

III. The Archetypal Phenomena of the Social Life of Modern Times

In an age when the spiritual life is invariably turned into ideology, a reader, whatever he takes into his hands, has no choice but to search for the true sense of what is offered in the most varied and at times glittering ‘packages’. These packages are designed to lame his attention or distract from an understanding of the innermost nature of things. One of the most favoured ‘packages’ is to argue endlessly on questions of humanism and morality. Very bad habit! If we know this we should do our utmost to avoid it. Those readers who interpret the conditions on which the author bases his work as mentioned in the beginning of the book, as an ideological chess-move, will misunderstand the essential content of this book. The author appeals to the reader’s reason and feeling without acting on his will. In this he sees the only rightful means to oppose ideology and allow a dialogue with the reader to unfold.

If something or other should sound emotional it is due to the author’s conviction that only those thoughts (especially in the social realm) should be voiced that not only have meaning, but also touch us, lend us wings, allow us to experience joy and sorrow. Do they evoke something similar in the reader? – May he judge this for himself. A lethargic and apathetic expression of the most important questions, on the other hand, is a sure sign of a sluggish intellect and an indifferent soul that is unable to enter into human destinies, even when these assume an ever more tragic aspect.

We are not at all spared such things in the Anthroposophical Society. We are rather (or at least should be) those who experience them, at the same time grasp their meaning, and are therefore able to find a way out of the crisis. It can hardly be denied that mass-suggestion, affecting everyone today, successfully works upon us, so that at times the disquieting question arises: are there still clear-thinking, reasonable people among us anthroposophists? Today this question must be asked **publicly**. We have to ask: **Friends, who still grasps the meaning of what is going on in the world, unswayed by suggestive influence? Is there anyone who is free of the syndrome of group and party opin-**

ions and group-egoism? It is a further aim of this book to answer this question also.

It is not enough to ask the one or the other anthroposophist: do you understand what is happening to the world and to all of us, and are you able to think independently? In all likelihood the answer would express very little, yet would be in the affirmative. It would be different if a symptomatological analysis were offered as a special kind of sociological investigation. Then – God willing – it would reveal who is capable of taking the helm of spiritual-scientific insight firmly into his hands – amidst the dark and murky streams of the political, spiritual and historical lie and the dulling of human consciousness..

This spiritual-scientific method of knowledge is based, as already mentioned, on the researcher advancing to the archetypal foundations in his investigation of individual phenomena. Only in this way can the forming of simplistic judgments be overcome, also in the humanities. If we believe the mass-media, all causes of the complicated battle within the maze of parties, confessions, Mafia-like organizations etc. are trite and trivial. We are told how, *deep in the province, in the town of Simbirsk,¹ the ordinary boy was born* (Vladimir Mayakovsky in the poem *Lenin*). Early on he recognized the injustice of the Tsarist regime; he fought it – and won. Wicked policemen once arrested him and asked: ‘Where are you going? – There is a wall in front of you?’ But he said: ‘A wall, yes, but it is rotten. If one strikes it with a finger it will collapse.’ He struck it ... and it collapsed! There we have the cause of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia.

But then came an ‘evil uncle’ – the ‘monster’ Stalin – and because of his evil tendencies brought the ‘lofty’ work to nought. But the years went by and another ‘ordinary boy’, Misha Gorbachev, was born. He became a high-ranking official of the party-apparatus and was admitted to the ‘nomenclature’; but soon he recognized the injustice of ‘developing socialism’, fought it and won. This is how we arrive at ‘Perestroika’.

Another example: owing to their permanent, inborn baseness and tendency to militarism, to wars of conquest, the Germans started a world war. All the other nations wanted to live together in peaceful harmony – only they did not! The lofty forces of the ‘Entente’ tamed the wildest nation on earth, taught it a ‘les-

¹ Today’s city of Ulyanowsk on the Volga (Publisher’s Note).

son' – but in vain. It would not stop. It created Fascism and behaved even worse than before. The lofty forces were obliged again to unite – this time with the 'monster' Stalin! – in order finally to tame the congenital barbarians. But this time they were not only defeated, they were re-educated. Now even the Germans say: we are pathological criminals. That is how truth and justice triumph. – But the suspicion remains that Germans are only pretending, they are actually only waiting for an opportunity to jump at the throats of peace-loving and innocent nations like the English, the American, ...the Soviet.²

The majority of people live with such fables convenues, as Rudolf Steiner liked to call them. But it is not befitting for an anthroposophist to be satisfied with these. Encompassing knowledge of the forces that move not only history, but also meta-history and the whole of world-evolution, stands at our disposal.

In order to understand our own time we must turn to the cultural epochs through which the fifth post-Atlantean root-race passes in its development.³ The first epochs – the ancient Indian and ancient Persian – stood under the

² One American stands out in the final truth on the German question, Th. N. Kaufman, who became world-famous in 1941 through publication (before the USA entered into war) of the book *Germany must perish*. He declares openly: *Today's war (the Second World War) is not a war against Hitler. Nor is it a war against the Nazis* (emphasis by the present Publisher). *It is a war of peoples against peoples, of civilized peoples ... against uncivilized barbarians ... This is a struggle between the German nation and humanity.* (p. 5).

Kaufman considers further that at least 15 million Germans (more than 20%) are absolutely innocent in what lies as guilt upon the *entire nation*. At the same time humanism would not permit the endangering of the well-being of 300 million inhabitants of the earth, civilized, educated, progressive and peace-loving in the highest degree, for the sake of these 15 million who possibly are not barbarians but also *civilized people* etc. It is therefore unavoidable to sacrifice them as well! (p. 9-11).

Kaufman's mode of thinking, though not entirely original, is by no means lacking in a certain genius. At the time of the fight against the Albigenian and similar heresies, at the siege of the city of Béziers, the Papal Legate, later the Bishop of Narbonne, was asked: What should we do with the inhabitants of the city in which, together with the heretics, many devout Catholics live? He answered: Slaughter them all! It will be seen in Heaven who is guilty and who innocent!

The American 'wise man' has a Soviet analogue, also world-famous, in the writer Ilya Ehrenburg, who voiced the same opinion as Kaufman with regard to the 'nation of barbarians'.

³ The periodicity of world evolution is described by Rudolf Steiner in '*Occult Science, an Outline*' (GA 13).

leadership of great initiates who drew the motifs for their guidance from the higher worlds. It was similar still in the third, the Egyptian-Chaldean-Babylonian epoch, although a specific stratum of society was already developing that had control of the individual life on the level of the sentient soul.

The people of the Greco-Latin cultural epoch went a step further on this path. They gained increasing power over their intellectual soul, began to think in concepts and to set themselves goals of development.

The present, fifth cultural epoch, called the European, is based on a complex interplay of all three levels of soul-life, including the highest – the consciousness-soul. This enables a human being to acquire a stable centre of his personality – the 'I' – and, on this basis, to take not only his own, but also the development of society entirely into his own hands. Not every 'I' is ripe for such an activity, but each has the right to it.

By passing on the setting of aims to men, the divine world has withdrawn somewhat from human affairs in order to provide each one of us with the possibility to realize the free spirit within. But every advance also contains a lagging behind. What is old and outlived is not willing to give way, and tries to prolong its anachronistic existence by various illegitimate means. Thus destructive forces arise within civilization and culture; forces of decline and disintegration. They are rooted in the individual man as well as in certain spheres of the spirit and are today directed in particular against the strengthening of human individuality. They seek to destroy the human 'I' in one way or another and to bring about a retrogression to group-consciousness. If these forces are not held in check they will destroy everything. They bear within them a danger for the entirety of human existence and it is therefore futile to seek a compromise with them.

When we observe Western civilization we can see that here two mutually-opposed forces are fighting a battle against the rightful goals of human development. The main opponent of both is the independent personality, and thus all relationships throughout the world are permeated by the battle of these forces for rulership over men. One represents a relic from the Greco-Latin epoch, a shadow of the *Imperium Romanum* so to speak, that refuses to depart this world despite the fact that its time is long past. It succeeded in penetrating our cultural epoch in a new guise, and in taking hold of its most precious possession – Christianity. Leading representatives of the Imperium in the declining Hellenis-

tic period had developed a sure sense for the inexhaustible, life-giving forces of the religion of the 'living God'. Young European humanity proved inexperienced in fighting the Imperium. The latter was senile but nevertheless in its own way experienced and, though the Europeans were outwardly victorious, they were defeated inwardly.

However, this new humanity – the Aryan race originating from old Atlantis – was able gradually to curb the Roman influence and to metamorphose the cultural impulse of the Greco-Latin epoch. Thus it was able to begin work on its own task – the elaboration of the consciousness-soul and the self-cognitive 'I'. The Middle-European and Anglo-Saxon peoples have a special disposition for the solution of this cultural-historic task. It so happened that in this process a nucleus of the Anglo-Saxon race was constantly forced to fight against the spiritual pressure of Latinism and to struggle for supremacy in the world, with the result that this nucleus succumbed, as it were for the second time, was infected with the age-old poison and became itself an anachronism of our times. Within the Anglo-Saxon race there germinates the intention to eternalize itself, like the *Imperium Romanum*, to take on the role of a new Papacy and to work against the emergence of 'I'-consciousness as it develops in the German-speaking peoples. In addition it is tempted to prevent the metamorphosis of the present cultural epoch to the next, the Slavic-Germanic period. – Thus the second destructive force arose.

Both forces – Latinism as well as Americano-Britannicism – have extensive and impressive occult backgrounds from which to draw impulses for political struggle. They are on the one hand the religious-political Orders of the Latin world (one of them is the Jesuit order) and on the other the secret occult Lodges, often called Freemasonry. Here we must make a qualifying remark. Known concepts such as Jesuitism and Freemasonry do not by any means encompass the entire range of those forces today, but serve on the contrary to veil the deeper content of the forces in the background. These terms must be treated carefully. It is more important to understand the forces themselves than to rely on conceptual labels – whose content ever changes – thereby risking being hypnotized by them. The opposing forces often attach these labels to each other in order to confuse the mass of ignorant 'lay people' and pull them to the one side or the other. But it would also be wrong to think such concepts to be entirely without content.

The 'Ghosts of the Old Testament' (everything in history leaves behind shadows and ghosts) **as relics of the Roman Imperium on one hand, and the occult-political forces of the Anglo-Saxon world frozen into group-egoism on the other, constitute in their bitter mutual struggle the primary phenomenon of all disaster in the social, political, economic and spiritual life of the epoch of consciousness-soul.** A second – the great East-West polarity – superimposes itself upon this archetypal phenomenon.

One or the other anthroposophist may say: 'All this belongs to politics and I do not want to concern myself with it.' Our anthroposophist is gravely mistaken. Politics is only one of the outward manifestations of the described battle. The attempt to reduce everything to politics proves on closer examination to be a huge lie. This is why anthroposophists do not involve themselves in politics. They investigate the archetypal phenomena (also in the sphere of the socio-political life) – the spiritual forces and their struggle in the world. The complicated nature of the phenomena is then revealed.

Every human being is engaged in this battle, on the outcome of which both our Earthly and cosmic destiny depends. It is not enough to say, 'I trust in God'. Only too often this statement proves to be no more than empty words. We must be quite clear about what we have to do, how we must behave in order truly to serve God and not Mammon. In other words: continuous research into the nature of those forces that lie behind all human relations is of crucial importance.

Some might respond that this task of cognition is too difficult for many people. Very well, but then the responsibility borne by those able to grasp historical symptomatology is all the greater. For those who bring forward such objections we will add an example from Soviet history: in our country people were arbitrarily and indiscriminately put into concentration camps; they were not asked whether they were in a condition to bear these events or comprehend them. Some managed to survive and became 'victors'; to others fell the bitter lot of being 'fertilizer' on the soil of anti-history.

People have more experience at their disposal today than in the first half of the century, and it is rather a lack of will than of ability if someone does not know the background of events. How many anthroposophists have read the *GULAG Archipelago* of Solzhenitsyn? – Most do not read it because it might disturb their contemplative life or destroy the artificially constructed rose-coloured view of the world..

An irresponsible attitude towards life also casts a shadow on Anthroposophy. Often people fail to recognize its real importance in the world; they **do not know its value**, which cannot be said of its opponents. In the higher hierarchies of the Orders, Lodges, societies and brotherhoods the saying goes that a person who takes hold of Anthroposophy will rule the world. It is understood in one way – purely materialistically –; but what should keep us from understanding it in the correct sense?

My kingdom is not of this world – says Christ. Therefore ‘this world’ awaits its renewal. Anthroposophy contains within itself the power to renew the world in the Christian sense. This is why – in the cultural sense – ‘world-rule’ is predestined. But the opposing spirits – Lucifer and Ahriman – have something different in mind. With the help of people whom they make into blind instruments of their will they try to take possession of the world and rob it of all hope for its future. They definitely have the power to force all of us to take account of their intentions.

The battle of these two principles of cosmic opposing forces is visible everywhere in the world. Practically the entire conscious part of humanity is tied into this conflict; the so-called masses will follow without resistance. This antagonism polarizes religious, political and even natural-scientific movements and streams. But wherever the polarity of luciferic and ahrimanic forces is revealed, the human being should **not join either side**. Neither contains the truth. Truth can be found only where the force of Christ absorbs both sides and neutralizes them.

Recent development has taken on such a character that, if we were to live on in a traditional manner, we would sooner or later turn unavoidably into servants of one of these forces. – So profoundly have they already corrupted the entire structure of human existence. But the Divine Hierarchies have given us self-consciousness as a counter-deed to the activities of the opposing forces and it would be a sin not to use this divine gift. It is a still greater sin to place self-cognitive consciousness in the service of Ahriman or Lucifer. Yet wherever we look in the world: we meet the sin of today’s most popular apostle – Judas – the betrayer of the human ‘I’.

This sin strikes one as especially grotesque in those who to all appearances are already in the service of the God of the human ‘I’, – the Christ. A certain hopelessness of soul can be experienced in anthroposophists who are already caught

up in the inhuman conflict of atavistic forces, devoid of any positive sense, the struggle of the Roman world against the unbounded group-egoism of the Anglo-Saxon world.

When visiting anthroposophical branches in different countries, taking part in conferences and spending considerable time in anthroposophical circles, one has the growing feeling that here too everything is permeated by this battle in which humanity is betrayed. True anthroposophists are regarded as annoying troublemakers by the ‘centaurs’ locked in a life and death struggle – the spiritually corrupted descendants of the old Hellenes and the Pyramid-builders.

For them we represent no more than a troublesome misunderstanding, which one is ready to put up with for the time being because one cannot yet put all the cards on the table. We must put an end to this absurdity at all costs, although it is extremely difficult under the present circumstances. For today we are not merely driving the merchants out of the temple, but madmen too, in part. If someone with knowledge of Anthroposophy puts himself in the service of one of the said forces it is equivalent to a special kind of madness.

If we dare to address this topic openly we must be prepared to be counted amongst the ‘Right wing’, the ‘reactionaries’, ‘chauvinists’, people who want to track down the ‘Masonic-Jewish’ heresy etc., etc. The issue is not made easier by the fact that we investigate both sides, i.e. also the radicalism of ‘right-wing reactionaries’. But as anthroposophists we do not need to justify anything. We neither create political parties nor do we act behind the scenes, we do not strive for power – either spiritual or worldly. The problem lies in our being forced to defend ourselves. All we intend to do is to represent spiritual science and inspire people to meaningful and consistent actions. When someone decides to build a church, why should a cabaret be held there? It would be equally absurd to set up a banking institute and hold church services in it. – People who want to be Freemasons are best advised to found a Lodge – this is not prohibited in either West or East. People are just as free to become a member of a religious order, that of the Jesuits for example; they will be welcomed with open arms.

The anthroposophical movement and Society were called into life to carry the fruits of Spiritual Science into the world with greater success than would have been possible for individuals. Hence it would be quite absurd to transform the Anthroposophical Society into a Lodge or Order. Such pleas are disregarded; certain people even react with indignation to this obvious demand. It is there-

fore necessary to recognize the nature and intentions cultivated to perfection by those forces. Much that is purely demonic, inhuman is at work, making people into actual instruments. But the manners – to put it simply – of the devil are well-known: he loves to flatter his way into human company and to imitate human activities of all kinds. In the anthroposophical world he uses the same methods as elsewhere.

We must be socially alert to understand what forces we are dealing with, not only in the outside world but also within our Society and movement. – **If we do not meet this challenge we will destroy Anthroposophy as well as our own eternal destiny.** The divine hierarchies await the solution from us to solve it. They sound into our souls: **Only your ignorance strengthens the opponents. Take that strength from them and everything will change for the better.**

In my own specific case I thought it best to elaborate all the significant material that Rudolf Steiner has bequeathed to us for the understanding of the interplay in today's world, for the understanding of the battle of forces waged everywhere against the spirit. Countless books on the subject exist in the outer world but we cannot use them unprepared, as they are governed by half-truths. Rudolf Steiner's communications are thus all the more important for us. But how paradoxical! – anthroposophists are not familiar with these themes; unintentionally we find ourselves in the role of explorers. But where something of these problems is known in our circles we can often find **the same half-truths as in the outer world.**

Whenever I had the opportunity to speak with 'advanced' anthroposophists in the West (during my first travels I sought out such people in particular as conversation partners), I never omitted to ask them about the events in our Society. Some evaded such a conversation, others reported impressively on the dangers threatening us from the side of Jesuits. When I asked about their antipodes it was as though I had not been heard. In the course of such a conversation I repeated the question several times, always with the same result.

I experienced conversation partners who, as a poet put it, 'with brilliance and sarcasm' painted a panorama of today's political life and demonstrated how all-encompassing is its permeation by the activity of the Masonic Lodges. When I

pointed out that yet another side must be considered all interest vanished immediately. The conversation grew boring and I had no choice but to leave.⁴

These conversations made it clear that the seemingly straightforward, natural experience we had fifteen to twenty years before, based on the study of Rudolf Steiner's indication that only knowledge of both world-forces mentioned above can bring understanding of the origins of the crisis of civilization, is hardly accessible to people in the West. There are several reasons for this. One is the veil of silence that has, for decades now, kept this theme hidden in anthroposophical circles. Another is a fear of punishment for involvement in such matters. Apparently there are people all over the world who are permitted to occupy themselves with them, while others are prevented as if by a rod of punishment, invisible yet clearly sensed.

A third, metaphysical, cause could also be mentioned. It is the fact that the occult-religious and occult-political forces engaged in the struggle over the leading astray of the entire world-evolution are real and not ideological forces. They will not tolerate anyone attempting to see through their true nature. It poses a challenge for them. Certain 'prophylactic' measures are therefore necessary when we dare to advance to such insights. The most important is a clear appeal to the divine hierarchies; which means that we should always have before us the cosmic dimensions of the battle being fought over humanity. We are permitted to place ourselves consciously on the side of the divine forces without wishing to take on their task – for this would exceed human powers.

The theme of the struggle should become the object neither of superficial conversation nor of empty phrases, nor of 'manic-obsessive' preoccupation. In particular we must always bear in mind that we are dealing here, in as immediate a way as is possible, with manifestations of real infernal forces. It is our task to ensure that we do not move beyond the cognizing of these archetypal forces, but leave the battle against them to be fought by the hierarchies.

If someone asks: what can we do for the outer world? I am inclined to reply that under the present circumstances we cannot bring this theme to the general public, if only for the reason that one cannot take hold of the phenomenon

⁴ There were certainly other meetings too, in which, at times, seemingly 'non-advanced' anthroposophists expressed unusually deep and penetrating views.

without a serious grasp of the fundamentals of Spiritual Science. It is all the more necessary that we achieve clarity about it in our own circles. The consciousness of people who on the basis of Spiritual Science attempt to grasp what is happening in the world, is open to the hierarchies. Therefore its content is important for the world.

The hierarchies take upon themselves the battle with the forces of evil. They have the power to do so. We aid them through recognition of the continuously growing manifestations of luciferic-ahrimanic activity in the ever-changing world. Without our cognition these forms and techniques remain an unconquerable power. – Knowledge is power.

If only enough people would have the impulse today to say: we have first of all to gain insight into these things, the rest will follow! (Dec. 12, 1918, GA 186). Thus speaks a great Initiate of our times who **exhaustively proved** the objectivity of his supersensible experience and his ability to place it into a right relation to earthly experience. We have accepted his teaching out of a free decision; we must always recognize this. Then we have to **follow** what we have recognized as truth, as knowledge of the nature of things. This means that we must oppose the attempts to discredit spiritual science and Rudolf Steiner's personality, which are now made increasingly in **anthroposophical** circles too.

Our purpose here is not the fanaticism of a blind adherence to an authority but just decency, consistency and logic in the connecting of idea and deed. Half-measures, a certain 'woolliness', the inability to come to clarity about the impulse we have taken up – all this leads our movement to ruin. Rudolf Steiner had cause for the plea: *Oh, I see quite a few in our midst who would like to sleep especially through those things that **appear out of the fullest compassion, out of compassion for what in our time, if left to itself, must lead to ruin!** There are faint-hearted people who join this Anthroposophical Society and then say: yes, spiritual science, I like it; but I don't want to know about social activity, that doesn't belong there* (Jan. 1, 1920, GA 195).

'What can I do?' – one or another of those people will ask who experience a vague unease over the fact that despite their honest relation to Anthroposophy they may be making a tragic mistake. Rudolf Steiner has an answer again: *to respond with understanding to the concerns of the present time in the sense of our anthroposophically oriented Spiritual Science! For **no-one is a true anthroposophist who closes his eyes to the monstrous things that are happening***

in the present, who wants to let his consciousness be numbed by all those means of stupefaction used by certain wielders of power today, so that they might avoid the need to disclose what they are actually intending (Jan. 8, 1917, GA 174).

We must keep our eyes open to the forces causing the *monstrous things happening in the present*. Those forces are awake. And it is up to us to act. We must resolve to understand society's workings, however difficult and dangerous a path this may be. *For what we see here – explains Rudolf Steiner – is the final spasm of a world in decline; but it can still, though this is the final spasm, thrash about like a madman ... Therefore we have at least to recognize **out of what impulses** the wild thrashing about arises. With small measures we will accomplish nothing; **we have to appeal to what is great. Let us try to be equal to this appeal!*** (Apr. 17, 1921, GA 204).