

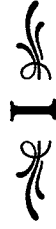
implication. Above all, perhaps, we must be able to hear how we are being addressed.

Because these are lectures and Steiner is speaking as it were one-to-one with every member of the audience, addressing them as his friends, we can — given a little imagination — feel that, almost eighty years later, we too, as readers, are being addressed individually.

In this sense, Steiner is speaking to us personally. He stands before us as a human being, with his own personality, history, and sense of what is important. We can follow him because he speaks to us in our humanity and addresses our "common sense." This phrase has come to mean something like a shared pragmatism, but its original meaning (and the sense in which Steiner often uses it) is more like "healthy human understanding." This state of mind is open, unprejudiced, and empathic. It allows the truth and reality of what is being said to emerge naturally. It listens.

Listening to these lectures, then, we begin to understand that to be human is to be connected in a special way with the mysteries of existence. We begin to understand that to be truly human is a task and a responsibility — not a burden, but a huge gift. To accept this gift is to accept our innate nobility and dignity as human beings. No wonder it is said in all the religious traditions that there is no more precious gift in the universe than to be born human. And we are all born humans! We cannot brush off the responsibility of being human. It is no longer possible to cultivate our own garden of comfort and material possession, excusing ourselves from anything more by saying, "That's not my responsibility. That may be the job of priests, philosophers, scientists, mystics, saints, occultists, or whatever, but it's not mine. I'm just an ordinary person."

Anthroposophy addresses every thinking person, each individual with a feeling heart. Each of us in our uniqueness is destined to play a part in the transfiguration of the world. May these lectures — fragmentary and almost offhand in delivery — allow us to begin.



THE PHYSICAL PERSPECTIVE

Dornach, July 20, 1923

A conviction has been surfacing recently among many of our members, especially among those with a scientific background. There is a general feeling that there should be wide-ranging discussion and debate regarding the relation between the spiritual-scientific or anthroposophical view of the world and what goes nowadays by the name of scientific cosmology, the foundations of which were laid in the second half of the nineteenth century. Such people fondly believe that exceptionally positive consequences would follow for *Anthroposophy*, as they see it, if Anthroposophy were to begin to approach modern science and even enter into dialog with it.

Scientific research has indeed come to play an important role in the anthroposophical society. Naturally, this fact is highly satisfying in many respects. But precisely to the extent that anthroposophical scientific research has become so important, errors have arisen with regard to its relationship with science as generally understood.

We should not forget that, in the course of the nineteenth century, under the influence of what has been, and still is, generally called science, general education has taken on a character quite alien to Anthroposophy. We can assume right away, therefore, that anyone whose thinking habits were formed by contemporary scientific life would find it virtually impossible to

shift to anthroposophic conceptions without further ado. Moreover, we must also realize that we can hardly expect science to agree with anthroposophic cosmology in any way.

Those who will find it easiest to understand the rightness of anthroposophical cosmology are, in fact, people whose thinking habits were *not* formed by today's scientific discourse, or people who — while still young — grew out of those habits as quickly as they acquired them.

In these lectures, I want to look at the path of Anthroposophy from three points of view that will put some life into the statements I just made.

In order that friends who have traveled long distances to be here can take as much as possible home with them, I have decided to give these talks a somewhat aphoristic form. I shall trace connections among various manifestations of present cultural life, while still basing my content on purely anthroposophical statements.

We know from previous lectures and books what realities we can expect to experience during the passage through death.¹

Today, to bring before your souls an idea of how Anthroposophy regards the physical world (as it were, "the physical perspective of Anthroposophy"), I will limit myself to the very first phase of life after passing through the gate of death.

It is often loosely said that, given the close connection between the physical and the etheric or formative-force bodies in earthly life, this connection continues unbroken throughout life.²

But in fact when, in ordinary earthly life, ordinary human consciousness is interrupted by the states of sleeping and of dreaming, then the astral body and the "I" are separated from the physical and the etheric, formative-force bodies. On the other hand, the two pairs (physical and etheric, astral and "I") remain so closely united that they do not separate from each other.

Therefore, in the normal course of sleep every twenty-four hours, a general separation occurs. The physical and etheric bodies separate from the astral body and the "I." However, the physical and etheric bodies do remain closely connected with

each other and inseparable, and the same is true of the astral body and "I." These two constitute, as it were, two tightly knit wholes.

It is different when a person passes through the gate of death. What happens at that point is that the physical body is immediately "cast off." A very brief connection is then established between the "I," the astral body, and the etheric body — a connection that was never present in the waking life. This connection, which lasts only a few days, produces a person's first experiences after death.

What are these experiences? What is the first experience after death? It is the experience of melting away from ourselves, while at the same time seeing all that we absorbed during earthly life through our senses and the understanding coordinating them.

During our lifetime, we become used to the fact that, when we turn our eyes toward the world, we see colorful things. We see events and processes played out in brilliant colors before us. Our mind retains the memory of these colors, although in somewhat weakened form. We carry them in our memory, as we do the impressions of the other senses. Actually, if we are honest in our self-observation, we have to admit that when, for instance, we sit quietly in our chamber and give play to our memories, that is, to our inner self, what we experience within is itself assembled from the shadowy reflections of outer impressions.

In ordinary consciousness, we live either with immediate, living impressions of the outer world or with shadowy memories of them. There is more to it than that, of course, as we shall learn tomorrow. Today, however, I want to focus on consciousness — the consciousness that, throughout the course of life, is filled with colors and colored processes that extend over all things. This consciousness is also filled with sounds and with sensations of warm and cold — in short, with all the impressions that we receive through our senses. The shadowy afterimages of these impressions in our inner soul are what we call memory. Let this be our starting point.

When we cross the gates of death, all that we had experienced through the senses in earthly life melts away. Within a few days, all the things that filled our soul from birth to death have dissolved into the universe.

Put another way: after a brief period of unification, unlike any occurring in life, the etheric body—the body of formative forces—separates from the “I” and the astral body.

Let me now place before your souls a more precise description of what this experience is. To do so, I shall draw a little picture. (*Rudolf Steiner draws the physical body and around and within it the etheric body, hatched in yellow chalk.*)

In life, we can only experience what I have drawn here—this conjunction of the physical and etheric bodies—if we are inwardly conscious when we wake after sleep. We always experience this union of physical and etheric only from within, from the inside.

To bring this reality before you as precisely as possible, I will now change the drawing as follows. (*Steiner adds a green line around the yellow hatching, and around the green line a red line.*)

The green represents the etheric body, as it reflects toward the inside. The physical body is cast off at death, so we need not pay much attention to it here. The red line indicates the part of the etheric body oriented toward the outside.

As I said, we experience the etheric body in this way only from the inside and when we wake from sleep. In other words, we experience only the etheric body oriented toward the inside (the part I drew in green). We have no awareness at all of what is represented by the red line, the etheric body oriented toward the outside. We do not experience it.

When we pass through the gates of death, the “I” and the astral body enter into a kind of union with the etheric body.

This happens as follows. Imagine that, after death, the whole etheric body is turned inside out like a glove—so that the inside, the part that touches the skin, is now on the outside. The part I drew in red is now turned inward, and the green section that was turned inward now is turned outward. The whole etheric body gets turned inside out. As this transformation

occurs, the etheric body expands astonishingly fast. It becomes immense and spreads out immeasurably into the universe. We might represent it like this. (*Steiner draws a large red circular band with a green band around it.*)

Whereas previously the “I” and the astral body were *within* the etheric body, now they are *facing* the etheric body, which is expanding into the cosmos, so that this time we are looking at things from the other side. All that had been part of us but previously had had no meaning for us is now turned inward. What was previously turned toward the inside—what was that mattered for us all during earthly life—is now turned outward. It no longer concerns us. It is dispersed into the universe. All that had color, sound, and so forth in life is now contained what is streaming outward.

By means of this reversal of the etheric body, what was inside and is now outside gradually moves outward until it completely disappears from us. At this point, an altogether different world impresses itself on us. We should not imagine that we could have the very same world after death as we had before death. That world disappears. For us to imagine that we could possibly experience after death the same content as we did in our earthly lives, even, as it were, under a different cover, is quite false. It has no connection with the facts. What we experience as a result of the transformation of the etheric-formative-force body is immense by contrast with the content of earthly life. It is also something quite different.

With the outside now turned inside, we experience, first, the whole forming of our earthly life, how it was built up. We experience this in powerful impressions that are quite different from sense impressions. We do not experience the redness of the rose, for instance, so much as we experience how the redness of the rose formed within us as a *concept*.

Things now begin to be less *peaceful* than they were in physical existence. In earthly life, roses are beautiful, one beside the other in the rose garden. Each is peaceful. Each makes us feel that we are resting inside its peace. But now the rose garden becomes something quite different. The rose garden becomes

events in time. On earth, in earthly life, we used to allow our gaze to glide from rose to rose. As we moved from rose to rose, we formed representations of them within our soul: first one rose, then another, and yet another. Now they succeed each other, weaving in lightning waves, as if in the living process of becoming, not as roses, but as ideas, inner realities. These enter our inner life as if we were in a sea of events.

Then something appears in front of us, something we never saw while we were on earth: the *becoming* of earthly life, the gradual arising of this earthly life. We now know how our soul developed from childhood on. What had gone completely unnoticed during earthly life now plays itself out before us. It is as if we had risen out of ourselves, become another, second self, and were observing how, as our first self, we gradually created the simple concepts of childhood, and then the more complex concepts of adolescence and so on. We witness from the inside the birth of this little earthing. We see how, from hour to hour, this earthly life, this earthly existence, is formed and developed. More than that, we have the insight that actually our whole earthly life forms out of the cosmos. Indeed, as everything that we experience on earth grows into the immeasurable, the cosmos, and as we ourselves grow outward with it, we realize that what was formed within us in our life on earth was likewise formed — built — out of the universe.

Gradually, then, we start developing a valid conception of human life on earth.

Let us now consider something that is considered common knowledge today in relation to human life on earth. As human beings, we eat. In this process, we bring substances from the outside world into our own organism. This is an undeniable fact. However, we also transform these substances. We start transforming them in our mouths, and continue to do so as they move through our whole organism. In the process, what we take in passes over into our whole organism. Furthermore, science tells us that, just as we take matter in, we are also continuously losing matter to the outside. Just think for instance of your nails, which you clip, and your hair, which falls off (provided

you aren't completely bald yet). Starting from this shedding, you can easily observe how the human body constantly loses matter. In fact, it is well known nowadays that the human being loses matter in this way all the time, and in fact is completely rebuilt in the span of about seven years.

To put it bluntly, insofar as it is matter, everything that is sitting here on these chairs was eight or nine years ago dispersed all over the world. Furthermore, whatever is sitting on the chairs here would have to have been brought together no earlier than seven or eight years ago. And if all the muscle and blood and so forth that had been formed *more than* seven or eight years ago had not been replaced — you are all older after all, so your bodies have been regenerated several times — it would not be *you* sitting there. If all that stuff sitting on those chairs had remained all those years, it would not be *you* sitting there!

Anything that you incorporated — at home or anywhere else into your muscle mass more than seven or eight years ago — your blood, other parts of your body — none of that is sitting here any longer. You have gradually expelled or shed it.

But what does materialistic science tell us? It tells us more or less the following. During the past seven years, we have all been eating. What we ate during the last seven years is still sitting here; whatever we ate earlier is no longer here.

For instance, each one of you has a heart. Science tells us that the physical material of this heart renews itself every seven or eight years. For all practical purposes, every nine years you get a new heart. This, we could say, is more or less the way present-day thinking conceives of these things.

But that is not the way things are! Such ideas can arise only when people do not know what I explained to you earlier and they fail to include it in their scientific observation and thinking. Scientists have no notion of the reversal of the etheric, formative-force body. They have no experience of what shows us, when we pass through the gate of death, how the whole person arose. If you know these things, you are in a position to look quite differently at the human organism. Only then do you learn to recognize the truth.

You might think that all the matter that went to build up your heart was gathered bit by bit from the cabbages, potatoes, and other vegetables, the cherries and plums and so on that you enjoyed eating over the years. But this is not what happened. Essentially — note, I say *essentially* — the heart that you carry in your body has very little to do with any matter you ate. The heart that you carry today arose, in fact, in a most mysterious way *out of the ether* that, over the past seven or eight years, you have drawn in from the cosmos. Your heart has not been renewed during this period by physical matter. Your heart renewed itself out of the cosmos. Your heart and other organs are renewed out of the ether. You did not remake yourself from the earth at all, but from the cosmos.

You can see then — from the workings of the etheric body after death and how it worked through our whole life — that we are continuously renewed out of the cosmos.

Here materialistic conscience — which each of us has to have — will protest: "But nevertheless we all ate! We all took in external matter, as a result of which inner processes took place."

Yes, but these deeper processes are not as closely related to your deeper human essence as you believe. The substances that you ate have already been disposed of in the various ways in which human beings dispose of matter. They have passed through your organism, but without uniting in any essential way with what you are. They constituted only a stimulus. We must eat for processes to take place within us that stimulate us. And insofar as they stimulate or goad us, our etheric body becomes active — the etheric body that is connected with the cosmos, not with the earth. What happens to the consumed, digested, metabolized foods are processes that create a stimulus so that a counterforce — the etheric process — can arise in you. The matter that enters into me and is physically transformed stimulates my old heart. But I myself make my new heart out of the world-ether.

Thus we may now set down a fact that, by today's standards, may perhaps seem a little grotesque. You are all sitting here. But

what has renewed you over the past seven or eight years never lived in the potato or cabbage fields. It lives out in the universe, in the sun, moon, and stars. It came down from there. You made yourself anew out of the universe.

Here I have indicated an error that inevitably arises in contemporary thinking. People only look for the connections between human regeneration and physical earthly matter. They do not look for the connections to the ether. Consequently, if one has grown accustomed to current physiological ideas, one cannot help considering anything Anthroposophy has to offer as a kind of fantastic fabrication. This is why discussions are necessarily sterile. If one has mastered both current science and Anthroposophy, one can see how each side casts light on the other. But one should not succumb to the hope that people thoroughly habituated to materialistic representations can be induced to switch to our side without further discussion just like that. Such a hope can only damage Anthroposophy. We must have a very clear, precise understanding of this. Only then can we see that other people first must absorb the whole way in which we integrate Anthroposophy within ourselves before they can even begin to penetrate this anthroposophic path of observation and knowing.

In essence, as I have said, we human beings regenerate ourselves out of the cosmos. Of course, we do not find the physical materials that we can then find in the heart in the cosmos. This is because they are so diluted, so subtle that they are not detectable by physical means. They are etheric. The dense matter of the heart that appears at a certain age has condensed from the universal ether. Therefore, nine or ten years ago, everything sitting here was still in the heavens. It was in the heavens, in the stars. In fact, whatever matter remains behind and pervades where etheric forces should by rights have been working, we find a predisposition to illness. Illness is caused by the presence within us of physical matter that is too old. Deep insights into the nature of illness are gained when we understand how matter can remain stuck, instead of being expelled, as it should have been. Any substance we absorb as physical matter is meant to

be eliminated again. If it remains in the organism, it becomes a cause of illness.

As you can see, very practical consequences ensue from the real knowledge that we gain when we have some insight into what happens to us immediately on leaving the physical body. After we die, all our sensory impressions and our intellectual interpretations of them melt away. We see the world completely differently. Minerals, plants, animals are no longer there as we previously beheld them. What we find there is the process by which we become who and what we are.

We have stepped through the gate of death. We have left the stage of the earth. We have entered the cosmic stage. Another world surrounds us. It is as if we had stepped out of a tiny room of earthly existence into the majestic, powerful fabric of the cosmos. We feel we are spread all over the cosmos. No longer can we be contained, in truth, in a small earthly chamber. And on this cosmic stage we must remain until we descend once more to earthly existence, now connected with entirely new worlds, worlds whose being belongs to the higher hierarchies.

Let us now extend the point of view we have gained here in relation to the human being to nature as a whole.

For example, let us assume that we were to go back a very long time in earthly evolution. We would then encounter completely different life forms, completely different earthly events. As you know, there have been epochs when huge animals lived on earth that are now extinct. Entire species and orders of species have died out. Paleontologists and geologists now search for their fossilized remains in the formations of the earth.

Let us assume, then, that we have returned, roughly speaking, to this very early stage of evolution when ichthyosaurs, plesiosaurs, and other remarkable animals were living on earth. These beings were not the products of the physical matter of the earth. They were formed out of the cosmos, from the ether. And when the time came when these beasts gradually died out, all their etheric matter, if I may put it so, remained behind. The animals themselves were no longer there, of course. But the

etheric matter from which they were formed stayed behind, just as our etheric body stays behind. And these etheric materials constituted the starting-point or initiative from which later — after these etheric forms had passed through the cosmos — other beings were formed in earthly existence. And these in turn also left behind etheric matter, from still other species were formed, until finally the world of animals as we know it today appeared.

Take, for example, the sequence of the three evolutionary periods leading up to the appearance of the human being. You find three successive animal forms following each other closely. We know that for one form to evolve out of the preceding form a passage through the cosmos with the help of etheric forces is necessary, just as a similar passage through the cosmos between two human lives is necessary. Thus, when we come to the third form of animals, they too pass into the ether. And then, after a certain period of time, the human being, formed out of the ether, appears — as always, influenced by this detour through the cosmos.

Now the strict materialist sees all this and is convinced that each animal form arose out of a previous one. Clearly, they are related to each other on earth; but an etheric activity, a cosmic activity lies between them.

In the nineteenth century, the practice arose of observing only the sequence of events on earth and ignoring the consequences of cosmic activity on earthly events. The scientific view remained therefore: first simpler forms, then less simple, and finally, the human being.

This is what natural science — which does not admit the etheric — gave (and gives) us as the evolution of organisms. It could not have been any other than it was and still is. Once one accepts its hypotheses — and the etheric is inadmissible — then the question is posed in such a way that earthly existence includes only what is visible. Then there is no choice but to accept the stream of evolution as exclusively physical.

This is what Darwinians do. This is what Haeckel did.³ And, on their assumptions, it is madness to demand more or argue

about the way the science of evolution has developed. Only by adding knowledge of the etheric world can one begin to perceive what truly belongs to it. You can see then why it makes no sense to argue. Clearly, if a person wishes to remain within the parameters of natural science, he or she can do so. And they can always turn to those who speak on the basis of a different view and tell them they are talking nonsense. Having become used to a purely earthly point of view, they will say that what you speak of is not there.

If one wants to speak differently, one must first gain knowledge of the etheric world. There is no other choice then for a valid, reasonable polemic with contemporary science than to say: In your domain, you are entirely right: things can't be at all different, and there is no other conclusion. But if you want to speak with us about the things we have in mind, then you must first acquaint yourselves with the elementary processes in the cosmic ether. Then we can talk. Otherwise, we shall have no common ground of reality to stand on.

For instance, one of our members sitting here has written a small book on botany from the point of view of spiritual science.⁴ A very negative review of this book recently appeared in a local paper. Now, what can one say? My reaction was: Imagine you yourself were the botanist who wrote the review; you have never heard of Anthroposophy and the second printing of this little book comes into your hands. You would have written exactly what the reviewer wrote. It is quite natural that you would have done so. That you don't write that review, and actually have written the booklet in question is predicated on the condition that you have studied Anthroposophy. All one needs to do is to place oneself into the other person's point of view. Then one can write all these hostile, combative things oneself. But to expect that a person who has been working in a certain direction, with all his intellectual habits, and expect that he should become different, become an anthroposophist, is a little like having a blond daughter and deciding out of the blue that you want her to be dark-haired. That's just not the way things work. The way people have been shaped by contemporary science is

not something we can simply turn around. We must be realistic about this.

The second half of the nineteenth century gave a very specific stamp to the whole constitution of the soul. Let me give you an example from a completely different direction.

As you know, there now exists something called analytical psychology or psychoanalysis. As I told you repeatedly, psychoanalysis makes some very valuable contributions, but it rests on an incomplete, dilettantish knowledge of human physiology. Therefore it is dilettantism. It also rests on a dilettantish knowledge of the human soul, human psychology. On this basis, too, therefore, it is dilettantism. Psychoanalysis is dilettantism squared! Still, when you pursue it, even as a dilettante, it works. And one can understand that what it lacks in physiology and psychology will gradually be completed. Still, this kind of thinking does color the human soul!

These days, there is an immense literature on the subject. You could fill a large library with psychoanalytic literature. And of course the people who study it get into all kinds of horrible arguments, which, if you enter into the polemics, are actually quite interesting. We have spoken about psychoanalysis ourselves here.⁵ As I said, you could fill a library with what's been written on the subject. And when so much has been written on a subject, this means that there is a great deal to study in that field. All this colors the human soul!

Now, here is something interesting. "Psychoanalytic literature" already existed in Europe in 1841! It consisted in a few lines by Karl Rosenkrantz. They ran: "In our modern, overfilled consciousness, we thrust many things back, because we have no time to give them form. They remain potential tasks within us that we could work on. They are, in Tieck's words, 'unborn souls, yearning for existence, floating as in limbo in the background of our own soul.'"⁶

In theory, all of psychoanalysis is contained in these lines. In those days, one spoke of "unborn souls living in limbo in the background of the soul, struggling to come to existence." Today one speaks of "hidden regions in the depths of the soul," and so

forth. Then such subjects were considered so insignificant that they were worth, at best, a few lines. Today we have become a civilization in which whole libraries are devoted to the subject. Yet everything essential is contained in those few lines. And as long as the essence of psychoanalysis remained encompassed in those lines, the libraries were filled with all kinds of other things than they are today, and people wishing to learn took up other subjects.

A psychology student embarking on a dissertation nowadays would have no choice but to tackle psychoanalysis. One just has to study it. And this colors the whole soul. In 1841, the essence of the subject was expressed in those few lines. It was just not considered important. It was not seen as something of great significance for human thinking. And the same is true of many other things.

It is of tremendous significance what particular range of facts we concentrate on — or don't. In 1841, human beings slept through psychoanalysis. It only surfaced in one person, Karl Rosenkrantz, in the form of one isolated thought, which I just read for you. He dreamt about it one day. Dreams are fleeting things; they do not influence one's life much. People in those days filled their waking life with other things. Nowadays, on the other hand, people sleep through many other things, because they want to keep awake for psychoanalysis and related subjects.

If we want Anthroposophy to become relevant to the world, we must take a closer look at this phenomenon in order to decide where to apply our energies. It certainly is not enough simply to engage in polemics. Polemics are like a person fast asleep in a room, snoring away, while another person, who is awake, goes to great lengths to try and get the snorer to understand what is being said. But the sleeper is not to be awakened and snores on. Therefore he or she cannot possibly understand what is being said. And it is just as difficult for people to understand each other if they are each asleep to the other's realm and are only awake to their own.

Many people are asleep to Anthroposophy. They will not easily wake up to what Anthroposophists have to tell them.

But one wishes for Anthroposophists themselves to awaken to the others. Then they would not approach others on the basis of blind faith but out of genuine insight into the value of the other, and understand Anthroposophy's inclusive quality. They need to understand why it is that Anthroposophy includes what others consider the one and only thing. They need to understand that Anthroposophy must widen its horizons by reaching out to areas which others see only from their own narrow perspective.

I have given you here one perspective, the one that is revealed when we look more closely at the nature of what surrounds us on this earth and which melts away when we die. This is the *physical* perspective. In order to understand it, we had to allow it to lead us to its immediate neighbor, the *etheric*.

We will consider next the *perspective of the soul*, how the human being awakens to the perspective of the soul. Then we shall conclude with an examination of the *spiritual perspective* of Anthroposophy. These then will be our three perspectives.



II

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Dornach, July 21, 1923

Anyone in our time observing spiritual life cannot fail to see — it takes only a sufficiently unprejudiced eye — how soul has on the whole more or less been lost as far as the most important aspects of our culture are concerned. This disappearance has been increasingly evident since the second half of the nineteenth century. In a word, soul is missing in our contemporary civilization, and the individual who wants to awaken his or her soul to an inner life must do so in solitude rather than in the shared experience of the great monuments of our civilization.

Generally speaking, we have lost the ability to be awake to the fundamental drift of present-day life. Things have happened that the kind of objective observation that started in the nineteenth century should have noticed. By rights, these things should have called for powerful attention to what was happening in our spiritual life. In reality, however, such phenomena are more and more allowed to pass by unnoticed. Even more, we can honestly say that they have never received any formulation in recent times that could make an impression deep enough to awaken anyone today.

To begin my observations today, I would like to present a phenomenon that, seen from the outside, will perhaps be greeted by some with a smile. Others will simply register it neutrally as one historical-philosophical error among many. Still

others will perhaps fight it angrily. I will try to give as simple a description of the facts as I can.

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, I often asked myself an important question: who is really the most intelligent person of my time? Of course, these things are always relative. So I shall ask you not to press the issue too hard and take it with a grain of salt. Having done this, I still ask you, however, to consider this question as one that can tell us something characteristic of our age.

Our age is the age of intellectualism. The intellect has brought our age to its quite exceptional height. And so one must wonder, what does the human intellect actually depend on during earthly existence? Certainly, intellectual powers and activity depend on the soul. Later, we have to take a closer look at the soul as such. For the moment, however, let us say they depend on the etheric organism (formative-force body), astral body, and "I"-organization that human beings unconsciously (at least as far as earthly consciousness is concerned) bear within themselves.

But human beings are not so far advanced in the present period of earthly evolution that they can really bring into existence the activity of the intellect as it lives in these three parts of human nature. Without a physical body, our intellect would be silent during earthly existence. We would be like a person moving toward a wall. As long as we move straight ahead without looking at our arms and hands, we see nothing of ourselves. But if the wall we are walking toward is a mirror, we see ourselves.

Without a body, the human intellect would be like a person who does not see himself or herself. In other words, if we did not have a physical body to mirror or reflect our activity, we would not be aware of ourselves. We owe the greatness of the intellect in the present time to the mirroring of our inner soul activity through our physical bodies. People do not normally confuse their mirror image with their self. But this does happen in the case of the intellect. People confuse the intellect itself with its reflection in the physical realm. They surrender to the

reflection — with the result that the reflection or mirror image itself then rules them.

To some extent, human beings today give the intellect wholly over to their physical body. When a person really succeeds in this, it produces a great perfection of the intellect. If, on the other hand, we allow our inner being to be active, we find ourselves always stumbling through all kinds of feelings and instincts, prejudices, sympathies, and antipathies. We blunder into the intellect in the same way. Then the intellect is very imperfect. However, if we allow ourselves to become dry, sober, and cold-natured and in the process acquire a capacity to think in a way that is determined by the parameters of our physical body, then we attain a certain perfection of the intellect. We learn to think in such a way that the intellect becomes self-moving, to some extent automatic, and relatively perfect. As Hamerling describes it in his novel *Homunculus*, we unite "the billionaire's male soullessness with the mermaid's female soullessness."¹

This is what I was thinking in the last decades of the nineteenth century when I asked myself: who is the most intelligent person today? Who has raised his intellect to a level of perfection in the sense that I have just described? Now, you may laugh, but I really could not come up with anyone other than Eduard von Hartmann, the philosopher of the unconscious.²

This is not some kind of daring paradox, but rather something that came to me as the result of long — and I don't think entirely soulless — reflection on the last decades of the nineteenth century.

You can well imagine that, having declared someone the most intelligent person of the age, you gain a great deal of respect for that person. That is why I dedicated my little book *Truth and Knowledge*, which was my contribution to a theory of knowledge in those days, to Eduard von Hartmann.³ What I am saying here, therefore, is said out of the deepest respect, not disrespect.

The foundations of von Hartmann's philosophy are determined in the first place by the fact that he was trained as a

military officer. He reached the rank of first lieutenant. But then he developed knee problems. Thus it came about that he transformed the intellectualism that had been intended to serve the modern military into philosophy. It is interesting that this is precisely how von Hartmann became the cleverest man of the last third of the nineteenth century.

He saw clearly everything that a person could see clearly with the mind of the last third of the nineteenth century. He penetrated human consciousness as it is attached to the earth. But he saw this attachment as the attachment to a human physical body. Because he was clever, he did not deny the spirit. As I said, he was very intelligent. However, he placed the spirit in the sphere of the *unconscious*, in what can never support a body or enter into intimate union with the physical world, and which therefore, because it is always extraphysical — that is, purely spiritual — can only be unconscious.

Von Hartmann thought we could be conscious only in the body. But if the body is not the only reality, if there is spirit, then the spirit can never be conscious, only unconscious. Therefore von Hartmann says that when we pass through the gate of death, we should not expect to enter a different state of consciousness. Beyond earthly consciousness is only unconsciousness. When we die we pass into the sphere of the unconscious spirit. The unconscious spirit is everywhere human consciousness is not.

In this sense, von Hartmann's philosophy is a philosophy of the spirit, but a philosophy of the unconscious spirit. There is no consciousness other than in a human body, but there is spirit everywhere, unconscious spirit that knows nothing of itself, or of the world, or of anything else.

It is quite clear, then, is it not, that this unconscious spirit can never penetrate any reality outside itself except through a physical human body? This is clear from the outset. But saying that implies something quite remarkable. The implication is that the intellect that rises to establish the unconscious lacks love.

I am not saying that Eduard von Hartmann lacked love, but

that his intellect, which is precisely where his importance lay, lacked love. Now a loveless intellect cannot build any bridges. It is locked into itself. But by that token, it cannot acquire consciousness. It remains in the sphere of the unconscious. Or, one could say, it remains in the sphere of *lovelessness*.

This implies that the intellect is also a sphere of soullessness. Wherever there is no place for love, anything of a soul nature gradually disappears. Hence we can sense of an atmosphere of lovelessness in the best productions of the late nineteenth century on whose shoulders our own civilization now stands.

It is astonishing to see where von Hartmann's compulsion toward the unconscious spirit, coupled with lovelessness, led him.

He observed the world of earthly life that gives humanity consciousness. But what if we were not able to live in our bodies? What if every time we woke up we were not able to submerge into our bodies and completely unite with them? What would be our prospect then?

When we awaken from sleep as earthly beings, the "I" and the astral body, separated during sleep, return into the physical and etheric bodies. The "I" and astral body then unite in full inner union with the etheric and the physical bodies. These four now make one. As long as we are awake, we must speak of an inner unity of spirit and soul with the physical and bodily. But if we separate the soul-spirit from the physical body, as von Hartmann does intellectually, it would be as if, on awakening, we were to penetrate into our physical and etheric bodies without melting into them, permeating but only as it were dwelling, hovering there. According to von Hartmann, the unconscious spirit dwells in the body and becomes conscious in and through physical, earthly life. Therefore he seems to think something that, were it to happen in reality, would mean that when we are awake we enter our physical and etheric bodies without completely merging with them. This would be rather like living in our bodies as in a house. We could be looking around, checking everything out, but remain inwardly separated, inwardly cut off. What would happen then?

If our spirit-soul were not merged with our physical body, but instead lived cut off from it, our soul would experience unfathomable, intolerable pain. Pain arises when an organ does not function correctly and the organ becomes sick and we are excluded from a part of our physical body. If we were kept out altogether, we would, if I may put it this way, literally be "extraphysical," out of the body, and we would suffer unspeakable pain. Each morning when we wake up, the threat of this suffering is to some extent present. We overcome it by submerging into our physical and etheric bodies and uniting ourselves with them.

Von Hartmann was certainly no initiate. He was simply an intellectual, the best intellectual of the second half of the nineteenth century. He grasped intellectually, in his thoughts, what I have just described to you as a reality. He imagined the world as if our astral body and "I" were not connected with our physical and etheric body. He thought of the relationship between the person and the physical body as I have just described in the light of reality.

Where did this lead him? This led him in the end to a radical pessimism. Obviously you would experience pessimism if you woke up separated from your physical body. Von Hartmann thought this, it was his invention, and what was the result? He concluded that the world is the worst imaginable. The world contains the greatest heap of evil and suffering, and the true cultural evolution of humanity can consist only in the gradual annihilation, dissolution, of the world. Accordingly, at the end of *The Philosophy of the Unconscious*, an ideal begins to emerge.

Von Hartmann lived in an age in which technology was developing rapidly. More and more machines were being invented to deal with this or that. Anyone considering everything that machines can accomplish will be fascinated by the possibilities they offer. Now if we expand the possibilities that the perfecting of the mechanical world promises for the world, a horrifying possibility suggests itself.

Von Hartmann gave himself over to this horrifying thought. He thought that humanity — which, because it is reaching the

intellect, is gradually becoming more and more intelligent — would increasingly come to see that the right thing for the world would be to annihilate it. He became convinced that humanity eventually would invent a new machine. With this machine, it would be possible to bore right through to the center of the earth. Then one had only to put this machine into motion in order, with a single blow, to blast this terrible earth, with all its physical inhabitants, into cosmic space.

We can only say that the roots of this way of thinking are actually present in everyone else, too. They may not be as smart as von Hartmann was, but they are still quite smart enough, though they lack the intellectual courage to draw the final consequences of their own logic. And one might almost say that if we seriously consider all that intellect can achieve when it is separated from the rest of the world, then this ideal that von Hartmann proposes, which is a result of one-sided intellectual development, appears as in a certain sense necessary.

I said earlier that people did not manage to describe correctly some phenomena of the time that were there for everyone to see. This of course would have required at least rising to the precise formulations of the philosopher of the unconscious who described this perspective in 1869. And von Hartmann was really more intelligent in this than anyone else. For after he had proposed his ideal, he did something that I have often described. In the same book in which he proposed his ideal, he spoke of the spirit. Even if it was unconscious, still, it was the spirit. This was a horrible sin at the time because science had developed to the point that scientifically one was not permitted to speak of the spirit, not even in the rather harmless way of making the spirit completely unconscious.

For this reason, other intelligent people of the time saw *The Philosophy of the Unconscious*, which was successful as literature, as dilettantism. But then von Hartmann played a trick on them. An unknown author published an attack against *The Philosophy of the Unconscious*, which thoroughly refuted the philosophy of the spirit. The title of this work was *The Unconscious from the Standpoint of Physiology and the Theory of Evolution*.

This anonymous work was a remarkable parody of the style of other scholars. The best natural scientists of the time, Oskar Schmidt, Ernst Haeckel, and a host of others wrote most laudatory reviews of the book, declaring that with this book, the dilettante Eduard von Hartmann had really been destroyed! What a shame, they said, that we don't know who this anonymous author was. Tell us who you are, and we shall accept you as one of us.

Not surprisingly, after this clarion call, the book by Anonymous soon sold out and a second edition became necessary. It appeared under the title "*The Unconscious from the Standpoint of Physiology and the Theory of Evolution*, second edition, by Eduard von Hartmann"!

As you can see, Eduard von Hartmann had proven that he really was the smartest, for he was not only as smart as he himself was, he was as smart as his opponents.

Yesterday, I had to say that psychoanalysis was "dilettantism squared." Today we might say, because soul qualities always multiply themselves, that von Hartmann's intelligence was "intelligence squared," intelligence multiplied by itself.

Surely, we ought not to sleep through such phenomena the way we do nowadays. We should be able to formulate them and hold them before souls. Then we would actually face the absurdities of our age. What was it that made Eduard von Hartmann so intelligent? He was so intelligent because his unblinking gaze had really looked at everything that it was possible to notice in his time. He was, as it were, the natural scientist of philosophy.

Approaching such a phenomenon, it is a question of being completely and empirically clear about what must be done to avoid falling into the same abyss. If we wish to find a way out of the chaos facing us in our civilization, we must take a close look at what we actually bear within us.

If we really start out from the human physical body, and then move toward the spirit, we begin to approach the soul. In doing so, we meet the etheric or formative-force body.

Like everyone else in his time, von Hartmann had no concept of this etheric or formative-force body. He never

rose from the observation of external, natural, physical reality to the reality that borders the physical, that is, the etheric, formative-force body.

We know that when we enter sleep, the astral body and the "I" separate from the physical and etheric bodies. The etheric body remains behind in the physical body. In fact, we can never know how the etheric body is constituted with only our earthly consciousness. For when we awake, our astral body and "I" submerge into the etheric body. Then we are inside. We experience what was brought in by the astral body and the I. It would take a much more highly organized being to enter into the etheric body during sleep, when the "I" and astral body are outside it. A being truly able to observe objectively how the etheric body actually operates would discover exactly what it is we leave behind with the physical body as etheric body when we go to sleep. If we were to investigate what we leave behind, we would find that the etheric or formative-force body is, in reality, the paragon of all wisdom in the earthly sense and in much higher senses too.

From the perspective of true knowledge, then, we cannot deny that when we leave our physical and etheric bodies behind at night, the two that we leave behind are much more intelligent than we are when we inhabit them. After all, as far as our "I" and astral body are concerned, we are respectively children of the more recent *Earth* and *Moon* stages of the evolution of the Earth. On the other hand, the etheric body goes back to the earlier evolutionary stage of the *Sun* and the physical body goes back to the first evolutionary stage of *Saturn*.⁴ These so-called Sun and Saturn stages therefore stand on a much higher level of perfection. We cannot today — in our "I" and in astral body — measure ourselves against the sum of wisdom amassed by our etheric body in the course of its Sun-Evolution.

One might put it this way: the etheric body is concentrated wisdom. But if we wish to bring the wisdom of the "I" and the astral body into the etheric body, then we need something to oppose to it, a counterfoil, just as we need the counterpart of a mirror in order to see the mirror image at all. We need

the physical body. Just as we could not stand if we did not have physical ground to stand on, so we could not live in our etheric body if the etheric body did not border on the physical body and "bump into" it on all sides. If the etheric body did not have a counterpart in the physical body, we could not live in our etheric body. The etheric body's inner life would float suspended in the air. Thus we have a soul life that lives in the etheric body and which, for ordinary earth life, requires the physical body as a support.

With this state of the soul, we can reach only to the mineral world. We can penetrate only what is without life. To reach the plant world, we need the ability to use the etheric body *without the physical body*.

How do we do that? How can we learn to use our etheric body without the physical body?

We can do it if gradually, by means of inner exercises, we transform ourselves from beings who prefer — because of their physical bodies — to live in the element of gravity into beings who learn — by means of the light — to live in the element of lightness or "levity."

We must transform ourselves — through the light — into beings that no longer experience their connection with the earth, but feel connected to the cosmic spaces.

Gradually, the contemplation of the stars, the sun, moon, and cosmic space must become as familiar to us as plants growing in the meadow.

If we are merely children of the earth, we look down onto the plants covering the meadow. We enjoy them, but we don't understand them, for we remain earth-beings weighed down by gravity. As earthlings bound by gravity, we have learned to stand on the earth. But if we could transform ourselves, we could connect ourselves with the widths of cosmic space — those meadows of the heavens, seeded with stars. In our present state of consciousness, we think of the heavens as a "ceiling" rather than a floor. But once they become as familiar to us as the ground of the earth beneath our feet, then we can begin — as we change earth consciousness into cosmic consciousness —

to learn to use our etheric body as we previously learned to use our physical body. Only then will we become capable of penetrating the plant world with our understanding. For plants are not so much pushed up out of the earth as they are pulled out of the earth by the sky.

Goethe was filled with this yearning when he wrote his *Essay on the Metamorphosis of Plants*.⁵ He said many things that a person would say who felt himself oriented to the sun rather than to the earth — a person who felt that the sun pulls the force of the plant's growth out of the earth when it is still hidden under the ground. He felt how the sun's forces, interacting with the influence of the air, gradually develop the leaf, and how the sun then slowly cooks the elements that the plant sucked out of the earth.

Read Goethe's wonderful 1790 essay and you will find approaches to this view on every page. Goethe lived in the desire to penetrate the world of the plants. But instead of developing etheric vision in place of physical vision, Goethe only stumbled on it — repeatedly. All the same, this impulse to develop etheric vision was already present in Goethe and anyone wishing to learn from Goethe — the living Goethe, whose influence is ongoing, not the dead one — must take this impulse further.

Once we understand that human souls can develop etheric vision — for this, we need only become truly conscious of the etheric body — we will be able to perceive our heavenly origins and independence from the earth. We will be able to understand that we have been transplanted onto earth. Then our soul will be able to say: "I am of cosmic origin. My physical body transplants me onto the earth, but my origin is cosmic. And if I can rejoice in the world of plants, what rejoices in me is a child of heaven, who rejoices in seeing what the heavens draw out of the earth in the plant world."

When we truly grasp our etheric or formative-force body, we rescue our souls from the earth.

If we can do that, if we are able to live in the etheric body just as we usually live in the physical body — and what can bring us there is true love for the plant world — it is not only

our *own* etheric body that is raised into consciousness. As the physical world is raised into our consciousness by our physical body — by our senses — so the etheric world is placed in our consciousness by our etheric body.

And what would we sense if, just as we look out into the physical world with our physical body, we looked into the etheric world through the etheric body? What would we behold then? We would see the past of all the things spread out before our physical eyes — the actual past, from which this physical world arose. We would see, in the spirit, the images of what was — of what made the present possible.

Already in most ancient times, the first initiation given to humanity was an initiation into the cosmos. The first mystery schools worked on this initiation into the cosmos. The teachers of these first mysteries initiated their students into reading in the cosmic ether, also called "reading in the Chaos," "reading in the Akashic chronicle" — that is to say, the reading of the past that the present conjures up before our eyes. For practical purposes, this initiation by the cosmos was the first level of initiation that humanity achieved in its earthly existence.

A second level of initiation may likewise be attained. This happens if, when we awake, we allow the astral body and the "I" to sink into the physical and the etheric bodies. We "ensoul" the etheric and physical bodies; we unite ourselves with them. However, we can gain only as much of the infinite wisdom of the etheric body as we ourselves carry into it. Nevertheless, it is the etheric body that constantly stimulates us. Whenever we have a good intuition, it is the etheric body, which is inwardly connected with the cosmos, that stimulates this intuition. We receive all the intuitions, all the genius we develop when we are awake, from the etheric body by way of the universe. Whenever the etheric body stimulates the astral body, our genius converses with the universe.

Even if we cannot see these things, we still live within them. Our soul life always consists in our astral body and our "I" sinking — in the waking state — into our physical and etheric bodies.

Once the stars are as much home to us as are the meadows, to the extent that we make the cosmic space the ground of our being on high, we are able to experience the etheric world. In reality, we always experience the etheric. Without initiation, however, we cannot penetrate it *cognitively*. Nevertheless, in actuality, every human being experiences the etheric world. If we are looking for an opposing counterpart for the astral body, that counterpart, the etheric body, is always there. It is just a matter of spiritual science calling our attention to what is present in every human being.

Let me give you an example. Let us say that you could not see the floor beneath you, but you were nevertheless standing on it. Then you would, in fact, be standing on it (although you knew nothing of it!). Then let's say that someone, by scientific means, were to demonstrate that the floor is there, and were to tell you so. You would still be standing on the floor (as you always were). In the same way, someone who knows spiritual science could tell you that your astral being reaches up to the upper floor — the floor of the stars. But actually, irrespective of what he has just said, you already do so — you already reach to the stars.

In other words, as human beings with astral bodies, we already live in another world, in the world of living spiritual beings that we have described as the world of the higher hierarchies.⁶

When we are in the physical world, we look at things from this perspective. Reality then is the physical world, in which there are minerals, plants, animals, and a ground to stand on — a world out of which the human being arose as the latest thing in the course of evolution. By the same token, human beings, by virtue of their astral bodies, dwell in the world of higher hierarchies.

Simply by inhabiting the world, we have the counterfoil appropriate to the astral body. We always carry within us what we learn from spiritual science. And, of course, we do so independently of its teaching. And we always bear within us the capacity to feel.

Whatever we can make our own from the world through our feelings, through this innermost life of the soul, is actually the welling up and weaving of the higher spiritual hierarchies in our astral body. Naturally, whenever we become conscious of our feelings, this experience itself is the immediate object of our perception, but the feeling itself is the weaving and working of the higher spiritual hierarchies through us. We cannot really grasp or understand soul unless we experience it immersed in the spiritual worlds of the higher hierarchies. You know that the past is unveiled to our present senses by etheric vision whenever I give a contemporary description of what was communicated in the first earthly mysteries as the initiation into the cosmos. In the same way, the soul can be deepened so that it becomes conscious of what is happening in the astral body.

This requires loving absorption in all that lived in the great mysteries as the relationship to the spiritual worlds. If we allow ourselves to be taught by the cosmos under the guidance of the wisdom of initiation, we reach the first level of the soul's reality. Once we penetrate what actually took place in the mysteries, we can read in the so-called Akashic record not only the past of the stars, the earth, and humanity. We can also read what lived in the very souls of the great teachers of these Mysteries. We can make what I tried to describe to you in *Christianity as Mystical Fact* live within us.⁷ We can bring to life what these teachers developed out of themselves in their work with the spiritual beings. In doing so, we shall approach the initiation that, in later times, was added to cosmic initiation. This I would call *the initiation of the sages*.

Thus we may speak of two levels of initiation: through the cosmos and through the sages. What the sages taught as cosmic knowledge formed the content of cosmic initiation. Looking into the souls of those who came before us in the human soul life leads to the second level of the soul's being. To enter this sphere, we can begin with outer history. We can seek to grasp and understand in an inwardly living way what still shines down to us from ancient times — the contents, for instance, of the remarkable wisdom of the Vedanta or other ancient wisdom

teachings. Doing so, we actually begin to grasp *our own inner life* and, thereby, begin to approach cosmic initiation. And if we become truly and lovingly absorbed in such things (as I did in *Christianity as Mystical Fact*, where I explained the relationship between the contents of the old Mysteries and the Mystery of Golgotha), then we begin to approach the sages' initiation.

The present age calls for one thing and that is to look honestly into our own interiority and come to know impartially our own spirit — the spirit that illuminates the soul from inside as it were. I shall return to this later, when I describe it as the third level of the initiation required in our time: *the initiation of self-knowledge*.

When spiritual science speaks of the soul, it must speak out of the spirit of these three levels of initiation: by the cosmos, by the sages, by self-knowledge. In doing so, it traverses the different boundaries of soul life. *But it is impossible to begin to take even the first steps on this path without love.*

Here I must stress that it is precisely the present-day intellect that forgets love — loses love — when it reaches its heights. Because of this, something quite particular happens.

To penetrate with love the realities described as physical body, astral body, etheric body, and "I," we need to absorb something of the voice of the ruling spirit of our age. We need the goodwill to listen carefully to the voice of the genius or spirit of our time. But can human beings today really take in with the necessary seriousness what is meant by the words "the genius of our time"? For most people, is it anything more than an abstract phrase? Just try and think how remote from the understanding of true spiritual living reality people really are — and how little they know what they are really saying when they speak of the "genius of our time."

Although human beings may deny the spirit, they cannot get rid of it. The spirit is inalterably connected to humanity. When human beings fail the genius of their age, the demon of the age steps in. We can understand what happens in such cases by considering what happened in the last third of the nineteenth century. This was a time when the human intellect was able to

follow the mechanism of physical life in most intimate detail. In the process, the intellect itself became automatic, mechanical. Thereby it reached its highest development — it became so clever, it reached the apogee of intelligence! But no matter how clever it became, it brought to existence only the mechanical, the materialistic, in the intellect. The intellect conducted itself as humanity does when it refuses the genius of the age. Therefore the human intellect fell prey to the demon of the age. Separated from the soul, it became mechanical, soulless, and on that foundation it built a philosophy. It had no love — it could not love wisdom. Its philosophy could only become the intellectual replica of terrestrial demonology — a demonology that can conceive the ideal of a machine boring right through to the center of the earth and blasting the world into cosmic space.

This was the demon of the age speaking to the intellect of the age. Often when we do not wish to know the soul, it is the demon of the age that we hear. The soul then appears to the intellect as it would to us if, on awakening, we plunged into our physical and etheric bodies, but did not unite with them and remained separated from them. Such an intellect is foreign to the very being of humanity, for it has freed itself from what it means to be human. An intellect united with the being of humanity grows from earthly consciousness up to other states of consciousness. An intellect that connects itself to the earth but then cuts itself off from it is only the mirror image of the intellect. For such an intellect, all other states of consciousness are part of the unending ocean of unconsciousness. Then the human soul ceases to be conscious of its heavenly origin, and loses the awareness of its autonomy in relation to earthly life.

But the human soul is characterized by the fact that in our being we oscillate between bodily and spiritual realities. Human soul life consists in this movement between the bodily and the spiritual. If we honestly believe only in the body and cannot let go of the spirit altogether, then the spirit merely becomes unconscious, and thereby we deny the soul.

Hartmann envisioned the downfall of the earth demonically. He did so only as a person could who was asleep in his physical

body and became, as it were, clairvoyant in it. At the very time that Hartmann was coming to his intellectual interpretation of earthly suffering, another man, who was his friend and exchanged many letters with him, lay on a sickbed. His body was racked with pain. Many organs of his soul-spiritual being could not gain access to his physical body. This man had the actual experience of earthly suffering; he did not just think about it. And for him the only way to deal with the soullessness of the age seemed to be satire. The man was Robert Hamerling, who in the 1880s wrote a book called *Homunculus*, in which he allowed the perspective on a soulless age to dawn. He created the image of a man who strives in all external matters, amasses more and more material goods, and eventually becomes a billionaire. Such was the frightening vista that Hamerling contemplated with the eye of his soul. The soulless billionaire — the "Homunculus" who comes into the world in a purely mechanical way, without the soul's collaboration — marries the soulless elemental spirit, the mermaid Lorelei.

For Hamerling, the perspective of a soulless *Zeitgeist* came to life in the form of a man whose striving focused entirely on the material realm, a striving for spiritless intellectualism. Such spiritless intellectualism is present in nature-spirits, but its presence in human beings awakens the forces of destruction — the demonic forces of destruction whose ambition it is to blow up the entire world. For Robert Hamerling, the only way to deal with the problem of soullessness was satire.

We must restore soul to modern civilization and culture. But we can do so — we can only give the world soul — when the light of spiritual knowledge illuminates human experiences on earth.

Thus, what the cleverest person of our age presented in a truly terrifying, repulsive manner and what a man who was racked in pain and saw the tragedy of this cleverness presented in satirical form — this is what humanity must transform through spiritual knowledge into the soul's perspective.

I spoke yesterday of the physical perspective. Today, I wanted to speak of the soul's perspective. Tomorrow, I shall speak of the spiritual perspective.

III

THE SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE

Dornach, July 22, 1923

As earthly beings, we initially know three alternating states of consciousness. There is the waking state. This lasts from the moment we wake up to the moment we fall asleep. Then there is its opposite, the sleeping state. In this, the soul to some extent dips into spiritual darkness and has no experience of its environment. Between the two is the dream state.

Of the dream state we know at least the following. We know how experiences from the waking state play into it and how, on the other hand, certain extraordinarily meaningful and interesting inner forces can transform the relationships established in the waking state. We know for instance that long-forgotten events appear as if they were immediately present — how something that went almost unnoticed by consciousness, something to which we paid no particular attention when awake, can come to the fore in our dreams, and so forth. Things that are normally completely unrelated are brought together into the dream.

It is also characteristic of the dream state that the content of the dream — everything that we perceive in the dream — has a strong *imaginal* quality. Even when words sound in dreams, it is the image quality of the words — their tonality and modulation — that enters the dream. The sounds, the words, are all transformed into images that the soul can hear.

Dreams thus present many aspects that can touch the human

soul in its deepest place. But we shall gain no insight into actual spiritual existence unless we can come to a valid idea of the relationship between these three states of consciousness: waking, sleeping, and dreaming.

Today, with the help of spiritual science, I shall try to characterize these three states. I shall begin with waking day-consciousness.

We can easily see that we are able to lead our daily waking lives only insofar as, on awakening, we begin to use our bodies, our bodily organs, and also our thinking, which is connected to bodies. We are not consciously aware of the fact that upon waking the "I" and astral body submerge into the physical and etheric bodies. Nevertheless, we can still experience, in a rapid but clearly perceivable way, how we recover the power over our limbs, the power over our organs, and the power to unfold our inner thinking.

All this can teach us how the waking state is connected to the physical body. And if, from the point of view of spiritual science, we consider the etheric or formative-force body, we must also say that the waking day life is as strongly connected with the etheric as it is with the physical body. To conduct our waking lives, we must submerge ourselves in these two — physical and etheric — and make use of their organization.

Without the illumination provided by spiritual science, it is quite possible to have all kinds of illusions about waking life. Little need be said here about the life of the senses. What could be clearer than that we use our sense organs in our waking lives, and that these senses mediate for us the revelation or manifestation of the outer physical world around us? We need only observe the senses a little to establish that what we call waking experience — the manifestation of the sensible world — occurs through the relationship between the eye, the ear, and the other sense organs and our surroundings.

Thinking and representation require closer examination. We must begin by being quite clear about the fact that our representations are at first merely interiorizations of our sensory life.

If we look into ourselves honestly, we must conclude that through the senses, we perceive impressions, while in our thinking we inwardly prolong these impressions. If we then examine our thoughts, we will find that they are shadowy images of objects mediated to us through our senses. To some extent, human thinking is entirely directed outward.

Now thinking is an activity of the etheric or formative-force body. Therefore, we could say that, insofar as a waking human being thinks as a sensory, earthly being, he or she directs the etheric or formative-force body outward. But saying that, we are really only looking at one side of the etheric or formative-force body. If we consider only the content of ordinary waking consciousness, that is, thoughts about the outer world, it is as if for some reason we could only look at a person from behind. Imagine being able to see people only from behind! You would come up with all kinds of ideas about them that would not necessarily be very satisfying. You would then, if I may so say, be extremely curious and eager to know how people look from the front. For you would be certain that the back had a front; and that precisely the front, the other side, was the most expressive side for physical earthly beings.

So it is with us. When we become conscious of our thinking about the outer world, we realize that we are, in a certain way, looking at the back, the *higher side of thinking*. Thinking is reversed, because in human beings the direction of the stream from the senses is always from the front to the back. No matter what appearances may be, therefore, we must be aware that what physically seems to be the front is actually the back for thinking. We must become able to look at human thinking from the other side — the side where thinking is not directed toward the impressions received from the outer senses, but where it shows its hidden, inner side.

Here we encounter something quite remarkable. Thinking does not appear to us from the inside, as it does when we think of it as the images of the outer world that we carry in consciousness. Considered from this other side, thinking — which is really the forces that make up the etheric body — is transformed into

the forces that build up our physical organism, the creative forces at work in our physical organs.

We see the other side of thinking — the thinking that organized and actively shaped us out of the body of etheric or formative forces — when we consider the processes of growth. We need only consider how our organs are built up and, as it were, sculpted from their embryonic state. What works and lives in us, as we grow and metabolize our food — everything that is in us as formative forces — all this is the other side of thinking. Ordinary thinking only produces shadowy thoughts in us. It is the back of thinking. The creative force of thinking, on the other hand, forms our thinking apparatus; it builds up our brain and our whole nervous system. This thinking is the creative force of the etheric, formative-force body. It is the other side of thinking.

One does not need highly developed powers of clairvoyance to become conscious of how this creative force of thinking operates in human beings as a force of growth — a formative force. We need only turn to our inner being to become conscious of the fact that thinking is an *inner activity*, and not a ghostly replica of the outer world. To become aware of the activity of thinking, all we need to do is, as it were, retract our orientation toward the outer world and turn instead toward our own inner activity, to what we are thinking.

When we understand the activity of thinking in this way, we also understand what *human freedom* is.

Understanding human freedom is the same as understanding the activity of thinking.

Furthermore, when we understand thinking in this way, we also understand the nature of *morality* — the morality that penetrates human beings, weaving through them and welling up within them.

This is what I wanted to communicate in my *Philosophy of Freedom*.¹ I wanted to communicate this understanding of thinking as active element — as pure activity in contrast to thinking filled with external sensory images. I wanted to make this inward movement understandable. I wanted to show how

human beings can grasp this activity of thinking within themselves, and how, by this inner movement towards pure thinking, empty of sensations, human beings can grasp morality as something that arises out of pure thinking. I also wanted to show how at the same time they could achieve the consciousness of freedom.

Therefore we might say: let us reverse the direction of our thinking — the thinking that shows us only shadowy reflections of the sensory world around — for by turning it around in this way, it becomes the creative, sculptural force of humanity itself. It becomes inner activity, the bearer of freedom, where the moral impulses in human nature may be caught hold of.

In this way, we press forward spiritually from the physical body to the etheric, formative-force body.

Therefore, we may say, too, that the first step up the ladder to the spiritual world is the authentic experience of the feeling of freedom.

Let us now look at dream consciousness. No matter how chaotic, how fearful or anxious — or how delightful — our dreams may be, in every instance they weave and live in us in the form of images conjured up before the soul. And if we leave aside the content of our dreams and consider instead their dramatic quality, we will see how the soul, whether waking or sleeping, lives and weaves in these dream images.

A particular power of the soul is expressed in dreams. The truth or falsity of the images themselves may be debated, but the very fact that the images can be formed in the first place should tell us that a power exists in the soul that forms these images. Dream images are placed before the soul by an inner power in the soul itself. A weaving, inner psychic power lies at the origin of dreams.

Consider the moment of awakening. As we awaken we can sense how, emerging from the darkness of sleep, this inner weaving force is present. But then it dives down into the physical and etheric bodies. If it did not submerge in this way, you would go on dreaming. This power is the force of the astral body. The astral body cannot be self-aware when it is outside the physical

and etheric bodies. It begins to feel itself, to sense its own power, only when, diving down into the physical and etheric bodies, it awakens and experiences their resistance.

It may appear chaotic in dreams, but what appears chaotic is nevertheless the soul's own force. This force was living in dreams from the point of falling asleep to awakening. Now it dives down into the physical and etheric bodies. It plunges down into the circulation of blood, into the contraction and relaxation of the muscles. It immerses itself into the etheric body. Thereby it is strengthened. The dream-forming power is weak and powerless by itself. When this force is alone, dream images flit past. When it engages itself in the physical and etheric bodies and uses their organs, it becomes strong.

What does this dream-forming power do as it gets stronger? It forms in us *memory*, recollections. Memory is nothing but the dream force incarnated in the physical and etheric bodies. Diving down into the physical body, the dream force is inserted into the ordering of the physical world. But now it no longer forms the chaotic stuff of dreams. It forms recollection in the physical world, the stuff of memory.

We could remember nothing if we did not bring dream and the dream force out of sleep into the physical body. For in the physical body, the dream force becomes the force of memory, of recollection.

Sit quietly, turn away from the outer world of the senses, and allow your memories to play. As memories rise to the surface, still them, and fill them with soul. Allow these memories — which stimulate fantasy — full rein. In this experience, it is the dream force, strengthened through the physical and etheric bodies, that rules within you. This is the same dream force that, when it was held outside the physical and etheric bodies by the astral body, was plunged in the world spirit.

There, in the world spirit, the dream force experienced the secrets of things.

Imagine that when asleep you could perceive this force that, in your waking state, creates the power of memory and recollection. You would perceive it spread out outside the physical and

etheric bodies. You would not experience chaotic dream images, for these are formed only at the moment of the plunge into the physical and etheric realm. Rather, freed from the physical and etheric bodies, you would be immersed in the outer cosmos. Asleep, you would experience yourself in a majestic world of images.

This majestic world is the cosmic counterimage of what rises and falls in your memories in solitary meditation. Your memory life is the microcosmic counterimage of this macroscopic, gigantic, majestic weaving and flowing of images that our dream force passes through when the astral body is plunged in the things and processes of the outer cosmos.

Were we to speak of our soul's spiritual contents, we would usually find that this spiritual content rises and falls like a wave with the transmuted impressions from the outer world that live on in our memory and thinking. This content, which we make our own by our inner life, fixes everything in us — all the bliss, tragedy, joy, and suffering in our soul lives. And if we wish to consider everything that lives in our souls as the spiritual content of memory, we must remember that we owe it all to the fact that this dream-forming force, which is related to the cosmos, can plunge into our inner being. What lives in the image forces in the outer cosmos, creating and activating the outer world, enters into us and becomes available to us as the force of memory that spiritualizes our soul.

In the power of memory, we feel ourselves to be related to all the creative, active forces of the universe. We may therefore affirm the following:

"I look outside and see the forms of the unfolding plants in spring. I look into the woods and see how trees develop out of their seeds, year after year, decade after decade. I look up at the clouds, changing under the influence of more outer formative forces. I look out and see how mountains form and erode. I look upon all these formative forces right up into the stars. There is something related to all of this in my soul. I have the powers of memory in my soul, and these powers are

the microscopic reflection of the forces at work in the world, in the metamorphoses of all things."

Let us now consider the "I." In sleep, likewise, the "I" leaves the physical and etheric bodies behind and unites outside them with cosmic things and processes. Thus we become aware of how, as human beings, we are able to dive down into things with our own actual being — even if the experience remains unconscious. The "I" itself, at any rate, certainly emerges from deep sleep and enters into the physical and etheric bodies. But only spiritual-scientific initiation can follow this process. As far as our memory of it is concerned, the way the dream force slips into the physical being provides ordinary observation with something to hang onto as we try to understand it. To do this, one must learn to observe with the Imagination when we develop it in the way I have described in *How to Know Higher Worlds*.²

Having learned to observe with the Imagination, we can learn to observe how the "I" (which sojourned with cosmic things and processes during sleep) is submerged in the physical and etheric bodies. We can also learn to observe the transformation undergone by the "I" when it emerges from the darkness of sleep. To present-day human development on earth, the "I" at first seems powerless, sunk in the darkness of sleep, in the darkness of the soul. Yet when it plunges into the physical and etheric bodies, it strengthens itself there. It becomes wrapped up in the paths opened by the physical and etheric bodies. It takes hold of the force of the blood, and works through the inner power of blood.

This is shown in waking day consciousness. The "I," immersing itself in the physical and etheric bodies, manifests itself. The "I" is what weaves and works as the free element in the human being. It may show itself, or not. And when it does, what is its characteristic manifestation?

When the "I" manifests, it is the force of love that appears in humanity.

We would never have the capacity to open into another being or another process — to pass, as it were, into the *other* —

if the "I" did not leave us every night to immerse itself in the things and processes of the outer cosmos. It really is submerged there. When the "I" slips into us in waking consciousness, it communicates within us the ability to love that it attained outside.

This, then, is what rises up in the depths of your inner life as the threefold power of the soul: *freedom, the life of memory, and the force of love*.

Freedom is the etheric body's inner primordial form.

Memory is the astral body's dream-forming force arising within us.

Love is the guiding force that arises within us so that we can surrender ourselves dedicatedly to the outer world.

When — and to the extent that — the human soul participates in this threefold force, it is transfused with spiritual life. When thoroughly imbued with these three forces — the sensation of freedom, the force of memory (which allows us to connect past and present), and the force of love through which we can give our inner life for the outer world and unite with it — our soul is "spiritualized." The inner possession of these three powers permeates the soul with spirit.

To grasp this with the right nuance of soul is to grasp that human beings bear the spirit within their souls.

Whoever does not understand the spirit's threefold inner penetration of the soul — through freedom, memory, and love — will not understand how the human soul can shelter the spirit.

The consequences of this extend over the whole of life. Something wonderful can definitely be attained once we are able to establish an inner, living connection between memory and love: the power of memory presiding in us by virtue of the astral body, the power of love given by the "I."

These things may be directly grasped in life. We preserve the memory of a beloved one who has died beyond death. We carry the person's image in our soul. We combine the sensory impressions that we received when the person was alive with what remains when their sensory existence is taken away from

us. We continue to live with the dead in memory with all the power and intensity of our soul to the point that we no longer need the support of external sensations. We try to bring such a living quality to these memories that it may seem as if the dead were there, with us, as if truly living — as if we had a direct apprehension of their "livingness." We remain conscious that we bear these things in our memory, but we connect it with the force that came about as the result of the strengthening of the astral body — the force that we received through our "I," the force of love. We carry this intense love for the dead over and beyond the grave. Previously we were able to develop the force of love under the influence of sensory stimulation. Now we became capable of connecting the force of love with the image that is no longer aroused by the senses.

Thus, it is possible to strengthen what otherwise would only be expressed by the astral body and the "I" when they made use of the physical organs. This is a way to rise inwardly to a certain level of separation from the astral body and "I." You preserve the memory of the dead (which can no longer be stimulated by the physical and etheric bodies) and hold it so intensely and animatedly that you are able to unite it with intense love. One of the first steps toward liberating the "I" and the astral body from the physical and etheric bodies while awake rests precisely in the memory that we can preserve of the dead.

If we could only understand the significance of keeping memory alive, we would be on the path that leads over the threshold between the physical and spiritual worlds. If we could only understand what it means to contemplate the image that is all that is left of the dead in the same way as we contemplate the living person, we would experience the liberation of the astral body and the "I."

We would have the following experience or shock. At first, we have the living memory, as if the person who had died were still there. We know that in our waking consciousness we have connected the image of the dead person with the love that we once used to feel only under the influence of sensory

impressions from the then living person. We make all this active and alive within us. When we can develop the necessary inner strength, then the shock comes. We step over the threshold into the spiritual world. The dead person is present in full reality.

This is one of the paths that human beings can take into the spiritual world. It is connected with things in the face of which one can feel only reverence. Even when we understand them, we can experience them only with reverence and a certain serious inner gravity.

This is one example of crossing the threshold into the spiritual world.

We must allow all the seriousness associated with such ideas to work on our souls. We must make this seriousness real. Then we will have an idea of the seriousness that must be united with any crossing into the spiritual world. If we truly wish to enter the spiritual world — if in all earnestness we wish to grasp it — life must have shown us its deep seriousness because we willed it so.

The science of initiation has always attempted to infuse this seriousness into culture and civilization. This is what our externalized age needs again today.

It is a remarkable sign of the times that dogmatic science means more to people today than reality. A person can become conscious of his or her freedom in every moral act. As human beings, we can actually experience freedom just as we can experience red or white. But we deny our freedom. We deny it under the authority of contemporary science. Why? Because contemporary science sees only the mechanical, where what comes earlier is always the cause of what comes later. Therefore this science states dogmatically that everything must have a cause. It dogmatically affirms causality. Because causality must be correct, because we swear by causality as a dogma, we deafen ourselves to the feeling of freedom. Reality is buried in darkness to protect dogma — in this case the dogma of a powerful science exercising its authority.

Science abolishes life. If life became aware of itself in us, this life would directly grasp freedom in the activity of thinking. And

so a purely external science building on causality has become the great murderer of the feeling of life of human beings. We must become conscious of this.

Can we then hope that, having inwardly destroyed the experience of freedom, human beings can push forward to the spirit — the spiritual form of memory? Can we hope that, just as they once allowed red to be a revelation of the red rose, human beings will allow memory to reveal to them the force of dream welling up and working in the universe? Can we hope that having killed the feeling of freedom in the first stage by the dogma of so-called causality, human beings will acquire the necessary conviction to rise to the second stage?

Human beings fail to see the spirituality of their own souls.

They fail to reach to a level deep enough to see clearly that, besides the ability to live among things in our sleep, we can attain the ability in our spiritual "I" to love through our spirit. The deepest foundation of love is an "I" penetrated with spirit that submerges in the physical and ethereal organism. To know the spiritual nature of love means in a certain sense to know the spirit. Whoever knows love knows the spirit. But this requires that a person penetrate to the innermost spiritual experience of love in the knowledge and experience of it. Here is where our civilization has taken a wrong turn.

Memory means moving and living in the inner soul. In our inner souls, however, distinctions are not so easily made. Only mystics like Swedenborg, Meister Eckhart, and Johannes Tauler could go deep into their inner souls, their memories, and experience the movement and life of the eternal spirit there.³ They speak of the little spark that lights up in human beings when they become aware within, in memory, that the same thing that lives in the microcosm lives and works outside in the creative, formative forces whose dreaming lies at the foundation of all world existence. This deep inner soul memory, however, is of course difficult to attain. Things are not so clear there.

Things become very clear when we move to the third stage, when we see how at the third level our civilization has misunderstood the original spiritual being and weaving of love. All

things spiritual naturally have an outer sensory form, for the spirit submerges in *physis*, the physical. The spirit incarnates in the physical. If the spirit forgets itself, if the spirit is only conscious of the physical, it will seem as if the physical activates what is actually activated by the spirit. This is the great delusion of our time.

Our time doesn't know love. Our age fantasizes about love, lies about love. In reality, when it tries to think of love it only knows erotic love. I am not saying that the individual person doesn't experience love. Human beings are less likely to deny the spirit in their unconscious feelings, in their unconscious will than in their thinking. But whenever the present civilization thinks of love, it just says the word. It actually means eroticism. It is fair to say that you should read through all current literature from end to end and, whenever the word "love" appears, replace it with the word "eroticism" or "sexual love." For "sexual love" is all that materialistic thinking knows of love. Denial of the spirit turns the force of love into an erotic force. In many areas, not only has the genius of love been supplanted by its lowly servant eroticism, but also its counterimage, the demon of love, has stepped in. The demon of love appears when something that was at work in human beings as divinely willed is taken over by human thinking and torn from spirituality by intellectuality.

This is how it goes. Recognize the genius of love, and you will have love infused with spirit. Acknowledge love's lowly servant, and you will have eroticism. But we have fallen prey to the demon of love. The demon of love appears whenever the interpretation of love — the interpretation of sexuality as it is practiced by the current civilization — replaces love's true form. Nowadays, in fact, when we wish to speak of love, we no longer even speak of eroticism, but instead only of sexuality!

Such talk about sexuality in our civilization includes much that passes for sexual education. The demon of love lives in all this intellectualized talk about sexuality. The genius of an age always appears in the form of its demon, for the demon steps in wherever the genius is denied. This is equally true of

this realm, where the spiritual in its most intimate form, love, should appear. Our age often prays, not to spirit of love, but to the demon of love, and confuses the true spirituality of love with the demonology of love in sexuality.

Naturally, in this area in particular the most complete misunderstandings occur. For what lives at the core of sexuality is of course saturated by spiritual love. But humanity can fall from this spiritualization of love. And it is most likely to fall in the age of intellectualism. When the intellect takes the form I described yesterday, then what is spiritual in love is forgotten, and only its external form is considered.

It is in the power of human beings to deny their own being. They deny it when they sink down from the genius of love to the demon of sexuality — by which I mean above all the way our present time feels these things, the way they are mostly present.

In view of this, Anthroposophy can act as our guide, not just in knowledge and knowing, but also in our innermost soul being and soul life. For we can become intimate with Anthroposophy. And we will become intimate with her if we understand how to take in her reality.

Someone suggested today that we should describe an image of Anthroposophy, a picture. But is Anthroposophy not present as a reality? Do we really need another image? What we need is to become intimate with Anthroposophy by means of our own inner sincerity. Then Anthroposophy will penetrate the innermost texture of our soul life and soul being. We should not try to form an image in an outer way. But inwardly we should try to form an intimate relationship with the living form of the Being who, as Anthroposophy, will walk in our ranks if we are united as men and women who understand these things.

We must live concretely with Anthroposophy as a real Being that moves among us. If we are truly human and on intimate terms with the Being of Anthroposophy, then the impulse will surely arise in us to really experience what humanity needs so much in our time. We do not need a mere image for the eye of

the soul. Our hearts need a love for the Being of Anthroposophy. This is what we need. This can be the best impulse for our age.

Today I have tried to add a *spiritual* perspective to the physical and psychological perspectives that Anthroposophy gives us. The spiritual perspective does not consist in following the spirit externally. Rather, it is the experience of Anthroposophy in the deepest recesses of the human soul and heart. This intimate experience of Anthroposophy in the human soul and heart is the meditation that will lead us to a true encounter with Anthroposophy.