

THE SOCIAL AND ANTISOCIAL FORCES IN THE HUMAN BEING

This lecture was given by Rudolf Steiner in Bern on 12 December, 1918.

It is published in German as the seventh lecture in the cycle, *Die Soziale Grundforderungen unsere Zeit in Geanderte Zeitlage*, 1963, Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung, Dornach. It is published in agreement with the Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung in a revised translation by Christopher Schaefer.

The times themselves speak clearly enough, demanding that we should apply to the conditions and activities of these times those feelings and modes of thinking which we have acquired from our studies of Spiritual Science. Not only do outward circumstances speak clearly, but our conceptions of Spiritual Science also justify us in a certain way, especially in what we have to say today. In many of our basic ways of looking at the world, we have started from one fundamental fact of human evolution, from the fact that this evolution is accomplished by successive stages of which the most important and most related to us began with the great Atlantean Catastrophe, namely this Post-Atlantean Epoch. Four periods of it have passed by, while we are now living in the Fifth Post-Atlantean Period. This period of development, which began in the 15th century of our Christian era, is the one which we can designate as the period of the Spiritual, or Consciousness Soul. Other soul forces have been especially evolved in other periods of civilization. In our civilization, which has followed on the Greco-Latin civilization from the first half of the 15th century, humanity must gradually develop the Spiritual Soul. The preceding period, which commenced in the 8th century B.C. and finished in the 15th century after Christ, was pre-eminently the period in which humanity developed the Intellectual or Mind Soul.

Now we need not give a full description of these cultural stages, but we will particularly look at what is a peculiarity of our age, this age which has comparatively few centuries behind it. Each age lasts on average about 2,000 years. Therefore, much remains yet to be done in this period of the Spiritual Soul. The task of humanity-of civilized humanity in this age of the Spiritual Soul will be that of laying hold of the whole human being and of making him entirely dependent on himself, of lifting into the full light of consciousness much of that which in earlier periods man felt instinctively and judged instinctively.

Many present difficulties and much that is chaotic around us in our era, become quite explicable when one knows that the task of our era is to raise that which is instinctive to the plane of consciousness. What is instinctive in us happens to a certain degree by itself, but to achieve a conscious result one must make an inward effort, above all, to begin to think truly with one's whole being. Man tries to avoid this; he does not willingly take a conscious part in the shaping of world conditions. Here is a point over which many are indeed deceived today. Men today think the following: Well, today we live in the period of the development of thought. People are proud of the fact that there is more thinking nowadays than in the past. But this is an illusion, one of the many illusions in which humanity lives today. This comprehension of thought on which people pride themselves today is mainly instinctive. Only when the instinctive nature which has appeared in the evolution of humanity and which so proudly speaks of thought; only when this instinctive nature becomes instead an active element, when the intellect does not depend merely upon the brain but springs from the whole man, when it is separated from rationalism and is lifted to the plane of Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition; only then will that gradually emerge which seeks to emerge in the Fifth Post-Atlantean Period, the period of the Spiritual Soul. That which meets man today and which is clearly indicated even in the worldly

thought of the present epoch is something which one continuously needs to mention—the appearance of the so-called Social Question.

But he who has earnestly studied our anthroposophically oriented Spiritual Science will easily perceive that the essential impulse in the shaping of the social order (whether belonging to the State or not) must come from that which human beings can develop out of themselves, as it is this which regulates the relationship between people. Everything which the human being develops out of himself naturally corresponds to certain impulses which are ultimately found in our soul and spirit life. If one looks at the matter in this way, one is able to ask: Then must not attention, above all, be directed to the social impulses or to the social instincts, movements or forces emerging in human nature? We can, if you like, call these social impulses, social drives; but we must keep in mind that they should not only be thought of as mere unconscious instincts since when we speak of social instincts today, we must take into account that we live in the age of the Consciousness Soul and that these drives seek to press up into consciousness.

Now, if these things are to count for us, then we must find social impulses which seek to become reality. But in so doing, we must recognize the terrible one-sidedness of our age, which should of course not be deplored, but which should be looked at calmly because it has to be overcome. Man has such a great inclination in our day to look at things one-sidedly. But a pendulum cannot swing from the central point out to one side without also swinging back to the other. Just as little as a pendulum can swing to one side only, can social impulses of men be expressed by only one side. This is because the social impulses of man are quite naturally opposed by antisocial impulses in the human being. Precisely because one finds social impulses or drives in human nature, one also finds the opposite. This fact must above all be considered.

The social leaders and agitators, for example, live in the illusion that they need only spread certain ideas or need only appeal to a class of man who is willing and disposed (provided ideas are there) to help forward the social impulse. It is an illusion to act in this way, for in so doing one forgets that if social forces are working, then anti-social forces are also present. What we must be able to do today is to look these things straight in the face without illusion. It is only from the viewpoint of Spiritual Science that they can be looked at straightly, without illusion. One is tempted to say that people are sleeping through the most important thing of all in life when they do not begin to look at life from the viewpoint of Spiritual Science.

We must ask ourselves: What is the relation between people with regard to social and antisocial forces? We need to see that the relationship between people is fundamentally a complicated matter. When one person meets another, I would say we must look into the situation radically. Meetings of course point to differences which vary according to specific circumstances; but we must fix our eyes on the common characteristics, we must clearly see the common elements in the meeting, in the confrontation between one person and another. We must ask ourselves: What really happens then, not merely in that which presents itself to the senses, but in the total situation, when one person stands opposite another, when one person meets another? Nothing less than that a certain force works from one person to the other. The meeting of one with another leads to the working of a certain force between them. We cannot confront another person in life in indifference, not even in mere thoughts and feelings, even though we

may be separated from them by distance. If we have any kind of relation to other people, or any communication with them, then a force flows between us creating a bond. It is this fact which lies at the basis of social life and which, when broadened, is really the foundation for the social structure of humanity.

One sees this phenomenon most clearly when one thinks of the direct interchange between two people. The impression which one person makes on the other has the effect of lulling the other to sleep. Thus we frequently find in social life that one person gets lulled to sleepiness by the other with whom he has interchange. As a physicist might say: a 'latent tendency' is always there for one man to lull another to sleep in social relationships.

Why is this so? Well, we must see that this rests on a very important arrangement of man's total being. It rests on the fact that what we call social impulses, fundamentally speaking are only present in people of our present day consciousness during sleep. You are, in so far as you have not yet attained clairvoyance, really only penetrated by social forces when you are asleep. And only that which continues to work out of sleeping into waking conditions works into ordinary waking consciousness as a social impulse. When you know this, you do not need to be surprised when your social being seeks to lull you to sleep in your relationship with others. In the relationship between people the social impulse ought to develop. Yet it can only develop during sleep. Therefore in the relationship between people a tendency is shown for one person to dull the consciousness of the other so that a social relation may be established between them. This striking fact is evident to one who studies the realities of life. Above all things, our interchange with one another leads to dulling the consciousness of one another, in the interests of a social impulse between people.

Of course you cannot go about continually asleep in life. Yet the tendency to establish social impulses consists in, and expresses itself by, an inclination to sleep. That of which I speak goes on subconsciously of course, but it nevertheless actually penetrates our life continuously. Thus there exists a permanent disposition to fall asleep precisely for the building up of the social structure of humanity.

On the other hand, something else is also working. A perpetual struggle and opposition to falling asleep in social relationships is also present. If you meet a person you are continuously standing in a conflict situation in the following way: Because you meet him, the tendency to sleep always develops in you so that you may experience your relationship to him in sleep. But, at the same time, there is aroused in you the counter-force to keep yourself awake. This always happens in the meeting between people—a tendency to fall asleep, a tendency to keep awake. In this situation a tendency to keep awake has an antisocial character—the assertion of one's individuality, of one's personality, in opposition to the social structure of society. Simply because we are human beings, our soul-life swings to and fro between the social and the anti-social. And that which lives in us as these two forces, which may be observed between people communicating, can from an occult perspective be seen to govern our life. When we meet social arrangements and structures in society, even if these arrangements seem far-fetched from the seemingly wise consciousness of the present, they are still a manifestation of this pendulum between social and anti-social forces. The national economist may reflect upon what credit, capital and interest are. Yet even these things which make for regularity in social transactions are only outward swings of the pendulum between social and anti-social forces.

The person who seeks to find healing remedies for these times must intelligently and scientifically connect with these facts. For how is it that social demands arise in our time? Well, we live in the age of the Spiritual or Consciousness Soul in which man must become independent. But on what does this depend? It depends on people's ability during our Fifth Post-Atlantean Period to become self-assertive, to not allow themselves to be put to sleep. It is the anti-social forces which require development in this time, for consciousness to be present. It would not be possible for mankind in the present to accomplish its task if just these anti-social forces did not become ever more powerful; they are indeed the pillars on which personal independence rests. At present, humanity has no idea how much more powerful anti-social impulses must become, right on until the 30th century. For men to progress properly, antisocial forces must develop.

In earlier periods the development of the anti-social forces was not the spiritual bread of humanity's evolution. There was therefore no need to establish a counter-force. Indeed none was set. In our day, when a person on his own account, for his individual self, must evolve anti-social forces—which are evolving because man is now subjected to this evolution against which nothing will prevail—there must also come about that with which man resists them: a social structure which will balance this anti-social evolutionary tendency. The anti-social forces must work inwardly so that human beings may reach the height of their development. Outwardly, in social life, structures must work so that people do not totally lose their outer connections in life. Hence the social demands of the present. They can in a certain sense be seen as the demand for a justified outer balance to the inward, essentially anti-social evolutionary tendency of humanity in the Fifth Post-Atlantean Epoch.

From this you can see that nothing is accomplished by seeing things in a one-sided way. As men live nowadays, certain words (I will not say ideas or feelings), certain words have certain values. The word 'anti-social' arouses a degree of antipathy. It is considered as something evil. Very well; we perhaps need not trouble ourselves whether it is considered good or bad, since it is quite necessary. Be it good or bad, it is connected with the necessary tendencies of evolution in our time. It is simply sheer nonsense to say that the anti-social impulses must be resisted, for they cannot be resisted. One must grasp the essential inner development of mankind in our time, understand the evolutionary tendency. It is not a matter of finding prescriptions for resisting the anti-social forces; but of so shaping, of so arranging the social order, the structure, the organization of that which lies outside of the individual, that a counter-balance is present to that which works as anti-social force within human beings. Therefore it is vital for our time that the individual achieves independence, but that social forms provide a balance to this independence. Otherwise neither the individual nor society can develop properly.

In earlier periods there were tribes and classes. Our age strives against this. Our age is no longer able to divide a people into classes but must consider them in their totality and create social structures which take this totality into account. I said yesterday in my public lecture that slavery could exist in the Greco-Latin Period; one was the master, the other the slave. Then men were divided. Today we have as a remnant just that which disturbs the working-man so much, namely that his power to work is sold; in this way something belonging to him is organized from outside. This must go; it is only possible to organize socially what does not integrally belong to the human being, such as his position or the function to which he is appointed, in short, something which is not an inner part of the individual. All this which we acknowledge with regard to the necessary development of social democracy is really so, and must be so understood.

Just as no man can claim to do arithmetic if he has never learned his multiplication tables, so too he cannot claim to discuss social reforms and the like when he has never learned those things which we have just explained: namely, that socialism and antisocialism exist quite concretely in the way described. People in some of the most important positions in society, when they begin talking about present social demands, often appear to those who know, as individuals who wish to begin building a bridge over a rushing stream without having the most elementary knowledge of mechanics. They may well be able to put up a bridge, but it will collapse at the first opportunity. It seems with social leaders or with those who look after social institutions that their plans will be shown to be impossible; for the things of reality demand that we work with them, and not against them. It is therefore tremendously important that those things which form the backbone of our anthroposophical thought and consciousness should one day be taken seriously.

One of the impulses which ensoul us in the sphere of our anthroposophical movement is that we, in a sense, carry into the whole of man's life that which most people apply only to youth. We sit on the 'schoolbench' of life long after we have become grey. This is one of the differences between us and others, who believe that at the age of 25, or sometimes 26, when they have finished lazing about with their education, that they are ready for the rest of life, or at most there may still be some amusing additions to one's education.

But when we approach the very nerve of Spiritual Science, we feel that the human being really must continue to learn throughout his whole life if he wishes to tackle the tasks of life. It is vital that we should be permeated with this feeling. If we do not get rid of the belief that people can master everything with the faculties they have developed up to their 20th or 25th year, that then one only has to meet in Parliament or some other forum to decide all affairs, as long as we do not get rid of this view, we shall never be able to establish healthy conditions in the social structure of mankind.

The study of the reciprocal relation between the social and the anti-social is extremely significant for our time. Just this anti-social tendency is of the utmost importance to understand because it must make itself felt and must be developed in us. This anti-social spirit can only be held in balance by the social. But the social must be nursed, must be consciously cared for. And in our day this becomes truly more and more difficult because the antisocial forces are really in accord with our natural development.

The social element is essential; it must be cherished. We shall see that in this Fifth Post-Atlantean Period there is a tendency to take no notice of the social in merely acting naturally. Rather it must be acquired consciously in working with one's soul forces, while formerly it was felt instinctively in man. What is necessary and must be actively acquired is the interest of man in man. This is indeed the backbone of all social life.

It almost sounds paradoxical to say today that no clear conception of the so-called difficult ideas of economics can be gained if the interest of one for another does not increase, if people do not begin to compare the illusions which have sway in social life with present realities. One who really thinks about it recognizes the fact that simply by being a member of society one is in a complicated relation to others.

Imagine that you have a £5 note in your pocket, and you make use of this £5 note by going shopping one morning, and you spend the full £5. What does it mean that you go out with a £5 note in your pocket? The £5 note is really an illusion, it is worth nothing in reality (even if it is metal money. At this point I do not want to discuss the theories of the Metalists and Nominalists with regard to money; but even if it is metal money, it is still an illusion and of no real worth). Money is namely only a 'go-between'.

And only because in our day a certain social order exists, an order belonging purely to the State, therefore this £5 note which you have spent in the morning for different items is nothing else than an equivalent for so many days of labor of so many men. A number of men must have completed so many days of work, so much human labor must have flowed into the social order—must have crystallized itself into merchandise—in order for the apparent worth of the bank note to have any real value, but only at the command of the social order. The bank note only gives you the power to call into your service so much labor, or to put it another way, to command its worth in work. You can picture it in your mind: There I have a bank note, which assigns to me, according to my social position, the power over so many men. If you now see these workmen selling their labor hour by hour, as the equivalent value of that which you have in your purse as the £5 note, then you begin to get a picture of the real facts.

Our relationships have become so complicated that we no longer pay attention to these things, especially if they do not concern us closely. I have an example which easily clarifies this. In the more difficult considerations of economics, in the areas of capital and interest and credit, things are quite complicated; so that even university professors and political economists, whose position should mean possession of adequate insight, really have no knowledge. Thus you can see that it is necessary to look at things correctly in these areas. Of course we cannot immediately take in hand the reform of the national economy, which has been forced into such a helpless condition by what is nowadays taught as political economy. But we can 'at least ask with respect to national education and other such matters: What must be done so that social life and forms are consciously established in opposition to anti-social forces? What is really required? I said that it would be difficult in our time for people to develop sufficient interest in each other. You do not have sufficient interest if you think that you can buy yourself something with a £5 note and do not remember the fact that this brings about a social relationship with certain other human beings and their labor-power. You only have an adequate interest when in your picture you are able to substitute for each apparent transaction (such as the exchange of goods for a £5 note) the real transaction which is linked with it.

Now, I would say that the mere egoistic, soul-stirring talk of loving our fellow-men and acting upon this love at the first opportunity, that this does not constitute social life. This sort of love is, for the most part, terribly egoistic. Many a man is supported by what he has first gained through robbing his fellowmen in a truly patriarchal fashion, in order to create for himself an object for his self-love, so that he can then feel nice and warm with the thought, 'You are doing this, you are doing that'. One does not easily discover that a large part of the so-called love of doing good is a masked self-love. Therefore, the main consideration is not merely to think of what lies nearest to hand, thereby enhancing our self-love, but to feel it our duty to look carefully at the many-sided social structures in which we are placed. We must at least lay the foundations for such understanding. Yet few today are disposed to do so.

I would like to discuss one question from the viewpoint of general education, namely How can we consciously establish social impulses to balance those antisocial forces which are developing naturally within us? How can we cultivate the social element, this interest of man in man, so that it springs up in us—going ever further and deeper, and leaving us no rest? How can we enkindle this interest which has disappeared so pitifully in our age, the age of the Spiritual Soul? In our age true chasms have already been created between people. Men have no idea about the manner in which they pass one another by without in the least comprehending each other. The desire to understand the other in all his or her uniqueness is very weak today. On the one hand, we have the cry for social union; and on the other, the ever-increasing spread of purely anti-social principles. The blindness of people toward each other can be seen in the many clubs and societies which people form. They do not provide any opportunity for people to get to know one another. It is possible for men to meet one another for years and not to know each other better at the end than they did at the beginning. The precise need of the future is that the social shall be brought to meet the anti-social in a systematic way. For this there are various inner soul methods. One is that we frequently attempt to look back over our present incarnation to survey what has happened to us in this life through our relations with others. If we are honest in this, most of us will say: Nowadays we generally regard the entrance of many people into our life in such a way that we see ourselves, our own personalities, as the centre of the review. What have we gained from this or that person who has come into our life? This is our natural way of feeling. It is exactly this which we must try to combat. We should try in our souls to think of others, such as teachers, friends, those who have helped us and also those who have injured us (to whom we often owe more than to those who, from a certain point of view, have been of use to us). We should try to allow these pictures to pass before our souls as vividly as possible in order to see what each has done.

We shall see, if we proceed in this way, that by degrees we learn to forget ourselves, that in reality we find that almost everything which forms part of us could not be there at all unless this or that person had affected our lives, helping us on or teaching us something. When we look back on the years in the more distant past to people with whom we are no longer in contact and about whom it is easier to be objective, then we shall see how the soul-substance of our life has been created by the people and circumstances of the past. Our gaze then extends over a multitude of people whom we have known in the course of time. If we try to develop a sense of the debt we owe to this or that person, if we try to see ourselves in the mirror of those who have influenced us in the course of time, and who have been associated with us, then we shall be able to experience the opening-up of a new sense in our souls, a sense which enables us to gain a picture of the people whom we meet even in the present, with whom we stand face to face today. This is because we have practiced developing an objective picture of our indebtedness to people in the past. It is tremendously important that the impulse should awaken in us, not merely to feel sympathy or antipathy towards the people we meet, not merely to hate or love something connected with the person, but to awaken a true picture of the other in us, free from love or hate.

Perhaps you will not feel that what I am saying now is extremely important-but it is. For this ability to picture the other in oneself without love or hate, to allow the other individual to appear again within our soul, this is a faculty which is decreasing week by week in the evolution of humanity. It is something which men are, by degrees, completely losing. They pass one another by without arousing any interest in each other. Yet this ability to develop an imaginative faculty for the other is something that must

enter into pedagogics and the education of children. For we can really develop this imaginative faculty in us if, instead of striving after the immediate sensations of life as is often done today, we are not afraid to look back quietly in our soul and see our relationships to other human beings. Then we shall be in a position to relate ourselves imaginatively to those whom we meet in the present. In this way we awaken the social instinct in us against the anti-social which quite unconsciously and of necessity continues to develop. This is one side of the picture.

The other is something that can be linked up with this review of our relations to others. It is when we try to become more and more objective about ourselves. Here we must also go back to our earlier years. Then we can directly, so to speak, go to the facts themselves. Suppose you are 30 or 40 years of age. You think "How was it with me when I was ten years old? I will imagine myself entirely into the situation of that time. I will picture myself as another boy or girl of ten years old. I will try to forget that I was that; I will really take pains to objectify myself." This objectifying of oneself, this freeing of oneself in the present from one's own past, this shelling-out of the Ego from its experiences, must be specially striven for in our present time. For the present has the tendency towards linking up the Ego more and more with its experiences.

Nowadays man wants to be instinctively that which his experiences make him. For this reason it is so very difficult to acquire the activity which Spiritual Science gives. The spirit must make a fresh effort each time. According to true occult science, nothing can be done by comfortably remaining in one's position. One forgets things and must always be cultivating them afresh. This is just as it should be because fresh efforts need to continually be made. He who has already made some progress in the realm of Spiritual Science attempts the most elementary things every day; others are ashamed to pay attention to the basics. For Spiritual Science, nothing should depend on remembering, but on man's immediate experience in the present. It is therefore a question of training ourselves in this faculty-through making ourselves objective -that we picture this boy or girl as if he or she were a stranger at an earlier time in our lives; of bestirring ourselves more and more, of getting free of events, and of being less and less haunted at 30 by the impulses of a 10 year old. Detachment from the past does not mean denial of the past. We gain it in another way again, and that is what is so important. On the one hand, we cultivate the social instinct and impulses in us by looking back upon those who have been connected with us in the past and regarding our souls as the products of these persons. In this way we acquire the imagination for meeting people in the present. On the other hand, through objectifying ourselves we gain possibilities of developing imagination directly. This objectifying of our earlier years is fruitful insofar as it does not work in us unconsciously. Think for a moment: If the 10 year old child works on unconsciously in you, then you are the 30 or 40 year old augmented by the 10 year old. It is just the same with the 11, the 12 year old child and so on. Egoism has tremendous power, but its power is lessened when you separate the earlier years from yourself and when you make them objective. This is the important point on which we must fix our attention.

The following pre-condition for social activity must be made clear to those people who raise social claims in unreasonable and illusory fashion: Understanding about how man can develop himself as a socially creative being must first be present in this period, when anti-social forces are growing ever stronger as part of human evolution.

What will then have been achieved? You will discover the whole meaning of what I have now explained if you consider the following: In 1848 there appeared a social document which continues to work into the present day in radical socialism, and in Bolshevism. It was the Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx, which contains ideas which rule the thoughts and feelings of many workers. Karl Marx was able to dominate the labor world for the simple reason that he wrote and said what the working man thinks and understands, as a working man. This Communist Manifesto, the contents of which I do not need to explain to you, appeared in 1848. It was the first document, the first seed in what has now borne fruit, after the recent destruction of opposing movements. This document contains one slogan, one sentence which you will often find quoted today by most socialist writers: "Workers of the world, unite!" It is a sentence which has run through many socialist groups. What does it express? It expresses the most unnatural thing that could possibly be thought today. It expresses an impulse for socializing, for uniting a certain mass of people. On what is this uniting, this union, to be built? Upon its opposite, upon the hatred of all those who are not members of the working class. This associating, this banding together of people is to be brought about through splitting up and separating mankind into classes. You must ponder this, you must think about the reality of this principle which is a genuine illusion, if I can use this expression and which has been adopted in Russia, now in Germany and the Austrian countries, and which will eat its way further and further into the world. It is so unnatural precisely because, on the one hand, it shows the necessity of socializing, but on the other it builds this socialization out of the anti-social instinct of class hatred, and class opposition.

However, these things need to be considered from a higher perspective, otherwise we shall not get very far; above all, we shall not be able to participate in the healthy development of mankind in the present. Nowadays Spiritual Science is the only means of seeing things truly in their totality; it is the only means for understanding our time. Just as one is averse to entering into the spirit and soul foundations of man's physical constitution, so one also avoids, out of fear and lack of courage, studying those things in social life which can only be understood out of the Spirit. People are afraid, cover their eyes and put their heads in the sand like ostriches when they are confronted by real and important things. Of what does human interchange in fact consist? As we have seen, it consists of one person trying to put the other to sleep, while the other tries to resist and stay awake. This is the archetypal phenomenon of social science in Goethe's sense. This archetypal phenomenon points to something which mere material thinking cannot grasp; it points to that which can only be understood when one knows that in human life one is not only asleep during sleep-when we slumber along for hours, oblivious to the world-but the same applies to daily waking life, where the same forces which lead to sleep and wakefulness also play into the social and antisocial forces of man. All thinking about social forms can bear no fruit if we do not make the effort to take these things into account.

With this in mind, we must not be blind to the events taking place in the world, but must carefully watch what is coming to pass. What, for examples does the socialist of today think? He thinks that he can invent socialist slogans and call to people from all countries-"Workers of the world, unite!" and by so doing, establish a sort of international paradise. This indeed is one of the greatest and most fatal illusions. People are not abstract, but concrete. Fundamentally, the human being is individual. I have tried to make this clear in my Philosophy of Spiritual Activity contrast to the relativism of Neo-Kantianism and socialism. People are also different according to their groupings over the world. We will discuss one of these differences so that we may see that it is not possible to simply say:-"You begin in the

West, and carry out a certain social system, then you go to the East and then home again, as if taking a world tour." But the attitude of taking a world journey lives in those who wish to spread socialism over the whole earth. They look upon the earth as a globe on which they, by starting in the West, can eventually arrive in the East. But people on the earth are different and exactly in this difference dwells an impulse which is the motive force of progress.

You can see how, in this way, provision is made for the Consciousness Soul through birth and heredity. This actually comes to expression in the English-speaking people of today. They are organized for the Consciousness Soul through their blood, their birthright, and their inherited faculties. Because the English-speaking peoples have been especially prepared for the cultivation of the Consciousness Soul they are, in a way, representatives of the Fifth Post-Atlantean period. People are thus differentiated according to where they live and how they are constituted.

The Eastern peoples must affect and represent the true development of humanity in another way. Beginning with the Russian people, and passing on to the people of the Asiatic countries, one finds an opposition, a revolt against the instinctive elements natural to the evolution of the Consciousness Soul. The people of the East wish to save the soul treasure of intellectuality of the present age for the future. They do not want it to be mixed with experience, but wish to liberate and preserve it for the next period. During this period, a true union can take place between the human being and the evolved Spirit Self. Thus, if the characteristic force of our present period is in the West, and can indeed be best cultivated as a quality among the English-speaking peoples, the people of the East, out of their national inheritance, seek to prevent the coming-to-pass in their souls of that which is most characteristic of the present period so that it may develop in them as a germ for the following period, which begins with the 30th century. From this we can see the fact that certain laws prevail in human life, and in human evolution. In the realm of nature people are not surprised that they cannot burn ice, that a regular law underlies this phenomenon. But with the social structures of humanity, people fancy that the same social form, based on the same social principles, can, for example, be made to work in Russia, as in England, Scotland, or America. This is impossible, for the whole world is organized by underlying principles so that one cannot simply create identical forms at will all over the globe. This is a point which we must not forget.

In the Central European countries there is a middle condition of affairs. There, it is as if one were in a balanced condition, between the extremes of the East and the West. Looked at in this way, we see the Earth population divided into three parts. You cannot say: "Workers of the world unite!" For the workers are of three sorts, are three varieties of people. Let us look at the people of the West again. We find a special disposition, a special mission for all who speak English by nature (single cases may be different) a disposition for the cultivation of the Consciousness Soul. This disposition expresses itself in not detaching from the soul its characteristic quality of intelligence, but connecting this intelligence naturally, instinctively, with events in the world. To naturally, even instinctively, place oneself in the life of the world as a consciousness soul individual is the task of the English-speaking people. The expanse and greatness of the British Empire rests on this quality. Indeed herein lies the original phenomenon behind the expansion of the British Empire—that which is hidden in the impulses of its people exactly coincided with the inner impulses of the age. In my lectures on the European folk souls, you will find what is essential in this matter. Much is contained in this series of lectures which were

given long before the war, but which provide material for judging this war-catastrophe objectively. *

Now, the very capacities connected with the evolution of the Consciousness Soul give the English-speaking peoples a special genius for political life. One can study how the political art of dividing society and creating social structure has spread from England to those countries where things have remained backward, where the remnants of the Fourth Post-Atlantean period have remained. This influence has spread even to the division of Hungarian society, to this Turanian member of the European peoples. It is only from the English heritage that a foundation for the political thinking of the Fifth Post-Atlantean period can come. The English are specially suited to the realm of politics. It is of no use to pronounce a judgment on these things; the necessities of the case alone do so. One may feel sympathy or the opposite that is a private affair. Objective necessity determines the affairs of the world. It is important that these objective necessities shall be clearly placed before us at this time.

Goethe, in his Legend of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily, has treated the forces of the human soul as three members, or forces; Power, Appearance, and Knowledge or Wisdom or, as the Bronze King, the Silver King and the Golden King. Many remarkable things are spoken of in this legend regarding the governing relationships which are being prepared for the present and which will live into the future. We can point out that what Goethe symbolizes by the Bronze king, the force of Power, is that which spreads over the world through the English-speaking peoples. This is necessary because the culture of the Consciousness Soul coincides with the special qualities of the British and American peoples.

In the Central European countries, which are not in such a state of chaos, there is an unmistakable equilibrium between the leaning of the intellect toward the Consciousness Soul, and the desire to be free from it; there, sometimes one prevails, sometimes the other. None of the Central European nations is really suited for political life. When they desire to be political, they are disposed to lose contact with reality. Whereas the political thinking of the Anglo-American nations is firmly anchored in the soul, in the Central European countries, it is not, for the second soul force dominates—Semblance and Appearance. However, the people of the Central European countries manifest an intellectuality of special brilliance. Compare anything that the English-speaking people have to say about the nature of thinking and you will find the thoughts strongly linked to solid earth-realities. But if you take the brilliant feats of the German mind, you will find that they are more an aesthetic shaping of thoughts, even if the aesthetic shaping has a logical form. It is especially noticeable how one thought leads to another so that thoughts of value appear in dialectical form, shaped by an aesthetic will. If one wishes to apply this to solid earth-realities—if one wishes by this means to become a politician—then one easily becomes untrue; one easily falls into a so-called dreamy idealism which seeks to establish united kingdoms, with decade-long calls for unity, but in the end sets up a mighty State by force. Never before has there been such a contrast in political life as the one between the dream of unity in 1848 and that which was really established in 1871. There you see the swing of the pendulum, the shift from that which really strives for aesthetic form, which can become untrue, an illusion, a dreamy picture when one wishes to apply it to politics. Here, there is simply no disposition for politics. When the Central European people become politicians they either dream or they lie. I should add that these things must not be discussed with sympathy or antipathy in order to accuse or to acquit. Rather, they must be said, because on the one hand they correspond with a need, and on the other with a tragedy. These are

things that we must heed.

And if we then look to the East, things are quite different again. We have seen that the German, if he wants to be political, falls into a dreamy idealism or, at its worst, into untruth. The Russian on the other hand becomes ill or actually suffers a death if he desires to be political. This may seem strange, yet a Russian person has a constitution which creates a disposition towards disease, towards death, with intensive political involvement. The Russian Folk Soul has absolutely no affinity with that quality in the English and American Folk Soul which creates a political capacity. But because of this, the East has the task of carrying the intellect separated from its natural connection with the world of sense experience into the future age of the Spirit-Self.

One must therefore know how different abilities are spread among the people of the earth. This becomes visible in many areas. You have, for example, heard about the super-sensible experience called 'The Meeting with the Guardian of the Threshold'. There are marked differences in this meeting with the Guardian. Where this meeting, this initiation, is affected entirely independent of nationality, then it is objective and complete. But when this initiation occurs through special groups or societies connected with a particular people or nation, then it is one-sided. The English-speaking peoples are those who when not guided by higher spiritual leaders but by their own Folk Soul, are especially suited for bringing to the Threshold those spiritual beings who surround and accompany us in this world of Ahrimanic spirits, and whom we take with us when we approach the supersensible world, if they have developed a certain liking for us. They then lead us primarily to an experience of the power of sickness and death. You will therefore hear it said by the greater number of Anglo-Americans initiated into the supersensible Mysteries, that the first more important event in their cognition of the supersensible world is the encounter with those powers expressing sickness and death. They learn to know this as an external, outward experience.

If you turn to the Central European people what will you find when those who are being initiated are not taken out of their nation and raised to universal humanity, but when the Folk Spirit cooperates with them? Then the first important experience which comes to our notice is a conflict between those spiritual beings who belong to higher worlds, to the other side of the Threshold, and certain other beings who are here in the physical world, on this side of the Threshold but who are invisible to ordinary consciousness. The Central Europeans will first become aware of this conflict. The experience of this conflict makes itself felt to the genuine seeker after truth in the Central European countries as a being penetrated with the powers of doubt. One becomes acquainted with all the powers of "many-sidedness". In Western countries, there is a stronger inclination to be satisfied with exact truth; whereas in the Central European countries there is a tendency to immediately see the other side of the question. There, in the searching for truth, one trembles in the balance. Everything has two sides. One is regarded as a Philistine in Central Europe if one ventures a one-sided opinion. But this causes tragic suffering when nearing the Threshold. We must pay attention to this struggle which takes place at the Threshold, between spirits which belong only to the spirit world, and those belonging to the world of sense—this struggle which conditions all that calls forth doubt in man, this vacillation with regard to the truth. It is this experience of doubt which creates the European need to be trained in the truth-in-philosophy so as not to fall prey so easily to the generally recognized impulses of truth in society.

When you turn to the Eastern countries and the Folk Soul acts as sponsor at the Initiation, then one primarily experiences the spirits that work upon human egotism. One sees all that gives rise to human selfishness. The Westerner who approaches the Threshold does not see this. Instead, he sees the spirits that permeate the world and humanity with sickness and death in the broadest sense, as injurious, destructive and degrading for humanity. The Neophyte of the East, however, sees all that comes forward to tempt man as selfishness. Therefore, the ideal which proceeds from Western Initiation is making men healthy and keeping them healthy, and giving mankind the possibility of healthy development. In the East, on the other hand, there springs up, as instinctive knowledge in connection to a religious orientation toward initiation, a feeling of one's own insignificance when faced with the sublime powers of the spiritual world. The man of the East, when meeting the spiritual world, is shown how selfishness may be cured, and egotism destroyed because of its dangers. This is even expressed in the external character of people from the East. Much of the Eastern character which is inexplicable to people from the West arises precisely from what is expressed at the Threshold of the spiritual world.

So we can see the differences in human qualities when we look at the inner development, the inner shaping of the psycho-spiritual development of humanity. It is important to keep this clearly in mind. In certain occult circles of the English-speaking people who were under the guardianship of the Folk Spirits, prophetic sayings could be found during the second half of the 19th century which referred to the things we have been discussing, things which are happening today. Think of what could have happened if the people of Europe, with the exception of those speaking English, had not stopped up their ears and blindfolded their eyes, so that their attention was directed from the truth of these things. I will tell you of a formula which was frequently repeated during the second half of the 19th century. The following was said: "The State must be abolished in Russia, so that the Russian people may develop, for in Russia social experiments must be carried out, which could never be done in Western countries". This might seem unsympathetic to non-English ears, but it contains a high degree of wisdom and insight. And he who can connect himself with these things so that he can believe in their efficacy as impulses in whose realization he can take part, this person is truly of the present age. Those who do not see the reality of these forces set themselves against the time.

These matters must be clearly understood it was, of course, the inevitable lot of Central and Eastern Europe to block their ears and blindfold their eyes to occult facts; to give no heed to them, to work on lines of mysticism, abstract teaching, and abstract intellectualism. But we are now in a time when this must cease. Pessimism and despair must not be created by such contemplations as these. Rather force, courage, and the will to help is needed. In this sense we should always remember that we do not work against, but rather with the issues of our time out of the spiritual scientific impulse of the Anthroposophical Movement. Let us see to it that we do not sleep away our opportunities. Spiritual Science can lead us to the conscious cultivation of social faculties. It can, for example, show us the forces at work in the human being when he is free from the body, what he is experiencing between going to sleep and awaking. But more importantly it can give us a direction in conscious waking life for developing social capacities. We of course cultivate the powers most necessary for our age when we are consciously thinking about those things which can only forcefully penetrate into our soul during waking hours. We could not develop; we would be powerless, if we only had to evolve during sleep. It is for our waking life that the following is therefore important:

Two powers are working in the present. One is the power which, since the Mystery of Golgotha, has worked in different metamorphoses through the ensuing periods of earth evolution as the Christ Impulse. We have often said that just in our age a reappearance of the Etheric Christ will take place. This reappearance of the Christ is indeed not far off. That He is coming again is no cause for pessimism, nor should it give rise to a nebulous longing and a desire for soul-warming, self-seeking, theosophical theories. The Christ Impulse has various forms, but in His present form He wishes to help humanity realize that spiritual wisdom now being revealed by the spiritual world. This wisdom wants to be realized and the Christ Impulse will be a help in this realization. It is on this realization that all depends. At this critical moment humanity is faced with a momentous decision. On the one side stands the Christ Being, calling us of our own free will to do what we have been speaking about today, to consciously and freely receive the social impulses which can heal and help humanity. Freely, to receive them. Therefore, we do not unite ourselves on those levels where hatred forms a foundation for love as in the cry, "Workers of the world, unite!" But we unite by striving to realize the Christ Impulse, by doing those things which are the will of Christ for this age.

Opposed to this will stands the adversary who is called in the Bible "the unrighteous Prince of this World". He makes his presence known in various ways. One of these ways is to take those forces which allow us as free beings to serve that which we have been talking about today, to take this force of free will and to place it at the service of the physical. This adversary, the Prince of this world, has various instruments; for example, hunger and social chaos. By this means, through external compulsion, and physical measures, the force of free will is subverted to the service of apparent necessity. See how humanity today shows that it will not, of its own free will, turn to a truly social life and to a recognition of true progress for mankind. It wishes to be compelled. And yet, this compulsion has not even led people to make the basic distinction between the Spirit of the supersensible world, the Christ Spirit and the adversary, the unrighteous Prince of this world. Look at this situation and see if this does not explain why in so many places today people oppose and struggle against the acceptance of any true spiritual teaching, against true spiritual deeds, and against Spiritual Science. They are possessed by the unrighteous Prince of this world.

Now think for a moment; think how you of your own free will turn to spiritual life; think humbly of yourselves, but also earnestly and strongly as the missionaries of the Christ-Spirit today, who have to combat the unrighteous Prince of this world, who lays hold of all those who unconsciously allow themselves to use forces out of the future to realize their own aims. If you think of yourselves in this light there is no room for pessimism- indeed it leaves you no time for a pessimistic view of the world. It will of course not shut your eyes and ears to that which has happened, sometimes in a terrible manner, and which is tragic to behold in its true form. But you will preeminently keep the following before your souls-"I am, in any case, called to look at everything without illusion; I must be neither pessimistic nor optimistic, so that forces may awaken in my soul which give me the power to aid the free development of the human being, to contribute to human progress in the place and situation where I am". Even if the faults and tragedies of the age are very visible to Spiritual Science this should not be an incitement to pessimism or optimism, but rather a call to an inner awakening so that independent work and the cultivation of right thinking will result. For above all things, adequate insight is necessary. If only a sufficient number of people today were motivated to say, "We absolutely must have a better understanding of things"; then everything else would follow. It is just in regard to social questions that

there is a need to consciously strive for insight and understanding. The development of the will activity is planned for, it is coming. If we in daily life would only wish to educate ourselves about social issues, and develop new social ideas, then (according to an occult law), each of us would be able to take another human being along. Each one of us can therefore work for two if we have the will. We could achieve much if we had an earnest desire to acquire insight at once. The rest would follow. It is not so bad that not many people can do much about the situation of society today, but it is incredibly sad if people cannot at least make up their minds to become acquainted with the social laws of Spiritual Science. The rest would follow if serious study would take place.

This is what I have desired to communicate to you today regarding the importance of knowing and recognizing certain things about the social situation of the present, and how such a recognition can lead to a life impulse for the future. I hope we will again have the opportunity of speaking together about the more intimate aspects of Spiritual Science.