Before coming to the topic of today’s talk, I would like to say a few words about the great and grievous loss on the physical plane we have suffered in recent days. You will undoubtedly know what I mean: the day before yesterday, Herr von Moltke’s soul passed through the gate of death. What this man was to his country, the outstanding part he played in the great and fateful events of our time, the significant, deep impulses growing out of human connections that formed the basis of his actions and his work—to appreciate and pay tribute to all this will be the task of others, primarily of future historians. In our age it is impossible to give an entirely comprehensive picture of everything that concerns our time. As I said, we will not speak of what others and history will have to say, but I am absolutely convinced that future historians will have very much to say about von Moltke. However, I would like to say something that is now in my soul, even if I have to express it at first symbolically; what I mean will be understood only gradually. This man and his soul stand before my soul as a symbol of the present and the immediate future, a symbol born out of the evolution of our time, in the true sense of the word a symbol of what should come to pass and must come to pass.

As we have repeatedly emphasized, we are not trying to integrate spiritual science into contemporary culture out of somebody’s arbitrary impulses, but because it is needed in these times. There will not be a lasting future if the substance of this spiritual science does not flow into human development. This is the point, my dear friends, where you can see the greatness and significance we find when we think of Herr von Moltke’s soul. He participated most actively in the busy life of our era, the life that developed out of the past and led to the greatest crisis humanity ever had to go through in its history. He was one of the leaders of the army and was right in the middle of the events that inaugurated our fateful present and future. Here was a soul, a personality, who did all this and, at the same time, also was one of us, seeking knowledge and truth with the most holy, fervent thirst for knowledge that ever inspired a soul in our day and age.

That is what we should think of. For the soul of this personality, who has just died, is more than anything else an outstanding historical symbol. It is profoundly symbolic that he was one of the leading figures of the outer life, which he served, and yet found the bridge to the life of the spirit we seek in spiritual science. We can only wish with all our soul that more and more people in similar positions would do as he has done. This is not just a personal wish, but also one born out of the need of our times. You should feel how significant an example this personality can be. It does not matter how little other people speak about the spiritual side of his life; in fact, it is best for it not to be talked about. But what von Moltke did is a reality and the effects are what is important, not whether it is discussed. Herr von Moltke’s life can lead us to realize that he interpreted the meaning of the signs of the times correctly. May many follow this soul who are still distant from our spiritual science.
It is true, and we should not forget it, that this soul has given as much to what flows and pulsates through our spiritual science as we have been able to give him. Now souls are entering the spiritual world bearing within them what they have received from spiritual science. What spiritual science strives for has united with the soul of a person, who has died after a very active life. This then works as a deeply significant, powerful force in the realm we want to explore with the help of our spiritual science. And the souls now present here who understand me will never forget what I have just said about how significant it is that souls now take what has flowed for many years through our spiritual science into the spiritual world, where it will become strength and power.

I am not telling you this to assuage in a trivial way the pain we feel about our loss on the physical plane. Pain and sorrow are justified in a case like Herr von Moltke’s death. But only when pain and sorrow are permeated by a sound understanding of what underlies them can they become great and momentous active forces. Take, therefore, what I have said as the expression of sorrow over the loss the German people and all humanity have experienced on the physical plane.

Let us stand up, my dear friends, and recite this verse:

Spirit of your soul, ever working Guardian!
May your wings carry
Our souls’ imploring love
To the son in the spheres entrusted to your care!
United with your power,
May our prayer be a shining help
To the soul it lovingly seeks.

My dear friends, as I have often said, the occult substance that flows through our whole evolution has found its outer expression or manifestation in all kinds of more or less occult and symbolic brotherhoods and societies. In my recent talks I have characterized them in more detail as really quite superficial. We are now living in an age when the occult knowledge from the spiritual world must be given to people in a new way, as we have been trying to do for many years now, because the previous ways are obsolete. Granted, they will continue to exist for a time, but they are quite obsolete, and it is important that we understand this in the right way.

As you know, I like to call our spiritual science anthroposophy, and a few years ago when I gave lectures here, I called them lectures on anthroposophy. Last time, I referred to these lectures on anthroposophy, particularly to my emphasis on the fact that human beings actually have twelve senses. I explained that, as far as our senses are concerned, what is spread out over our nerve substance is organized according to the number twelve because the human being is in this most profound sense a microcosm and mirrors the macrocosm.

In the macrocosm the sun moves through twelve signs of the zodiac in the course of a year, and the human I lives here on the physical plane in the twelve senses. Things are certainly rather different out there in the macrocosm, especially in regard to their sequence in time. The sun moves from Aries through Taurus, and so on, and back again through Pisces to Aries as it makes its yearly course through the twelve signs of the zodiac. Everything we have in us, even everything we experience in our soul, is related to
the outer world through our twelve senses. These are the senses of touch, life, movement, balance, smell, taste, sight, warmth, hearing, speech, thinking, and the sense of the I.

Our inner life moves through this circle of the twelve senses just as the sun moves through the circle of the twelve signs of the zodiac. But we can take this external analogy even further. In the course of a year, the sun has to move through all the signs of the zodiac from Aries to Libra; it moves through the upper signs during the day and through the lower ones at night. The sun’s passage through these lower signs is hidden from outer light. It is the same with the life of our soul and the twelve senses. Half of the twelve are day senses, just as half of the signs of the zodiac are day signs; the others are night senses.

You see, our sense of touch pushes us into the nightlife of our soul, so to speak, for with the sense of touch, one of our coarser senses, we bump into the world around us. The sense of touch is barely connected with the day life of our soul, that is, with the really conscious life of the soul. You can see for yourself that this is true when you consider how easily we can store the impressions of our other senses in our memory and how difficult it is to remember the impressions of the sense of touch. Just try it and you’ll see how difficult it is to remember, for example, the feel of a piece of fabric you touched a few years ago. Indeed you’ll find you have little need or desire to remember it. The impression sinks down in the same way as the light fades into twilight when the sun descends into the sign of Libra at night, into the region of the night signs. And thus other senses are also completely hidden from our waking, conscious soul life.

As for the sense of life, conventional psychological studies hardly mention it at all. They usually list only five senses, the day senses or senses of waking consciousness. But that need not concern us further. The sense of life enables us to feel our life in us, but only when that life has been disturbed, when it is sick, when something causes us pain or hurts us. Then the sense of life tells us we are hurting here or there. When we are healthy, we are not aware of the life in us; it sinks into the depths, just as there is no light when the sun is in the sign of Scorpio or in any other night sign.

The same applies to the sense of movement. It allows us to perceive what is happening in us when we have set some part of our body in motion. Conventional science is only now beginning to pay attention to this sense of movement. It is only just beginning to find out that the way joints impact on one another—for example, when I bend my finger, this joint impacts on that one—tells us about the movements our body is carrying out. We walk, but we walk unconsciously. The sense underlying our ability to walk—namely, the perception of our mobility—is cast into the night of consciousness.

Let us now look at the sense of balance. We acquire this sense only gradually in life; we just don’t think about it because it also remains in the night of consciousness. Infants have not yet acquired this sense, and therefore they can only crawl. It was only in the last decade that science discovered the organ for the sense of balance. I have mentioned the three canals in our ears before; they are shaped like semicircles and are vertical to each other in the three dimensions of space. If these canals are damaged, we get dizzy; we lose our balance. We have the outer ears for our sense of hearing, the eyes for the sense of sight, and for the sense of balance we have these three semicircular canals. Their connection with the ears and the sense of hearing is a vestige of the kinship between
sound and balance. The canals, located in the cavity in the petrosal bone, consist of three semicircles of tiny, very minute bones. If they are the least bit injured, we can no longer keep our balance. We acquire our receptivity for the sense of balance in early childhood, but it remains submerged in the night of consciousness; we are not conscious of this sense.

Then comes the dawn and casts its rays into consciousness. But just think how little the other hidden senses, those of smell and taste, actually have to do with our inner life in a higher sense. We have to delve deeply into the life of our body to be able to get a sense for smell. The sense of taste already brings us a growing half-light; day begins to dawn in our consciousness. But you can still make the same experiment I mentioned before concerning the sense of touch, and you will find it very difficult to remember the perceptions of the senses of smell and of taste. Only when we enter more deeply into our unconscious with our soul does the latter consciously perceive the sense of smell. As you may know, certain composers were especially inspired when surrounded by a pleasant fragrance they had smelled previously while creating music. It is not the fragrance that rises up out of memory, but the soul processes connected with the sense of smell emerge into consciousness.

The sense of taste, however, is for most people almost in the light of consciousness, though not quite; it is still partly in the night of consciousness for most of us. After all, very few people will be satisfied with the soul impression of taste alone. Otherwise we should be just as pleased with remembering something that tasted good as we are when we eat it again. As you know, this is not the case. People want to eat again what tasted good to them and are not satisfied with just remembering it.

The sense of sight, on the other hand, is the sense where the sun of consciousness rises, and we reach full waking consciousness. The sun rises higher and higher. It rises to the sense of warmth, to the sense of hearing, and from there to the sense of speech and then reaches its zenith. The zenith of our inner life lies between the senses of hearing and speech. Then we have the sense of thinking, and the I sense, which is not the sense for perceiving our own I but that of others. After all, it is an organ of perception, a sense. Our awareness of our own I is something quite different, as I explained in my early lectures on anthroposophy. What is important here is not so much knowing about our own I, but meeting other people who reveal their I to us. Perception of the other person’s I, not of our own, that is the function of the sense of the I.

Our soul has the same relationship to these twelve senses as the sun does to the twelve signs of the zodiac. You can see from this that the human being is in the truest sense of the word a microcosm. Modern science is completely ignorant of these things; while it does acknowledge the sense of hearing, it denies the existence of the sense of speech although we could never understand the higher meaning of spoken words with the sense of hearing alone. To understand, we need the sense of speech, the sense for the meaning of what is expressed in the words. This sense of speech must not be confused with the sense of thinking, which in turn is not identical with the I sense.

I would like to give you an example of how people can go wrong in our time in this matter of the senses. Eduard von Hartmann, who was a most sincere seeker, begins his book Basic Psychology with the following words as though he were stating a self-evident
truth: “Psychological phenomena are the point of departure for psychology; indeed, for each person the starting point has to be his or her own phenomena, for these alone are given to each of us directly. After all, nobody can look into another’s consciousness.”[2] The opening sentence of a psychology book by one of the foremost philosophers of our time starts by denying the existence of the senses of speech, thinking, and the I. He knows nothing about them. Imagine, here we have a case where absurdity and utter nonsense must be called science just so these senses can be denied.

If we do not let this science confuse us, we can easily see its mistakes. For this psychology claims we do not see into the soul of another person but can only guess at it by interpreting what that person says. In other words, we are supposed to interpret the state of another’s soul based on his or her utterances. When someone speaks kindly to you, you are supposed to interpret it! Can this be true? No, indeed it is not true!

The kind words spoken to us have a direct effect on us, just as color affects our eyes directly. The love living in the other’s soul is borne into your soul on the wings of the words. This is direct perception there can be no question here of interpretation. Through nonsense such as Hartmann’s, science confines us within the limits of our own personality to keep us from realizing that living with the other people around us means living with their souls. We live with the souls of others just as we live with colors and sounds. Anyone who does not realize this knows absolutely nothing of our inner life. It is very important to understand these things. Elaborate theories are propagated nowadays, claiming that all impressions we have of other people are only symbolic and inferred from their utterances. But there is no truth in this.

Now picture the rising sun, the emergence of the light, the setting sun. This is the macrocosmic picture of our microcosmic inner life. Though it does not move in a circle, our inner life nevertheless proceeds through the twelve signs of the zodiac of the soul, that is, through the twelve senses. Every time we perceive the I of someone else, we are on the dayside of our soul sun. When we turn inward into ourselves and perceive our inner balance and our movements, we are on the night side of our inner life.

Now you will not think it so improbable when I tell you that in the time between death and rebirth the senses that have sunk deeply into our soul’s night side will be of special importance for us because they will then be spiritualized. At the same time, the senses that have risen to the dayside of our inner life will sink down deeper after death. Just as the sun rises, so does our soul rise, figuratively speaking, between the sense of taste and the sense of sight, and in death it sets again. When we encounter another soul between death and a new birth, we find it inwardly united with us. We perceive that soul not by looking at it from the I outside and receiving the impression of its I from the outside; we perceive it by uniting with it. You can read about this in the lecture cycles, where I have described it, and also in An Outline of Esoteric Science.[3]

In the life between death and rebirth, the sense of touch becomes completely spiritual. What is now subconscious and belongs to the night side of our inner life, namely, the senses of balance and movement, will then become spiritualized and play the most important part in our life after death.

It is indeed true that we move through life as the sun moves through the twelve signs of the zodiac. When we begin our life here, our consciousness for the senses rises, so to
speak, at one pillar of the world and sets again at the other. We pass these pillars when
we move in the starry heavens, as it were, from the night side to the day side. Occult and
symbolic societies have always tried to indicate this by calling the pillar of birth, which
we pass on the way into the life of the dayside, Jakim.\[^4\]

Our outer world during the life between death and rebirth consists of the perceptions of
the sense of touch spread out over the whole universe, where we do not touch but are
touched. We feel that we are touched by spiritual beings everywhere, while in physical
life it is we who touch others. Between death and rebirth we live within movement and
feel it the same way a blood cell or a muscle in us would feel its own movement. We
perceive ourselves moving in the macrocosm, and we feel balance and feel ourselves part
of the life of the whole. Here on earth our life is enclosed in our skin, but there we feel
ourselves part of the life of the universe, of the cosmic life, and we feel that we give our-
selves our own balance in every position. Here, gravity and the constitution of our body
give us balance, and usually we are not aware of this. During life between death and a
new birth, however, we feel balance all the time. We have a direct experience of the other
side of our inner life.

We enter earthly life through Jakim, assured that what is there outside in the macrocosm
now lives in us, that we are a microcosm, for the word Jakim means, “The divine poured
out over the world is in you.”

The other pillar, Boaz, is the entrance into the spiritual world through death. What is
contained in the word Boaz is roughly this, “What I have hitherto sought within myself,
namely strength, I shall find poured out over the whole world; in it I shall live.” But we
can only understand such things when we penetrate them by means of spiritual
knowledge. In the symbolic brotherhoods, the pillars are referred to symbolically. In our
fifth post-Atlantean epoch they will be mentioned more often to keep humanity from
losing them altogether and to help later generations to understand what has been
preserved in these words.

You see, everything in the world around us is a reflection of what lives in the macrocosm.
As our inner life is a microcosm in the sense I have indicated, so humanity’s inner life is
built up out of the macrocosm. In our time, it is very important that we have the image of
the two pillars I mentioned handed down to us through history. These pillars each
represent life one-sidedly; for life is only to be found in the balance between the two.
Jakim is not life for it is the transition from the spiritual to the body; nor is Boaz life for
that is the transition from body to spirit. Balance is what is essential.

And that is what people find so difficult to understand. They always seek one side only—
extremes rather than equilibrium. Therefore two pillars are erected for our times also, and
we must pass between them if we understand our times rightly. We must not imagine
either the one pillar or the other to be a basic force for humanity, but we must go through
between the two. Indeed, we have to grasp what is there in reality and not go through life
brooding without really thinking, as modern materialism does. If you seek the Jakim
pillar today, you will find it. The Jakim pillar exists; you will find it in a very important
man, who is no longer alive, but the pillar still exists—it exists in Tolstoyism.

Remember that Tolstoy basically wanted to turn all people away from the outer life and
lead them to the inner.\[^5\] As I said when I spoke about Tolstoy in the early days of our
movement, he wanted to focus our attention exclusively on what goes on in our inner life. He did not see the spirit working in the outer world—a one-sided view characteristic of him, as I said in that early lecture. One of our friends showed Tolstoy a transcript of that lecture. He understood the first two-thirds of it, but not the last third because reincarnation and karma were mentioned there, which he did not understand. He represented a one-sided view, the absolute suppression of outer life. It is painful to see him show this one-sidedness. Just think of the tremendous contrast between Tolstoy’s views, which predominate among a considerable number of Russia’s intellectuals, and what is coming from there these days. It is one of the most awful contrasts you can imagine. So much for one-sidedness.

The other pillar, the Boaz pillar, also finds historical expression in our age. It, too, represents one-sidedness. We find it in the exclusive search for the spiritual in the outer world. Some years ago, this phenomenon appeared in America with the emergence of the polar opposite to Tolstoy, namely, Keely. He harbored the ideal of building a motor that would not run on steam or electricity, but on the waves we create when we make sounds, when we speak. Just imagine that! A motor that runs on the waves we set in motion when we speak, or indeed with our inner life in general! Of course, this was only an ideal, and we can thank God it was only an ideal at that time, for what would this war be like if Keely’s ideal had been realized? If it is ever realized, then we will see what the harmony of vibrations in external motor power really means. This, then, is the other one-sidedness, the Boaz pillar. It is between these two pillars we must pass through.

There is much, indeed very much, contained in symbols that have been preserved. Our age is called upon to understand these things, to penetrate them. Someday people will perceive the contrast between all true spirituality and what will come from the West if the Keely motor ever becomes a reality. It will be quite a different contrast from the one between Tolstoy’s views and what is approaching from the East. Well, we cannot say more about this.

We need to gradually deepen our understanding of the mysteries of human evolution and to realize that what will some day become reality in various stages has been expressed symbolically or otherwise in human wisdom throughout millennia. Today we are only at the stage of mere groping toward this reality. In one of our recent talks I told you that Hermann Bahr, a man I often met with in my youth, is seeking now—at the age of fifty-three and after having written much—to understand Goethe. Groping his way through Goethe’s works, he admits that he is only just beginning to really understand Goethe. At the same time, he admits that he is beginning to realize that there is such a thing as spiritual science in addition to the physical sciences. I have explained that Franz, the protagonist of Bahr’s recently published novel *Himmelfahrt* (“Ascension”), represents the author’s own path of development, his path through the physical sciences.

Bahr studied with the botanist Wiessner in Vienna, then with Ostwald in the chemical laboratory in Leipzig, then with Schmoller at the seminar for political economy in Berlin, and then studied psychology and psychiatry with Richet in France. Of course, he also went to Freud in Vienna—as a man following up on all the various scientific sensations of the day would naturally have to do—and then he went to the theosophists in London, and so forth. Remember, I read you the passage in question, “And so he scoured the sciences, first botany with Wiessner, then chemistry with Ostwald, then Schmoller’s
seminar, Richet’s clinic, Freud in Vienna, then directly to the theosophists. And so in art he went to the painters, the etchers, and so on.”

But what faith does this Franz attain, who is really one of the urgently seeking people of the present age? Interestingly enough, he wanders and gropes, and then something dawns on him that is described as follows:

He was no longer in a state of spiritual innocence. But wasn’t there perhaps a kind of second innocence, an innocence regained? Was there not a piety of the intellect, humbled by the recognition of its own limits, wasn’t there a faith for those who know, a hope born out of despair? Weren’t there throughout history wise men, living in solitude and seclusion from the world, yet connected with each other through secret signs, and working wonderfully and quietly with an almost magical power in a region beyond nationalities and creeds, in the infinite, in the sphere of a purer humanity, a humanity nearer to God? Were there not even today, scattered allover the world and hidden in secret, knights of the Holy Grail? Were there not disciples of a white lodge, a lodge invisible and perhaps not to be entered but merely felt, yet working and predominating everywhere and determining human destiny? Hasn’t there always been an anonymous community of holy men on earth, who do not know each other nor anything of each other and yet are working together and on one another through the very power of their prayers? Such thoughts had already much occupied him in his theosophical days, but he had obviously gotten to know only false theosophists; maybe genuine, true theosophists did not allow themselves to be known.

These thoughts occur to Franz after he has hurried through the world and has been everywhere, as I have told you, and has at last returned to his home, presumably Salzburg. That’s where these thoughts occur to him, in his Salzburg home. I would like to mention in all modesty that he did not come to us; and we can get an idea of why Franz did not come to us. In his quest for people who are striving for the spirit, Franz remembers an Englishman he had once ‘met in Rome and whom he describes as follows:

He was a clever man in his mature years, of good family, a rich, independent bachelor, and a proper Englishman—sober, practical, unsentimental, lacking any musical or artistic sense; in short, a robust, cheerful, sensuous person. He loved fishing, rowing, sailing, eating and drinking heartily; he was a playboy disturbed in his complacency only by one single passion, the curiosity to see everything, to get to know everything, to have been everywhere—with no other ambition than to be able to say with satisfaction, regardless of what place was being talked about, that he knew this or that hotel, where Cook’s had found accommodations for him, had seen the sights, and associated with notable people of rank and fame. To be able to travel more comfortably and to have access everywhere, he had been advised to become a freemason. He praised the usefulness of this association until he thought he had discovered a similar but better organized and more powerful association of a higher kind, which he now wanted to join by all means, just as he would have made travel arrangements with another better firm than Cook’s if one could have been found.
He was not to be dissuaded from his conviction that the world was governed by a small group of secret leaders, that so-called history was made by these men who were as unknown to their closest servants as those in turn were to theirs. He claimed to have followed the traces of this secret world government, of this real freemasonry of which the other was merely a most foolish copy, made by inadequate means. He thought he had found its center in Rome among the Monsignors, most of whom, of course, only played a minor role as unsuspecting pawns, whose jostling provided the cover for the four or five true leaders of the world. And, looking back, Franz still had to laugh at the funny desperation of this Englishman, who had the misfortune never to meet the real leaders but always only their pawns. However, this did not deter the man in his attempts but only served to increase his respect for this very well-guarded and impenetrable association, which he was willing to bet he would be allowed to enter some day—even if he had to stay in Rome until the end of his life and become a monk or even if he had to be circumcised. For since he was tracking everywhere the invisible threads of a power covering the whole world like a spider web, he was not averse to hold Jews in very high esteem. And occasionally he expressed his serious suspicion that in the ultimate, innermost circle of this concealed worldwide web, Rabbis and Monsignors might be sitting together in utmost harmony, which would have been all right with him as long as they would allow him to take part in their magic.

There you have a caricature of what I have told you, namely, that there is, as it were, a kingdom within a kingdom, a small circle whose power radiates into others. But the Englishman, and Franz with him, imagined this circle to be a community of rabbis and monsignors; as a matter of fact, they are precisely the ones who are not in it. But you see that Franz just gropes his way here. And why? Well, he remembers once again the eccentric whims of the Englishman:

> It was only much later that it occurred to him to wonder whether perhaps someone who had not been born with such capacities could acquire them, whether one could train oneself to such powers, whether they could be learned. But the theosophical exercises soon disappointed him.

Those he had given up! You see, there is such a groping and fumbling in our time. People like Barn reach their old age before they understand anything spiritual, and then they have such grotesque ideas as we see here. This Franz is then invited to the house of a canon. This Salzburg canon is a very mysterious personality, and of great importance in Salzburg—the town Salzburg is not named, but we can nevertheless recognize it. He is of even greater importance than the cardinal, for the whole city no longer talks about the cardinal but about the canon although there are a dozen canons there. And so Franz gets the idea that maybe this very man is one of the white lodge. You know how easy it is to get such ideas.

Well, Franz is invited to lunch at the canon’s house. There are many guests, and the canon is really a very tolerant man; imagine, he is a Catholic canon, and yet he has invited a Jewish banker together with a Jesuit, Franz, and others, including a Franciscan monk. It is a very cheerful luncheon party. The Jesuit and the Jewish banker are soon talking—*nota bene*, the banker is one to whom practically everybody is indebted but who
is really most unselfish in what he does and as a rule does not ask for repayment of what he apparently lends but instead only wants the pleasure of being invited to the house of a gentleman such as the canon once a year. The eager conversation between the Jesuit and this Jewish banker is altogether too much for Franz. He leaves them and goes into the library to escape their scandalous jokes, and the canon follows him.

The library, though not big, was very select. On theology there were only the most essential works, the Bollandist writings and a good deal of Franciscan literature, Meister Eckhart, writings on the spiritual exercises, Catherine of Genoa, the mysticism of Gorres and Mohler’s symbolism. On philosophy there were more books: all of Kant’s works, including the collected volumes of the Kant Society, also Deussen’s Upanishads and his history of philosophy, Vaihinger’s philosophy of the “As if,” and very many books on epistemology. Then the Greek and Latin classics, Shakespeare, Calderon, Cervantes, Dante, Macchiavelli, and Balzac in the original, but of German literature only the works of Novalis and Goethe, the latter in various editions and his scientific writings in the Weimar edition. Franz took down a volume of these and found a number of marginal notes made by the canon, who at this moment left the young monk and the Jesuit and joined Franz, saying, “Yes, no one knows the scientific writings of Goethe.”

Now what the canon finds in Goethe’s scientific writings is characteristic, on the one hand, of what is actually contained there and can be understood by the canon and, on the other hand, of what the canon can understand by virtue of being a Catholic canon. “Yes, no one knows the scientific writings of Goethe. It is a pity! In these writings, the old heathen that Goethe is supposed to have been suddenly appears in a different light, and only after reading them does one understand the end of Faust.” There the canon is right. We cannot understand the end of Faust if we don’t know Goethe’s scientific views. “I have never been able to believe that Goethe pretended there [in Faust] to be a Catholic just for artistic effect. [You see, the canon in him cannot be denied, but never mind.] After all, my respect for the poet, for all poets, is too great to believe that at the moment he utters his last words, he is putting on a mask.”

That is what most people believe, that Goethe really was only pretending when he wrote the magnificent, grandiose final scene of Faust. “But the scientific writings reveal on every page how much of a Catholic Goethe was.” Yes, well, the canon calls everything he can understand, everything he likes, Catholic. We don’t need to feel embarrassed about that.

... how much of a Catholic Goethe was, perhaps unknowingly and in any case without the courage of his convictions. These writings read as though the writer, unfamiliar with Catholic truths, had unexpectedly discovered them on his own, on his own initiative, as it were. Of course, in the process some violent distortions and some oddities are inevitable, but on the whole nothing crucial, necessary, and essential is lacking, not even the dash of superstition, magic, or whatever you want to call it, that makes confirmed Protestants so suspicious of our sacred doctrine. Often I could hardly believe my own eyes. But once you are on the trail of the hidden Catholic in Goethe, you soon see him everywhere. His trust in the Holy Spirit (of course, Goethe prefers to call him “Genius”), his deep feeling for the sacraments, which he thought were too few, his sense for penitence, his gift
for reverence, and even more so the fact that in totally un-Protestant fashion he is not content with faith but always insists on the acknowledgment of God in the living deed, the pious work—this rare and most difficult realization that human beings cannot be approached by God if they do not first approach God themselves, the realization of this awesome human freedom to choose either to accept or reject the grace offered, this freedom through which alone God’s grace will be deserved by those who decide to accept it—all this, even in his exaggerations and distortions, is still Catholic to the core.”

For us, it would be particularly interesting to know what the canon calls “exaggerations.” Well, in any case, he calls them Catholic and goes on to say, “Therefore, as you see, I have often written in the margin the passages from the Council of Trent where the same content is expressed, sometimes even in almost the same words.” Imagine, a Catholic canon writing the resolutions of the Council of Trent next to the words of Goethe! In this juxtaposition you have what permeates all humanity and what we may call the core of spiritual life common to all people. This should not be taken as just so much empty rhetoric; instead it must be understood as it was meant. The canon continues:

And when Zacharias Werner tells us that a sentence in Goethe’s Elective Affinities has made him a Catholic, I believe him implicitly. Of course, this is not to deny [here the canon comes through again] there is also a heathen, a Protestant, and even an almost Jewish Goethe; I don’t want to claim him as an ideal Catholic.

What the canon adds to this we can be pleased to hear; well, I don’t want to press my opinion on you; at least I am pleased to hear this: “If Goethe had indeed been Catholic, which on the whole he was more likely to have been than the shallow and complacent run-of-the-mill monist the neo-German senior professors parade under his name.” Of course, the canon here refers to Richard M. Meyer, Albert Bielschowsky, Engel—neo-German senior professors who have written neo-German works on Goethe. You see, we are already doing what our times secretly and darkly long for, something that is indeed inevitable—this is a very serious matter.

Now please remember some of the first lectures I gave to our groups in these fateful times, where I spoke of a shattering occult experience, namely the perception that the soul of Franz Ferdinand, who was assassinated in Sarajevo, plays a special part in the spiritual world. As most of you will remember, I told you his soul has attained cosmic significance, as it were. And now Bahr’s novel has been published and people have been buying it for weeks. In it the Archduke Franz Ferdinand is described by a man who had hired himself out, under the guise of a simpleton, as a farmhand by a Salzburg landowner who is the brother of the protagonist Franz. Now this man disguised as a simpleton is so stubborn he has to be whipped to work. At the time of the assassination in Sarajevo, this poor fool behaves in such a way that he gets another thrashing; and imagine, when he reads the news of Franz Ferdinand’s assassination in an announcement posted on the church door, this fellow says: “He had to end like this; it could not have been otherwise!”

Well, people can’t help assuming he was part of the conspiracy even though the murder took place in Sarajevo while the simpleton was in Salzburg. However, such discrepancies don’t trouble the people who investigate the matter: Obviously this fellow is one of the Sarajevo conspirators. And since they find books written in Spanish among his posses-
sions, he is evidently a Spanish anarchist. Well, these Spanish books are seized and taken to the district judge, or whatever he is. He, of course, cannot read a word of Spanish but wants to get the case off his docket as quickly as possible after the poor simpleton has been arrested and brought before him. The district judge wants to push this case off on the superior court in Vienna; the people there are to figure out what to do with this Spanish anarchist. After all, the district judge does not want to make a fool of himself; he is an enthusiastic mountain climber and this is perhaps the last fine day of the season, so he wants to get things settled quickly and get going! He understands nothing of the matter. Nevertheless, he is certain of one thing: he is dealing with a Spanish anarchist.

Then he remembers that Franz had been in Spain (I told you Bahr himself was there, too) and could read Spanish. Franz is to read the book and summarize it for the judge. And so Franz takes the manuscript—and what does he discover? The deepest mysticism. Absolutely nothing to do with anarchism—only profound mysticism! There is actually a great deal that is wonderful and beautiful in the manuscript. Well, according to Franz this simpleton wrote it himself because his very mysticism led him to want to die to the world. Naturally, I do not want to defend this way of proceeding. The simpleton then turns out to be in reality a Spanish infante, a crown prince, and his description fits that of the Archduke Johann who had left the imperial house of Austria to see the world. Franz could not discern the simpleton’s Austrian character, but his true identity shines through the disguise, and Franz hits on the idea to say the fellow is a Spanish infante. You can imagine what this means in poor old Salzburg! The people believed they had caught an anarchist and put him into chains—now he turns out to be a Spanish infante! But this man, who knew the heir to the throne, Archduke Ferdinand, what does he say about the latter now after he himself has been unmasked as an infante and a mystic?

The enchanted but now disenchanted prince, still in his old clothes and otherwise still the same old fellow, yet different since Franz knew the old clothes were a disguise, said with a smile, “Forgive me this deception, which, for my feeling, wasn’t really one. I have long since stopped being the infante Don Tadeo. If circumstances force me now to play his role again, the part has become much more difficult for me. To myself I was really the old simpleton, and if I ever lied at all, I lied to myself, not to you. I could not know I would inconvenience you, and I am sorry enough for that. Naturally it was all the silliest misunderstanding.

I have known the successor to the throne well, without having actually met him; he was very dear to me, and we have been in touch albeit not in the ‘local’ way. [He means here in a way not on the physical plane.] He had long overstepped the limits of his earthly work and had already one foot in the realm of purely spiritual activity. He had to go over completely, I knew. In order to fulfill his work he could no longer stay here. It is only from there that his deed will be done. I only wonder why destiny hesitated so long with him. And that Sunday, as I came out of the church where in my prayers I had been assured again, when I saw the anxious crowd, I knew right away he had at last been freed. What is to happen through him, he can carry out only from the other side. Here he could only promise it; his life was only a preliminary announcement of what is to come. Only now can the deed come about. I have never been able to think of him as a constitutional monarch, with parliamentarianism and all that other humbug. He
was a man of too much stature for that. But now he has seized the reins of action all at once. Only now in his death will this man live, really live. This is what I felt when I heard the news, and this is what I meant by the words I said at the time.

“It had to end like this,” that’s what he said at the time of the assassination. I have to admit that I was strangely and deeply moved when I read these words a few days ago in Bahr’s *Himmelfahrt*. Just compare what we find in this novel with what has been said here out of the reality of the spiritual world! Try to understand from this how deeply spiritual science is rooted in reality. Try to see that those who are seeking for knowledge, albeit at first only in a groping, tentative way, are really on the same path, that they want to follow this path and that they also arrive at what we are developing here, even down to the details. After all, it is hardly likely that what I said back then could have been divulged to Hermann Bahr by one of our members. But even if that had been the case, he did at any rate not reject it, but accepted it.

We do not want to put into practice what is really only some hobby or other. We want to put into practice what is a necessity of our age and a very clear and urgent one at that. And now certain really slanderous things are making themselves felt, and we see that people nowadays are inclined to turn their sympathy to those who spread slander. It is much rarer these days for people to show sympathy for the side that is justified. Instead, precisely where injustice occurs we find people think those who have been wronged must appease and cajole the party who committed the injustice. We find this again and again. Even in our Society we find it again and again. My dear friends, today I do not feel in the mood to go into these things, and in any case that is not the point of my talk. I never mention such things except when it is necessary. But let me conclude by mentioning one more point.

In my recently published booklet, I have pointed out that what we are seeking in our spiritual science has been uniform and consistent since the beginning of our work. I have also explained that it is indeed slander to talk of any kind of changing sides, of any contradictions to what we did in the early days of our movement. On page forty-nine, you will find the following: “In a lecture I gave in 1902 to the Giordano Bruno Society, I referred to these statements by I. H. Fichte [which seemed to me the expression of a modern intellectual movement and not merely the opinion of an individual]; that was when we made a beginning with what reveals itself now as the anthroposophical way of thinking.” I was referring there to a lecture held in Berlin before the German Section of the Theosophical Society was founded. Continuing along the lines of Goethe, I wanted to create in that lecture the starting point for this new movement not on the basis of Blavatsky and Besant, but based on modern spiritual life, which is independent of those two. Yet there are people today who dare to say that the name “anthroposophy” was invented only when, as they say, we wanted to break away from the Theosophical Society. As I explained in my book: “This shows what we had in mind was an expansion of the modem striving for a world view to an actual observation of spiritual reality. Our aim was not to take any old views from the publications then (and even still today) called “thesosophical,” but to continue the striving that began with modem philosophy but then got stuck in the abstract and therefore did not gain access to the real spiritual world.”
few individuals who heard my talk to the Giordano Bruno Society back in 1902, that is, before the German Section was founded. Today I can present documentary evidence. Well, life’s funny like that, due to the kindness of one of our members, Fräulein Hübbe-Schleiden, I have recently received the letters I wrote to Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden back then, just before and on the occasion of the founding of the German Section. Now, after his death, those letters were returned to me.

The German Section of the Theosophical Society was not founded until October 1902. This particular letter is dated September 16, 1902. There are a few words in this letter I would like to read to you. Forgive me, but I must begin somewhere. There was a lot of talk at that time about connecting with the theosophist Franz Hartmann, who was just then holding a kind of congress. I have no intention of saying anything against Franz Hartmann today, but I have to read what I wrote in those days:

Friedenau-Berlin, September 16, 1902. Let Hartmann continue to tell his rubbish to his people; in the meantime I want to take our theosophy where I will find people of sound judgment. Once we have a connection to the students [so far we have had only mediocre success with this], we will have gained much. I want to build anew, not patch up old ruins. [That is how the theosophical movement appeared to me then.] This coming winter I hope to teach a course on elementary theosophy in the Theosophical Library. [I did indeed hold this course, and one of the lectures was given during the actual founding of the German Section. The course title is mentioned here, too.] In addition, I plan to teach elsewhere an ongoing course entitled “Anthroposophy or the Connection between Morality, Religion, and Science.” I also hope to be able to present a lecture to the Bruno Society on Bruno’s monism and anthroposophy. At this point, these are only plans. In my opinion, that is how we must proceed.

That was written on September 16, 1902. Here is the document, my dear friends, that can prove to you these things are not simply claims made after the fact, but they have really happened in this way. It is favorable karma that we are able to show who is right at this moment when so much slander is spread, and will increasingly be spread, about our cause.

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[1] Helmuth Johannes Ludwig von Moltke (1848–1916), German soldier, chief of general staff (from 1906), and director of German strategy at the beginning of World War I (1914). Lost the first battle of the Marne (September 1914) and was relieved of his command in November 1914.


[4] Jakim and Boaz are the words that were inscribed on the two columns at the front of Solomon’s Temple. See the Bible, I Kings, chapter 7; II Chronicles, chapter 3. See also Rudolf Steiner, The Temple Legend: Freemasonry and Related Occult Movements (Rudolf Steiner Press, 1997). See also, Rudolf
Count Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy (1828–1910), Russian novelist and moral philosopher.

John Ernst Worrell Keely (1827–1898) claimed the invention of a perpetual-motion system in 1873. After his death, his apparatus was proven a fraud.

Hermann Bahr, Himmelfahrt (Berlin 1916).

Ibid. Friedrich Wilhelm Ostwald (1854–1932), German physical chemist who invented a process for preparing nitric acid by oxidizing ammonia, important for the production of explosives during World War I; awarded 1909 Nobel prize for chemistry. Gustav von Schmoller (1838–1917), German economist, leading pacifist, and opponent of German militarism; awarded 1927 Nobel peace prize. Charles-Robert Richet (1850–1935), French physiologist; researched serum therapy, epilepsy; discovered phenomenon of anaphylaxis; awarded 1913 Nobel prize for physiology; also studied psychic phenomena. Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), Austrian neurologist and founder of Psychoanalysis.

Council of Trent: council of the Roman Catholic Church, 1545–1563.

Richard M. Meyer (1860–1914), German philologist.

Franz Ferdinand (1863–1914), Archduke of Austria and nephew of Emperor Franz Joseph and heir to the crown. He was assassinated with his wife June 28, 1914, by a Serbian nationalist at Sarajevo, Bosnia, which led to World War I.


Immanuel Hermann von Fichte (1796–1879), son of Johann Gottlieb. Philosopher and exponent of an ethical, or speculative, theism.


Franz Hartmann (1838–1912), doctor and theosophist. He founded his own movement within theosophy.