well as being coarse, and this the Hanoverians could not understand. He had other similar traits as well.

First, Ernst August repealed the Hanoverian constitution. Then he dismissed the famous 'seven professors' of Göttingen University. He had them sent straight out of the country, so that it was not until they reached Witzenhausen, which lay beyond his majesty's borders, that their students were permitted to take leave of them. I need not tell you the whole story. But what is the explanation? Those who seek no further for an explanation of this extraordinary mask merely find Ernst August coarse and dishonest. He even cheated Metternich, which is saying much indeed, and so on. But there is something remarkably systematic in all this. And the systematic aspect is not changed by the fact that he lived most of his life up to the age of sixty-six in England, where he was an officer of the Dragoons.

An explanation may be found in the fact that in his whole manner he was manifesting

the impulses one has when one is a member of the so-called 'Orange Lodge'. His whole manner was an expression of the impulses of the Orange Lodge, of which he was a member.

What we must do is learn to understand history symptomatically and widen our horizons. We need to develop a sense for what is important and what really gives insight. So I told you the tale of Gerhard the Good in order to demonstrate how, through such phenomena as the Orange Lodge, and so on, what had been Central Europe was quite systematically drawn over to the West. I am not uttering any reproach, for it was a historical necessity. But one ought to know it and not apply moral judgements to such things. What is essential is to develop the will to see things, to see how human beings are manipulated, to see where there might be impulses by which people are manipulated. This is the same as striving for the sense for truth. I have often stressed that this is not something that enables one to say: But I really believed it, it was my honest and sincere opinion! No indeed. One who possesses the sense for truth is one who unremittingly strives to find the truth of the matter, one who never ceases to seek the truth and who takes responsibility for himself even when he says something untrue out of ignorance. For, objectively, it is irrelevant whether something wrong is said knowingly or unknowingly. Similarly it is irrelevant whether you hold your finger in the candle flame through ignorance or on purpose; either way you burn it.

At this point we must understand what happened at the transition from the fourth post-Atlantean period—when commerce was still just under the influence of the spiritual world, as is indicated in the story of Gerhard the Good—to the fifth period, when everything commercial was drawn over into the occult sphere which is guided by the so-called 'Brothers of the Shadow'. These brotherhoods guard certain principles. From their point of view it would be extremely dangerous if these principles should be betrayed. That is why they were so careful to prevent Blavatsky from making them public or causing them to pass over into other hands. They were, in fact, to be passed over from the West to the East; not to India but to the East of Russia.

Someone with a sense for what lies behind maya can understand that external institutions and external measures can have differing values, differing degrees of importance in the total context. Consider an incident in recent history. I have told you so many occult, spiritual things that I have, in a way, 'done my time' and am now free to go on and give you some indications out of more recent history. No one should say that I am taking this time away from that devoted to occult matters; these things are also important.

So let us take an example from more recent history. In 1909 a meeting was arranged between the King of Italy and the Tsar of Russia. So far there had not been much love lost between these two representatives, but from then on it was considered a good thing to manoeuvre them into each other's company. So the meeting at Racconigi¹⁶ took place. It was not easy to arrange. In the description of all the measures he had to take to prevent 'incidents of an assassnatory nature' you can read how difficult it was for poor Giolitti, who was Prime Minister at the time.

Then there was the question of finding a suitable personage who would pay Rome's homage to the Tsar. This had to be a personage of a particular kind. Such things have to be prepared well in advance so that when the right moment arrives they can be set in train on

the spot. For a really ‘juicy’ effect to be achieved, not just any personage would do for the purpose of paying Rome’s homage to the Tsar—the homage of the Latin West to the self-styled Slav East. It would have to be a special personage, even one who might not easily be persuaded to undertake this task. Now ‘by chance’, as the materialists would say, but ‘not by chance’, as those who are not materialists would say, a certain Signor Nathan¹⁷—what a very Italian name!—was at that time the mayor of Rome. For many reasons his attitude was rather democratic and not at all one that would make him inclined to pay homage to the Tsar, of all people. He had only taken Italian citizenship shortly before becoming mayor of Rome. Before that he had been an English citizen. The fact that he was of mixed blood should be taken into account; he was the son of a German mother and had assumed the name of Nathan because his father was the famous Italian revolutionary Mazzini.¹⁸ This is a fact.

So persuading him to pay homage to the Tsar made it possible to say: See how thoroughly democracy has been converted. Here was someone who was not an ordinary person but one who had been anointed with all the oils of democracy, but—also someone who had been well prepared. From that moment onwards certain things start to become embarrassing. Today it is known, for example, that from that moment onwards all the correspondence within the Triple Alliance was promptly reported to St Petersburg! Human passions also played some part in the matter, since a special role was carried out in this reporting by a lady who had found a ‘sisterly’ route¹⁹ between Rome and St Petersburg. Such things can obviously be ascribed to coincidence. But those who want to see beyond maya will not ascribe them to coincidence but will seek the deeper connections between them. Then, when one seeks these deeper connections, one is no longer capable of lying as much, is no longer capable of deceiving people in order to distract them from the truth, which is what matters.

For instance—I am saying this in order to describe the truth—it would obviously have been most embarrassing for the widest circles if people’s attention had been drawn to the fact that the whole invasion of Belgium would not have taken place if that sentence I have already mentioned, which could have been spoken by Lord Grey—Sir Edward Grey has now become a lord—if that sentence had really been spoken. The whole invasion of Belgium would not have taken place. It would have been a non-event, it would not have happened. But instead of speaking about the real cause, in so far as this is the cause because it could have prevented the invasion, it was obviously more comfortable to waste people’s time by telling them about the ‘Belgian atrocities’. Yet these, too, would not have happened if Sir Edward Grey had taken this one, brief measure. In order to hide the simple truth something different is needed, something that arouses justified human passions and moral indignation. I am not saying anything against this. Something different is needed. It is a characteristic of our time, even today when it is particularly painful, to make every effort to obscure the truth, to blind people to the truth.

This, too, had to be prepared carefully. Any gap in the calculation would have made it impossible. The whole of the periphery, which had prudently been created for this very purpose, was needed.

But these things were very carefully prepared, both politically and culturally. Every possibility was reckoned with; and this was certainly necessary, since the most

unbelievable carelessness sometimes prevailed, even in places where such a thing would be least expected. Let me give you an example, an objective fact, which will allow us to study this carelessness.

At one time Bismarck had a connection with a certain Usedom²⁰ in Florence and Turin. I have told you before: modern Italy came into being by roundabout means and actually owes her existence to Germany; but this is connected with all sorts of other things. What I am saying has profound foundations, and in politics all sorts of threads interweave. Thus at one time threads were woven which were to win over the Italian republicans. In short, at a certain time one such link existed between Bismarck and Usedom in Florence and Turin. Usedom was a friend of Mazzini and of others who enjoyed a certain prominence in nationalistic circles. Usedom was a man who posed very much as a wise person. He employed as his personal secretary somebody who was supposed to be a follower of Mazzini. Later it turned out that this personal secretary, of whom it had been said that he was initiated into Mazzini's secret societies, was nothing but an ordinary spy. Bismarck tells this tale quite naively and then adds, as an excuse for having been so mistaken: But Usedom was a high-grade Freemason. Many things could be told in this way and often it would turn out that those involved are totally innocent because the ones who pull the strings remain in the background.

You cannot maintain that there is no point in asking why such things are permitted to happen by the wise guides of world evolution—why human beings are, to a large degree, abandoned to such machinations, by making the excuse that there is no way of getting to the bottom of these things. For, indeed, if one only seeks them honestly, there are many ways of finding out what is going on. But we see, even in our own Society, how much resistance is put up by individuals when there is a question of following the simple path of truth. We see how many things which should be taken objectively in pursuit of knowledge, when they would best serve the good of mankind, are instead taken subjectively and personally. There are—are there not?—within our Society groups who have studied very attentively an essay²¹ of, I believe, 287 pages which they have taken utterly seriously and about which they are still puzzling, as to whether the writer—who is well enough known to us—might be right. In short, within our own circles we may sometimes discover why it is so difficult to see through things. Yet it is, in fact, not at all difficult to see through things if only one strives honestly for the truth. For years so much has been said within our Society. If you were to bring together all that has been said since 1902 you would see that it contains much that could help us to see through a great deal that is going on in the world. Yet our anthroposophical spiritual science has never been presented as belonging to a secret society. Indeed the most important things have always been dealt with in public lectures open to anybody. This is a contrast which should be noted.

I might as well say now: If certain streams within our Anthroposophical Society continue to exist and if, for the sake of human vanity, they continue to interpret to their own advantage certain things which have been said behind closed doors—for no more reason than one would exclude first-year students in a university from what is told to those in their second year—then, eventually there will be nothing esoteric left. If things are not taken perfectly naturally, if people continue to stand up and say: This is secret, that is very esoteric, this is occult, and I am not allowed to speak about this!—if this policy continues to be followed by certain streams in our Society, if they continually fail to understand that

any degree of vanity must stop, then everything mankind must be told about today will have to be discussed in public. Whether it is *possible* to make known certain things, the needs of the moment will tell. But the Anthroposophical Society is only meaningful if it is a 'society', that is, if each individual is concerned to make a stand against vanity, against folly and vanity and everything else which clothes things in false veils of mysticism, serving only to puzzle other people and make them spiteful. The mysteriousness of certain secret brotherhoods has nothing to do with our Society, for we must be concerned solely with bringing about what is needed for the good of mankind. As I have often said, our enemies will become more and more numerous. Perhaps we shall discover what our enemies are made of by the manner in which they quarrel with us. So far we have had no honest opponents worth mentioning. They would, in effect, only be to our advantage! The kind of opposition we have met hitherto is perfectly obvious through their ways and means of operation. We might as well wait patiently to discover whether further opponents will be from within our circle, as is frequently the case, or from elsewhere! I have just had news of opposition from one quarter which will empty itself over us like a cold shower. A forthcoming book has been announced during some lectures.²² The author, a conceited fellow, has never belonged to our Society but has been entertaining the world with all sorts of double egos and such like. He has now used the opportunity of the various national hatreds and passions to mount an attack on our Anthroposophy of a kind which shows that his hands are not clean.

So we must not lose sight of these things and we must realize that it is up to us to hold fast to the direction which will lead to truth and knowledge. Even when we speak about current issues it must only be in pursuit of knowledge and truth. We must look things straight in the eye and then each individual may take up his own position in accordance with his feelings. Every position will be understandable, but it must be based on a foundation of truth.

This is a word which must occupy a special place in our soul today. So much has taken place in our time which has puzzled people and which should have shown them that it is necessary to strive for a healthy judgement based on the truth. We have experienced how the yearning for peace only had to make itself felt in the world for it to be shouted down.²³ And we still see how people actually get angry if peace is mentioned in one quarter or another. They are angry, not only if one of the combatants mentions peace, but even if it is mentioned in a neutral quarter.

It remains to be seen whether the world will be capable of sufficient astonishment about these things. Experience so far has been telling, to say the least. In April and May 1915 a large territory was to have been voluntarily ceded, but the offer was rejected so that war could be waged. Since world opinion failed to form an even partially adequate judgement about this event, there seems to be really nothing for it but to expect the worst. We might as well expect the worst, because people seem bent on telling, not the truth, but what suits their purposes. Their thinking is strange and peculiar to a degree. Yet to tackle things properly the right points have to be found.

Let me read you a short passage written by an Italian before the outbreak of the present war, at a time when the Italians were jubilant about the Tripoli conflict—which I am not criticizing. I shall never say anything against the annexation of Tripoli by Italy, for these

things are judged differently by those who know what is necessary and possible in the relationships between states and nations. They do not form judgements based on lies and express opinions steeped in all kinds of moralistic virtues. But here we have a man, Prezzolini,²⁴ who writes about an Italy which pleases him, which has evolved out of an Italy which did not please him. He starts by describing what this Italy had come to, how it had gone down in the world, and he then continues—directly under the impression of the Tripoli conflict:

‘And yet, totally unaware of this economic *risorgimento*, Italy underwent at the same time the period of depression described above. Foreigners were the first to notice the reawakening. Some Italians had also expressed it, but they were windbags carrying on about the famous and infamous “primacy of Italy”. The book by Fischer, a German, was written in 1899, and that by Bolton-King, an Englishman, in 1901. To date no Italian has published a work comparable to these, even to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of “unification”. The exceptional good sense of these foreigners is notable for, truly, outsiders have neither wanted, nor do they now want, to know anything about modern Italy. Then, as now, people’s judgement, or rather prejudgement of Italy amounted to saying: Italy is a land of the past, not the present; she should “rest on her past glory” and not enter into the present. They long for an Italy of archives, museums, hotels for honeymooners and for the amusement of spleen and lung patients—an Italy of organ-grinders, serenades, gondolas—full of ciceroni, shoe-shiners, polyglots and pulcinelli. Though they are delighted to travel nowadays in sleeping cars instead of diligences, they nevertheless regret a little the absence of Calabrese highwaymen with pistol and pointed velvet hat. Oh, the glorious Italian sky, defaced by factory chimneys. Oh, la bella Napoli, defamed by steamships and the unloading thereof; Rome filled with Italian soldiers; such regret for the wonderful days of Papal, Bourbon and Leopoldine Rome! These philanthropic feelings still provide the basis for every Anglo-Saxon and German opinion about us. To show how deeply they run, remember that they are expressed by people of high standing in other directions, such as Gregorovius and Bourget. The Italy who reformed herself and grew fat, the Italy who is seen to carry large banknotes in her purse—this is the Italy who has at last gained a proper self-confidence. We should forgive and understand her if she now reacts by going a little further than she ought in her enthusiasm. Ten years have hardly sufficed for the idea of the future and strength of Italy to pass from those who first saw it, to the populace at large who are now filled and convinced by it. It would have been in vain had our great thinkers piled up volumes of journals, statistical papers, philosophical works and books of modern art.’

This is the attitude, my dear friends! ‘It would have been in vain had our great thinkers piled up volumes of journals, statistical papers, philosophical works and books of modern art.’ All this would be worthless, he thinks, to raise up a people. This modern man has no faith in the worth and working of culture and spiritual values!

‘It would have been in vain had our great thinkers piled up volumes of journals, statistical papers, philosophical works and books of modern art; neither the people nor the foreigners would ever have been convinced, at least not before the passage of very many years.’

So this man has no confidence in creating spiritual culture in this way.

‘A great and brutal force was needed to smash the illusion and give every last and miserable village square a sense of national solidarity and upward progress.’

To what does he attribute the capacity to achieve what no spiritual culture could produce? He says:

‘It is the war which has served to do this.’

There you have it! This is what people believed. Tripoli was there and it had to be there. Moreover, they also said: War is needed to bring the nation to a point which it was not found necessary to reach by means of spiritual culture.

Indeed, my dear friends, such things speak to us when we place them side by side with another voice which says: We did not want this war; we are innocent lambs who have been taken by surprise. Even from this side comes the cry: To save freedom, to save the small nations, we are forced to go to war. This man continues:

‘We young people born around the year 1880 entered life in the world with the new century. Our land had lost courage. Its intellectual life was at a low ebb.’

These were the people born around the year 1880.

‘Philosophy: positivism. History: sociology. Criticism: historical method, if not even psychiatry.’

This may indeed be said in the land of Lombroso!

‘Hot on the heels of Italy’s deliverers came Italy’s parasites; not only their sons, our fathers, but also their grandsons, our elder brothers. The heroic tradition of *risorgimento* was lost; there was no idea to fire the new generation. Among the best, religion had sunk in estimation but had left a vacuum. For the rest it was a habit. Art was reeling in a sensuous and aesthetic frenzy and lacked any basis or faith. From Carducci, whom papa read to the accompaniment of a glass of Tuscan wine and a cheap cigar, they turned to d’Annunzio, the bible of our elder brothers, dressed according to the latest fashion, his pockets full of sweets, a ladies’ man and vain braggart.’

Yet this marionette—of whom it is said here that he was ‘dressed according to the latest fashion, his pockets full of sweets, a ladies’ man and vain braggart’—this marionette had made clear to the people at Whitsuntide in 1915 that they needed what no work of the spirit could give them!

When times are grave it is most necessary to make the effort to look straight at the truth, to join forces with the truth. If we do not want to recognize the truth we deviate from what may be good for mankind. Therefore it is necessary to understand that precisely in these times serious words need to be spoken. For we are in a position today in which even one who is seven-eighths blind should see what is happening when the call for peace is shouted down. Someone who believes that you can fight for permanent peace while shouting down the call for peace might, conceivably, hold worthwhile opinions in some other fields; but he cannot be taken seriously with regard to what is going on. If, now that we are faced with this, we cannot commit ourselves to truth, then the prospects for the world are very, very bad indeed.

It is for me truly not a pleasant task to draw attention to much that is going on at

present. But when you hear what is said on all sides, you realize the necessity. We must not lose courage, so long as the worst has not yet happened. But the spark of hope is tiny. Much will depend on this tiny spark of hope over the next few days. Much also depends on whether there are still people willing to cry out to the world the utter absurdity of such goings on—as has been done just now, even in the great cities of the world.

The world needs peace and will suffer great privation if peace is not achieved. And it will suffer great privation if credence continues to be given to those who say: We are forced to fight for permanent peace; and if these same people continue to meet every possibility for peace with scorn, however disguised in clever words. But we have reached a point, my dear friends, when even a Lloyd George²⁵ can be taken for a great man by the widest circles! We may well say: Things have come a very long way indeed!

Yet these things are also only trials to test mankind. They would even be trials if what I permitted myself to express at the end of the Christmas lecture were to happen, namely, if it were to be recorded for all time that, in the Christmas season of the nineteen hundred and sixteenth year after the Mystery of Golgotha, the call for ‘peace on earth among men and women who are of good will’ was shouted down on the most empty pretexts. If the pretexts are not entirely empty, then they are indeed more sinister still. If this is the case, then it will be necessary to recognize what is really at work in this shouting down of every thought of peace: that it is not even a question of what is said in the periphery, but of quite other things. Then it will be understood that it is justified to say that what happens now is crucial for the fortune or misfortune of Europe.

I cannot go further tonight because of the lateness of the hour. But I did want to impress these words on your heart!

LECTURE TWELVE

Dornach, 30 December 1916

Our recent considerations have, on the one hand, referred to human evolution as a whole, in so far as this has been affected by the Mystery of Golgotha. We have concerned ourselves to some degree with the loftiest, the most significant aspects of universal and human evolution. On the other hand, it is surely understandable that we have gone into the events of the moment. It was especially necessary to do this because a large proportion of our friends had expressed the wish to hear something about these current events. We have to admit that the gravity of the times encourages us to link the concrete experiences of the day with the nerve centre, the inmost impulse, of our spiritual-scientific striving. For after much investigation we can surely say that the reasons for the catastrophe we now see all around us in human evolution are buried very deeply indeed, and that it is superficial to look at current events solely by taking account of only the most external ramifications.

Looking only at these we would never reach a fruitful view of present events. A fruitful view would be one which would give us the possibility of finding thoughts on how to extricate ourselves from the catastrophe in which the world now finds itself. So let us look at some more details. I then intend tomorrow to show an important connection revealed by spiritual science, a connection which will touch our souls in a way which will enable us to gain an active and understanding grasp of these things. So let us now prepare for this with some more details.

First, let me stress once again that nothing is further from my intention than to put forward political considerations. This is most certainly not our task. It is our task to use our considerations to gain knowledge, knowledge of how things are linked together. For this we have to look at the details. And for this very reason our considerations are very far removed from any form of taking sides. Especially in this respect I beg you not to misunderstand me. Whatever point of view one or other of us might have in relation to national aspirations must not be allowed to interfere in any way with the deeper foundations of our spiritual-scientific striving. My intention is solely to make suggestions on which a judgement might be based. In no way do I want to influence anyone's opinion.

Misunderstandings can easily arise in this field, and it seems to me that some of the things I have said recently have indeed been open to misunderstanding. Let me therefore say immediately—since anyone can be misunderstood in this way—that, for instance, when I have spoken about the question of Belgian neutrality¹ and events connected with it, I have had absolutely no intention of defending or attacking anything but merely wanted to state facts. Indeed, the first time I mentioned this I was simply quoting Georg Brandes² who, so it seems to me, has expressed a truly neutral judgement.

It has not been my concern to criticize politically one measure or another taken by one side or another. My intention has been to stress the importance of the principle of truth in the world, to stress that the karma which has fulfilled itself in mankind has often come about because the attention paid to facts, the attention paid to historical and other connections of life in our materialistic age, is not permeated with the truth. When truth is

not at work, when that extraordinary opposite of truth, namely, the lack of inclination to seek the truth, is at work, when there is little yearning for truth—all this is connected with the karma of our time. This is what we must study.

When we see what is being said during these years in which mankind is living, through what is today called war, we cannot object that such things are said only by the newspapers. What matters is the effect. These things have powerful effects. When we pay attention to what is said and to how these things are said, we find that it is just in this ‘how’ that something works which truly does not run concurrently with the truth. Do not believe that thoughts and statements are not objective forces in their own right! They are objective, actual forces! It is inevitable that they are followed by consequences, even if these are not translated into external deeds. What people think is far more important for the future than what they do. Thoughts become deeds in the course of time. We live today on the thoughts of past times; these are fulfilled in the deeds committed today. And our thoughts which flood through the world today will flow into the deeds of the future.

I am now coming to something which has easily led to misunderstandings, so let me say in advance: I am using the following as a model for the manner in which one may seek the truth. I said some days ago that peace would have been preserved if Sir Edward Grey had replied in the affirmative to the question from the German ambassador in London as to whether England would remain neutral if Germany respected Belgian neutrality. This statement may be disputed. I maintain, however, that it cannot be denied that things would certainly have taken a different course if Sir Edward Grey had answered in the affirmative; for then the violation of Belgium’s neutrality would not have taken place.

If you recall everything I have said—and please consider that what matters here are the nuances—you will see that with not a single word have I anywhere defended the violation of Belgian neutrality. I certainly have not done this. But neither do I need to brand it as a violation of the law. To do so would be to carry coals to Newcastle, as the saying goes. Right at the beginning of the war the German Chancellor himself admitted that it was a violation of the law. It cannot be my task to add anything to this or to excuse anything about it. It has been admitted by those competent to judge that it was a violation of the law.

The fact remains—and I beg that we should understand one another properly today, my dear friends—the fact remains that on 1 August the English Foreign Minister was asked: Would England remain neutral if Germany refrained from violating Belgian neutrality? And he gave an evasive answer! The way the question was framed leaves no doubt that, if the answer had been affirmative, Belgium’s neutrality would not have been violated.

You could say that the neutrality of Belgium had been guaranteed since 1839, and that as matters stood there was no need to ask, since Germany was obliged to respect the neutrality of Belgium. Therefore Germany had no right to demand that England should remain neutral if Germany were to respect the law, since it was her duty to do so. The respecting of Belgium’s neutrality ought not to have been made dependent on England’s neutrality. You could say that the German ambassador merely asked: Will England remain neutral if Germany keeps her promise?

So if someone maintains that it was formally correct of Sir Edward Grey to answer

evasively, he is absolutely right. He is so right that it is pointless to go into it any more. But legally formal judgements are never what matters in world evolution. Such judgements never conform to reality! World history proceeds in ways which cannot be encompassed by formal judgements. A formal judgement is foreign to reality. But someone who makes a formal judgement will, if only he shouts loudly enough, always be in the right because, of course, sensible people do not object to the rightness of formal judgements. Formal judgements are also very easily understood; but they do not encompass the realities.

May I remind you that in my recent book *Vom Menschenrätzel*³ I stressed that it is not only the formal correctness of a judgement that matters but also the degree in which it conforms to reality. The important thing is that judgements must encompass reality. Nobody can have any objection to the formal correctness of Sir Edward Grey's answer. There is nothing to discuss, for it is perfectly obvious. But it is the facts we must look at, although the way we look at the facts must be such as to show how we ought to judge external matters if we want to prepare ourselves to win correct perceptions about spiritual matters also. Spiritual matters must be comprehended in all their reality; and for this, formal judgements are insufficient. So we must accustom ourselves to keep the facts together as well as we possibly can in external matters also.

I could argue for a long time on this, for we could speak for days solely about this question. First of all, if it were a matter of establishing a legal basis—for if neutrality is to be violated, it must first exist—we should have to discover whether Belgium's neutrality did, in fact, exist at the time when it was supposed to have been violated. I am not referring here to documents⁴ which have been found during the war. There is no point in discussing these since they are questionable and various opinions are possible. But if the matter were being discussed, and if everything relevant were being scrutinized and assessed in the way other things are also judged in ordinary life, then this point would have to be raised too: surely the old neutrality formalized in 1839 lost its validity when Belgium occupied the Congo.⁵ If a state creates new circumstances by entering into international relations at a level where it could give away or sell territories as extensive as those of the Congo—or do anything else with them in relation to other states—then, surely its neutrality must be suspect.

I know that in 1885 the Congo was declared neutral as well; but it would be a matter of deciding whether or not this was contestable. But I do not want to decide anything. I merely want to draw your attention to the difficulties which exist and to the fact that it is not so easy to form a truly objective judgement about such things. A number of other things of equal calibre could be brought into the argument, so this is where the difficulties begin. Neither shall we discuss how far the old agreement of 1839 could still be valid, since Germany was not founded until 1871. All these things would have to be considered. For into the objective progress of events there flow not only fantastic ideas which we formalize, but also actual facts, without any contribution from human beings; actual facts also play their part.

Now, is it really true that the German ambassador formulated a question about something that should have been a matter of course? The question he asked was: Would Great Britain remain neutral if Germany kept the promise of 1839, even though Germany

did not exist at that time! Earlier on, Belgian neutrality was not taken as a matter of course either. When, in 1870, war broke out between Prussia—together with the German principalities allied with her— and France, an agreement⁶ was reached between Great Britain under Foreign Minister Gladstone and Germany on the one hand, and between Great Britain and France on the other hand. In each case it was agreed that Great Britain would remain neutral if the other two respected the neutrality of Belgium.

So, in the year 1870, Great Britain was in exactly the same situation. Yet she did not take the attitude that the old agreement of 1839 was definitely valid. Instead, in case anything should happen, she balanced the neutrality of Belgium against her own. If a prejudgement such as this occurs, it cannot afterwards be said that similar steps should not be taken at a later date. So let us refer once more to something I have stressed several times: there is continuity in the life that runs through history; things are linked together. Just as an individual cannot do something to undo what has once been done, so it is with nations. You cannot take something for granted if it has not previously been taken for granted.

So this, too, must be taken into consideration. Even if the matter had been so simple that it could have been said: The agreement of 1839 was obviously valid, and so there was no need to request Great Britain for an additional commitment—even if this could have been said—then the counter argument is: that in 1870 Great Britain herself took the initiative. It was Great Britain who asked France, on the one hand, and Germany, on the other, whether they would respect the neutrality of Belgium. So at that time discussions took place about neutrality. And when discussions take place, others can follow from them at a later date.

The following can also be said. You know that it is not my task to defend the violation of neutrality, but I can say: If an affirmative answer from Great Britain had led to non-violation of Belgium's neutrality, then everything in the West would have taken a different course. But this was not my final word, for I added expressly: In addition, Germany offered to respect France and her colonies if England were to remain neutral. When no positive answer was forthcoming to this question either, the further question was asked: Under what conditions would England remain neutral? England was actually invited to name the conditions under which she would remain neutral. This was all over and done with on 2 August, for it happened on 1 August. England declined. Great Britain did not want to give any answer to questions on this subject. So you can really say: If Great Britain had given any kind of an answer, everything would have taken a different course in the West; even the external course of history shows this.

But I did not stop here either, for I said to you that I knew from other circumstances that even the whole war with France could have been avoided if Great Britain had given a suitable answer. The fact that there were other, more profound, reasons why this did not happen is something that weighs down the scales on the other side. But everything must be carefully considered if we want to form a judgement about the opinion that has been buzzing around the world for the last two and a half years. For there are still many people who believe that England entered the war because of the violation of Belgian neutrality, when in fact this very thing could have been avoided if she had not entered the war!

Now you might say: The whole war situation in the West would have been different if Germany had not violated the neutrality of Belgium. But then you are not distinguishing

between what is formally and legally correct and all that is connected with the tragedy of world history. It is very important to distinguish between what is tragic and what is formally correct. Of course, things would have been different. What would have been different? Without, I beg you, bringing moral aspects into the discussion, let us now see what would have been different.

Let us assume that Belgium's neutrality had been respected despite Great Britain's refusal to make a commitment, which meant that at any minute she could be expected to enter the war. As things stood, the attitude of Great Britain made it absolutely inevitable that war would break out in the West. This must be obvious to anyone who really studies the matter, not only the Blue Paper but all the other documents as well. Whether it could have been avoided with the mood in France being as it was at that time is another question—hardly, perhaps! But let us assume that war broke out in the West because of Great Britain's attitude. What would have happened if Belgium's neutrality had nevertheless been respected? As I have said, I am not leading up to a moral judgement in any direction.

The following would have happened: by far the greatest part of the German army, which has been accused of so much, would have been entangled in France's defences and used up on the western side. Despite all the talk of Prussian militarism, the French army is hardly less powerful than the German—the figures are virtually identical—and this was the case before the war as well. Therefore, obviously the German army would have been used up in the West, and the invasion from the East which began in August and September, would have commenced with a vengeance. For the experts said that it would have been impossible to wage war in the West without engaging almost the whole of the German army all the time. Germany would have been totally exposed to the invasion from the East.

This was the situation. It might have been said that this was a wrong strategic judgement. This was arguable during the early months of the war, but not any longer. For since the failed attempt at Verdun, those who said that the whole German army would be used up if it was deployed solely in the West have been proved to be right.

So there was a choice between passing the death sentence on Germany or taking the tragic step of breaking in through Belgium, which was the only alternative if war in the West could not be avoided; for in the East it certainly could not be avoided! Anyone who says today that it could have been avoided must have the effrontery to say Yes and No at the same time. People today are hardly capable of considering what might be true and what false, but given that some might have the effrontery to say Yes and No at the same time, this is what they would maintain: we have been attacked by the Central Powers; we are not to blame for the commencement of the war; but we shall not end the war until we have attained our war goal, namely, to conquer this one or that one!

There you have Yes and No in the same breath! We are not the ones who want anything, it is the others who want something; they want to conquer, that is why they have attacked us; we, however, shall not end this war till we have achieved our long-standing aim of this or that conquest! It is really unbelievable that people exist who have the effrontery to say Yes and No in the same breath. Perhaps in the next few days you will discover that there is indeed a person who is capable of saying Yes and No in the same breath. Here is probably the most appalling document⁷ ever to have been published in recent times, for it depicts a

logic riven beyond all meaning. This is indeed something that belongs to the karma of our time.

So what we have to do is distinguish between what is logical and formally legal and what is purely tragic. We must not succumb to the peculiar misconception that it could be possible in maya—that is, in the world of the physical plane—for real events to take place solely in accordance with what is merely formal and logical. But let us look further: we did not set out to defend or attack anything. Our intention was to show that it is not justifiable—especially while those accused are not in a position to defend themselves—to trumpet abroad that this war is being fought by one of the sides because of the violation of Belgian neutrality, without also proclaiming that one possessed the possibility of preventing this violation. The only possibility of escaping the tragedy would have been the neutrality of England. For no statesman may proclaim in advance the death sentence on his own country.

Of course it is reasonable if all those who are satisfied with reasonable judgements say: Agreements must be kept. My dear friends, if you were to see a list of all the agreements in public and private life which are not kept, and if you were then to be shown what the breaking of these agreements has brought about in the world, you would begin to realize just what forces in maya are the really effective ones.

But was there really such a good conscience on the side which failed to answer in the affirmative? The facts seem to speak against the possibility. For when, at a later date, the question of this discussion between the German ambassador and Sir Edward Grey was once again placed on the agenda, and when it was said that England could have saved the neutrality of Belgium, the English government defended itself. It did so not by invoking the argument of mere formal and legal correctness—for this there were too many excellent statesmen in the English government at that time. Although I do not withdraw the judgement⁸ of Sir Edward Grey—formed not by me but by his English colleagues—he was, nevertheless, too good a statesman to fall back on the pose of maintaining that since an agreement had been formulated in 1839, Germany was obliged to abide by it even if England had given an evasive answer. Instead of doing this the English statesmen excused themselves in a different manner. Grey said that Lichnowsky had indeed asked this question but that he had done so in a private capacity and not on the instruction of the German government. Had he done so on the instruction of the German government, this would have been different. Though Lichnowsky had acted from the best intentions of maintaining peace in the West, he had not had the German government behind him!

Do you not think that in any private situation this would be called a lame excuse, a perfectly ordinary lame excuse! For the whole world knows that when the ambassador of a country speaks with a Foreign Minister he must do so with the full power of his country behind him, and that his country cannot but ratify what her ambassador says, unless she wants to appear quite impossible in the eyes of the world. So this was a perfectly ordinary lame excuse, grasped at because no one wanted to withdraw to a position which would have to be defended by saying, simply: What we did was correct. They certainly felt the weight of the fact that England could have prevented the violation of neutrality, quite apart from whether the violation was justified from the point of view of the other side. If an avalanche is threatening to fall and the one at the top of the mountain refrains from

holding it back because, for some reason—which may or may not be justified and may certainly be unjustified—he is forced to let it go, and then if someone further down also fails to hold it back, with the justification that the one at the top should have done it—no, you cannot argue in this way! But to form judgements about these things always entails weighing them up. So the following would also have to be taken into consideration:

When did it happen? We have now arrived at 2 August. On 2 August the King of Belgium requested the intervention of England, that is, he requested England to intervene with Germany. The Belgian King saw it as a matter of course that England should negotiate with Germany about the neutrality of Belgium. Initially, England did nothing. She waited a whole day while Sir Edward Grey spoke to his Parliament in London. In doing so he concealed the conversation he had had with the German ambassador. Not a word did he breathe about it. If he had mentioned it, the whole session in Parliament would have taken a different course!

So after the discussion with the German ambassador had taken place, and after the King of Belgium had requested the intervention of England, everything paused in England, nothing was done. What was everybody waiting for? They were waiting for the violation of Belgium's neutrality to be accomplished! As long as it remained unaccomplished, matters could still have taken a course along which it would not happen. Powerful forces were working against it happening and it was hanging by a silken thread. If the request of the Belgian King had been fulfilled quickly enough, if England had intervened, it is questionable whether the violation of neutrality would have taken place. But when did Grey intervene? On the fourth, when the German armies had already set foot on Belgian soil! Why did he wait, even after the request of the King of Belgium? These are questions which have to be asked.

Much could be added to all this if the documents were to be studied both forwards and backwards. But this is not necessary, for I believe I have made it clear to you that these things were very well prepared years in advance. So there is no need to be surprised that events took the course they did in recent years. Of course, if you study the documents forwards only, you will only come up with formal answers.

It has been my intention not to take sides one way or the other, but only to show what is necessary to come to a judgement on these things. For in accordance with the nerve centre of spiritual science, where we strive for a lofty viewpoint, I would rather refrain from light-heartedly making derogatory judgements about what happens in world history when states collide head-on; for do not forget: not nations, not peoples, wage war; states wage war!

In this field we tend to consider too little that, in addition to the forces of growth and becoming, world events also need the forces of destruction and decay. Is it any different with the individual human being? As we develop our capacities during the course of our lifetime, we cause our body to decay and be destroyed. Tomorrow I shall show you what profound connection exists between our soul life and belladonna, jimson weed, and other poisons found outside in the world. These are truths which delve deeply down into things. One must have the courage to give these truths a validity in world history. Therefore it is much better to understand, rather than to judge in accordance with some so-called norm or other. Any condemnation of states or nations usually stands on insecure foundations. If we

are at last to ascend towards the spiritual world and be able to understand anything there, we must accustom ourselves to simply looking at facts, without any criticism—which belongs to quite another realm. Only then shall we understand what forces are at work in world evolution.

From this point of view let us now look at certain events—without anger, but by studying them carefully—certain events which I have hitherto observed have so far been considered solely from a moral point of view. Such a point of view must, of course, be applied to the actions of individuals, although it is absurd to apply it to the lives of states. One or other of you might even find it strange that I should look at these events without judging them morally; yet they can certainly be considered without any moral undertones.

One of the chief elements in the mighty British Empire is its dominion over India. This dominion over India has undergone a number of earlier stages. It took its departure from the East India Company, a trading organization which, to begin with, enjoyed the privilege of being the sole company permitted to trade with India on England's behalf. Then, as time went on, there developed, inexorably and appropriately, out of the various privileges enjoyed by the East India Company, the dominion of England over India—indeed, the English Empire of India. From this, indeed also through the East India Company, there also developed England's trade with China. From the end of the eighteenth century there was a lively trading relationship between India and China, and the English East India Company was already involved at that time. You know that England then gradually grew to be the foremost merchant of the world.

Then, as the element of trade became established in the Orient, something else was brought to bear on it; it came into contact with something else. From the seventeenth century onwards the habit of smoking opium had become widespread in China.⁹ Probably it was the Arabs who taught the Chinese how to smoke opium, since before the seventeenth century they had not done so. For those who do it, smoking opium provides a questionable but powerful pleasure. The opium smoker creates for himself the most varied fantasies out of the astral world. In these he lives. It is truly another world, but reached by a purely material path.

When the people who conducted England's trade with China, in the manner described, noticed that the habit, the passion of opium smoking was spreading rapidly among the Chinese, they established vast poppy plantations in Bengal for the production of opium. Those who are familiar with the laws of commerce know that not only does demand stimulate supply, but supply also stimulates demand. Any economist will tell you that if a large amount of some article is put on offer there will soon be a great demand for it. The East India Company was granted the monopoly by England for the export of opium from India to China. And the more opium arrived in China, the more the evil habit spread. From 1772 onwards several thousand chests were imported annually, each to the value of about 4,800 marks.

I have chosen this example for it has a very profound cultural and historical background, if all factors are taken into account. Only consider that, by introducing opium, which works on the soul, you are interfering with the spiritual life of a whole nation or, at least, of those to whom you are supplying it. I can use this example because I have no intention of condemning anyone who wants to trade. Trade is something that must

move freely in the world. This is a perfectly justifiable principle. I have no intention of condemning anyone who might grow poppies in Bengal in order to manufacture opium for China and take gold in exchange.

But the Chinese saw their pathetically wasted opium smokers. Opium smokers gradually deteriorate, and after a while it was noticed that the habit was causing the degeneration of wide sections of the Chinese population. When the Chinese noticed this they outlawed the smoking of opium in 1794. They wanted to prevent any more opium from entering the country.

But as is the way with such things, prohibitions do not necessarily prevent trade with the forbidden article. Ways and means are found to carry on trading. So it turned out that despite the formal prohibition, despite the law which forbade the import of opium, the opium trade flourished. There are all sorts of ways, of which bribery is only one. In short, the opium trade flourished and increased from a few thousand chests in 1773 to thirty thousand chests in 1837: that is, over only a few decades. The profits, about thirty million francs a year, flowed into British India.

Once things had got out of hand to this extent, the Chinese could think of no other measure than the confiscation of the opium consignments as they arrived. To Canton, which was the usual destination of the consignments, they sent a capable Chinese—an energetic man, Lin by name, who confiscated the chests as they arrived. The English also had a capable man in their consulate, Captain Elliot, who was very energetic and even succeeded on one occasion in breaking through the Chinese blockade with a warship.

Now there arose the question of how to get out of this fix. Mountains of chests filled with opium were waiting to be dealt with, but the Chinese would not relent. The situation was most awkward. So Elliot, who was in a position to do this, had 20,283 chests signed over to himself personally and then handed them to the Chinese Government. This was the way out for the moment.

However, this did not remove the opium trade from the face of the earth, for in some quarters there was no desire to rid the world of the opium trade. So the Chinese found there was nothing for it but to make new laws once again, very strict laws indeed. Lin decreed that anyone caught trading with opium would be condemned to death by the Chinese courts and that from now on all ships were to be confiscated. Thus the Chinese were now faced with the prospect of the death penalty if they traded with opium.

But the British would not consider the abolition of the opium trade, just because a few people might lose their heads. Instead they said—and I quote¹⁰—‘With this demand, the Chinese Government has finally destroyed any sense of security.’ Then they ordered all British nationals living in China to leave, while armed assistance was requested from India. They, so to say, occupied the whole area. The Chinese meanwhile stood quite bravely by their decision to behead anyone caught trading in opium. So it appeared that the opium trade had ceased. Since the Chinese intended to confiscate any British ships carrying opium, there appeared to be no more British ships. What happened was that the opium was loaded in India on to American ships instead! So, just as much—indeed more and more—opium continued to arrive in China on American ships.

Elliot, the civil servant, said: The question underlying our conflict is quite simple. Does

China wish to conduct honest and increasing trade with us, or does she want to accept responsibility for allowing her coastal waters to fall victim to open piracy and freebooting? The harbour at Canton was blockaded with help from India. In the skirmishing this involved, a Chinese was killed by an English sailor. Of course the Chinese Government demanded the extradition of the sailor. Every so often the Chinese tired of the whole affair, sometimes wanting to prove they were in the right and yet not wanting to prove the English wrong either. It is quite possible to do this! One day an English sailor drowned by accident. So Elliot, a very clever man, agreed with Lin, the representative of the Chinese Government, that they would confirm the drowned sailor to be the one who had killed the Chinese. The drowned sailor was handed over and the matter thus settled for the moment. But all these things led in the end, in 1840, to the war between England and China.

So the whole course of events was inexorable and could not have gone any other way. An incisive influence was exercised in a material way on the soul life of a people. Something took place which is connected with the whole process of world evolution. In England people 'knew' what it was all about! What did they know? In England people 'knew' that England had been 'surprised' by China—that is how they put it—and the reason given was that China could not tolerate England's cultivation of opium in India because the Chinese wanted to build up their own cultivation. This is what was said. Everybody 'knew' all about this, and another thing they knew was that the Chinese were barbarians! That is what people in England knew at that time. Lord Palmerston said: The protection of poppy cultivation in India must gain ground; it is a matter of protecting poppy cultivation in India; furthermore, the economists in China do not want to allow out of their country the money which should by rights be paid to India. All these were things well 'known' and understood in Europe!

War raged; and in war, inevitably, atrocities occur. Atrocities were committed, both by the Chinese and by the English. Whole villages were found in which the women lay in pools of blood in their houses; the Chinese men, having fought bravely, saw that they would have to kill themselves or surrender, so first they killed their wives and children. This war of 1840 was a sad war. Strange rumours began to circulate about Elliot, who had observed it throughout and who actually had it on his conscience. The rumours—perhaps they were true—said that he was inclined to initiate peace negotiations with the Chinese. So he was overthrown. Then—no, not Lloyd George!—a certain Pottinger was given the position of Elliot who had wanted to initiate peace negotiations. The war was to be fought to its bitter end, that is, until the island of Chusan and the cities of Ningpo and Amoy had been taken, until the English had advanced as far as Nanking and until, in 1842, China had become totally demoralized. Hong Kong was made over to England, five ports in China were opened for unlimited opium trade, and British consuls established. In addition to the earlier twenty-five million extorted—I do not quite mean extorted, there is another word which I can't find for the moment—in addition to the earlier twenty-five million extorted from the Chinese, a further demand was now made for ninety-seven and a half million war damages.

As I have said before, I would not dream of interpreting this process as anything other than a historical necessity. I would not dream of accusing anybody. Those who understand necessities of this kind, those who understand how things take place on the physical plane,

know that such things are perfectly possible in the normal physical way of world evolution. The profits made from opium are now absorbed into the English national economy, and the English national economy includes a good part of English culture. Just as it would be nonsense to underestimate English culture, so is it also nonsense to doubt the necessity of such events, though perhaps the trifling satirical epilogue to the whole affair might be excluded from that necessity:

When the first instalment of the ninety-seven and a half million war damages was received, certain people came forward claiming they had been the first to have chests of opium confiscated and that the compensation they had received had been minimal. Now, they said, we have seen that our country regards the opium trade with China as legitimate, so we demand full compensation, since we were merely doing something over which our country has since been waging war. The minister whose task it was to decide the matter drew from his pocket a note he had given Captain Elliot at the time, stating that so long as Chinese law forbade the opium trade, the English Government would never agree to pay compensation to anyone who might suffer losses as a result of carrying on this trade. Since this Chinese law was in force at the time, he said, your demand has no foundation because you were contravening this law which was only later nullified by the war.

We need not decide whether this epilogue was also one of the historical necessities. But what is a necessity is that we should look at the facts. When this Anglo-Chinese war started in 1840, mankind stood at the beginning of a time about which we have often spoken. I have mentioned this very year to you as that in which materialism attained its zenith. It is good to understand how such things develop. As I said, just as it would be nonsense to underestimate English culture or English life—English civilization—so would it be nonsense to believe that something of this nature could have been avoided in the overall context of English evolution. It belongs to it. So it is entirely wrong to form any kind of moral judgement about it. If we did, we would be making the mistake of judging whole nations, whole groups in the manner which is only appropriate when we judge individuals. This is the very thing which it is impossible to do.

Yet again and again it is maintained that such a thing is possible. I have just received another pamphlet—there are so many peacemaking pamphlets to be had at the moment—which says: States have their own thinking, feeling and willing, just as do human individuals. Of course this is utter nonsense because you cannot, by analogy, transfer something which has reality on a higher plane to the level of the human being who has his thinking, feeling and willing in the physical sphere. Of course the folk spirits, the folk souls, also have their characteristics, but these are as I have described them in the lecture cycle¹¹ I mentioned the other day. But to speak of the thinking, feeling and willing of nations is simply nonsense.

My dear friends, today I have introduced you to certain matters, for the simple reason that it was necessary to add some striking examples to our basic material. Tomorrow we shall continue to link this to more far-reaching viewpoints.

LECTURE THIRTEEN

Dornach, 31 December 1916

You will understand that for one who follows with sympathy the destiny of mankind it will be difficult to speak today, on New Year's Eve. I expect it will be understandable if what I have to say today cannot be rounded off in the way we have come to expect, for that 'New Year's Eve gift'¹ received by mankind will hardly allow the free unfolding of what is in my soul.

Yesterday I endeavoured to describe to you a historical event and to show that on no account may such an event be judged in a moral sense, for events founded on historical necessity may not be assessed morally. We have to be quite clear that just as the Mystery of Golgotha has nothing to do with peoples or groups of people—for its light falls only on the individual human being—so, by analogy, is it also impossible to transfer to groups the way in which we morally judge the thinking, feeling and willing of the individual.

There are other cases, also, to which moral yardsticks may not be applied. For instance, it would not occur to anyone to apply a moral yardstick to the building of a house; no one would find one roof less moral than another because of its shape. It is just that this example is more extreme, so it is more obvious that people would not apply moral judgements to such things; in such an extreme case they would be unlikely to let themselves be led astray by moral judgements. In contrast, however, those who want to work on people's souls, which are ever open to such things, choose just this method of decking-out with moral reasons things to which, in truth, moral judgements do not apply and which cannot be judged morally, except by hypocrites. That is why I put before you an event which had the capacity of throwing light on certain motives which are at work in human evolution on the physical plane.

It is not permissible to make moral judgements, either positive or negative, about events such as the Opium War I described to you yesterday. Where would a moral judgement lead, even if it were one which might make people consult their consciences? Suppose someone were to say: That was indeed an immoral venture, but now we have put it behind us. This would be one of those judgements intended to lull us to sleep! For thanks to the millions which flowed from Asia to Europe at that time, there exists today, in all its glory, that kingdom which ought to consult its conscience.

To be logical it would then also be necessary, from the same standpoint of conscience, to condemn the present intrigues just as firmly and sharply as one condemns the Opium War! If one did not do so it would be like taking into account, in the case of a house, only the first, second and third floors and the attic, while leaving out what cannot be left out—namely, the ground floor. What was won at that time belongs now to the whole configuration of the British Empire. Perhaps you have heard the example of how much a penny or a centime invested at the time of the birth of Christ at compound interest would have increased by now. This shows you what increase of riches is possible over the years. So if you want to judge the yield of the Opium War you must look at it as a whole. Then you will see that what has grown out of those millions—after all, this has been going on

for a century—is something which is preparing to rule the world, to overrun the world; this is what may be found in what was won at that time!

You see, it would be an offence against all truth to consider in isolation a single event which is part of an ongoing evolution. What you can say is that what has since developed is one of the consequences of the Opium War. You can say this quite objectively, without taking up a positive or negative moral stance. It is not permissible to paint over the facts with shades of morality. If we do this today, we are preventing the possibility of any subsequent insight into what is going on now. On karmic and moral grounds we have to presume that, looking back on today's events in the decades or centuries to come, people will condemn with an equal degree of certainty and conviction what is today defended with noble moral patriotism. In the centuries to come, today's events will look very similar.

It behoves us to look more deeply into such things as they occur on the physical plane, especially at a moment like this when, on the one hand, the turn of the year should awaken a festive mood in our souls, while on the other hand the bitterness of events must move us deeply—unless we are utterly superficial. Regardless of any side we might support, none of us can fail to realize that on the words we have read today² could depend the most terrible destiny for the whole of mankind.

I said: It behoves those of us who stand for spiritual knowledge to look more deeply into things. So today, since I do not know how much longer it will be possible to speak about such spiritual matters in Europe, I want to draw your attention to something which may serve as an example to help us look more deeply into conditions which are manifested outwardly in what we see on the physical plane. You see, even more than is the case in the sciences which apply to the physical plane, it is necessary to be clear that in spiritual science the facts and the way they relate to one another are not simple at all, but very complicated indeed. I have often stressed the complicated nature of these facts and have begged you to understand that although the general formulae, ideas and laws about the relationships between the different aspects of life which we receive from spiritual science are absolutely correct, nevertheless they are naturally extraordinarily complex in their application to actual cases.

We have often spoken about the time between death and a new birth and of how the human being descends again to the physical world in order to incarnate his soul-and-spirit being into a physical body. So we can realize that whenever we raise our spiritual eye to the spiritual world we always find souls who, with the forces they have gathered between death and their new birth, are preparing to descend into physical bodies. In other words, here down below the possibilities await the creation of those physical bodies, while up above there are the forces in the souls which guide them to these physical bodies.

Now you must consider a number of other things together with what I have just said. You know that one of the objections to the concept of repeated earthly lives is: the human population is increasing all the time, so where do all the souls come from?

I have often replied that this is a superficial objection, for the simple reason that people forget to take into account that this so-called increase in the population of the world has only been observed in very recent centuries. For instance, those scientists who are so very

proud of the exactitude of their calculations would be highly embarrassed if one were to question them about the population statistics of the year 1348 when America had not yet been discovered. The objections often mentioned are indeed staggeringly superficial. It is a fact that in some parts of the world the birth rate diminishes while it rises elsewhere, so that the population density varies in different places. This brings about a certain amount of disharmony. It can happen that, in accordance with the conditions prevailing in relation to the incarnation of souls who are living between death and a new birth, there are certain souls who, as a result of previous incarnations, are inclined to descend to a certain part of the world but that there are too few bodies available there. This can indeed happen. Furthermore, there is something else that can happen as well, which I would like you to consider in connection with what we have been saying.

Some time ago—and you will see from this that the lectures I have given here in recent weeks have not been without a wider context—I mentioned that John Stuart Mill,³ and the Russian philosopher and politician Herzen,⁴ have both pointed out that in many ways a kind of ‘Chineseness’ is beginning to manifest in Europe,⁵ as though Europe were becoming ‘chinesified’. This was no idle remark on my part. If John Stuart Mill, who was a keen observer, considered that many people in his vicinity were beginning to show noticeable Chinese traits, then in certain respects he was quite right.

Consider the following: souls exist who, as a result of their former lives, are inclined to incarnate in Chinese bodies during the nineteenth century or at the beginning of the twentieth. Now since the Chinese population is nowhere near as great as it was in former times, it is, in any case, not possible for all these Chinese souls to incarnate there. In Europe, on the other hand, the physical population has increased considerably in recent times, and so many souls can be accommodated here who were really destined for incarnation in Chinese bodies. This is one reason why keen observers are beginning to notice that Europe is becoming ‘chinesified’.

But this alone would not have sufficed to prepare Europe for that European karma which was to come about. A helping hand was needed to assist a certain aspect of the great laws of existence. Now if over a long period something is brought about of the kind I mentioned yesterday, namely, that very many bodies in a whole population are caused to become emaciated, then a situation will arise in which souls who were inclined towards that area will not, after all, incarnate in those bodies. By bringing about the ‘opiumising’ of Chinese bodies and causing generations to come into being under the influence of opium’s forces, it was possible to condemn the Chinese to take in, to a certain extent, some very immature, sub-standard souls, whose qualities I shall not discuss. But those souls who had themselves decided to incarnate in Chinese bodies were thereby prevented from approaching these ‘opiumised’ bodies. They were diverted to Europe where they brought about among the European population those traits which have, meanwhile, been noted by those keen observers I mentioned.

So you see that an event on the physical plane such as the Opium War has a quite definite spiritual background. In the first instance, its purpose is not to help certain people make millions and grow rich but to prevent certain souls who would have come from the spiritual world round about now, to strengthen the cultural forces of Europe, from incarnating yet, and instead to surreptitiously fill European bodies with Chinese souls.

This is really so, however paradoxical it may seem. This momentous event has truly become fact. In a great many European people a disharmony between soul and body has been brought about in the way I have just described. Such disharmony between soul and body always has the consequence of making it impossible to use the tools of the body properly. This makes it possible, instead, for others to busy themselves with errors and untruths. It would not be so easy to work by means of errors and untruths, if those who see through these errors and untruths were not condemned, by the conventions of their day, to preach in the wilderness.

You see, therefore, that I certainly did not mention what I told you yesterday merely in order to link it in an insulting manner with a particular nation. I mentioned it as an example of how actions by human beings here on the physical plane can bring about far-reaching changes in the spiritual evolution of mankind as a whole. Furthermore, please do not imagine that I told you what I did about the hotbeds of deception, and the manner in which they bring about errors and illusions, simply for my own amusement. Here, too, my intention was to show you much that goes on in our materialistic age. And today I have sought to demonstrate the kind of result one discovers when one observes not only the physical events but also the spiritual background of what human beings bring about. Seen in this way, that Opium War meant the switching of a soul element from a part of the earth to which it belonged—and where it might have been of use, because it would have been united with bodies into which it would have fitted—to another part of the earth where it could become a tool for forces whose designs are by no means necessarily beneficial for mankind.

We must realize, of course, that an ordinary historian will only notice some degree of degeneration in certain strata of the Chinese population resulting from the Opium War. But one who, in addition, observes the spiritual aspects of cultural history will have to look more deeply in order to see what is brought about by this degeneration for the whole of mankind. For only in this fifth post-Atlantean period, which is entirely permeated by materialism, is it possible to observe things in a manner so deeply ahrimanic—a manner which pervades all thinking and all ideas—that if something good or something bad is done to a part of mankind, people really can believe that this will not affect mankind as a whole. Whatever is done in connection with, or by, a part of mankind, will always affect the whole of human evolution because of the way the forces behind the scenes of physical existence arrange things.

Not until the sixth post-Atlantean period will a sense of responsibility become general among mankind so that each individual feels responsible for what he does, not only towards himself but towards mankind as a whole. Today we are surrounded by such a mood of catastrophe because the very opposite of this is the general trend, and from the attitudes prevalent today mankind will prepare to crystallize out the opposite as the right view.

So this is an example which can show you that what takes place on the physical plane really does affect even the spiritual world, and is therefore not only significant for the physical plane but is also echoed in the events of the spiritual world and thus of the whole universe. This is expressed quite deliberately in the mystery drama,⁶ not for the poetic effect but, for once, in order to give embodiment to a truth which needs to be placed into

our present time equally as much as everything else that is contained in the Mysteries.

Man has as yet not progressed very far along the road towards the achievement of wider horizons in his view of the world. Somehow he does not really want wider horizons in his view of the world. At the same time, science today is intent on restricting the horizon more and more. For science is secretly afraid of what the truth really is. Fear of the truth is taking hold of mankind increasingly, both in everyday matters and in wider contexts. Indeed, if this were not the case in the wider contexts, neither could it come about in everyday situations. For instance, people would no longer continue to draw out the war merely because they are afraid that if an understanding were to be reached by means of proper discussion, certain matters would then be revealed of which they are—well, of which they are afraid.

Some of you will remember the lecture cycle I gave in Vienna in the spring of 1914 when I summarized much of what I have said over the years about the tendencies and inclinations of our time. I said there that it is possible to speak about a social carcinoma.⁷ I must admit to being somewhat astonished by the way such remarks—which throw a profound light on certain existing things—are very frequently taken simply as remarks which satisfy curiosity to some extent, just like any other remark that might be made.

I was trying to point out—at the beginning of 1914—that in our life today certain impulses are active comparable with the impulse in the physical human organism underlying the formation of a carcinoma, the disease of cancer. I said that just as one studies the sick physical organism, it would more and more become a task for mankind to study the social organism. Although poisons causing the disease are not present in the same way as they are in a physical organism, nevertheless they are no less poisons which create the disease. But to do this, a sense for what is spiritual is needed. And you cannot have a sense for the spiritual if you deny its existence. Of course the social organism is not infiltrated with bacterial poison as though it were a physical organism. The poison in the social organism can only be found if you have a sense for the spiritual as it interweaves with physical existence. But if there is a possibility of doing more than merely making analogies—which are inadmissible anyway—if there is a possibility of following events on the different planes, then it will be possible to form an idea of what is behind these things.

It might be asked how it can be possible at all in the social life of the globe to move, in the way I have described, a whole company of souls from one part to another, just as though an illness were being artificially cultivated in a human body. But if these things are understood, if they are, to begin with, studied independently of what comes to meet us in human life, much may be noticed. Consider that plant life, animal life and, of course, also the minerals, are all capable of secreting poisons. As you know, these poisons have two different characteristics. On the one hand they are ‘poisons’, they destroy higher forms of life; they destroy and slay, for instance, the human organism. But on the other hand, suitably prepared and taken in suitable doses, they are medicaments.

This arises from profound interconnections in the whole realm of nature. We ought gradually to acquire certain ideas about this, not based on hypotheses or, even worse, on fantasies, but on spiritual science. We know, for instance, the truth about the evolution of man and, connected with this, of way the world has passed through the Saturn, Sun and

Moon existences and has now reached Earth existence. We know that before the present Earth existence there was the Moon existence. I have described this to some extent, though hitherto more physically, depicting the substantiality, the substances of Moon existence. From my descriptions you can see that this Moon existence was quite physical, that it was—at least in certain stages—just as physical as Earth existence is today. Even though the mineral kingdom did not exist, Moon existence was physical. The physical structures were held by different conditions, but they were physical. So the question arises: How can the substantiality of ancient Moon be compared with the substantiality of Earth, with what flows and pulsates in the substances of our Earth?

Spiritual investigation reveals that the substances existing on Earth today have really only come about during the course of Earth existence. They are such that the human body, which needs them for its nourishment, can unite itself with them. They passed through earlier stages but only reached their present stage during Earth existence. You could not speak of 'wheat' or 'barley' during Moon existence.

So what substances now present on Earth were there during Moon existence? Every mineral, plant and animal poison, every poison that flows through these kingdoms, everything we today call poison and which today works as poison—these were the normal substances of Moon! You need only recall something I have pointed out quite often, namely, that prussic acid⁸ was present as something quite normal on ancient Moon. I have mentioned this a number of times since the year 1906, when I spoke about it for the first time, in Paris. All these things are connected with prussic acid.

On ancient Moon the substances which are today poisonous played the same role as do the plant juices on Earth, those juices which agree with man. But why are the poisons still present today? For the same reason that Ahriman is present. They are what has remained behind, something that has remained behind in physical forms. So we now have what agrees with man, that is, whatever has progressed in the normal way, and certain other substances which have remained behind at the Moon stage, which is now the stage of poisons.

There is also another aspect to this matter. We know that today's spirituality only developed as a possibility during the transition from ancient Moon to Earth existence. Our normal development was also paralleled in the substances of the lower kingdoms. Only the poisons remained behind. But there is a link, not in the spiritual but in the physical sense, between the substances on which our higher man is founded—that is, the higher organs which make us human, those organs which only developed during Earth existence—and the poisonous substances of Moon existence. To a certain degree we bear within ourselves the further stage of development of the poisons. The substances we today regard as poisonous are something which has remained behind at an earlier stage. Those substances from the lower kingdoms which man cannot tolerate have developed in a retrograde direction. But those substances that have developed in a forward direction, those substances that live in us in such a way that they can transform themselves to become the bearer of our ego, these are the transformed poisonous substances of ancient Moon.

It is only because we bear within us these transformed poisonous substances of ancient Moon that we have to some extent the capacity to be ego-conscious beings. I have

mentioned this, even in public lectures, by saying that, in order to live, man needs not only constructive but also destructive forces. Without the latter, ego intelligence would be impossible. From birth onwards, breaking-down, growing-old and death are necessary, for it is in the processes of breaking-down—not those of building-up—that the possibility for our spiritual development lives. The building-up process lulls us to sleep. The building-up process is like rank, abundant growth which sends us to sleep. It dampens down consciousness. Consciousness can only live by using up spiritual forces. Those structures within us, together with their substances, which use up spiritual forces—these are the transformed poisonous substances of ancient Moon; they are transformed in such a way that they no longer work in the way they did on ancient Moon.

It is difficult to imagine this in connection with certain poisonous substances. But what we have to imagine about the development of these poisons is that their intensity has been reduced by one seventh, or two sevenths, or three sevenths. Poisonous substances in plants are as they are today because they have remained behind from Moon existence. But other poisonous substances have had their poisonous potential reduced many times, and these have been inoculated into us during the course of evolution. Because of this we are capable of growing old during our lifetime. Also because of this we are capable of using these poisonous effects—for they are poisonous effects—which are connected with the way the male element works on the female element in human procreation. The effect of the poison is expressed in the fact that, without it, the female alone would tend to bring forth only an etheric being. For this etheric being to find a physical form, the rank growth of etheric life has to be poisoned. I hinted at this in my lecture on physiology some time ago in Prague.⁹ The act of fertilization provides this poisoning, just as in plant life the effect of etheric material on the pistil—which is the fertilization act of the plant—provides a poisoning by light.

Here you have something which has come into existence for man since the beginning of Earth existence: procreation. It is a kind of distilled poisonous effect, a poisonous effect which existed on ancient Moon in an intensity equalling that of the poisons which have now remained behind in the lower kingdoms. You can now understand a sentence which I simply want to place before you for the moment: Ordinary poisons, which are ahrimanic substances left over from ancient Moon, are the opponents of progressive evolution; distilled, in a way diluted, they provide the physical substance which is the bearer of our spiritual life.

What happens when a diseased form comes into being, when a form falls ill? Medical science will have to concern itself more and more with such things, so that it can widen its view through spiritual science. When a diseased form comes into being, this means that evolution is advancing faster, and with it our physical organism. If some form—and this need not only be a growth, it could be something fluid or not even fluid in the organism—if such a form comes into being, this means that a part of the physical organism is growing faster than normal. A carcinoma, for instance, comes about when a part of the organism excludes itself and starts to evolve more quickly than the rest of the human organism. In physical life, the life of substances, this is something luciferic. I do not mean luciferic in the moral sense; it is simply objectively luciferic. And it is balanced out by poison, because poison is ahrimanic—and that is the opposite. If you can find the proper polar opposite then the luciferic growth will be balanced by the poison, which is ahrimanic.

These two can balance each other out if they work in the right way.

From this you see that the concepts of what is luciferic and what is ahrimanic may be pursued right down into the realms of natural life. They may also be pursued upwards into human life, human social life. If we wanted to be cleverer than the gods, we might ask why they did not make the world without all these poisons. We would have to be as clever as that King of Spain,¹⁰ who first asked this in relation to a particular case. Now, just as these poisons work as actual substances in the human organism, so do they also work spiritually in social life. And in social life it is possible to guide and lead them. What is grey magic really? Grey magic is nothing other than the guiding of poisonous effects in such a way that they cause damage and bring about sickness in the social sense.

This is, in the first place, something which must be taken into account by those who seriously wish to learn about life. So as not to go on for too long about one subject, we shall continue—probably tomorrow—to talk further about poison, sickness and health.

Meanwhile, we might find in our soul the question: What is the consequence of all this? If you meditate on it you will not fail to see the connection. The consequence is that, having evolved beyond the former atavistic knowledge of these things, mankind now has the task of striving for truth with the new consciousness which has been achieved. Without this, nothing is possible. The links with the old atavistic knowledge have been severed, precisely because mankind is to become free to develop ego-consciousness ever further. So there is a fading away of what was still quite clear to the old atavistic consciousness and which is expressed in certain myths. I have demonstrated to you the connection between a myth such as the Baldur myth and great all-encompassing manifestations of human evolution.

Our scientific simpletons who conduct research into myths and legends can go no further than to maintain that they are an expression of creative folk imagination. In reality, however, they encompass deeply significant truths which are revealed particularly through the fact that they are truly worked out down to the last detail. As an example, the Baldur myth, among many other things, gives us a very good idea of the gradation of poisons. That a parasitic plant exudes a certain degree of poison is expressed wonderfully in the way Baldur is slain by the mistletoe. This shows that there existed a knowledge of the gradation of poisons in the world, for instance, that mistletoe is poisonous to a degree which cannot be tolerated by man. Everything is differentiated by degrees, everything is graded.

When certain things are said to be 'poison', what is meant is that they are stronger poison which has remained behind at the Moon stage—they have not continued to evolve. But everything is to some small extent poison, in everything there is a little poison; the only difference is in the degree. Although I cannot back a certain doctor and professor who stood up in favour of alcohol and maintained he could prove that many more people had died of the poison 'water' than of the poison 'alcohol', nevertheless the point he makes is important: in all poisons there are degrees, and it is true that more people have been killed by water than by alcohol. It is a fact that something can be true but at the same time it may, without becoming untrue, be inapplicable to a certain case. I have often said it is not enough for something to be true. What matters is whether it can be incorporated into reality, whether it belongs to actual reality.

The ancient truths have, to a great extent, faded away. That is why significant indications about the truth of ancient myths still given, for instance, by the so-called ‘unknown philosopher’ Saint-Martin, remained totally incomprehensible to those who followed him. Saint-Martin, who considered himself to be a pupil of Jakob Böhme,¹¹ was still just able to point to the true core of the myths. That was in the eighteenth century. By the nineteenth century the most total and utter nonsense was being put forward by way of interpretation of the myths. All this is connected with the way our time lacks a strong, intense urge for the truth. If this urge for truth had been sufficiently strong, it would have sufficed to lead mankind far more extensively towards spiritual life than has actually been the case. It is the weakness of the urge for truth which has brought it about that so few people experience a longing to deepen their spiritual life.

This shows itself in the external, concrete world as well. The sad and painful events of today show that the sense for truth does not flow through the world like the blood of the soul, and this is not always the fault of human beings. The sense for truth must be properly awakened. That is why, during the past weeks, it has been necessary to point to concrete, sense-perceptible affairs in so far as they are the expression of spiritual impulses and spiritual events. It is because of the striving for truth—or rather the lack of striving for truth today—that current affairs are handled and things are said which are believed in the widest circles, although they are in fact nothing but absolute inversions of the truth. In an age when it is possible to make the truth conform to any kind of antipathy, passion or instinct, a great deal of effort will be needed in this age to awaken a strong sense for the truth which can then lead to a spiritual life. The details show that this is so.

Only consider all the things that have been said in the two-and-a-half years since this event called the war started to rage. Consider further all the things that have been believed. As I said yesterday, the striving for truth, the search for truth, has been the only standpoint for everything I have said; there has been no intention of taking sides in any way at all. It is necessary, however, when making an assertion—even if only in your own soul, for that is just as much a reality—to have the will to take into account that in a particular case the truth might not be entirely available to you and that it is therefore a matter of holding back and searching for ways which can then make it possible to come to a judgement of something.

Let us look at a particular case. Think of all that was disseminated in America in connection with European life during the build-up to this war! Much that has echoed back to Europe reveals what is believed in America. Why are these things believed? They are believed because people over in America have, of course, just as little possibility of understanding European life as did the English with regard to life in China after the Opium War. Pangs of conscience might inspire someone today to admit that the Opium War was a *faux pas*. I should like to remind such a person that among those in the British Parliament who sang the praises of the outcome of the Opium War as ‘an achievement of British culture’ was old Wellington¹² himself—not one of the worst.

Some time ago an American wrote an essay for his countrymen which they obviously failed to note. To conclude this evening I shall read some passages to you so that you can see the judgement of a man who genuinely endeavours to understand things. Do not rejoice that after seeing what has happened in recent weeks a different judgement could be

reached. Of course a more profound background might be found. But to form a judgement such things are not needed. To form a judgement it is enough to have a true sense of objectivity about the external events which are taking place. This sense of objectivity has been little in evidence.

This is what George Stuart Fullerton,¹³ a professor at New York University, writes about Germany. Allow me to read to you from this document, which provides such a contrast to that New Year's Eve document which is now circulating in the world. Fullerton writes:

'I am an American without a drop of German blood in my veins, so that I can not be suspected of having the natural partiality for Germany which characterizes the German-American. Moreover, I can claim the right to be as truly an American as any one, since my family has been American as long as there has been an American Nation. I love my country, and pray that it may have before it a great future, and a prosperity founded upon right and justice. Nevertheless, no man has the right to be only an American, but must remember that he is also a man, and that, as a man, it is a matter of concern to him that justice should prevail in other continents than his own. We Americans are neutrals, but we have a right to know the facts about the great war, and it is our duty to aim at intelligent comprehension of the situation.'

He is a man who applies only his common sense to what he sees; he is not an occultist.

'For thirty years I have known Germany, and have been interested in her science, her literature, and her political and economic development. At first, I saw the land through the eyes of a mere visitor, but of late years I have had the opportunity to know it much more intimately. I have seen a people, formerly comparatively poor, not very strong, not very closely welded into a unit, become rich, powerful, united, and so advanced in its social development that its internal organization compels the admiration of the economist and of the humanitarian. The land has prospered exceedingly in the intelligent pursuit of the arts of peace. Austria I have visited in past years, and last winter I spent in that Empire in the capacity of first American Exchange Professor to the Austrian Universities, lecturing at Vienna, Graz, Innsbruck, Cracow and Lemberg. I met many persons in public and in private life and had an opportunity to feel the pulse of public opinion.

I say without hesitation that no class, either in Germany or in Austria, desired to precipitate this terrible war. Peace was desired, and earnestly desired, for economic reasons. But war was forced upon both nations. That war came just when it did may be regarded as an accident, for the war was sure to come in any case.

As many of my fellow-countrymen are imperfectly acquainted with the conditions which prevail in Europe; as they themselves live under conditions so different that it is difficult for them to realize the significance even of facts which are truly brought before them; and as they have, moreover, been systematically misinformed by certain of the parties interested, who have had the opportunity to cut the German cables, it is not surprising that there should be, in America, much misunderstanding of the situation. I think it my duty to make a brief contribution towards the clearing up of this misunderstanding.

Americans have heard a great deal lately of German militarism, and many of them have a vague notion that it is a menace to European civilization. Of what the word really stands for they have no intelligent notion. In America we have brief attacks of militarism—as at the time of the Spanish-American war, or when there is common talk of a possible war with Mexico—but militarism, as a permanent condition of things, does not exist. And if it is not to be met with in the Great Republic, why should it exist in Germany? The American who is not acquainted with Germany and with the position in which she finds herself can find no satisfactory answer to this question. An answer is, however, not far to seek.

The Germans are a peace-loving people. We Americans know that there is no element in our own population more orderly, industrious, and law-abiding, than the German element. The German in Germany has the same characteristics. The land is an orderly land, and the population is enlightened, disciplined, and educated to respect the law. The rights of even the humblest are jealously guarded. The courts are just. The successes of the Germans are attained as the result of careful preparation and unremitting industry. Even competition in business is carefully regulated by law, and the laws against what the community regards as ‘unfair competition’ are rigorously enforced. No one who lives among the Germans and learns to know them can feel that he has to do with an aggressive and predatory people. And those who spent in Germany, as I did, the month of August 1914, mingling freely in the crowds on the streets during the two weeks of the mobilization, when the public excitement was the greatest, can only wonder that a people so peaceable and self-restrained should be capable of the daring courage which has since stormed fortresses, and has gathered laurels on land and sea in a way which compels the admiration of all who have not been kept in ignorance of the facts.

Yet this orderly and peace-loving people, a people which has not only loved peace, but has for more than forty years kept the peace, while other nations carried on wars, a people that has, in the pursuit of the arts of peace, grown exceedingly rich and prosperous—this people has all the while trained the mass of its male population to be prepared for war in case of emergency, and has built up a formidable fleet. Finally, it has gone to war against what seemed, at first, to be overwhelming odds, and the rising has not been that of a class, but of a nation. Neither the Emperor, nor the Government, nor the officers in the army and the navy are responsible for the public sentiment which makes this movement in Germany a national uprising. Even the Social-Democrats and those of a kindred way of thinking, men who have never been accused of servility to the Emperor or the Government, nor suspected of a weakness for army and navy, have stood by their country to a man, and are now fighting bravely and dying without a complaint at the front. In the past three months I have not met with a German of any class, from the highest to the lowest, who has not been heart and soul for the war. I have heard no laments from those who have sent their sons; I have heard no criticism of their country from those who have been bereaved, and I know many such.

A strange phenomenon to be observed among a peaceable and industrious race, a race as devoted to the cultivation of the sciences and arts as it is to industrial pursuits; a civilized race, not one living in a state of barbarism and to which war is welcome, a diversion rather than a calamity. To the American who cannot put himself in the place

of the German, an inexplicable phenomenon. What has possessed the Germans to prepare for war on a great scale? What drives them to fight even against a world in arms, and to stake their all in the gigantic contest?

Let me help the American to put himself in the place of the German. We Americans inhabit a land more than four-fifths the size of all Europe including Russia. It is fifteen times the size of the German Empire, and has only ninety-eight millions of inhabitants, so that we are in the position of a family occupied in growing up to fill a large and well furnished house. It does not cross our mind that our neighbors, either near or remote, can seriously frighten us. Who could invade us with any hope of success? Who could threaten our national existence, or subject us to anything approaching a state of bondage?

To the north of us is Canada—an empty house, a country with only seven million inhabitants, which could not hurt us even if it wishes to do so. To the south is Mexico, which can make trouble within her own borders and can cause some Americans to regret their investments there, but which is no more formidable to the United States than an unruly class in a school. To the west and to the east we have the broad sea. Japan might quarrel with us, and might be a detriment to some of our foreign trade.'

He is rather optimistic here! But never mind; at the time this judgement was appropriate.

'But Japan is far from us,'—she will draw nearer in the future!—'and we know very well that she is too poor, and will long be too poor, to carry on a long-continued war. At the most, Japan can only annoy us. That European states should, singly or combined, crush us, is a contingency too remote to fall within our horizon. As much of an army and as much of a fleet as we think necessary to our purposes we freely call into being, nor does it occur to us to ask the permission of any other power before increasing either. Why should Mr. Carnegie fill his house with bread, as a provision against a possible famine in the State of New York? Why should Mr. Rockefeller store gold and silver coins in a stocking and hide them in his mattress? The occupant of a Nebraska farm who should build a sea-worthy boat, in order to be ready for all emergencies, we should regard as out of his mind. We Americans do what seems to us prudent and practical under the conditions which prevail in America, and we have no more need for the German army than has a Philadelphia Quaker, at his Yearly Meeting, for a revolver. What we think we really need, however, we set about with much energy to obtain.

But suppose that our territory were not too large to be invaded. Suppose that to the north of us, we had a great land with a vast population of more than one hundred millions, under an autocratic government, boasting, even in time of peace, an immense army. Suppose that this land had for many decades shown a restless activity in extending its borders at the expense of its neighbors, where it had found them too weak to resist aggression. Suppose that its population was upon a plane of civilization far less advanced than our own; so little advanced, indeed, that the overwhelming majority were compelled to live in what civilized men must regard as a condition of distressing misery, ignorant, dumb, passive, a tool in the hands of a bureaucratic class which would not be the first to suffer from the added miseries entailed by a state of war. Suppose that we had information that this neighbor of ours had for some time been massing its troops upon its borders in a way that could only be interpreted as a menace.

Again, let us suppose that we had to the south of us, not Mexico, but a rich, resourceful, and highly civilized nation of forty million inhabitants, with a large army, formidable, well-drilled, and well equipped with all that is necessary to carry on successfully modern warfare. Suppose that this nation had for forty years made no secret of the fact that it was animated by a bitter sentiment of resentment against us, and hoped some day to have its revenge. Suppose that it stood in relations with the power above described, and also with a third power to be mentioned below, such that we had reason to fear that they might act in concert to our detriment.

Now let us extend our suppositions, too, over the case of this third power. Suppose that we did not have the broad sea upon our borders to east and west, with the trade routes of the world open to us, but that there existed a third power so fortunately situated as to be inaccessible by land and yet in direct control of our only available outlets to the sea. Suppose that our foreign commerce was far more important to our prosperity than it actually is; that our prosperity was in large measure based upon our export trade. Suppose that the third power in question was rich enough to maintain a navy equal to our own combined with that of any other great power with which we might contract an alliance, and openly avowed its intention to retain control of the sea by maintaining this proportion. Suppose that its control of the sea even made it possible for this power to cut international cables, and only let through to the world so much regarding what we did or what others did to us as seemed to it in accordance with its policy. Suppose that this power had an “understanding” with the two described above, and we had reason to fear that it might join them should they attack us.

How could we Americans accept such a situation? I know my Americans. I have lived through the Spanish war, and have seen a University emptied of professors and students eager to fight under the flag of their country. Yet the Spanish war was, to America, a very small and unimportant affair. Spain could no more crush the United States and reduce our country to virtual subjection than it could stay the moon in its revolutions. Were our land really in danger, or did we believe our land to be in danger, what would happen in the United States? Would we be peaceable and patient, anxious to make concessions, willing to give up territory, eager to limit, under compulsion, our army and navy? Would we humbly declare our readiness to step out of the race for industrial success, or to ask permission of another power for access to the trade routes of the world? I know my Americans, and such questions strike me as broadly humorous.

In this paper I have no other aim than to set the American in the place of the German. Whether it is or is not desirable that Germany or Austria, or parts of them, should be reduced to the condition of Finland or Poland; whether France should be allowed to take Alsace and Lorraine; whether England should be freed from a business rival so intelligent and industrious as to be formidable in time of peace, and should be left in control of the sea routes to America, Asia, Africa and Oceanica;— with all this I am in no way concerned. I wish only to make clear that, *under like circumstances, Americans would do what the Germans have done*. The Germans have, not without reason, feared Russian and French aggression, and have made preparations for many years to forestall it. German science and industry have led to an enormous expansion in German trade, and the Germans have not been willing to trust their trade to the mercies of Great

Britain. Under this regime Germany has prospered exceedingly. Militarism, which the German regards as only a somewhat offensive name for his necessary preparation to repel very real dangers, a legitimate measure of self-defence, has not hampered Germany a tithe as much as she was hampered in the past, when she was not in a position to defend herself. Militarism is undoubtedly a burden, but it has not prevented Germany from cultivating successfully the sciences and arts, to the great benefit of humanity; from initiating and carrying out social reforms which insure to all classes of her population an unusual measure of well-being; from developing her internal resources and building up her foreign commerce in a way that has made her a rich nation. Militarism may be a crushing burden, abstractly considered, but it has not crushed Germany, and, to the German, that is a consideration which deserves to be weighed.

We are all influenced by the constant repetition of a catch-word. Americans have heard so much of German militarism, largely from certain foreign sources, that it would be surprising if some of them were not deluded into believing that Germany is the only European nation with a large army. Yet Russia has a larger army, and has for years been using it for aggression. France, with a much smaller population than Germany, has an army of approximately the same size, and, hence, may, with much greater justice than Germany, be accused of militarism.

And Great Britain has the exact equivalent of an immense army—she has a colossal fleet, which she keeps up at an enormous expense to herself, and which she increases from time to time, with the avowed purpose of allowing no nation to dispute with her the control of the sea, that great common highway of the world, over which all may pass, but which no nation may possess. How formidable this equivalent for a great army may be to other nations has been made clear in the present crisis. There is no nation in Europe that can, without asking England's permission, sail into the Atlantic, pass the Straits of Gibraltar, make use of the Mediterranean, or reach Asia by way of the Suez Canal. The public highway has by a single nation been fenced in and made private property.

It is a pity that the word "Navalism" is not good English, for that which it exactly describes has been peculiarly English for a century. "Navalism" can be a more serious menace than militarism, for the latter threatens chiefly one's more immediate neighbors. "Navalism" holds a threat over every nation on the face of the globe.

I repeat that, in this paper, I am not urging that it would be a good thing for the world for any one nation rather than another to emerge from this great contest victorious. One's opinions upon such matters are not dictated wholly by pure reason.'

This man speaks very good sense!

'I wish only to make the real issue clear, and to avoid the fallacy of catch-words and phrases. I make no reference to the neutrality of Belgium, nor do I think it worthwhile to touch upon the question who first formally declared war on this side or on that. In the light of what the world now knows, these have become wholly trivial matters. The explanation of the attitude of the German people is to be sought at a much deeper level. *And I maintain without hesitation that we Americans, under the same circumstances, would have done just what the Germans have done.* Would it have been right? Would it

have been wrong? I leave it to Americans to decide.

Some Americans—not many—are by their nature inclined to the acceptance of the *status quo*, that somewhat ambiguous expression so often found in the mouth of the man who thinks it to his purpose to urge the continued existence of a state of things which long has been or which has recently come to be. Had Austria accepted the *status quo*, she would not have resented the revolutionary activities of the Servians within her borders; she would not have resented the murder of her Crown Prince; she would not have opposed resistance to Russia. Had Germany accepted the *status quo*, she would not have prepared for defence, have reacted to Russian mobilization on her frontier, or have endeavored to prevent the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary. She would have offered her cheek to the French; she would have left Britain to rule the waves according to her pleasure, and in accordance with an old tradition. What would have happened to Austria and to Germany had the *status quo* been thus respected? It would undoubtedly have been something very disagreeable to Germans. On this point they are all agreed, and it is this that has led Prince and Peasant, Catholic and Protestant, Conservative and Social-Democrat, to drop all other causes and to go whole-heartedly to war.

Shall we urge upon Germany, rather than upon other nations, the acceptance of the *status quo* and a tender regard for the “balance of power”? As for the “balance of power”, any nation that is intelligent and industrious, and that, preserving the peace for nearly half a century, is enabled to develop its industries and become thereby rich and powerful, unavoidably disturbs it. Nations less civilized, or less industrious, or more quarrelsome, are put at a disadvantage. As for the *status quo*, has it been accepted by Servia, by Russia, by France, by England, by Japan? And what, on the whole, has been the attitude of the American towards it?

Did we accept the *status quo* when we dispossessed the Indians? Did we bow down before the principle when we published our Declaration of Independence in 1776? Did we show our respect for it when we rebelled against the search of American ships and the impressment of American seamen by Great Britain in the years preceding 1812? Did we think of the *status quo* in 1861, when we refused to recognize the Confederacy, and insisted upon the integrity of the Union? Did we treat it with deference at the time of our war with Spain?

The *status quo* is a catch-word. The balance of power is something which, in the normal course of human events, is always being upset and set up again upon a new basis. We Americans are not, I think, a quarrelsome people, but we have long ago recognized that the times change and that we change with them. To new conditions we make new adjustments, and we guard jealously enough what we consider our legitimate interests, whether they be new or old. Were it necessary, we should not hesitate to guard them by a prompt display of force. And among our legitimate interests we should certainly place in the front rank our national self-defence and the enjoyment of such advantages as we have, by intelligence and industry, and in the pursuit of the arts of peace, obtained.

We are neutrals, but we have a right to know the truth even about Central Europe. It is not right that we should be kept in ignorance, or led, through misrepresentations, to condemn in haste nations with which we stand in friendly relations. When we see a

great nation of some seventy millions, a nation highly civilized, wealthy and cultivated, a nation well aware that it can prosper as few others, if it be allowed to exercise its industries in peace—when we see such a nation go to war against powerful odds, risking its very existence in the struggle, we must be shallow, indeed, if we suppose that its whole population, a naturally peaceable and orderly population, has either gone mad or lapsed into barbarism. We must stand before an unsolved problem until we attain to information and comprehension.

Let the American forget the conditions under which he himself lives. Let him think himself into the situation of the German. Then let him ask himself what, under the circumstances, he would do.'

These are the words of one who had the will to see things as they really are, and not to listen to what is said in the newspapers and journals of the periphery. Are these the only people who spoke like this? Such people are equipped with a genuine sense for the truth. This is how they spoke.

Yesterday—this is very relevant—I had a look at the *Basler Nachrichten*. It quoted some words which were actually spoken. It is a good thing that they have been quoted. They were spoken in 1908 by an Englishman in front of other Englishmen in order to point out that Germany had every reason to adopt a militaristic attitude, and that it would have been unwise for Germany not to have adopted this 'militarism', which has since become a slogan to be slandered. The words this Englishman spoke to other Englishmen were:

'Look at the position of Germany. .. Suppose we had here a possible combination (of enemies) which would lay us open to invasion, suppose Germany and France, or Germany and Russia, or Germany and Austria, had fleets which, in combination, would be stronger than ours, would we not be frightened? Would we not arm? Of course we should!'

Lloyd George¹⁴ spoke these words in 1908 with as much conviction as he now thunders his tirades into the world! These words were spoken by Lloyd George in 1908!

NOTES

LECTURE ONE

- 1 'Wisdom lies solely in truth': In *Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften* (Goethe's Scientific Works), 5 volumes, edited by Rudolf Steiner in *Kürschners Deutsche National-Litteratur*, GA 1a-e, Volume 5: Sprüche in Prosa, p.360. Chosen in 1913 as the motto for the Statutes of the Anthroposophical Society.
- 2 'Then words come in...': J. W. von Goethe, *Faust*, Part One. Study (Mephistopheles). Trans. Philip Wayne, Penguin Classics, London 1986.
- 3 Rudolf Kjellén, *Die Ideen von 1914. Eine weltgeschichtliche Perspektive* (The Ideas of 1914 in the Perspective of World History), Leipzig 1915.
- 4 Rosa Mayreder, 1858–1938. *Kriegsphasen* (Phases of the War), in *Internationale Rundschau*, Zurich 1916, p.648ff. On Rosa Mayreder, see Rudolf Steiner *An Autobiography*, Steinerbooks, Blauvelt 1977, and *Briefe Band I, 1881–1890* (Letters), GA 38, Dornach 1984.
- 5 *I have told you before*: e.g. in Munich on 18 March 1916 in *Mitteleuropa zwischen Ost und West* (Central Europe between East and West), GA 174a, Dornach 1971, and in Berlin on 28 March 1916 in *Things of the Present and of the Past in the Spirit of Man*. English text available in typescript only.
- 6 *by means of maps*: Arthur Polzer-Hoditz says in his book *Kaiser Karl* (Emperor Charles), Zurich-Leipzig-Vienna 1928, p. 19 (Note): 'I conclude that the breaking up of the Habsburg monarchy had long been a foregone conclusion among those politicians who—by the way—after the collapse of the Central Powers intended to share amongst themselves the chief roles in world politics. I refer in particular to a map showing the division of Europe, which was published by the Englishman Labouchère in his satirical weekly journal *Truth* in 1890 (the Christmas Number dated December 25 1890, not the regular number for that week which is also dated December 25), that is, twenty-four years before the outbreak of the World War. This map is virtually identical with that of present-day Europe: Austria as a monarchy has disappeared and made way for a republican member of the League of Nations. Bohemia is an independent state in the incidental shape of Czechoslovakia. Germany is squeezed into her present confines and split into small republics. Where Russia would be is written "Russian Desert." Countries for socialist experiments. See also C. G. Harrison *The Transcendental Universe. Six Lectures on Occult Science, Theosophy and the Catholic Faith*, London 1894, Lecture 2: 'A powerful empire which unites under a despotic government a number of local communes—Russia. The remains of a kingdom—Poland, whose only cohesive force is its religion, and which will be ultimately re-absorbed in the Russian Empire in spite of it. A number of tribes who, oppressed by the alien Turk, have thrown off the yoke, and have been artificially consolidated into little states, whose independence will last as long as, and no longer than, the next great European war. .. The Russian Empire

must die that the Russian people may live, and the realization of the dreams of the Pan-Slavists will indicate that the sixth Aryan sub-race has begun to live its own intellectual life, and is no longer in its period of infancy.'

- 7 'Slav Welfare Committee': Quoted after S. Rado *Der Sturz des Zarismus* (The Fall of Tsarism), Leipzig 1915.
- 8 Nikola Pasic, 1846–1926. From 1903 till his death he was a leading statesman in Serbia.
- 9 'On the instruction...': Quoted after Rado (as above p. 16f).
- 10 'Memoires of... King Carol': *Aus dem Leben des Königs Karl von Rumänien* (From the Life of King Carol of Romania), Recorded by an Eye Witness. Four volumes, Stuttgart 1894–1900.
- 11 Grand Duke Nikolai: Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, 1856–1929, uncle of the last Tsar; until 1915 commander in chief of the Russian army. Quoted after Rado (as above p.20).
- 12 Gorchakov: Prince Alexander Michailovich Gorchakov, 1798–1883; from 1856 Foreign Minister; 1862–1882 Prime Minister. The Russo-Turkish war took place from April 1877 to March 1878 (Treaty of San Stefano). Letter from Alexander II to King Carol quoted after Rado (as above p.22).
- 13 Export figures: Quoted after Sir Roger Casement: *Irland, Deutschland und die Freiheit der Meere und andere Aufsätze*, Munich 1916, p. 129. (This was written in German and does not appear to have been translated into English. Tr.)
- 14 Dr Jakob Rüchti: *Zur Geschichte des Kriegausbruches. Nach den amtlichen Akten der Königlich Grossbritannischen Regierung dargestellt*. (On the History of the Outbreak of the War Based on the Official Records of His Majesty's British Government), Bern 1916. The Second Edition, 1917, was reviewed by Rudolf Steiner in the *Neue Badische Landeszeitung*, Mannheim, No. 193, 17 April 1917. (C. S. Picht: *Das literarische Lebenswerk Rudolf Steiners*, No. 743). On page 47f Rüchti writes: 'On 3 August, in the House of Commons, Grey gave his long speech to prepare people's minds for the English declaration of war. He suppressed Germany's latest suggestions and calculated that England would suffer scarcely more damage by joining in than by remaining on the sidelines. On 6 August Prime Minister Asquith spoke to Parliament to justify the declaration of war. He based his justification on the suggestions made by the German Chancellor on 29 July, rejected with deep moral indignation the request of the German Government, refrained (as his "honourable friend" Grey had done) from mentioning the negotiations with the German ambassador of 1 August, and deliberately gave Parliament, the English people and, indeed, the whole world, a false version of the facts.'
- 15 Georges Clemenceau, 1841–1929. French Prime Minister 1917–1920.
- 16 William Archer, 1856–1924. Scottish writer, translator of Ibsen, distinguished journalist and critic.
- 17 Georg Brandes, 1842–1927. The article, *Farbenblinde Neutralität* (Colour-Blind

Neutrality), was published in *Internationale Rundschau*, Zurich 1916, p.633ff. It was written in reply to William Archer's *Colour-Blind Neutrality. An Open Letter to Doctor George Brandes*, London 1916. The following quotations are taken from this article.

- 18 *Sir Edward Grey*, 1862–1933. British Foreign Minister 1905–1916.
- 19 ‘*tiniest Little Red Bird Fourth Class*’: The Order of the Red Eagle.
- 20 *Clemenceau-Brandes Seat*: The beautiful Silesian hermitage is Schloss Strzebowitz in Austrian Silesia (later Czechoslovakia), where Rudolf Steiner once paid a visit to the owner, the poetess Maria Stona.
- 21 *interview in the Daily Telegraph*: See Fürst Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten* (Memorabilia), Berlin 1930, Volume 2, p.350ff, containing a facsimile of the *Daily Telegraph* of 28 October 1908.
- 22 *Prince Karl Max Lichnowsky* 1860–1928. *Meine Londoner Mission* (My Mission to London), Zurich 1918.
- 23 ‘*War brings... the horrors of war*’: Rudolf Steiner *Gedanken während der Zeit des Krieges. Für Deutsche und diejenigen, die nicht glauben sie hassen zu müssen* (Thoughts during Wartime. For Germans and those who do not believe they have to hate them), Berlin 1915 in *Aufsätze über die Dreigliederung des sozialen Organismus und zur Zeitlage 1915–1921* (Essays on the Threefold Social Organism and on the Social Situation in 1915–1921), GA 24, Dornach 1961. The actual sentence reads: “The existence of this confusion makes us want to understand why so many people cannot grasp the fact that war in itself brings with it the horrors and sufferings of war, and why they condemn their opponents as “barbarians” when bitter necessity forces them to make use of modern weaponry.’
- 24 *Gotthilf Vöhringer: Meine Erlebnisse während des Krieges in Kamerun und in englischer Gefangenschaft* (My Experiences during the War in the Cameroons and in English Captivity), lecture in Hamburg 1915.
- 25 *Henri Lambert: Pax oeconomica*, in *Internationale Rundschau*, Zurich I November 1915.
- 26 *shark negotiating for a peace treaty*: Byron called the union between England and Ireland a ‘union between the shark and his prey’. After Sir Roger Casement, as above p.96.
- 27 *lawyers who have become presidents*: The reference is to Raymond Poincaré (1860–1934). He was French Prime Minister several times and President of the Republic from 1913–1920. There may be gaps in the shorthand report at this point. On Maeterlinck see Rudolf Steiner’s lecture of 5 November 1914 in *Aus schicksaltragender Zeit*, GA 64, Dornach 1959.
- 28 *Alexander von Gleichen-Russwurm*, 1865–1947, grandson of Schiller. *Menschenrechte und Menschenwürde* (Human Rights and Human Dignity), in *Westermanns Monatshefte*, Braunschweig 1916, p.239ff. Rudolf Steiner also quotes Gleichen-Russwurm in the lecture of 16 June 1916 in ‘Ascension and Pentecost’,

The Festivals and their Meaning, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1981.

29 *Charles Webster Leadbeater*, 1847–1934. English theosophist.

30 *dispute... with Mrs Besant*: Annie Besant, 1847–1933. President of the Theosophical Society from 1907. In 1913 the German Section, of which Rudolf Steiner was the General Secretary, separated from the Theosophical Society. This had been prepared inwardly for some time and was now outwardly brought about by the exclusion of the German Section. Then followed the foundation of the Anthroposophical Society.

LECTURE TWO

- 1 *Count Richard von Pfeil*, 1846–1916. Officer and writer. Author of *Neun Jahre in russischen Diensten unter Alexander III* (Nine Years in Russian Service under Alexander III), 1907. The quotation is taken from Alexander Redlich *Der Gegensatz zwischen Österreich-Ungarn und Russland* (The Conflict between Austria-Hungary and Russia), Stuttgart 1915, p. 19.
- 2 *Helena Petrovna Blavatsky*, 1831–1891. See Rudolf Steiner *The Occult Movement in the Nineteenth Century*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1973, and C. G. Harrison *The Transcendental Universe* (as above).. In Lecture 1 the latter writes ‘... I gathered the following information:... That Koot Hoomi... is a treacherous scoundrel in the pay of the Russian Government, who, for a time, succeeded in deceiving Madame Blavatsky, but whose true character and personality she at length discovered.’ Also in the appendix to Lecture 1: ‘Now we know from Colonel Olcott’s *People from the other World* that in 1874 Madame Blavatsky’s “master” (or control) professed himself to be the “spirit” of a bold buccaneer called John King who flourished in the seventeenth century... Moreover it was Colonel Olcott himself who first suggested (p.454) that “John King” was no deceased buccaneer but the creation of an “Order which, while depending for its results upon unseen agents, has its existence upon earth amongst men”.’ And again from Lecture 1: ‘She then disappeared, and the next thing that was heard was that a certain Madame Blavatsky had been expelled from an American brotherhood for an offence against the constitution of the United States, and had gone to British India in order to carry out a certain threat which it would seem there was a fair prospect of her putting into execution.’
- 3 *physician in Vienna*: Moriz Benedikt, 1835–1920. Benedikt describes the fall of Voidarevich in *Aus meinem Leben* (From my Life), Vienna 1906, p.273ff. The ruler on whom Voidarevich’s articles had a great influence was Alexander III of Russia.
- 4 *Milan Obrenovich IV*, 1845–1901. Ruled 1868–1889. From 1882 King of Serbia.
- 5 *Nikola (Nikita) I* 1841–1921. Prince, later King, of Montenegro. Ruled 1860–1918.
- 6 *Russian Foreign Minister*: Prince Alexander Gorchakov, 1798–1883. Foreign Minister 1856–1882.
- 7 *Alexander I von Battenberg*, 1857–1893. Prince of Bulgaria. Reigned 1878–1886. Abdicated 7 September 1886.

- 8 *Richard Cobden*, 1804–1865. English political economist. Advocate of free trade, peace, disarmament.
- 9 *John Bright*, 1811–1889. English Quaker, politician, minister.
- 10 ‘*Testament of Peter the Great*’: Peter I, Tsar of All Russia, 1672–1725. See Ludwig Polzer-Hoditz *Der Kampf gegen den Geist und das Testament Peters des Grossen* (The Battle against the Spirit and the Testament of Peter the Great), Stuttgart 1922. The ‘Testament’ is today regarded as a Polish forgery of Napoleonic times (see Wittram *Peter der Grosse, der Eintritt Russlands in die Neuzeit* (Peter the Great and the Entry of Russia into Modern Times), Berlin-Göttingen-Heidelberg 1954).
- 11 *during a course*: At the Workers’ Educational Establishment in Berlin.
- 12 *Rudolf Christoph Eucken*, 1846–1926. German idealistic philosopher.
- 13 *Mitrofanoff, a history professor*: Rudolf Steiner quotes here from Hans Delbrück *Die Motive und Ziele der russischen Politik nach zwei Russen (Professor von Mitrofanoff und Fürst Kotschubey)* (The Motives and Aims of Russian Politics According to Two Russians, Professor von Mitrofanoff and Prince Kotshubey), Berlin 1915. Mitrofanoff’s letter is dated 12 April 1914.
- 14 ‘*“Nibelung” by the Spree*’: The River Spree flows through Berlin.
- 15 *Take Ionescu*, 1858–1922. 1912–1914 Romanian Minister for the Interior.

LECTURE THREE

- 1 *Hermann Bahr*, 1863–1934. *Die Stimme* (The Voice), Berlin 1916.
- 2 *Himmelfahrt* (Ascension): Novel by Hermann Bahr, Berlin 1916. See also Rudolf Steiner ‘Ascension and Pentecost’ *The Festivals and their Meaning*.
- 3 *Julius Wiesner*, 1838–1916. Austrian botanist.
- 4 *Wilhelm Ostwald*, 1857–1932. German chemist. Nobel Prize 1909.
- 5 *Gustav von Schmoller*, 1838–1917. German economist.
- 6 *Charles Richet*, 1850–1935. French physiologist. Nobel Prize 1913.
- 7 *Sigmund Freud*, 1856–1939, Austrian neurologist. Founder of psychoanalysis.
- 8 *Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria*, born 1863, assassinated at Sarajevo on 28 June 1914.
- 9 *been speaking... in various branches*: See Rudolf Steiner *Destinies of Individuals and of Nations*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1986, Lectures 2 and 5. Also *Cosmic Being and Egohood* Lecture 3 (English text available in typescript only). During a lecture to the branch in Stuttgart on 30 September 1914, Rudolf Steiner said: ‘I have often stressed how different things are, here on the physical plane, and how on the spiritual plane the opposite is often revealed. Yet even I was surprised when I was permitted to compare this individuality before death with the state he entered after the assassination: This personality had been transformed into a cosmic force.’ In *Die geistigen Hintergründe des Ersten Weltkrieges* (The Spiritual Background to the

First World War), GA 174b, Dornach 1974.

- 10 *Die neuen Menschen* (The New People), play by Hermann Bahr, Zurich 1887.
- 11 *one-act play: La Marquesa d'Amaegui*, by Hermann Bahr, Zurich 1888.
- 12 *Die grosse Sünde* (The Great Sin), play by Hermann Bahr, Zurich 1889.
- 13 *Georges Ernest Boulanger*, 1837–1891. French general and nationalist politician.
- 14 *Alphonse Daudet*, 1840–1897. French writer.
- 15 *Café Griensteidl*: See Note to Number Seven, Rudolf Steiner *Briefe, Band I*, Note 4, Lecture One.
- 16 *Nikolaus Lenau*, 1802–1850. Austrian poet.
- 17 *Anastasius Grün*, 1806–1876. Austrian poet.
- 18 *Karl Kraus*, 1874–1936. Austrian publisher of the journal *Die Fackel*. The pamphlet *Die demolierte Literatur* (Literature Demolished), Vienna 1897.
- 19 *Maurice Barrès*, 1862–1923. French nationalist writer.
- 20 *book on expressionism*: Hermann Bahr *Expressionismus*, Munich 1916.
- 21 *Germans, Czechs, Slavonians*: Not mentioned here are the Slovenes.
- 22 *Archduke Rudolf*, born 1858. The cause of his death at Mayerling in 1889 was never fully clarified.
- 23 *secret brotherhood*: The 'Omladina'. See next lecture.
- 24 *Friedrich Nietzsche*, 1844–1900. German philosopher, one of the most influential thinkers of modern times. The sentence quoted is from *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Fourth Part. "The Intoxicated Song." Trans. R J Hollingdale, Penguin Classics, London 1986.

LECTURE FOUR

- 1 *Omladina*: The statements about Serbia in this lecture are taken from an essay by Leopold Mandl *Der Mord als Mittel der Politik in Serbien* (Murder as a Political Tool in Serbia) in *Österreichische Rundschau* 1915, p.241ff. Regarding 'Omladina' and 'Narodna Odbrana' see also Lennhoff *Politische Geheimbünde im Völkergeschehen* (Secret Political Societies in International Relations), Berlin 1930.
- 2 *Michael Obrenovich III*, 1823–1868. From 1839 Prince of Serbia. Banished 1842. Returned to the throne 1860. Assassinated 1868.
- 3 *Jovan Ristic*, 1831–1899. Influential politician, author of works in several volumes about Serbia's foreign affairs and her diplomatic history in the second half of the nineteenth century.
- 4 *Alexander Karageorgevich*, 1806–1885. After the banishment of Michael Obrenovich III, Prince of Serbia 1842–1858. In 1858 Milosh Obrenovich I was returned to the throne for two years until 1860. His son, Michael Obrenovich HI, succeeded him for a second term from 1860 until his assassination in 1868. He was

succeeded in turn by his first cousin once removed, Milan Obrenovich IV, from 1868 to 1889, who abdicated in favour of his son Alexander Obrenovich V, retiring to live chiefly in Vienna.

- 5 *Nikola Pasic*: See Note 8, Lecture One.
- 6 ‘*A confederation of all the Serbs...*’: After Mandl (above).
- 7 *Alexander III of Russia*, 1845–1894. Crowned 1881.
- 8 *Serbia’s war with Bulgaria*: In 1885.
- 9 *Draga Masin*, 1867–1903. Widow of an engineer. Lady-in-waiting to the King’s mother, Queen Natalie of Serbia, and mistress of Alexander Obrenovich V. Alexander married her in 1900 and made her Queen of Serbia. Both were assassinated on 11 June 1903. See Dr Vladan Georgevich *Das Ende der Obrenovitch. Beiträge zur Geschichte Serbiens 1897–1900* (The End of the Obrenovich Dynasty. Notes on the History of Serbia 1897–1900), Leipzig 1905.
- 10 *Murder of Alexander Obrenovich V*: See Mandl p. 254 (above).
- 11 ‘*The Jew will be burnt!*’: Lessing *Nathan der Weise* (Nathan the Wise), Act IV, Scene 2.
- 12 *pamphlet*: See Note 23, Lecture One.
- 13 *David Lloyd George*, 1863–1945. British minister from 1905. Prime Minister 1916–1922.
- 14 *Lord Archibald Rosebery*, 1847–1929. British Foreign Minister 1886 and 1882. Prime Minister 1894. The remark was made in 1893 and is quoted after Bernhardt *Deutschland und der nächste Krieg* (Germany and the Next War), Stuttgart 1912, p. 82. Bernhardt is in turn quoting Hanotaux *Fachoda et le partage de l’Afrique*, Paris 1909.
- 15 *taught in some secret brotherhoods*: See Note 6, Lecture One.
- 16 *Albert Auguste Gabriel Hanotaux*, 1853–1944. French statesman and historian. The quotations are from *Fachoda et le partage de l’Afrique* as quoted by Bernhardt (p. 83 and 84, above).
- 17 *Fichte’s speeches: Reden an die deutsche Nation* (Speeches to the German Nation), Tübingen 1859. In the thirteenth speech on p.202 Fichte says: ‘Equally foreign to Germans is the freedom of the high seas, which is so frequently proclaimed today, whatever the intention, be it genuine freedom or merely the capability of excluding all others.’
- 18 *Sergei Dmitrievich Sasonov*, 1861–1927. Russian Foreign Minister 1910–1916.
- 19 *extensive circles*: In confirmation and illustration of what Rudolf Steiner says here about England it is most revealing to read a short work by the English Minister Lord Morley, who resigned on the outbreak of war: *Memorandum on Resignation*, London 1928.
- 20 *Edward VII*, 1841–1910. King of England 1901–1910.

- 21 *Two people spoke to one another*: Conference between the Russian Foreign Minister Izvolski and the Austrian Foreign Minister Baron Aehrenthal in Buchlau. Paul Herre in *Weltpolitik und Weltkatastrophe* (World Politics and World Catastrophe), Berlin 1916, maintains that Izvolski obtained Austrian agreement to the opening of the Dardanelles (p.91). Prince Bülow in *Denwürdigkeiten* (Memorabilia), Volume Two, states that he received reports on the Buchlau conference both from Izvolski and from Aehrenthal. Izvolski felt he had been tricked by Aehrenthal, hence his hatred for him. It is noteworthy that Jaurès, in a speech given shortly before his death, said: ‘Herr von Aehrenthal made a gesture which Izvolski took to signify “yes”, whereupon he permitted Austria the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. When Russia then requested Austria’s reciprocation (agreement to the opening of the Dardanelles), Aehrenthal answered: “What are you saying; I never said anything!” ‘ (See *Demain*, Geneva, Volume One, 1916, No.4). A further facet appears in a book published in Paris during the war: Jacques Prolo, *Une politique... Un crime! Le meurtre de Jean Jaurès*. Here it is maintained that immediately before the outbreak of war Jaurès is supposed to have said in the lobbies of the Cabinet that France was reeling into war because Monsieur Izvolski, the Russian ambassador in Paris, had not received the forty million which had been promised him while he was still Foreign Minister by Baron von Aehrenthal for Russia’s agreement to Austria’s annexation of Bosnia. (Daniels, *Preussische Jahrbücher* (Prussian Annals), Berlin, Volume 164, p. 123.)
- 22 *Aleksandr Petrovich Izvolski*, 1856–1919. Russian Foreign Minister 1906–1910, thereafter ambassador in Paris.
- 23 *for England’s part*: This is confirmed by Lord Morley in the Memorandum mentioned in Note 19. According to Morley, even the English Cabinet was for the most part in favour of neutrality during the early days of August.
- 24 *a German had a conversation*: Details not known.
- 25 *Bernhardi* As above, pp.105 and 113 (See Note 14).

LECTURE FIVE

- 1 *important events*: On 12 December 1916, via a speech in the Reichstag by Bethmann-Hollweg, the Central Powers offered a suggestion for peace negotiations which was rejected by the Allies. See Lecture Thirteen.
- 2 *Brooks Adams*, 1848–1927. American historian. *Law of Civilization and Decay*, 1895, with an essay by Theodore Roosevelt.
- 3 *Theodore Roosevelt*, 1858–1919. President of the United States of America 1901–1909.
- 4 *Goethe’s saying*: ‘Life is her most wonderful discovery and death her artifice through which she may have much life’, from the hymn *Die Natur* (Nature) in Goethe’s Scientific Works. (See Note 1, Lecture One), Volume 2: *Zur Naturwissenschaft im Allgemeinen*, p.8.
- 5 *Henry VIII*, 1491–1547. King of England. See Rudolf Steiner *Things of the Present*

and of the Past in the Spirit of Man, Lecture 8. English text available in typescript only.

- 6 *Sir Thomas More*, 1480–1535. English saint and humanist. Lord Chancellor 1529–1532.
- 7 *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*, 1463–1494. Italian philosopher and scholar. See Rudolf Steiner *Things of the Present and of the Past in the Spirit of Man* Lecture 5. English text available in typescript only.
- 8 *Utopia*: Thomas More *De optima statu rei publicae deque nova insula Utopia*, trans Paul Turner, Penguin Classics, London 1986.
- 9 *Charlemagne*, 742–814. King of the Franks 768–814, and Western (Holy Roman) Emperor 800–814.
- 10 *Dante Alighieri*, 1265–1321. The greatest poet of Italy. *De Monarchia*. *Divine Comedy*, Purgatory 7, V.91–96.
- 11 *Rudolf of Habsburg*, 1218–1291; German King from 1273.
- 12 *Venice devoured the patriarchate of Aquileia*: In 1451.
- 13 *Battle of Solferino*: 24 June 1859.
- 14 *Camillo Benso Cavour*, 1810–1861. Piedmontese statesman.
- 15 *I can only give you an outline*: Among the source material used by Rudolf Steiner for this lecture was the booklet *Italien* (Italy). This is Booklet 9 of the *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, Volume 12, June 1915, which was devoted to Italy's preparations for entering the war on the side of the Entente.
- 16 *Victor Emmanuel II*, 1820–1878. King of Italy from 1861.
- 17 *Francesco Crispi*, 1818–1901. Italian Prime Minister 1887–1896.
- 18 *when France took over Tunisia*: France annexed Tunisia in May 1881. See Kjellén *Dreibund und Dreiverband* (Triple Alliance and Triple Entente), Munich 1921. p.60ff. Triple Entente: Alliance between France and Russia (March 1894), France and England (the Entente Cordiale, 1904), and England and Russia (August 1907).
- 19 *friendly gentleman*: According to Marie Steiner, who was present, this was Professor Angelo de Gubernatis.
- 20 *'reconquering of Italy by means of hunger'*: See Kjellén, as above p. 61.
- 21 *speech made in 1888*: Bismarck's speech in the Reichstag on 6 February 1888. See Rudolf Steiner *Aus schicksaltragender Zeit*, GA 64, Dornach 1959, Lecture entitled 'Das Volk Schillers und Fichtes'.
- 22 *publications of Loiseaux, Chéradame and others*: Hippolyte Loiseaux *Le Pangermanisme, ce qu'il fut ce qu'il est*, Paris 1921. André Chéradame *L'Europe et la question de l'Autriche au seuil du XXe siècle*, Paris 1901.
- 23 *Wilhelm Oberdank*: Student, Irredentist. Attempted to assassinate Emperor Franz Josef on 17 August 1882 in Trieste. Oberdank was executed. Carducci celebrated

him in an ode.

24 *Grand Orient de France*: The central organization of French Freemasonry.

LECTURE SIX

- 1 *Giosué Carducci*, 1835–1907, in his essay *L'opera di Dante* (The Works of Dante), 1888. *Prose die Giosué Carducci*, Bologna 1905, p. 1131.
- 2 *the Britons, the Gauls, the Germans*: 'Before the Roman conquest, Gaul, Britain and Germany were not nations, they had only tribal existence. Their conquest and incorporation into the Roman Empire marked the period of infancy. Roman law was their nurse and protector. To the nurse, succeeded the tutor. The destruction of the Roman Empire and the rise of the Papacy marked the period of childhood, as the beginning of their intellectual life... The manhood of modern Europe dates from the sixteenth century.' From C. G. Harrison, as above, Lecture 2.
- 3 *Balkan Slavs*: See Note 7, Lecture One. Also C. G. Harrison, as above, Lecture 2: 'We need not pursue the subject further than to say that the national character [of the Slav peoples] will enable them to carry out experiments in Socialism, political and economical, which would present innumerable difficulties in Western Europe'.
- 4 *system of sounds*. Voiced plosives (d, b, g), unvoiced plosives (t, p, k), aspirated sounds (ph, ch, etc.). Regarding Grimm's Law see also Rudolf Steiner *Das Reich der Sprache. Die Sprache als Spiegelung des Lebens höherer Wesen*, Dornach 1935, and *Geisteswissenschaftliche Sprachbetrachtungen*, GA 299, Dornach 1977.
- 5 *an interesting dissertation*: Not known.
- 6 *Herbert Henry Asquith*, Earl of Oxford and Asquith, 1852–1928. Minister from 1892. Prime Minister 1908–1916.

LECTURE SEVEN

- 1 *urgent request not to take notes*: This of course did not apply to Helene Finckh, the official stenographer, who took down all Rudolf Steiner's lectures from 1916 onwards.
- 2 *Mikhail Bakunin*, 1814–1876. Russian anarchist.
- 3 *Faust*: Goethe *Faust*, Part I, Auerbach's Cellar.
- 4 *German Reich*: On the foundation of the German Reich and the question of the title of Kaiser see Bismarck *Gedanken und Erinnerungen* (Thoughts and Memoires), Stuttgart 1915, Volume Two, Chapter 23: 'Versailles', p.146ff.
- 5 *Matin*: From Hans F Helmolt *Die Geheime Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges* (The Secret Build-Up to the World War), Leipzig 1914, p. 17.
- 6 *judgement expressed in the year 1870*: Thomas Carlyle, 1795–1881. Scots essayist and historian. Rudolf Steiner was reading from a heavily abbreviated version in German of the letter written by Carlyle on 11 November 1870 and printed in *The Times* on 18 November 1870. The same issue of *The Times* carried an editorial praising Carlyle as a historian but disagreeing with the opinions expressed in his

letter. The text of the letter in *The Times* ends with the words ‘hopefullest public fact that has occurred in my time’. What follows was read aloud by Rudolf Steiner as if it was still part of the letter. It has been impossible to discover the German text from which he was reading.

- 7 *this man said*: Rudolf Steiner read this quotation from p.38 of Helmolt’s book (see Note 5). Helmolt prefaces it with the words ‘A telling portrait of Grey is painted in the following letter written by a colleague of his during the ambassadors’ conference in London in the winter of 1912 to 1913.’ As it has proved impossible to trace the original source, the text here quoted is a re-translation from the German translation.
- 8 *Jean Jaurès*, 1859–1914: One of the leaders of the French Socialist party in its formative years. After Helmolt. As above, p.38f.
- 9 *senator Gaudain de Villaine*: *Die Frankfurter Zeitung* of 23 November 1906, No. 323: ‘Paris 21 November. According to the version published by a number of papers, Prime Minister Clemenceau’s declaration on foreign policy in reply to the interpellation from senator Gaudain de Villaine was as follows: “You say that I am a supporter of English policies without adding any explanation and without telling us what these are, and you use this as a basis for predicting the greatest misfortune for France... “ (Gaudain de Villaine, interrupting: “Yes or No, is there a military agreement with England?”) Clemenceau continues: “Do you imagine that I can answer Yes or No to such a question? Although the Minister for Foreign Affairs has sent dispatches to me as well as all his cabinet colleagues, of which some might refer to the Anglo-French entente, I have not studied the question of whether there is a military agreement.” (Villaine, interrupting: “This is monstrous!”) Clemenceau: “What is monstrous?” Villaine: “What you have said! What an admission!” Clemenceau: “Then you also spoke of dictatorship and ministers bent on revenge. You had no right to use that word. What am I supposed to reply? Do you wish me to disavow the views held by countless Frenchmen? Is that what you have the gall to demand? (Lively applause on the left). Do you want me to abandon France to the worst adventurers by agreeing with you? Such a thing would be unworthy of a good Frenchman.” ‘ There followed a vote of confidence showing 213 against and 32 in favour of the Government. (Helmolt, as above, pp.41/42)
- 10 *disarmament proposal*: At the peace conferences in The Hague in 1899 and 1907, disarmament proposals were also made.
- 11 *in the Daily News*: After Helmolt, as above, pp.26–27.
- 12 *success achieved... by the Entente*: This refers to the Romanian campaign which was successfully concluded at the end of December 1916 by the Central Powers. The Serbian army, consisting of four divisions, had been reorganized and fought successfully in the East against the Bulgarians under the French general Sarrail, the Supreme Commander East of the Entente forces. See Stegemann *Geschichte des Krieges* (History of the War), Stuttgart 1921, Volume Four, p. 136.
- 13 *the Duchess’s exclamation*: This is lacking in the shorthand report. It is included in M. Harden *Krieg und Frieden* (War and Peace), Berlin 1918, Volume One, p.36.
- 14 *rather inferior Paris journal*: *Almanach de Mme de Thèbes. Conseils pour être*

heureux, Paris 1912. See also Rudolf Steiner *Aus dem mitteleuropäischen Geistesleben*, GA 65, Dornach 1962, p.583.

- 15 Robert Arthur, Marquis of Salisbury, 1838–1903. For decades one of the most prominent British politicians. British delegate to the 1878 Berlin Congress.
- 16 essay by an Austrian: This has so far not been traced.
- 17 Herbert Spencer, 1820–1903. Political essays: *The Proper Sphere of Government* 1842; *Social Statics* 1850; *Essays* 1858; *Political Institutions* 1882; *Man versus the State* 1886.
- 18 John Stuart Mill, 1806–1873. English philosopher and economist. *On Liberty* 1856; *Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform* 1859; *Considerations on Representational Government* 1861; *England and Ireland* 1868; *Subjection of Woman* 1869.
- 19 Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, 1729–1781. German dramatist, critic and writer on aesthetics. One of the great seminal minds in German literature. *Laokoon oder über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie* (Laocoon or the Limits of Painting and Poetry), 1766.
- 20 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, 1770–1831. German philosopher. *Selbstbewusstsein des Gedankens* (Self-Consciousness of Thought). See Rudolf Steiner *Aus schicksaltragender Zeit*, GA 64, Dornach 1959, lecture entitled ‘Der Schauplatz der Gedanken als Ergebnis des deutschen Idealismus im Hinblick auf unsere schicksaltragende Zeit’.
- 21 when Austria voluntarily declared: Before Italy joined the war, Austria had declared herself willing to accede to most of Italy’s territorial demands. On 4 May 1915 she offered to relinquish all the Italian areas of the South Tyrol and the region to the right of the Isonzo. Also offered was the autonomy of Trieste, the establishment of an Italian university there and the recognition of Italian rule in Valona. (Herre, as above, p.249.)
- 22 or rather those three people: Among the notes Rudolf Steiner made for these lectures is a sheet on which he had written the names Salandra, Sonnino and Tittoni. All three were prominent Italian politicians at that time: Antonio Salandra, 1853–1931, Prime Minister 1914; Giorgio Sidney Sonnino, 1847–1927, Foreign Minister 1914, concluded the pact with the Entente in London in 1915; Tomasso Tittoni, 1855–1931, Ambassador in Paris 1914–1916, President of the Senate 1919–1928.
- 23 Jakob Böhme, 1575–1624. German mystic.
- 24 Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, 1743–1803. French illuminist who signed his works ‘Le Philosophe Inconnu’.
- 25 recent book: Rudolf Steiner *Vom Menschenrätsel. Ausgesprochenes und Unausgesprochenes im Denken, Schauen, Sinnen einer Reihe deutscher und österreichischer Persönlichkeiten* (The Riddle of the Human Being. Spoken and Unspoken Aspects of the Thinking, Vision and Reflections of a Number of German and Austrian Personalities), GA 20, Dornach 1957.
- 26 to solve certain.. . problems: Rudolf Steiner *The Challenge of the Times*,

Anthroposophic Press, New York, 1987. Lecture of 1 December 1918. See also C. G. Harrison, as above Lecture 1.

- 27 *that sin comes from the law*: Romans, 7,8: 'For without the law sin was dead.'
- 28 *John Emrich Baron Acton*, 1834–1902. English historian.
- 29 *to an inner place*: Confirmed by Sir Roger Casement in *Irland, Deutschland und die Freiheit der Meere*.
- 30 "*The foreigner has no...*": Only the first few words of this quotation appear in the shorthand report. Lord Acton *Lecture on the Study of History*, Cambridge 1895, p. 15.
- 31 *Michael Faraday*, 1791–1867. English chemist and physicist. The quotation is not included in the shorthand report. The passage selected is one that states particularly concisely a thought frequently expressed by Faraday. From Henry Bence Jones *The Life and Letters of Faraday*, London 1870, Volume Two, p.325.
- 32 *Charles Robert Darwin*, 1809–1882. English naturalist.
- 33 *Sir Isaac Newton*, 1642–1727. English physical scientist and mathematician.
- 34 *Ernst Heinrich Haeckel*. 1834–1919. German zoologist.
- 35 *Aristide Briand*, 1862–1932. French Prime Minister (eleven times) and French Foreign Minister (fifteen times).
- 36 The closing words of this lecture:

Thursday's lecture will be in Basel and we will then meet here again next Sunday at 5 o'clock. There will be no lecture on Saturday, firstly because many of you will be busy preparing for Christmas, and secondly because I was told earlier that something ever so beautiful is being prepared that Saturday is needed for rehearsals. So we shall meet here again next Sunday if no one has any objections. If anyone would prefer a different time, please raise your hand.

LECTURE EIGHT

- 1 *Gnosis*: See, among others, Rudolf Steiner *Christ and the Spiritual World. The Search for the Holy Grail*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1963, Lecture One.
- 2 *creeds of Arius or Athanasius*: At the first Council of Nicaea (325) the Athanasian creed (identity of the Son with the Father) was accepted. Arius denied this identity and stressed the oneness of God the Father. He gained many supporters, especially among the Germanic tribes, and the strife between the two schools of thought dragged on throughout the fourth and fifth centuries, until Arianism lost its influence.
- 3 *Ingaevones*: 'To Mannus they assign three sons, from whose names, they say, the coast tribes are called Ingaevones; those of the interior, Herminones; all the rest Istaevones.' Tacitus *Germania*, 2.
- 4 *Vanir*: A literal translation of these two sentences reads as follows: 'Subconsciously the people knew themselves to be ruled by gods, who were given the name 'Wanen''

[English: Vanir], which is connected with the word ‘wähnen’ [to fancy, to imagine], that is, with that which runs its course, not in full, intellectual consciousness but in a “knowing, dream consciousness”.’ Trs.

- 5 *contained in Tacitus*: Tacitus on the Ertha saga, *Germania*, 40. Translated by A J Church and W J Brodribb.
- 6 *Walpurgis Night*: The night of 30 April to 1 May when the witches are said to gather on the Brocken in the Harz Mountains.
- 7 *Scandinavian mysteries*: See Rudolf Steiner *The Mission of the Individual Folk Souls*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1970, and also *Die Julzeit und die Christfeststimmung*, Dornach 1966.
- 8 *famous Anglo-Saxon rune-song*: The so-called song of the runic names. Twenty-second rune. See Wilhelm Grimm *Über deutsche Runen* (On German Runes), Göttingen 1821.
- 9 *longing for peace is shouted down*: See Note 1, Lecture Five.

LECTURE NINE

- 1 *request you once again*: See Note 1, Lecture Seven.
- 2 After his opening request, Rudolf Steiner first spoke about the Christmas Plays, giving the meaning of certain dialect words in the Paradise Play. This passage—about a page—has been omitted here, since it is irrelevant for English-speaking readers. Tr.
- 3 *discussion in Basel*: Lecture Eight.
- 4 *Vanir*: See Note 4, Lecture Eight.
- 5 *Aesir*: After further examination of the shorthand report, *ecce*, ‘to see’, (which was used in the 1966 German edition) was changed to *esse* in the 1978 edition, from which this translation is made. It is possible that there is a gap in the shorthand report.
- 6 *law by the sins*: See Note 27, Lecture Seven.
- 7 *Jesuit Father*: Pater Klinkowström. See Rudolf Steiner *Things of the Present and of the Past in the Spirit of Man*, Lecture Four. English text available in typescript only.
- 8 *Cola di Rienzi*, 1313–1354. Italian politician. In 1347 he proclaimed the foundation of a people’s state and himself adopted the ancient title of Tribune.
- 9 *Gabriele d’Annunzio*, 1863–1938. Italian poet. According to information received by the publisher of the German edition of these lectures, the widely held view that d’Annunzio’s real name was Rapagnetta is explained by the fact that his father, whose name had indeed been Rapagnetta, had been adopted as a child by a family named d’Annunzio. His name in law would then have been d’Annunzio Rapagnetta. In the register of births his son was entered as Gabriele d’Annunzio. In an article of 16 May 1915 in the Roman newspaper *Avanti*, the poet was described as a ‘singer of all shameful degeneracy’. His novel *The Flame of Life* refers to his relationship with

the famous actress Eleonora Duse.

10 *d'Annunzio gave a speech*: On 12 May 1915.

11 *Giovanni Giolitti*, 1841–1928. For decades one of Italy's most influential politicians.

12 *in the solemn gathering of our union*: D'Annunzio means the forthcoming parliamentary session at which the entry of Italy into the war was decided.

13 *villa on the Pincio*: The German embassy. Von Bülow was the Ambassador.

14 *from the gospels*: These 'beatitudes' conclude the speech of 5 May 1915.

LECTURE TEN

1 *The Spiritual Guidance of Man and Humanity*, Anthroposophic Press, New York, 1970.

2 *invitation from Copenhagen*: See preceding Note.

3 *Once upon a time*: Rudolf von Ems (13th century) *Der gute Gerhard* (Gerhard the Good). A modern publication in German is available from Verlag Freies Geistesleben, Stuttgart 1962.

4 *Otto of the Red Beard*: Otto II, 955–983.

LECTURE ELEVEN

1 *in the middle of the nineteenth century*: See Rudolf Steiner *The Occult Movement in the Nineteenth Century*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1973.

2 *Blavatsky*: See Note 2, Lecture Two.

3 *connecting link for machinations*: For this whole episode, see also C. G. Harrison *The Transcendental Universe*, as above, Lecture 1.

4 *Silvagni, Durante, Sergi, Cecconi, Lombroso*: In an article published in *Süddeutsche Monatshefte* Volume 12, Booklet 9, June 1915, M Rennert says: 'All the leaders of the radical wing, our chief enemies, belong to lodges: Professors Silvagni (Bologna), Durante (Rome), Sergi (Rome), Cecconi (Turin), Lombroso and all his relations...'

5 *on the different folk spirits*: See Note 7, Lecture Eight.

6 'Celtic soul and Latin spirit': Edouard Schuré' *L'âme celtique et le génie de la France*, published 1915, third edition Paris 1921.

7 *Wolfram von Eschenbach*, early 13th century. One of the greatest medieval German poets.

8 *James I*, 1566–1625. James VI of Scotland from 1567; James I of England from 1603. See Rudolf Steiner *From Symptom to Reality in Modern History*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1976, and *Cosmic Being and Egohood*, Lecture 7, English text available in typescript only.

9 *history of symptoms*: See previous Note.

- 10 *Thirty Years War*: 1618–1648, part of a fifty-year struggle for the European balance of power involving Austrian Habsburgs and the German princes and cities.
- 11 *battle of the White Mountain*: On 8 November 1620 between the ‘Winter King’, Frederick V, Elector Palatine of the Rhine, and the Catholic League.
- 12 *Seven Years’ War*. 1756–1763 between Prussia under Frederick II and the coalition of Austria, Russia, Sweden and France.
- 13 *Victoria*, 1818–1901. Queen of England 1837–1901.
- 14 *Ernst August, Duke of Cumberland*, 1771–1851. King of Hanover 1837. He repealed the constitution of Hanover in November 1837. Among the ‘seven professors’ of Göttingen University were the brothers Grimm and the historian Gervinus. Regarding the Orange Lodge, or Orangemen, Lennhoff says in *Politische Geheimbünde* (Secret Political Societies), Berlin 1932: ‘As time went on, the Orangemen spread over the whole of Great Britain. They had lodges in the army and in the colonies and exercised considerable influence in politics. It is true that in 1828, when the Duke of Cumberland, later King Ernst August of Hanover, had become Grand Master, the anti-Catholic vow was abolished and the purpose of the society declared to be nothing more than “the preservation of the true, legally established, religion” and the “preservation of the Protestant line of succession and the defence of all Orangemen and their property”. But this made not the slightest difference to the nature of the society. As much as ever before, the methods were in stark contrast to the vow of Christian charity and tolerance expected of members on their admission... The Orange Order was severely reprimanded by a parliamentary commission which found that it had weakened rather than strengthened Protestantism by its intransigence, that it had stirred up religious fervour, corrupted the machinery of justice and exercised unlawful influence over parts of the army. But this did not prevent it from continuing to exist.’ (pp. 271.272).
- 15 *Thomas Moore*, 1779–1852. Irish poet.
- 16 *meeting at Racconigi*: October 1909.
- 17 *Ernesto Nathan*, born London 1845, died Rome 1921. Became an Italian citizen in 1888. Mayor of Rome 1907–1913.
- 18 *Giuseppe Mazzini*, 1805–1872. Italian patriot. Revolutionary prophet of the Risorgimento.
- 19 *‘sisterly’ route*: One of the sisters of Queen Helene, a princess of Montenegro, had married a Russian grand duke.
- 20 *Usedom*: See Bismarck *Gedanken und Erinnerungen* (Thoughts and Memories), Popular Edition, Volume One, p.229.
- 21 *an essay*: Richard Grelling *J’accuse, von einem Deutschen* Second Edition, Lausanne 1915. See Rudolf Steiner *The Karma of Untruthfulness. Part Two*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1988, Lecture One.
- 22 *A forthcoming book*: Not known.

- 23 *yearning for peace... to be shouted down*: See Note 1, Lecture Five.
- 24 *Giuseppe Prezzolini*, born 1882. Italian writer. The books mentioned in the quotation are: P. D. Fischer *Italien und die Italiener* (Italy and the Italians), 1901; Bolton-King *A History of Italian Unity*, London 1899, and *Italy Today*, London 1901.
- 25 *Lloyd George*: See Note 13, Lecture Four.

LECTURE TWELVE

- 1 *Belgian neutrality*: Lord Morley's *Memorandum on Resignation* shows quite clearly that the violation of Belgian neutrality was not the reason but the excuse for England's intervention in the war.
- 2 *Georg Brandes*: See Note 17, Lecture One.
- 3 *my recent book*: See Note 25, Lecture Seven.
- 4 *documents... found during the war*: These were Belgian embassy reports found by the Germans in Brussels and subsequently published.
- 5 *Belgium occupied the Congo*: in 1885.
- 6 *an agreement*: Frank *Die belgische Neutralität* (Belgian Neutrality), Tübingen 1915: 'Soon after the outbreak of war England concluded identical treaties with the two combatants in which each of these was committed to respect the neutrality of Belgium if the other did so, failing which England undertook to protect Belgian neutrality.' See also Morel *Truth and the War*, p. 15.
- 7 *most appalling document*: Rudolf Steiner seems to mean the Tsar's order to the army and navy at the end of 1916:... 'This point in time [for peace negotiations] has not yet arrived. The enemy has not yet been driven from the territories he has occupied. Possession of Constantinople and the straits, as well as the creation of a free Poland, have not yet been secured... Above all, the holy memory of the sons of Russia fallen in battle does not permit even a thought of peace before the enemy is utterly defeated... Not until he [the enemy] finally surrenders and gives us and our loyal allies certain definite guarantees that he will never again commit a similar perfidious invasion, not until he is compelled to keep the commitments peace will lay upon him, can any thought be given to an end to the war.' December 1916.
- 8 *judgement of Sir Edward Grey*: See Note 7, Lecture Seven.
- 9 *habit of smoking opium*: Rudolf Steiner's description of the opium war follows an article by K. A. von Müller *Der Opiumkrieg* (The Opium War) in *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, Volume Twelve, Booklet 4, January 1915.
- 10 *and I quote*: The quotations are from von Müller's article.
- 11 *lecture cycle mentioned the other day*: See Note 7, Lecture Eight.

LECTURE THIRTEEN

- 1 *New Year's Eve gift*: Joint note of 30 December 1916 from the ten Allies (both large and small) to President Wilson (in reply to his appeal for peace on 18 December

1916). The note contained the following sentence: ‘One historical fact is certain at present, namely the aggressive will of Germany and Austria-Hungary to secure a dominant position in Europe and the economic domination of the world.’

- 2 *words we have read today*: See previous Note.
- 3 *John Stuart Mill*: See Note 18, Lecture Seven.
- 4 *Alexander Herzen*, 1812–1870. Russian writer. Correspondence between Herzen and Mill.
- 5 ‘*Chineseness*’ in *Europe*: See Rudolf Steiner *Aus schicksaltragender Zeit*, GA 64, Dornach 1959, Lecture of 29 October 1914. Here he quotes Mereschkowski *Der Anmarsch des Pöbels* (The Approach of the Rabble), Munich 1907.
- 6 *expressed... in the mystery drama*: Rudolf Steiner *The Soul’s Awakening*, translated by Ruth and Hans Pusch. Steiner Book Centre, Toronto 1973, Scene Eight:

The holy mystic ritual we perform
is of significance not only here for us.
Through word and deed of sacred priestly rites
there pours the fateful stream of world events.
- 7 *speak about a social carcinoma*: Rudolf Steiner *The Inner Nature of Man and the Life between Death and a New Birth*, Anthroposophical Publishing Company, London 1959.
- 8 *prussic acid... on ancient Moon*: The modern term for *prussic acid* is *hydrocyanic acid*. In Paris in 1906 Rudolf Steiner explained that the laws of ancient Moon were preserved in the comets and that the atmosphere of comets contained something like a cyanide compound. This was confirmed by natural scientists in 1910. See also Rudolf Steiner *L’Esotéricisme chrétien d’une cosmogonie psychologique*, transcrit par Edouard Schuré, Paris 1957.
- 9 *lecture... in Prague*: Rudolf Steiner *An Occult Physiology*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1973, Lecture 8.
- 10 *King of Spain*: Alfonso X, the Wise, of Castile and Leon, 1252–1284, is supposed to have said that had he been God he would have arranged the world more sensibly.
- 11 *Saint-Martin, Jakob Böhme*: See Notes 23, 24, Lecture Seven.
- 12 *Sir Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington*, 1769–1852. British commander-chief and statesman. Conquered Napoleon at Waterloo.
- 13 *George Stuart Fullerton*: An American professor who spent several years teaching at the universities of Munich and Vienna. *Why the German Nation has Gone to War. An American to Americans*. Munich-Leipzig 1915.
- 14 *Lloyd George*: Extract from a speech delivered at the Queen’s Hall on 28 July 1908. Quoted in E. D. Morel *Truth and the War*, London 1916, p.95.