

Editor's Preface

Heinz Pfeifer (22nd June 1910 - 25th January 1990) was the author of a series of noteworthy publications, which are listed chronologically in the Appendix to this book. The best known are his studies on the forces working behind the scenes of political life. His book "Brüder des Schattens" ("Brotherhoods of the Shadows") first appeared in 1981. The last time it was published was in 1987 in a third, newly extended edition. In the 1980's Heinz Pfeifer had the opportunity to publish a number of supplementary articles on this theme in the Anthroposophical journal *Erde und Kosmos* edited by Hellmut Finsterlin.

Now, after more than 20 years, a completely revised, fourth edition of the "Brüder des Schattens" has been prepared for publication. For the purpose of this new edition the sources were checked and the content and structures revised and updated.

Heinz Pfeifer's special merit was to apply the "historical symptomatology" of Rudolf Steiner to the "pragmatic writing of history" and to convey to the reader the technique of deciphering the coded language of official historical records – the "fable convenue". Two different approaches are followed:

1. The deductive: Taking as a basis statements of Rudolf Steiner regarding spiritual connections, certain historical facts are brought forward to illustrate the working of these laws.
2. The inductive: Historical processes of particular significance are intended, as pictures for spiritual connections, to stimulate the reader to further reflection and research. Broader interpretations arising on this basis are then presented.

The combination of these approaches makes possible a survey of recent history based on a "symptomatology" method of research. A theoretical discussion to provide this theme with a scientific foundation is a task that still needs to be undertaken. We would refer the reader, nevertheless, to Andre Bartoniczek's fundamental study of Rudolf Steiner's extension of historical science.¹

Rudolf Steiner once outlined the task as follows:

¹ Andre Bartoniczek, *Imaginative Geschichtserkenntnis*, 2009.

Events follow one another in succession, one after the other, but one event is far more important than the other. And sometimes a particular event which happens at a particular time provides much more for the understanding of what happens afterwards, than other events do. The point is to find the right events, the right facts. I have often spoken to you of such a way of studying history, as a symptomatic approach to the study of history, as opposed to the merely pragmatic approach which is widely sought today: an understanding of the inner, spiritual development, through symptoms, whereby one finds at certain points events which tower in importance above the events in their surroundings.²

Several months later he formulated it as follows:

(...) very often the important thing is to direct your gaze to one point, and then again to direct your gaze to another point, and to bring these two points into a relation with one another, and look at these points. If you attend to the right points you find lights that illumine the situation (...) Yes, how does one do such things? You see, this is the important thing: If you work with [Anthroposophical] spiritual science in the right way, you find (...) the points in life which you must look at in combination with one another, so that life reveals itself to you; whereas otherwise you can follow life, consider one event after the other, but fail to understand anything of life, just as is the case with the [pragmatic] historians of the present day who trace their threads from event to event, but understand nothing of life because the important thing is to view the world symptomatically. And it will become more and more necessary to view the world symptomatically, that is, to look at it in such a way that you direct your gaze to the right places and then draw the connecting lines from the right places to other things.³

And to those who wish to know the realities, Rudolf Steiner recommends the following:

(...) there are points when there enters into historical events, like waves surging upwards, sometimes with volcanic force, what is down below the surface. Again at other points it peeps through, one might say, and certain historical events betray what is down below. They are then particularly

² Rudolf Steiner, 4.7.1916, GA 169 (Bibliography numbers of the complete edition of Rudolf Steiner's works).

³ Rudolf Steiner, 18.11.1916, GA 172.

characteristic as symptoms, whereby, as one is looking at the symptomatic fact, one must to a very high degree look past the outer appearances.⁴

Heinz Pfeifer tried in this way to point out symptomatic elements in history and politics. His aim was not to look for “wicked people”, but to indicate goals, methods and the multiplicity of the networks and their interconnections, and in particular the spiritual-occult background of political manoeuvrings. Against the circles that can be termed “Brotherhoods of the Shadows” resistance on the level of consciousness is necessary. Wakeful and insightful individuals fulfil through their cognitive efforts a corrective or healing function as a contribution to the goals of mankind’s evolution.

The subject in its full scope is complex and many-layered. It includes not just politics and history, but also economic, scientific and financial practices and relations, questions of geopolitics, ethnology and national psychology, the manipulation of the whole of civilized humanity with the help of ideologies and half-truths and untruth disseminated on a daily basis etc. By way of an example our aim here is to indicate the methods underlying the machinations of the “Brotherhoods of the Shadows”, which should make possible an in-depth understanding even for the unprepared reader. For the further study of individual themes we recommend the literature mentioned throughout the book.

The Editor

⁴ Rudolf Steiner, 18.10.1918, GA 185.

I. Shadows over Humanity

If nothing but the outer materialistic impulses work in the world and in human heads and human hearts (...) then (...) the entire civilized earth will be gradually enveloped in terrible chains of slavery and never know joy again.
Rudolf Steiner.¹

Humanity as a whole now stands at the end of the first part of an attack, launched in two stages, of those counter-forces which are using economic power in the striving to set up a world government. “The endeavour of the Ahrimanic powers”, so Rudolf Steiner said, “is to bring the earth to a state of total rigidity”.²

The first stage of the attack is nearing completion. Materialism, a hardening process, has already been victorious, has densified the earth and almost shut it off, as if with a thick plate of armour, from the instreaming of the heavenly forces of light. The decisive diabolical attack on what remains of spirituality and the centres for its cultivation is still to come.

The second wave of the attack culminates in the appearance of the Antichrist. His name is secretly coded in the Apocalypse.³ Rudolf Steiner describes the powers of darkness as hierarchical spiritual beings at different stages of development.⁴ The Antichrist (Sorat) is the most powerful of the adversaries. Since the beginning of the Christian era, particularly strong inworkings of this being have taken place in a rhythm of around 666 years. In the 7th century he gave the impulse for the Academy of Gondishapur⁵ and in the 13th century for the destruction of the Order of the Knights Templar. The influence shows itself in an increasing materialism in human life, on all levels, and especially in the fact that human beings are prevented from coming to an understanding of the Cosmic Christ. In this way an earthly world disconnected from the spiritual cosmos is to be created. The adversary of the Christ attempts to penetrate unnoticed

¹ Rudolf Steiner, 31.12.1918, GA 187.

² Rudolf Steiner, 15.11.1919, GA 191.

³ Revelation 13,18. The value of the letters written in Hebrew – read from right to left – is: Taw = 400, Resch = 200, Waw = 6, Samech = 60 = 6 6 6. Adding the vowels to the consonants we obtain the name of the Sun demon: Sorat. See also Rudolf Steiner, 22.4.1907, GA 104a and 27.4.1907, GA 96.

⁴ Rudolf Steiner, GA 110 and GA 136. – The angelic Hierarchies were described in the 5th/6th century by Dionysius Areopagita in *the Hierarchies of the Angels and the Church*.

⁵ Rudolf Steiner, 16.10.1918, GA 182 and 12.10.1918, GA 184.

into human consciousnesses in order to bring about confusion and disorder. Everything spiritual in a positive sense – in that it is healthy and in keeping with the needs of the time – is to be suppressed. To achieve this, Sorat makes use of those circles of human beings which can be described as “Brotherhoods of the Shadows”.⁶

The spiritual science of Rudolf Steiner is the impulse that reaches sufficiently deeply to overcome the crisis of the present cycle and lead humanity into a new period. Even as much around us is in a state of decline and the meaning of words and signs is no longer clear, the statements of Rudolf Steiner, as aids to our understanding, can train our consciousness and work to healing effect. It is important to know these background facts and connections, as it will be of decisive significance at the end of our cycle, the epoch of the consciousness-soul,⁷ to see through the veils that conceal the truth from us.

The catastrophes and the suffering also have positive and constructive aspects. Through the shocks which the soul experiences, a certain loosening of the higher bodies occurs, enabling change to take place in the thought and life-processes of human beings. Certain individuals attain in this way a new spiritual depth. Just as the call stood before those about to enter the Greek temples: “Change your way of thinking” (metanoiete), so does it seem to stand, written in spiritual letters, before many people today.

In order that, on the one hand, what is good and right can come about, the possibility must be given to err from the right path and for poison to have its effect (...) In order that the individual can come to such a spiritual life, the counter-image must be present: the corresponding possibility of erring from it onto the path of grey or black magic. It is not possible otherwise. Just as you as a human being cannot hold yourself if you do not have the earth beneath you to provide you with firm ground to stand on, so there can be no pursuit of the light-filled spiritual life without the resistance that has to be permitted, without the possibility of resistance expressly for life's higher spiritual levels.⁸

⁶ Rudolf Steiner, 26.12.1916, GA 173b.

⁷ According to Rudolf Steiner this period lasts for around 2000 years, beginning in the 15th century.

⁸ Rudolf Steiner, 1.1.1917, GA 173b.

Thus everything is leading inexorably towards a mighty battle in the spirit. We are living in a time that is shaken by crises and is telling us to wake up at last! And yet this Apocalyptic age is *not* heralding the end of humanity. The convulsions are there to break open the doors that were bolted shut in the Gabrielic age⁹ and have since then allowed us no access to the spiritual world. The Archangel Gabriel as the spirit of the preceding epoch prepared, developed and transformed the brains of human beings so that they are now able to receive the higher science, which is to, and must come into the world under the present Spirit of the age, Michael.¹⁰

Now the time has come, to burst the chains through which humanity was bound to the earthly realm. This Apocalyptic element – in the sense represented by John the Evangelist – is unleashed by the good angels who work for the benefit of mankind. Even if it is not easy to understand: in these catastrophes the spiritual world comes closer again to us human beings and shakes us out of our sleep. In us and around us a battle of growing intensity is taking place in the spiritual. But our human consciousness gains through this ever more strength and mobility, enabling it to perceive and experience this approach of the spiritual world. Here the impulse of Michael becomes effective. The living knowledge of these connections prevents fear from taking over and paralysing us. For, fears darken the human soul and shut the human being off from the in-working of the light-filled cosmic forces.

Wakeful contemporaries are developing a picture of the powers that are hostile to man, and whose working will be described in this book. We will give an account of historical events and, operating in the background, the “Circles of the Left”, as they are known in occultism. Such a description of hidden forces working behind the outer scene of world history will be met with prejudicial judgements. The facts presented will be rejected and dismissed as misrepresentations by those with standardized opinions. Their tendency is to dismiss accounts of these conspiratorial *practices* as wild phantasy or as conspiracy *theories*. The problem lies in an inadequate development of thinking: people live with empty words and slogans which do not permit rational reflection and cannot take account of the objective facts; in a world of inner representation that corresponds to “public [publicized] opinions” referred to by Nietzsche as “a

⁹ Rudolf Steiner, 22.11.1919, GA 194.

¹⁰ Rudolf Steiner, 23.10.1907, GA 266/I.

soap bubble inflated by the press” or also “collective stupidity”. To latch on to prevailing opinions meets a widespread need for comfort and convenience, also in one’s thinking, and conceals the fear or powerlessness of those who belong to the general masses.

Gustave Le Bon defined this phenomenon in a few sentences:

The masses have never thirsted for truth. They turn away from the facts they dislike, and prefer to idolize error if it has succeeded in seducing them. Whoever knows how to deceive them, easily becomes their master; anyone who tries to enlighten them will always become their victim.¹¹

The ease with which certain opinions become universal, is connected above all with the inability of most people to form an opinion of their own on the basis of their own particular conclusions.¹²

Pure and simple assertion with no reason or proof given is a sure way to instil an idea into the soul of the masses. The more categorical a statement, and the freer it is of proofs and evidence, the more awe it inspires.¹³

The masses only have opinions that have been instilled into them, and never rational ones.¹⁴

Belief in any brash or bold assertion is achieved through the fact that the human being of the masses lets opinions be instilled into him, and is glad to accept them without inquiring whether they are rational. Moreover, he does not wish to take the trouble to acquire the knowledge that would be necessary for the forming of an independent judgement. Joseph Pulitzer summed up the positive value of the press and the means intended to oppose it in the following well-meant word of advice:

There is no crime, no sleight of hand, no trick, no swindle, no vice that does not depend on secrecy. Bring these secrets to the light of day, describe them, make them ridiculous before everybody’s eyes. And sooner or later public opinion will send them packing. Making things known is per-

¹¹ Gustave Le Bon, *Psychologie der Massen*, 1982, (1895), p. 78.

¹² Gustave Le Bon, *Psychologie der Massen*, 1982, (1895), p. 87.

¹³ Gustave Le Bon, *Psychologie der Massen*, 1982, (1895), p. 89.

¹⁴ Gustave Le Bon, *Psychologie der Massen*, 1982, (1895), p. 133.

haps not enough – but it is the only means without which all the others will fail.¹⁵

“Those in the Dark can’t be seen”¹⁶

What sort of people are they, who make such efforts that are hostile to development? The dark powers, which can be called the “Brotherhoods of the Shadows”, are very difficult to trace, as it is their fundamental principle to operate from hidden places. From there they try to work upon human passions and make use of the sensual forces in particular.¹⁷ A constant battle is waged between the forces that serve the purification of the passions and those whose aim is to increase sensuality. One power is striving to spiritualize the Earth again, while the other, also known in occultism as the “power of the Left”, wishes to densify the Earth ever further and conjure forth the illusion of a future earthly Paradise.¹⁸

A clearly well-informed author described the aims of the “black” Lodge as follows:

Always in times of peaceful development, political and economic turmoil, always in years and decades of noticeable change and transformation, there awakens in many people, more distinctly than in time of peaceful development, a felt recognition that the world and humanity are in the hands of a secret society which is pursuing its own egoistic aims. Without a thought, these powerful people sacrifice nations and continents to their aims, “make” war and peace, fortune and misfortune of mankind. These “secret rulers” of humanity are great magicians and managers, but their magic is as dark as their selfish aims and their managerism darkens the future of nations.¹⁹

The aims of the “Black” Lodge are alienation from God and from spirit and the shackling of human souls to the earth. This working is directed against human

¹⁵ Perry Reisewitz, *Pressefreiheit unter Druck: Gefahren, Fälle, Hintergründe*, 2008, p. 43.

¹⁶ There is no direct connection to the book of Johannes Mario Simmel, *Die im Dunkeln sieht man nicht* (1985), but chapter 16, p. 89-128 is worth reading.

¹⁷ As an example one could mention tendencies in modern music. See also Fernando Salazar Bañol, *Die okkulte Seite des Rock*, 1993.

¹⁸ Rudolf Steiner, 17.-18.10.1905, GA 93a.

¹⁹ Ebernius, *Europa im Banne dunkler Gewalten ... Magier, Manager und Massen. – Die Ziele der «schwarzen» Loge, Morgen/Neues Europa*, 15.9.1954, p. 5.

evolution. The same aim is served by the programme suggested as early as 1903 by K. S. Mereshkovsky in his "Earthly Paradise": to administer the Earth as an industrial Trust.²⁰

In 1918 the German mystic Gustav Meyrink produced a manuscript which was published in 1921 under the title "The White Dominican". Clairvoyant in his foreknowledge, Meyrink lets a representative of the dark powers say the following in his book:

'From time immemorial there has lived on earth a circle of men which directs the fate of mankind (...) All great popular leaders are instruments in its hand, unless they were initiates of this circle. Our aim is to abolish the differences between poor and rich, between master and servant, wise and ignorant, the rulers and the oppressed, and to create out of the vale of tears called Earth a Paradise, a land in which the word "suffering" is unknown. The burden under which humanity groans is the cross of personality. The world-soul has been sundered into individual beings; this gave rise to disorder of all kinds. Out of the many to restore unity is our will (...). Therefore, we fathers of the Order have sent out streams of thought into the world, which seize hold of brains like wildfire in order to burn to ashes the megalomania of the doctrine of individualism – War of all for all!²¹

"Out of the many, one" is "E Pluribus Unum" in Latin, and is to be found, remarkably enough, on the one-dollar note. The theme of the earthly Paradise that is striven for, also appears again and again. Here, striving is to be directed entirely towards the earthly, material realm.

Meyrink's clairvoyant vision is now in process of realization before our eyes, in East and West. Orwell showed in his novel where the rulership of the "great, dark Ones" must lead. He gave a picture of their black Hierarchy.

Humanity today is in the hands of these dismal powers. One could also say: in the clutches of the "black Lodge", whose dominion, again in East and West, is only of this world. They wish to rob human beings of their self, they aim for the collective, for the massing together of humanity. Their "Paradise" is a great, wide pasture for a mindless flock, which they intend to shear of its wool.

²⁰ Konstantin S. Mereschkovskij, *Das irdische Paradies oder ein Winternachtstraum – Märchen aus dem 27. Jahrhundert*, 1997 (First printing 1903).

²¹ Ebernius, *Europa im Banne dunkler Gewalten ... Magier, Manager und Massen. – Die Ziele der «schwarzen» Loge, Morgen/Neues Europa*, 15.9.1954, Nr. 18, p. 5.

It is entirely improbable that, in the case of this "black Lodge", we are dealing with what today we call an "organization". Its community rests, not upon written statutes, but on the spiritual aberration whose number is 666.

Standing over against them is the "white" Lodge. Its kingdom is not of this world and for this reason it sets up neither kingdoms nor great wealth. Its task is, not to direct humanity and thus deprive it of independence, but to accompany it through the depths of human wanderings on the paths of error. To knowledge of a better kind.²²

Ceremonial Magic

Certain Societies use solemn rituals which are based on customs originating in the distant past, and whose real meaning is kept secret by those who stand at the head of such Societies. For this reason, one can also speak of "secret Societies"; also, the ceremonies remain hidden from outsiders. Masonic Lodges are a suitable instrument for these secret Societies.²³ If, in such circumstances, groups of human beings are brought together, a community with great power, also on a spiritual level, comes into being. Those in the secret Societies who have knowledge can make use of these forces for the realization of their own intentions.

C. G. Harrison (b. 1855), who was familiar with occult secrets, pointed to certain rituals of ceremonial magic.²⁴ Through their use it is possible, by means of psychic influences, to restrict higher human capacities. This is called in occultism "the retardation of striving". In this way, in a kind of spiritual sleep, phantastic stories are conjured up, which are used by powerful, dark brotherhoods to manipulate people. An effective antidote is to become conscious of such processes.

In the western world such groupings are particularly widespread. They use certain ceremonies in order to affect the physical body. There is a special focus on the brain and spinal cord. The materialistic attitude of many of our contemporaries is enhanced in this way. When people join together in Lodges, or clubs and associations influenced by them, they can be used as instruments by the leading figures. These leaders have the power to guide their members towards certain goals that remain hidden from the world at large and also from the

²² Ebernius, *Europa im Banne dunkler Gewalten ... Magier, Manager und Massen. – Die Ziele der «schwarzen» Loge, Morgen/Neues Europa*, 15.9.1954, No. 18, p. 5.

²³ Rudolf Steiner, 21.2.1920, GA 196.

²⁴ C. G. Harrison, *Das Transcendentale Weltenall*, 1897, p. 34.

lower degrees of the Lodge. Being raised to so-called higher degrees is, up to a certain level, just eyewash, which flatters the vanity of the personality thus promoted, and reinforces his egoism.

We owe to Rudolf Steiner many important indications regarding these secret ceremonial practices:

It is really the case that, in certain Lodges working with ancient ceremonies, the one who could understand what was going on said to himself: Here the soul of a human being is already present, who will only descend in the future to the earth. – Before the human being descends to the earth, this soul visits one such occult Lodge and on the feeling level there is an enormous amount that can be drawn from it. Just as the human soul hovered about the mummy, being still in bondage to the mummy, so to speak, similarly, the spirits of as yet unborn human beings hover around in occult Lodges as if in an existence that is lived out in advance. This does not come about through intellectual thoughts, as modern people have them in any case, they don't need them; but when they are in their occult Lodges in the right soul-mood, they receive messages from unborn human beings, from human beings who are still in their pre-earthly existence and who can now be present as a result of these ceremonies. And these human beings feel the spiritual world and can also speak out of the spiritual world.²⁵

When people take part in meetings in which ceremonies take place which work in the way we have indicated, then:

(...) the possibility is created for the dead, together with other spirits, to work upon those who are caught up in a ring of the kind that is brought about by ceremonial magic. In this way, however, the materialism of our time can be, as it were, over-materialized. Imagine that a human being is materialistically-minded through and through, and this is true of a huge number of people in the West. Now this materialistic attitude is considerably intensified. Then he has the urge to exert an influence on the material world, not just while he is living in the physical body, but also after death. Such is his aim: When I die I want to have some sort of place through which I can work upon the living people I have left behind on the earth or who have been trained for my purposes. There are, indeed, in our time human beings whose materialistic urge is so strong that they strive for situations to be set up that will enable them to carry out certain things in the

²⁵ Rudolf Steiner, 4.9.1922, GA 216.

material world after their death. And the kind of instruments through which the human being secures for himself material control after death, are places for the practice of certain forms of ceremonial magic.

(...) imagine the following: A number of people have been brought together in a certain brotherhood. To begin with, these people know: others have gone ahead of us, who developed, to such a high degree, thoughts of power and domination, that their lives were not enough for them to be realized, and they therefore want to realize them after death. For these human beings we will create a circle, and through what we do by means of the ceremonial, magical rituals we perform, they work into our bodies. This gives us greater power (...) when we meet other, weak human beings who stand outside our societies (...) When we speak a word, when we deliver an address, these dead souls work through us because we are prepared by our involvement in the rituals of ceremonial magic.

It makes a big difference, whether a person is simply, one might say, standing honestly within the cultural process of our time, and then, from this honest position in the cultural process of our time, delivers a speech in Parliament or writes an article for a magazine, or whether a person is standing within circles of ceremonial magic, for in the latter case he is strengthened with the power-impulses of certain dead individuals. And if, with these impulses, he now delivers a parliamentary speech or writes an article for a journal, he works with much more powerful effect for what he wants to achieve, than if he did not have this in the background.²⁶

If someone carries out his political-ideological tasks, strengthened by the impulses of these dead persons, he has at his disposal a suggestive power in his written and above all his spoken utterances, which causes his will-intentions and his aims to be taken up by the subconscious mind of his contemporaries. Thus, with this help from beyond the threshold he possesses magical powers to influence his fellow human beings.

But these people, who in this way have been drawn into super-materialism, strive to attain an Ahrimanic immortality, not, however in the Divine-spiritual but in the earthly-physical realm. For them ...

... the Society which they have joined provides a certain guarantee that forces of theirs, which should actually live only until their physical death,

²⁶ Rudolf Steiner, 20.1.1917, GA 173c.

live on after their death (...) Today there exist Societies which are – viewed spiritually, occultistically – “Insurance Societies for Ahrimanic immortality”!

And only if one understands how in such Societies the, so to speak, living testaments are conserved – not the testaments written while they were alive, but the living testaments, the forces that work after death, but ought not to do so – does one notice something of the magical power exercised by such Societies through the fact that they often imprint the stamp of truth onto falsehood. And it is a significant magical procedure to disseminate falsehood in the world in such a way that it has the semblance of truth, for, in this working of the false as something [seemingly] true there lies a tremendous force of evil.²⁷

Invariably, only few people are familiar with these things, as such Societies are, as a rule, so organized that the ceremonial magic works upon the naive and unsuspecting, the many human beings with a need to enter into contact with the spiritual world by means of symbolic rituals. Such people can be received into the circle of ceremonial magic. A small number then join together, who use as instruments the others who have entered the circle. This danger exists in the case of all so-called occult Societies with higher degrees, whose aims always remain a secret for the lower degrees.

Thus the leaders of the secret Societies seek to activate by occult means the spiritual forces of their dead predecessors, who wish to continue working from the realm of the dead into the earthly in order to attain thereby a material immortality.

In this connection we must consider the question of the angels who stand in a relation to human beings. Every human being stands in a relation to his angel. However, since the Egypto-Chaldean time some of them have remained behind and become Ahrimanic. The participant in ceremonial magic also comes into a connection with these Angeloi, so we are told by Rudolf Steiner.

These retarded Angeloi play (...) a significant role in such occult Societies; there, they are important helpers and important guiding spirits. Thus there is much in such occult Societies that has the express aim of carrying over into the present an Egypto-Chaldean element in the old way. If it is not just hocus-pocus, which is the case with the merely so-called occult Societies, but if it really stands within the occult life, then it takes place under the influence of retarded beings from the hierarchy of the Angeloi, who play a

²⁷ Rudolf Steiner, 20.1.1917, GA 173c.

leading role. Thus we have indicated those beings of the supersensible hierarchy closest to us, who are sought out by such Societies.²⁸

Forms of Rulership

The first historically recorded form of rulership is the theocracy in the Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian kingdoms and with the Pharaohs of Egypt. In these cultures the ruler was a God, and those who counselled him were regarded as human beings of Divine nature. The worldly realm was a Divine realm. To aid one's understanding it is helpful to familiarize oneself with the quite different consciousness of people in those times. For them, the difference between the physical and spiritual worlds was not so great as for people today. The ruler was a son of Heaven, who has appeared on earth. Wars therefore meant something different than in later times. Conquests served the morally justified aim of extending God's kingdom, and as religion in the sense of re-connecting was unknown, the peoples of conquered regions worshipped the new ruler as their new God. They “knew” that the intentions of the Gods are realized on earth.

Theocracy was replaced by kingly majesty, the bearers of which were human beings sent by God, appointed “by the grace of God”, and by the side of the ruler stood the priesthood, also anointed “by the grace of God”. The second imperialism begins to develop and the idea of the Church gradually emerges. It grows apparent in, for example, the character of the “Holy Roman Empire of German Nation” and began, in the true sense, with Charlemagne. The ruler receives through the anointing ceremony the right to exercise control over worldly affairs. He becomes Emperor. This view of things, which was anchored in the popular consciousness, finally came to an end with Napoleon 1st.

Parallel to what is in decline, the new emerges. The urge arises for freedom and self-determination of the nation and of the single individual. The seeds of this trend, which grows ever more universal, are to be found at the beginning of the modern age. It leads initially to parliamentarianism and to the at least formal abolition of the ruling Houses, or to their consignment to purely representative duties.²⁹

²⁸ Rudolf Steiner, 20.1.1917, GA 173c.

²⁹ At the same time enormous influence is wielded by certain circles of the nobility. For example, the core of the Bilderberg group is descended from royalty.

The people are granted the “freedom” to choose by way of elections their representatives in the parliaments. If, in the eyes of human beings, the ruler in theocracy was still a kind of image of God, and in the imperial form of rulership a symbol for the inworking of the Divine, these conceptions turn into mere empty formulations in the parliaments. Imperialism in the real sense begins to form. It takes root in the 17th century in the, particularly suited, English-speaking peoples and comes to expression in the 19th century in colonialism. It is occult Societies working in the background, which we should understand as the impulse-givers for this independent economic life. The significance of such Societies has grown continually since the 18th century. In the 20th century they have been concentrating on the goal of economic world rulership, an economic imperialism.

Thus it is important to understand how, with the transition [to the fifth] from the fourth post-Atlantean period, where the life of commerce still stood under those impulses from the spiritual world – as is indicated in the story of Good Gerhard – the commercial element was drawn over into a different, occult, realm. This occult world is led by what are called the “Brothers of the Shadows”, who preserve in a certain way basic principles of this or that kind. These people can, however, become extremely dangerous if these principles – as seen from their point of view – are betrayed.³⁰

The political mechanism can also be viewed in a grotesque light, as Rudolf Steiner shows in a lecture:

Occultistic people, standing in the background, are often – forgive the expression – just “ones”, nothing more than “ones”, and this is of no great significance; they need something else – they need zeroes. Zeroes are not “ones”; but [if you add a zero to a one] you straight away get a ten. And if you add on still more zeroes – each zero is only a zero, but if the “one” is there somewhere, then you have got a lot, a thousand, for example, and if you hide the “one”, then the zeroes are there [so it seems]; but the zeroes need only to be combined in the right way with the “ones”, and you don’t even need to know very much about the way they are combined with the “ones”.³¹

The ones are therefore potentized in their effect by the zeroes. And Rudolf Steiner shows other aspects of such mechanisms:

³⁰ Rudolf Steiner, 26.12.1916, GA 173b.

³¹ Rudolf Steiner, 17.12.1916, GA 173a.

(...) the things that are known in these circles flow over into reality. They also flow across into the instincts of those people who then stand in their place out in the world as the representative politicians, even though they may only be acting out of political instinct. (...) They only need to take up into their instincts that which lies in the direction of their forces. Such things really go on; this does happen.³²

Who are, then, the “Brothers of the Shadows”? One could perhaps imagine them as something akin to high priests of the powers of darkness, as people with occult capacities who stand in connection with anti-Christian super-earthly powers, retarded and retarding beings. These beings are Angels that are called “evil” by us human beings, and work counter to the rightful course of the evolution of mankind. In the wider cosmic context they, too, have their justification and their working as so-called forces of opposition acquires a deeper meaning. Nevertheless, we human beings are faced again and again with the decision, in whose spirit we think, feel and act.

The “Brothers of the Shadows” inspire long-term strategies, which are taken up all too willingly by certain circles who wish to implement them. They cause their marionettes to dance on all levels of politics, culture, economy and finance. Elements that are employed to attract the outside world are an intellectual-materialistic mindset combined with a striving for power and money. Simple folk are distracted from these manoeuvres through being kept busy in the struggle for survival or, on the other hand, tranquillized with amusements.

But we would warn explicitly against oversimplification, apportionment of blame, scapegoating and generalizations, according to which now the Jews, now the Illuminati, now the Freemasons are the ones responsible for all the bad in the world. The truth is far more complex because these “streams” cited as examples consist of manifold groups with different interests. Élitist circles within these “streams” dominate, however, and claim to represent the whole. We wish here to present, as far as possible without prejudice and with no claim to exhaustiveness, some facts and connections.

A power élite consists of people who play varied roles. They are in a position, thanks to shared access to various levels of power – e.g. sanctions – to force through decisions that are favourable to them and have far-reaching effects.

³² Rudolf Steiner, 1.12.1918, GA 186.

But all forms of rulership or any exercise of power only works if there are people who can be used as its servants. The soul-disposition in such a Society has been described by a veteran of psychology, Erich Fromm:

The fact that people regard uniforms and titles as qualities that bestow authority is not something that happens entirely by itself. Those who wield authority and those who benefit from it have to convince people of this fiction and send to sleep their realistic, that is to say, critical thinking capacity. Every thinking person knows the methods of propaganda, methods through which the power of critical judgement is destroyed and the understanding is lulled to sleep until it bows to clichés which stupefy human beings because they rob them of the ability to trust their eyes and their power of judgement. This fiction, in which they believe, makes them blind to reality.³³

The purpose of this book is to point to the activity of the “Brothers of the Shadows”, who plan, not only to take control of the world’s natural resources, but also to destroy the culture of Middle Europe. Rudolf Steiner said on 25.12.1919 that the intention is to “rain down onto humanity the death and the sickness of culture” and this “downpour” is “a gift of the Asuras, just as the lie is a gift of Ahri-man and selfishness is a gift of Lucifer”.³⁴ We could safely say that these three forces of opposition in evolution, Lucifer, Ahriman and the Asuras, reunite their most important servants in the “Brothers of the Shadows” and their henchmen.

On the previous day Rudolf Steiner had said that the actual victor in the hostilities of 1914-1918 was the Anglo-American impulse. And that this will carry in the future the responsibility for what happens to humanity. Rudolf Steiner explained further, that the German people had been crushed and would never be able to rise again, with the consequence that it would no longer bear the responsibility as a nation – as opposed to individual responsibility – for humanity’s future. “External domination will be easy to acquire. It will be acquired by means of forces that are due to no effort or merit of one’s own.”³⁵ And on a later occasion Rudolf Steiner became still more concrete:

The Second World War, which has to develop between Asia and America and what lies between them, has to develop with absolute necessity, for underlying economic reasons. You hear, no doubt, how the call sounds forth

³³ Erich Fromm / Rainer Funk, *Analytische Charaktertheorie*, 1980, p. 300.

³⁴ Rudolf Steiner, 15.12.1919, GA 194.

³⁵ Rudolf Steiner, 14.12.1919, GA 194.

from the lower layers of society: World revolution! This idea of world revolution, the only way of enveloping it in fog and mist will be to unleash the catastrophe of the Second World War. There is simply no alternative.³⁶

Walter Lippmann spoke of the value of historiography and of the methods and goals of the psychological warfare waged against the German Reich.³⁷ Military occupation of the enemy state and the condemnation of the leading caste of the conquered nation in war-crime tribunals are, he said, the most important means to clinch the victory.

Of decisive importance in this connection is that the war propaganda of the victors should find entry into the history books of the conquered, and should be believed also by the next generation.³⁸ Although Lippman is referring to the Germans, if the truth were known, it is not only the Germans who are subject to this re-education, but practically every one of us. There is no room, therefore, for national resentment or racism. A thought-provoking quote from US President Harry S. Truman tells us: “History is always written by the victors.”³⁹

The Rockefeller Foundation donated money to the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) so that it would commission Harvard Professor William Langer to write a “history” of the World War II – a fact revealed in an article by US historian Charles Austin Beard. In this way the Rockefeller Foundation and the CFR wanted to prevent “a repetition of what they call in the vernacular ‘the debunking journalistic campaign following World War One’”. Neither journalists nor any other persons should, once more, “examine too closely and criticize too freely the official propaganda and the official statements relative to our ‘basic aims and activities’ during World War II”.⁴⁰

We have to do with, not the *science* of history, but the *politics* of history. The latter is concerned, not with the recording of events from the past, but the writ-

³⁶ Rudolf Steiner, 2.1.1921, GA 338, only in the 1986 edition.

³⁷ Walter Lippmann (1889-1974) under President Woodrow Wilson head of the unofficial propaganda Ministry of the U.S.A., and from the 20’s to the 50’s of the last century one of the most influential journalists in the U.S.A.

³⁸ Hellmut Diwald, *Deutschland – was ist das?*, in Wolfgang Venohr (editor), *Ohne Deutschland geht es nicht*, 1985, p. 60.

³⁹ Hellmut Diwald, *Deutschland – was ist das?*, in Wolfgang Venohr (editor), *Ohne Deutschland geht es nicht*, 1985, p. 60.

⁴⁰ Charles A. Beard, *Who’s to Write the History of the War?* In: *The Saturday Evening Post*, 4.10.1947, p. 172.

ing up of preferred theses of a few people with a special interest in their dissemination. These accounts are dictated by interest and make use of falsification, glorification, suppression of information, and exaggeration. “History would appear to be ... not a record of events from the past, but a recital of claims made by certain people who have a special interest in the dissemination of these views.”⁴¹ One can therefore never be critical enough of official historical accounts; they should not be accepted at face value. The real truth can only be discovered on the basis of critical research.

Methods such as these are used for the re-education of people in their historical consciousness; the boundaries between truth and falsehood are blurred, with the result that the “warm, world-wide interest” that is necessary “if the development of humanity is not to be destroyed”, cannot unfold.⁴² ... Discovery of the truth requires not just the reading of newspapers and books, but over and above this we need to think-through the information, rewrite inwardly what has been published and, in our thinking, translate it into the truth.⁴³ How can this be done? One way is to consider the events in connection with what has gone before and what comes afterwards. This helps us to recognize threads, intentions and aims. Often the general public, like the ancient Romans, is distracted with “panem et circenses”. But this honest quest for the truth is necessary, as only then can knowledge be acquired of the actual tasks of the Middle Europeans. And this process of inner development is of special importance.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Christopher Knight / Robert Lomas, *Der zweite Messias*, 2002, p. 16.

⁴² Rudolf Steiner, 14.10.1909, GA 58.

⁴³ See Rudolf Steiner 1.12.1918, GA 186: “... because it is a law that if one knows these impulses, if one takes an interest in them, if one receives them into one’s consciousness, they can be corrected in a certain way and guided in a different direction ...”

⁴⁴ See Rudolf Steiner, 8.12.1918, GA 186: “... The German can only become something. That is why it is so difficult with German culture, that is why in German and Austrian-German culture there are only single individualities who have taken their development into their own hands, who stand out, while the broad mass of people want to be ruled over, do not want to concern themselves with thought ...”