

## Exoteric and Esoteric Christianity

### *The Hadrian Essay of 1930*

Destinies of Peoples and Individuals  
in the Roman-Greek Middle Ages and the Present

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Anthroposophy tells us that folk spirits are not the abstractions of which one normally speaks. For conventional thinking at the present time, a people [*Volk*] is only a sum of individuals with particular characteristics and a common mother tongue. This abstract concept of a people is shown by events to be untenable when considered with the logic of facts, but the necessary consequences of life are not drawn from it. Because people cannot decide to recognize spiritual being, and because they shut themselves off from spiritual scientific methods, often out of fear, they cannot at all arrive at a concept of a people [*Volk*] that is based on reason. If one really wants to grasp what a people is, one can only do it when one raises oneself to the supersensible, for in the physical earthly realm there are only single, variously formed individuals. The facts show that the earlier separation of peoples is disappearing more and more, and the outer physical characteristics increasingly differentiate themselves; mixings and blendings of peoples have become extraordinarily complex. Also, languages, which have become ever more abstract, increasingly lose the characteristic of being spiritual expressions of the different folk-individualities.

The awkwardness which is felt when 'peoples' are spoken of is especially evident in the case of social and political thinking. One can bind human beings together abstractly in a State when they are limited within boundaries by legal force, but one should then know that this State is a union which has to be regarded as nominalistic, in the sense of the old mediaeval philosophical disputes, and that it will then always be a vain effort to bring this intellectual-abstract union into any kind of congruence with what a people really is. A people can never be regarded in the sense of Nominalism but only in the way one understood Realism in the Middle Ages. There were at that time still individuals who knew that the real does not exhaust itself in the naturalistic and the physical but has a spiritual background that is one of beings. A people is therefore a spiritual being of a higher order than the [individual] human spiritual being; it leads a group of human beings in spirit and soul and is unattainable by

conventional knowledge. On the Earth therefore, individual human beings can only be brought together in a State by force and human intellect. Peoples cannot be limited in an earthly way by human beings; this is why the abstract, nationalism of the State, as it is understood today, is so foolish, restricting and ruinous for the development of mankind. The professorial phrases of [Woodrow] Wilson about the liberation of peoples could only result in the further oppression of human beings and lead the modern abstract bureaucratic States into forms even more hostile to life. If people want to achieve what they said they wanted to achieve with the phrase of 'peoples' liberation', they must actually begin by liberating the individual. The effect of collective freedoms is to work against freedom.

Peoples arise and fade through the ingress and egress of spiritual beings, and folk spirits act in accordance with the spiritual intentions of the world spirit; they are themselves differentiations of the world spirit. They lead human souls into a particular relationship with earthly folk souls and withdraw again to take up other tasks when their relationship with a people has fulfilled its task and is no longer needed in the evolutionary process. One speaks then of the decline of a folk community.

The problem of ethnic minorities which is so politically fraught will never be solved in the manner resorted to at present. The boundaries of the State, as they are meaninglessly maintained and even increased today, contributing to the sickness of mankind, can in the present time in which territorial dominance is being increasingly dissolved, never really comprehend peoples and never really benefit the life of peoples. This manner of collaboration, as it is practised today, will bring about the very downfall of the worthiest folk communities. The national element is very closely bound up with the spiritual life, and this endures, if it is to develop itself in a beneficial manner, because it has its impulses in the human being himself and not in a rigid separation of arbitrary, merely geographically created groups. The national characteristics of a people seek to perfect themselves through the national characteristics of other peoples in the free engagement of individual men and women. To shore up the cultural life for the power motives of abstract collective relationships through protectionist tariffs or to privilege it bureaucratically can only lead to ruin. In the cultural life, which the national element bears, an unrestricted free competition should prevail; only then can national characteristics show themselves in their true creativity for the general benefit of mankind. Because there is no courage, even in liberal circles, for such real freedom in the cultural life, mindlessness and chaos prevail in the political world. The current methods of separation and privileging promote only a withering of soul and spirit.

The history and sudden decline of two peoples which were flourishing in the time before the Mystery of Golgotha are especially interesting to consider from a spiritual-scientific viewpoint, because their destinies are deeply bound up with the growth of Christianity. Both the Greeks and the Celts experienced a sudden fall after a high cultural blossoming; the folk spirits that led them, Rudolf Steiner told us in a lecture cycle held in Christiania [Oslo] in 1910, took on special tasks within Christianity after it had emerged. The folk spirit of the Greeks took over the leadership of exoteric Christianity, while the folk spirit of the Celts assumed the leadership of esoteric Christianity. If we want to understand Christianity's path of development after its almost unnoticed entry into mankind's evolution, then we must keep this spiritual fact in mind. Christianity, which did not work through the power of a new teaching but proceeded from the cosmic deed on Golgotha, could not enter so easily into the sense-based consciousness of the individual, as it was a supersensible event within the Earth's cosmic body at the time of the deepest darkness of the human spirit vis-à-vis the spiritual worlds. Its destiny differed among the individual peoples [of Europe]. The history of peoples at that time becomes more understandable to the spiritual gaze through Christianity, and the destiny of Christianity itself becomes more understandable when one sees it in terms of its effects on the various peoples.

If the Mystery of Golgotha is understood as the fructification of mankind by a supersensible element, then history will also be able to reveal its karmic background to human understanding. It will show how one has to speak not only of a karma of human individualities, but of a karma of peoples, of the earth and of the whole of humanity. It will further show how the human being has to live out not only his own individual karma but is also entrusted by higher beings with special tasks for the karma of peoples and of mankind, and such tasks cross their own individual destinies many times, indeed, they can even be in contradiction with them. The human being is to be trained for independent collaboration within the world spirit. This will then for the first time give to the world body its true meaning and thereby contribute to the understanding of the riddle of the human being. This meaning was implanted into the body of the Earth on Golgotha in the greatest Mystery in the whole development of the Earth so that the human being could come to know his true destiny.

Through such understanding of human destiny in human lives which follow on after each other, the destinies of peoples and the destiny of the entire human race can become comprehensible. In world history that is cognized by the inner powers of destiny shines the light with which the

way into the future can be illumined, and when the guidance of mankind can be shaped through such knowledge, the tasks of new cultural periods can be fulfilled; then the saying that one can learn nothing from history will be transformed into the sentence: 'The true history of mankind must become our master that guides us into the future.' In the way history is pursued scientifically today, it can be of no positive value in life. The great energy which is spent on collecting facts and interpreting documents will only show itself to have not been in vain for the life of the future if the spirit enlivens this work, supplements it and thereby makes it meaningful. One will then recognize, for example, how the history of the Jews actually tells us how that human body was prepared over generations by divine spiritual influences, which was to provide the bodily sheath for the Christ Being for three years, from the Baptism in the Jordan until the Mystery of Golgotha. We shall recognize the Romans as the people, who, without understanding Christianity, nevertheless provided for it the first, exoteric foundations for its propagation. The Greeks had to sacrifice themselves as a people because their folk spirit had to take on the wisdom-filled guidance of esoteric Christianity in earthly happenings. The Celts were given up as a single people because their folk spirit had to take care that the contents of the esoteric mystery of Christianity were not lost in the age in which a consciousness of gods which still saw the facts of nature as proceeding from divine beings had to fade away. To maintain the spiritual continuity, a spiritual leader-being of the rank of folk spirit had to subordinate himself to the Time Spirit until the latter would say: 'It is time to appear.'

The preparation of the physicality for the Deed of the Christ Being could not simply take place and just as little could Christ consciousness find its way into human beings in any simple, straightforward manner. There first had to be a duality, an exoteric outer form of propagation and an esoteric way of working that had to remain outwardly hidden.

In the first period of Christianity the greatest of all antitheses in human development appeared—that between the Roman spiritual direction, which founded the Imperium, and the supersensible Deed of Christ. This led to the well-known cruelties of the persecutions of Christians which stemmed from the same hatred of the spirit as that which exterminated the being of the Mysteries. Everywhere in the world where the Romans went, these tendencies to extermination showed themselves. The present, violent, revolutionary movements are the repetition of this mood; they also work in the sense of a struggle against the spirit and have also placed the powers of the State in their service.

The Jews had a secret teaching which was protected in the Mysteries

and which pointed towards the Mystery of Golgotha. The messianic message of the Sun which, when they fulfilled it, they did not recognize, was something perceived by the Roman nature as something alien and hostile. The gradual annihilation of the Jewish State was therefore intimately linked to the extermination of the Mysteries.

The Imperium borne by the Roman people, like its present successor, had a destiny that continually had to bring it into conflict with Christianity. Christianity, which entered into mankind almost unnoticed by the learned in contemporary Rome and by all those leading personalities in the Roman State, soon became a great problem for the Empire.

Light can best be shed on the understanding of Christian development in the first Christian era when one pays special attention in a spiritual scientific sense to the transition from the nature of the old Mysteries to exoteric Christianity. We shall be able to get to know this era best and most understandably through individual human destinies. Christianity was what gripped people religiously in place of the nature of the old Mysteries; it was the fulfilment of these Mysteries, and was therefore a mystical fact. When the old consciousness of the Gods disappeared in the human soul and Mystery wisdom was lost, traditional, external symbolic cults and decadent, increasingly declining ceremonial rituals maintained themselves in many parts of the world. The Romans, who especially had lost all inner connections to the Gods, were therefore the leading people in that cultural epoch. Yet they still recognized the traditional powers of these old divine worlds of the various subject peoples and made political use of these. It was only then actually that what is called politics began, which today has wholly fallen into decadence.

In the transition from the being of the Mysteries to exoteric Christianity, the Greeks played a special role, karmically. The sober Romans needed Greek art, the Greek sense of beauty and Greek wisdom. The male spirit, which was coming to personal autonomy in this era, needed inspiration from the divine nature forces of the female spirit. The wisdom of the Gods had placed the duality of the male and female spirit in the two leading peoples of the cultural epoch; they were to complement each other.

The turning point of time required a stronger emphasis on the male principle, that which goes out into the external world in order to become independent and autonomously conquer the earthly forces. The Greeks were therefore overcome outwardly, but they had the task to provide cultural inspiration within the structure of Roman power until the onset of the power of the Mystery of Golgotha. The polarity between the Roman nature and the Greco-oriental nature, between the masculine and

feminine spiritual principles, showed itself from this time onwards in the struggles between the ruling families and the democratic State-building elements. The polarity, which was then still represented in the two peoples, the Romans and the Greeks, became more inward. With the progress of Christianity, the dualism which in the early Christian era was still represented by the two peoples necessarily took on inward forms, and showing itself more socially, later led to the split between the community of the Empire and the community of the Church. This split was a necessity because it was recognized that the Roman Caesars' pretensions to divinity, which were still dominant as the after-effect of past stages of development, were something impossible. It was also known at that time that the spiritual world had to work into the human social order, shaping it; people in those days had neither the great superstition of modern cleverness—that the spiritual world does not exist—nor the superstitious arrogance that thinks itself capable of creating social institutions on the basis of a one-sided, merely earthly intellectualism.

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In the time of the Antonines in the middle period of the Greco-Roman epoch, we find a Roman Emperor whose personal destiny was deeply bound up with the transition from the being of the Mysteries to exoteric Christianity. Emperor Hadrian was both Roman and Greek, unlike any of his predecessors. His destiny brought him into close contact with the folk spirits of those peoples who were deeply bound up with the growing Christianity. In the destiny of this Emperor one can clearly follow the transition of the folk spirit of the Greeks from one task to another. Hadrian, who repeatedly wandered on foot across his great Empire, has been judged by history both favourably and unfavourably. Spartianus, who wrote a biography of him 200 years later, in the time of Diocletian, refers to his good and bad qualities in no particular order. There are writings about him by the monk John Xiphilinus in the eleventh century who included extracts from the histories of Cassius Dio that referred to Hadrian. In recent times Ferdinand Gregorovius has written about Hadrian and his times with exactitude and great industry on the basis of the sources available to him, and I have made use of his historical work in these considerations.

All historians agree that this Emperor combined in himself a high level of Greek culture with a kind of universal geniality, that he administered the Roman Empire wisely, was distinguished by a great love of peace and had within him a great urge to travel. His era and that of his immediate successors were preceded and followed by difficult times—before him the

era of the Caesars of the first century; later, after Marcus Aurelius, the incursions of the barbarians, which gradually destroyed the great Empire. Hadrian is one of those historical personalities about whom the external writing of history can gain little clarity; he presents it everywhere with riddles that it is not in the position to solve. It is always especially interesting for spiritual science to consider such personalities. Hadrian believed, as Gregorovius writes, in the script of the stars, in the power of oracles, he received signs of his future imperial dignity from the books of the Sibyls, as an astrologer he researched his own future and directed his operations in accordance with what he had read in the starry script. Even people of culture still believed in those days on the once high science of astrology, of the starry script, although this had already become decadent at that time.

The age of the instinctive Intellectual-Mind Soul was in full bloom, and this could only develop at the expense of older capacities. This applied principally to those peoples who were then carrying the main thrust of that cultural epoch, that is, to the Greeks and especially to the Romans.

Some historians consider Hadrian to have been an atheist; others see him as the most pious Emperor. Gregorovius comes to no firm conclusion; on the one hand, he has to admire him in this regard, but then refers to qualities of the Emperor that are not in harmony with it, so that he finally has to confess with regard to Hadrian's religion: 'The religion of this riddle of a man is a mystery for us.'

From the perspective of spiritual science, one can understand that when looking at personalities such as Hadrian, one cannot begin with the current concept of the 'religious'. The cult of the Emperor was then in reality the religion of the State in which Hadrian had to, and wanted to, find himself; he *lived* in a very real way, not only in abstract concepts and principles in the transition to a new world order. What was working within him was the ancient culture, which was once reality in the Orient, and also that in his soul into which he was born as a Roman. The forces of the Sentient Soul and those of the Intellectual-Mind Soul were struggling with each other within him, as is understandable for that era of the Turning Point of Time.

It is very hard to understand such facts of soul development today because people always assume that the thought life of people in that Roman epoch was just like that of our time. The thought life at that time was still close to that of the epoch when people could actually perceive thoughts just as people today can perceive something external, such as a symphony. Plato, Aristotle and others were perceivers of thoughts; they

did not at all create them from within out of the efforts of their own souls. Only after Golgotha, in the time of Hadrian, did people experience thoughts first as thought-inspirations stirred by the spirit; only slowly came awareness of the subjectivity of thinking and then, finally, the free creation of thoughts by human beings.

Hadrian's double nature shows itself especially in the fact that he was really a Roman and a Greek. He thus incorporated the Greco-Roman cultural epoch in a very real way within his individuality and moreover, was living in the time in which the transition was beginning from the ancient being of the Mysteries to exoteric Christianity. Only within a polarity, a duality, can the Mystery of Golgotha be recognized as a supersensible event for the awakening of the potential of the Son of God in the Son of Man through the Christ Spirit. The twofold basis was expressed through peoples, through the Romans and through the Greeks. The Jews disappeared very soon as a unitary people after their mission to prepare human physicality to receive the Christ had been fulfilled. One can say that the duality, between which the concept of the Son first had to ripen cognitively as the middle term, would in the fourth cultural period be placed by Gods into peoples [the Greeks and the Romans—*transl.*], but must later be brought by human beings themselves into the process of forming society and that finally, out of this internalization will come Christ consciousness, that is, the understanding of threefoldness, which is at the same time oneness.

Hadrian himself represents the duality in his double nature. He already anticipates in the middle of the Roman-Hellenistic era what in the later age of the Consciousness Soul will emerge ever more clearly in the individual human being, namely, the Parzival nature and the Amfortas nature. Hadrian naturally represented this double nature in a very different way from a modern person; he experienced it in a very elemental fashion out of the natures of the two peoples. This double nature worked much more strongly at that time than it can today. As he learned much from the Mysteries, he was actually able to live out this double nature of his Roman-ness and his Greek-Oriental soul. He was divided between *Stoa* and *Gnosis*; he could find full satisfaction in neither of these philosophies and that is why he sought out the Mysteries. It has not been established historically whether he was initiated in Mysteries other than those of Eleusis, but it is very likely. The growth of rational intellect at that time among the more cultured peoples had turned them away from Mysteries, oracles, and all mysticism: the Oracle of Delphi had been silent since the days of Nero. Trajan showed some interest again in the old Greek wisdom, and Hadrian sought to re-enliven it, for he could not



really be a Stoic. During his reign, one can speak of a revival of the cults of the Gods, which he brought about. He felt the need for a spiritual enlivening of Roman rationalism. One spoke at that time of demons becoming priests at the Oracles, and that was indeed often the case due to the decay of the Oracles, but it had nothing to do with the original thing itself. From his perspective, which is often that of the modern period, Gregorovius can hardly speak otherwise than of the 'stupidity' of the people with whom Hadrian had to deal. Habits of thought in the nineteenth century were even further from any consciousness of 'gods' than at that time in Rome. And yet today, true spiritual experience has once again come very close to mankind, and people are again beginning to entertain doubts about the splendour [of modern civilization—*transl.*] to which mankind is supposed to have been brought. The writer Pausanias was certainly right when he called Hadrian the most god-fearing Emperor. Even if he had only built temples out of an artistic sensibility, there was a religious yearning in that sensibility that stemmed from imaginative pictures that had already become uncertain. In Hadrian there were no longer any real pretensions to divinity; on the contrary he seems to have felt that he had the duties of a divine stewardship. This was understandable for a Greek-oriented spiritual seeker on the Caesars' throne; in feeling it, he was in his soul also in tune with the times. Inwardly, he was torn between two worlds—the declining Greek world with its Gods disappearing from the sight of the soul, and the rising Roman world. His attempt to unite Hellas and Rome, which could not be immediately accomplished, shows something of his sense that a harmonizing of these two cultural principles would be necessary in the future. Christianity, which was working within mankind, shows itself in his unconscious, instinctive search for the 'Son'. As he could not find Him, he fell into externalities, but he is therefore one of those personalities that incorporate world forces, which is why Rome today is still filled with memorials to him; his mausoleum—Castel Sant'Angelo—played a later role in the history of Christianity and at its top is a statue of the Archangel Michael.

Destiny ruled when he came to power in the Great Roman Empire. His adoption by Trajan is shrouded in darkness. To succeed at all, it must have been on Trajan's deathbed. Trajan did not like Hadrian's political direction; he was completely different from Hadrian, who was too Greek and oriental for him. Trajan therefore feared Hadrian's influence on the Roman Empire. One can feel the powers of destiny clearly at work then, when Hadrian mounted the throne of the Caesars, probably at the urgings of the ladies Augustina Plotina, Trajan's wife, and Matidia, Trajan's niece,

and perhaps also that of his guardian, Trajan's adjutant, Licinius Sura. That women should have played a great part in his adoption is understandable from a spiritual scientific perspective since there lies in every woman, and especially in that era, which was still so close to the Sentient Soul epoch, the 'inwardness' of the East. Hadrian was certainly a Roman and thus bore in himself the strong, male spiritual principle that was striving for autonomy, and which at that time was already beginning to make itself independent of the inspiration of the female spiritual principle and wanted to see in the woman only the housewife and mother, but Hadrian's soul had such a great inclination to what was Greek and oriental that women recognized this.

At the present time, the word 'oriental' can hardly be used without giving the impression that one means by it something inferior, barbaric or something from an Arabian fantasy. Here, it is used to denote what was once deep nature wisdom in Asia and represented the powers of human origins, which must again be recognized as such. It signifies that which is closely bound to the eternally valid elements of the ancient Mysteries. The Romans, who had a special task in the fourth cultural epoch, despised oriental cultures as well as the Germanic cultures of the North as barbaric. This habit of despising the East was taken over from the Romans by their successors and has been passed on down to us; the East was increasingly identified with paganism and was finally stamped by an intellectual arrogance as something that had been conquered. As the ancient Romans called the peoples they conquered 'barbarians' and had to be hostile to all their Mysteries, one heard during the world war the population of Middle Europe described as 'barbarians' by their enemies. But times will change. It is the Middle European population that bears capacities and spiritual seeds within itself which the future needs. They will be able to come forth until finally, these peoples have purified themselves from all Roman and Western influences and have accepted other social forms. Spiritual scientifically, it can be said that in the people of the West and in those who are in their service in Middle Europe, Roman souls have incarnated who in the Roman era represented something that was especially strongly Roman. In every European woman today there still lives a deep inclination to the primeval culture of peace that was once permeated by wisdom and upheld by the divine. European culture has fallen into complete alienation from spirit; a large number of human beings, human products and social institutions will therefore have to go under before a new culture can bloom.

Under Trajan the Roman Empire reached its greatest expansion. The cultural epoch was nearing its mid-point, and it therefore had to show

what it could achieve on the basis of the forces of the Intellectual-Mind Soul. The time of the Antonines was the blossoming of this cultural period; it was represented by Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius. An interesting geographical fact is connected with this. There began, already in the reign of Trajan, a pulling back from Europe towards the ancient primeval Indian source of many cultures. The Roman Empire had already almost conquered all of Europe. Now, on the ground of these conquests and consolidations of power, the yearning arose, at first manifesting itself through weapons, violently, to reach back to the East. Trajan sought to reach India but could not succeed. In the middle of the Post-Atlantean Age, in the Greco-Roman cultural epoch, in which the human personality became conscious of its I, with this achievement, it now wanted to return to its spirit-filled origin. Almost 2000 years later, this would be attempted by force but only attained economically for a short period. The effort is now being made to bolster this tottering economic success by forceful ecclesiastical endeavours. But the path of culture can only be taken when a spiritual understanding of the destinies of individuals and peoples has grown from newly blossomed Mysteries in Middle Europe, which correspond to the development of the Consciousness Soul. The Middle European region has the same significance for the modern western world as Greece once had for the Roman world, and the whole Balkan peninsula will one day have for the fifth cultural epoch a significance similar to that which the Italian peninsula had for the later fourth cultural epoch.

Hadrian recognized that he would have to consolidate his Empire and benefit it artistically, and did exactly the opposite of what Trajan had done. He immediately abandoned the conquests in Parthia. The Roman military party was therefore hostile to him from the outset, but also in this case we see destiny at work, for the Senate itself took on to remove his opponents. Just as later, the love of truth was Julian the Apostate's striking characteristic, with Hadrian it was his love of peace, which lay deeply grounded within his nature and was even stronger than his feeling for beauty and artistic creativity. A Late Greek with an oriental element was now on the throne of the Roman Caesars. Hadrian sought to harmonize his pronounced double nature in the Mysteries, but could not find what he needed because at that time he could only have found it in Christianity. But the seeds of exoteric and esoteric Christianity lay unfertilized, as though sleeping, in his double nature. Because he united in himself the Roman and Greek natures, the folk spirit of the Romans was working within him and also the folk spirit of the Greeks. In Greece and in Asia he built new temples and rebuilt old ones and everywhere instituted rational

administration. The effects of the oriental Mysteries of Light and the Egyptian Mysteries of Man are revealed in these two directions of his actions. He thus worked for the foundations of an exoteric Christianity, which would first be borne by the Roman Empire, and for an esoteric Christianity, because he recognized that the Mysteries were in need of protection and he saw in art the most suitable means to do this. Through Hadrian, the Greek folk spirit as leader of exoteric Christianity was able to bring this into Roman culture. There had to be a human individual in physical incarnation at that time who would build the bridge between Romans and Greeks. The transition had to be prepared on the physical plane and then be accomplished through a human being. That could only happen through a Roman in whose soul were living very deep elemental connections to the being of the Greek people, who was representative of the Roman culture and who had comprehensive capacities for action. Since both the former Greek folk spirit and the Roman folk spirit, as Rudolf Steiner told us, became the educators of the Time Spirit [*Zeitgeist*—*transl.*] of our present cultural epoch, that had to be recognizable in Hadrian's destiny and deeds.

One who looks at contemporary events not just with his head but with his heart, will be able to discern in those events the education of our Time Spirit by those two Time Spirits. The Time Spirit of our cultural epoch, who wishes to make inner freedom a reality, had, as spiritual science says, still a third educator in the Time Spirit of the Egyptians; much in our fifth cultural epoch is therefore repeated, in a metamorphosed way, from the third cultural epoch. These three educators did not, however, act like so many foolish human teachers do today who seek to educate their pupils to be just like them, but they taught in such a way as to enable something quite new to flow from the spiritual world into the development of mankind and form itself.

With Hadrian, who lived in such a decisive era when so much that was important for humanity played itself out, that Christianity began to become exoterically independent, many later developments were anticipated in seed form. Hadrian was already working in a cosmopolitan manner. He was the first Roman Emperor who moved beyond the differentiation of peoples and who put Rome and the provinces on an equal footing. His endeavours and deeds also show his sense that development in the future would take place in the North. He even saw that the future of the Roman Empire would depend more on the North than on the East. His love belonged entirely to the East, but his duties he saw more in central Europe. One can almost say that the Greek-inclined part of his soul sensed the future task of Middle Europe, which he was

unable to achieve in his time through the binding of Rome and Hellas. The Danube basin was a region he was concerned about. He sought to better conditions in Pannonia, Dacia, and Moesia through improvements in administration. So he sensed the future in Europe but he also knew that this Europe needed Greek wisdom and beauty, and that the spirit of past ages which still moved in Greece needed to be brought to Europe just as much as Roman might. Hadrian therefore recognized that the course of the Roman destiny led not towards the orient but to the Germanic and Celtic lands of the occident, and in doing so, he grasped the geographical problem of the development of mankind in the middle of the post-Atlantean age. He said to himself that the future would depend on the Rhine and then on the Danube, for the course of development would turn in that direction. As one can see from the actions of his government that he knew how to weigh up the future correctly, so his awareness of his own time was such that he also knew how to do justice to the past of human development. *The province of the Roman Caesars was Egypt. That this was so is grounded, in terms of destiny, in the fact that the leading people [Volk] of the previous cultural epoch had been the Egyptians and that the most prominent Egyptian souls had mostly reincarnated in Roman bodies. The path of inner cultural progress, that is, of the education of the human race, went from Egypt to Rome. Egypt therefore became intimately bound to the Roman Empire in later times. Its wealth made it the private domain of the Caesars; no one was allowed to go there without the Emperor's permission. The Egyptian Time Spirit had to be active not only in the Roman period, but beyond it, down to our own cultural epoch. One must not lose sight of the fact that the Greco-Roman period stands in the middle of the post-Atlantean age as a whole and that on both sides of it, the epoch that preceded the Greco-Roman period will show itself again in the epoch that succeeded it. With the beginning of the Roman age, mankind bound itself to the forces of the earth, lost the sight of the gods and after exiting the Greco-Roman period, from the fifteenth century onwards had to find its way out of the darkness of the earth forces to conscious experience of the spiritual.*

Hadrian's journey to Egypt became a tragic destiny for him. The letter, which he wrote from there to his brother-in-law Servianus, the authenticity of which has certainly been doubted, reveals that he was not impressed by conditions in Egypt and at first experienced great disappointment. Yet later, he seems to have been gripped by the remains of the religious cultic magic of the once so deep Egyptian wisdom. He saw a magnificence which still worked its effect on him from out of the ruins and which the original size of the buildings powerfully confirmed. He was

driven by it to get to know the wonders of Egypt deeper in the interior of the country. The mysterious Nile had a great attraction for Romans and Greeks in those days; it gave rise to vague memories of their former destinies. Hadrian encountered his personal destiny in a tragic manner on his own journey up the Nile when, in a mysterious way, at Besa, near Hermopolis, he lost his beloved Greek youth, Antinous. He died in the waters of the Nile and it is assumed that he killed himself in an act of self-sacrifice in order to fend off something that was threatening the Emperor. Hadrian was overcome by the death. For the modern way of thinking, which has no understanding of the conditions of people's souls at that time, the problem of Antinous is unfathomable. The way in which Gregorovius writes about it is unacceptable, in spiritual scientific terms; he writes: 'The most bizarre intermezzo of all journeys on the Nile gave to the disappearing paganism and to the art of antiquity its last ideal figure.' And yet, in this statement one can sense a solution to the problem. Even if Gregorovius sees nothing of spiritual symptomatic nature in this event on the Nile and makes his sentence merely information about a purely external fact, the expression 'bizarre' shows how he sees the event, so the fact—which had its own deeper background—is that Antinous was later really worshipped as a god. Collections in Rome and other cities show the most various busts of Antinous. For those who have learned to experience karmic relationships in human development, this Antinous event on the Nile, which modern historians dismiss with a kind of embarrassment and sarcastic remarks, is no trivial matter. One has the feeling that something revealed itself there and has been preserved in history, which, in the future when carefully researched, will throw new light on the formation and fulfilment of destiny.

Hadrian felt the past and the future at work in the present. He felt that he had the task of bridging over great world polarities which first showed themselves to him as the Roman nature and the Greek nature. In that he recognized the future in Europe and also took care over the administration of the European West as far as Britain, he was also working in a way in the service of the Celtic folk spirit. His wanderlust was in reality the outer expression of his search for a satisfactory understanding of life. He hoped to find this in the beautiful images of art, in association with his love of peace. But the love of peace which imbued this emperor, who travelled restlessly through his great Empire, could not prevent him from having to lead one of the bloodiest wars of extermination. It was a destiny judgement of world history which was incumbent on him to carry out. The fanatical resistance of the Jews against the incursions of the Romans, who had begun to build the city of Aelia Capitolina with a temple to Zeus

on the site of the city of Jerusalem that had been destroyed by Titus, forced Hadrian to wage war. The enormous opposition between Jahve and the Greek god Zeus, whom the Romans venerated outwardly without having any inner connection to him went on regardless of the fact that the Mystery of Golgotha had already taken place and that the Turning Point of Time had occurred.

There were two factions among the Jews, the appeasers and the zealots. The former, as Gregorovius writes, were to have negotiated with Hadrian in Egypt in order to keep the peace, although the zealots wanted to know nothing of it. The negotiations must have been just as fruitless as the illusory attempts of those in the world war who thought that the western will to exterminate Middle Europe could be overcome by the usual kind of negotiations. In these modern events Roman events were repeating themselves in new forms. It would be interesting to follow the personalities who were negotiating with Hadrian at that time in their later lives to see whether their experiences were transformed in the deeds of their later deeds for they certainly played a role again in the events in our time. Hadrian would have liked to avoid the war, but the karma of mankind led to a different course, and he could not see through this because he found himself in a situation of inevitability that had developed over a long time. Rabbi Akiba and the people's hero Bar Kokhba, who was held to be the national Messiah, were not prepared to negotiate with the Romans. It is clear that the Messiah, who was still awaited, was conceived entirely externally and thus a decadent self-destructive nationalism developed. In their campaign against the Jews, the Romans did everything to wipe out the last traces of the Mysteries. The secret teachings of the Jews, which were communicated in the messianic message, were to be annihilated with all their bearers; nothing was to be left of this messianic gospel of the sun. At the time of Hadrian the nationalist fanaticism of the Jews was in almost every respect only an externalized racial fanaticism. The priestly nobility of the Sadducee caste ruled the Jews' religion forcefully; these priests had a horror of any Mysteries and were only puppets of the Roman State. The connection between Roman culture and the monotheistic Jahve principle constituted a precondition for the possibility of the later spread of exoteric Christianity. From the perspective of external state politics the Roman Empire could never tolerate a Jewish State between its greatest provinces, Egypt and Syria. Its extermination in the war was a certainty as this priestly national community was under Roman domination and by that time had already lost the spiritual foundations of its Mysteries. It had therefore already become to a degree Roman and alienated from its own folk being. It could no longer defend itself spiri-

tually but only through fanatical violence and pitted against the great Roman world empire, its downfall was certain. Jewish culture was no more suited than Greek to form a State in the Roman fashion; its unity was only possible as a priest-led community with the Mysteries in the background and never as a juridical, democratic community. In democracy the Greeks too died as an independent, autonomous community of people. In this last war against the Jews in Hadrian's reign, two very differently constituted peoples were fighting each other, both of which were in reality hostile to Christianity—the struggles of parties and the State never have anything to do with Christianity—and into which the Christ Event entered very concretely. As a people, the Romans were carrying the main current of the development of mankind appropriate to the fourth cultural epoch, while the Jews belonged to the third cultural epoch and represented a stream that had remained behind; as a unitary national community, they were bound to be overcome by the Romans. In this, one also sees how the politics of the Romans, despite Hadrian and despite Julian the Apostate later on, had as its main mission to prevent the emergence of the esoteric side of Christianity which was living in the old Mysteries. Rome already sensed at that time that in the Sun-nature of Christianity something was living that would gradually destroy the Empire. An oracle prophesied in the later Antonine period that Rome was fated to decline because it had lost the primeval wisdom. Therefore the Romans were on the alert to Christianity, and various Caesars continually tried to come to terms with it somehow, because they sensed in it a power with which they had to reckon. Persecutions of Christians and attempts to come to terms with Christianity therefore went on in parallel. Constantine, who established the exoteric Christian State, wanted to counter this prophecy of the downfall of Rome, so, contrary to the will of the gods, he had the Palladium, the symbol of the ancient, primeval wisdom, transferred from Troy to Constantinople with solemn cultic ceremonial and used it as the foundation for the building of the city. He wanted to preserve in Constantinople the eternal impulse of primeval wisdom which the Romans had lost and could no longer attain. Thus developed out of the uniting of the Roman nature with exoteric Christianity the first external foundations of a dualism, which later resulted in the division of the eastern and western churches. This dualism, which has worked on into our own time was the constant cause of countless conflicts and wars. The other dualism, which developed in Middle Europe between the Empire and the Church was the expression of the right path of human development. The division of the Church between East and West was an event that resulted from spiritual confusion



and which was therefore bound to work itself out in lasting external conflicts. These conflicts remain permanent, because Churches, just like abstract States, can do nothing other than fight each other. States and Churches are institutions of conflict. Neither nations nor religions based on spiritual foundations can make wars; by contrast, every nominalistic collectivity bears the being of war within itself. The dualism of Empire and Church, if it had been rightly understood, would have led to the internalizing of the spiritual struggle within the individual human being. The meaning of this dualism was the harmonious binding of the world body with the world spirit through the knowledge that the male and female spirits in each single human being, whether in the body of a man or a woman, must come into balance, because only in this way can the Son of God be born in each human being. The conflicts of the great world polarities must be fought out within the hearts of every single human being. To externalize these conflicts and to maintain them permanently through States and Churches has been a false path in development during the last few centuries. Dante had already conceived of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation as a spiritual institution and therefore justified its expansion over the whole of Europe.\*

At the beginning of our reckoning of time, the Jewish community had arrived in a condition which is characterized by the denial of the Mystery of Golgotha; it did not comprehend the ultimate event, which was taking place in its midst. One can experience today a similar denial in official Germany: Rudolf Steiner brought his message about the Mysteries and about Christ to German culture; it was to take its start from Middle Europe. Official circles in all areas of life have responded to it as the Jews responded to Christ. But just as Christianity established itself, at first exoterically, despite the persecutions, so will esoteric Christianity do the same, despite denials and denunciations from the side of the power-mongers concerned for the Empire.

The more the Germans become aware of their own inner being, the more therefore that they are comprehended by the forces of the Consciousness Soul, then the more they will recognize that they do not constitute a territorial dominion in the modern sense but that they can only develop themselves culturally and socially out of a sense of being a spiritual community. Just as the growing forces of the Intellectual-Mind-

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\*Dante (died 1321) would not have been familiar with the concept Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, which only came into usage from 1512 but in his *De Monarchia* (written somewhere between 1308 and 1321) he did indeed strongly support the Holy Roman Empire (Middle Europe and Italy) and the claims of the Emperor vis-à-vis the Pope. See also p. 333. [transl.].

Soul in the time of the fourth cultural epoch led on to territorial dominions and the Romans were the representative people in that process, so the growing forces of the Consciousness Soul in our time will again dissolve territorial dominions. The tendency towards this can already be seen in contemporary phenomena. It will have to be recognized after the catastrophic events of the future, if human culture is to be maintained at all.

Rudolf Steiner wanted to call leading personalities in Middle Europe to recognize this in 1917 with the first outline of the threefolding of the social organism. The coming conflicts and confusions will violently demolish territorial boundaries if they cannot be brought into mobility by the exercise of reason. The facts show again and again that efforts to make of the Germans a powerful, unitary, territorial State on juridical and democratic i.e. Roman foundations are in vain. This Roman idea of territorial dominion gradually spread in the post-Roman period to all the other European peoples until our time. Germans and Slavs suffered especially under these legalistic, intellectual forms which are utterly foreign to their nature. Everywhere in history from the ninth century onwards we encounter the sufferings of these peoples, the real causes of which they could not make known to themselves. Everywhere there lived in the souls of these Germanic and Slavic peoples the search for other forms of community, which they were unable to find, and when these ideas were brought to leading Germans by Rudolf Steiner, they failed to translate them into action.

In the year 63 BC Judaea was made part of Roman Syria by Pompey. Through its influence in Judaea, Rome did what it needed to do there in order to become the real ruler over the Jews. Herod was only able to assert his rule with the help of the Romans. We find similar aberrations among leading circles in Germany today to those in Herod's State in Judaea. The German people [*Volksgemeinschaft*] had its mission in spiritual life. The present German State is just as dependent on the Anglo-American economic imperium—it is its instrument—as Herod and the priestly caste of the Sadducees were dependent on the Roman State. Ultimately, the Jewish State had to fall in accordance with the Roman State principle, after it had done its duty, which was to extinguish the Mysteries of Judaism.

Emperor Hadrian, a man who recoiled from war, was placed in this tragic human destiny by higher beings. He became the executor of a terrible judgement of destiny, and his personal destiny was crossed by this destiny of mankind.

After the end of the Jewish State, the Christians separated their destiny

from that of the Jews. Christianity, then, found itself between two conflicting forces—those of the Romans and the Jews. It is also Christianity's destiny in our time to come between two powers into the clamps of encirclement.

As servant of the Greek folk spirit, Hadrian actually helped exoteric Christianity to cosmopolitan independence by this war; also, one can recognize how he was the personality who stood in the service of the former Greek folk spirit that became the leader of exoteric Christianity.

The main stream of human development came from Egypt in the third cultural epoch and flowed to Romans, as the representative people of the next epoch. When this people's own forces became lamed, exoteric Christianity came forward as the supporting power of the imperium. The Christ impulse itself forged a path to Middle Europe, to peoples who had the predisposition to understand esoteric Christianity in the future and through this to attain to an understanding of the Son that can shape really new worlds. These peoples also bore in themselves the forces to overcome the Roman Empire ultimately, in whatever form it reappears. Hadrian could not bring the empire to any consciousness of esoteric Christianity and could not therefore illuminate the abyss between the two sides of his dual nature; he stood torn between spiritual poles. He lived out his last years in concerns for the future of the beauty and wisdom of the world and sensed that ancient Rome and everything that it sought to continue would be judged and finally be transformed into a scene of devastation. Such was the concern in the depths of his soul at the end of the life of the wandering emperor. It showed itself especially in his anxieties about the succession, when his adopted son, Lucius Aelius Caesar suddenly died on 1 January 138. He called a few respected senators to him and spoke in favour of adoption and against bloodline succession. The Roman Empire was then to owe him two of its best rulers, for he adopted Antoninus Pius and demanded of him that he in turn pick Marcus Aurelius for his own successor by adoption. After this, he soon died, as Gregorovius writes, in the arms of that truest of men, Antoninus Pius.

The church cult, which stemmed from the Mysteries and which, despite its pagan hostility, was taken over by exoteric Christianity, comprehended in its modified form the soul life less and less and entirely lost any spiritual vision, which was replaced by dogma. Jurisprudence and democracy increasingly took hold of Christianity and founded a democratic, abstract order of Church and State. Exoteric Christianity and the Roman democratic State system went hand in hand and gradually falsified the dualism of the ecclesiastical and imperial communities which should

have developed in a spiritual way in accordance with human soul development.

Despite the differences in the activities of the Greek and Celtic folk spirits as Christianity spread, the cooperation of the two also showed itself. The esoteric content of Christianity lost itself in the East as a consequence of the exoteric task of the Greek folk spirit, which bound itself to the Roman in vague, mystical feelings and entirely externalized itself in cultic ritual. A few sporadic remnants of Christian memories of the Mysteries could still be found in the Balkans, for example, in the traditions of the Bogomils and in old wall paintings which had been preserved in many monasteries despite the attacks of the Turks. In the West exoteric Christianity everywhere came up against, on the one hand, ancient, still existing Mystery centres—those which had not been destroyed by the Romans—and on the other, the area of activity of the Celtic folk spirit, which had been entrusted with the mission of esoteric Christianity. The Mystery of Golgotha had been perceived in those places in the macrocosm, and the leader of esoteric Christianity had to supervise the sight of the passing of Christ from the macrocosm into human souls. In other words, esoteric guidance by the Celtic folk spirit consisted of the accomplishment of the transition from the culture of the knights of Arthur to the culture of the knights of the Grail. This transition having been accomplished, esoteric Christianity, bearing the results of it, slowly moved into the middle of Europe into contact with exoteric Christianity, in order to unite with this. Christianity was then, in new Mysteries, gradually able to awaken to individual consciousness that which in ancient times the East had enabled people resting in the maternal bosom of Nature's wisdom to experience of spirituality.

In the middle of Europe in the third cultural epoch, a future-oriented, anticipatory, post-Atlantean development of humanity encountered Atlantean Mysteries. Legend tells of how king Gilgamesh of the Babylonians travelled to the west in order to solve the riddle of immortality after he had become aware of the fact of death. He hoped to find the solution in the Atlantean Mysteries, in the region of today's Burgenland. His initiation into the tasks of the post-Atlantean age failed. Before the Mystery of Golgotha a connection to the secrets of Atlantis that was appropriate to the time was not possible. Out of the harmonized polarity of esoteric and exoteric Christianity, Mysteries will arise from which spiritual guidance for humanity will emerge that will be able to bring the results of the Atlantean age into harmony with the needs of post-Atlantean times. The anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner, the wisdom suitable for the male and female spirit alike, is the necessary foundation for such

re-emerging Mysteries. Through this, understanding with the East will be able to be found in cultural life.

The Jews were as a people the link between the Egyptian-Chaldean and the Greco-Roman cultural epochs; the Germanic tribes and the western Slavic peoples were similarly placed between the Roman-Greek culture and the Consciousness Soul people of the later period, the fifth cultural epoch. From the Jews came the first Christians. From the Germans will come Michaelic people who will build a new, universally human spiritual community in Middle Europe, under the leadership of Michael, the Time Spirit of the fifth cultural epoch.

The Germans, who today are falling back into a one-sided emphasis on race on Roman state foundations, play in the present the same role as the Jews before the fall of their last State, which was dependent on Rome.

In the last three to four centuries a significant power shift has occurred in Europe. The Roman Empire, which repeated itself in the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, slowly released itself from Middle Europe; it declined there and re-consolidated itself in the British Isles as an economic empire. London became the capital of this power, corresponding to the increasingly awakening forces of the Consciousness Soul, as in the second third of the fourth cultural epoch, Rome was the capital of power. The Roman Empire has, with its centre, moved ever further to the West, while esoteric Christianity moves ever more towards the Middle of Europe and to the East. The coming Mysteries will proceed from the polarity between exoteric and esoteric Christianity. The spiritual impulse necessary for this entered into the Middle of Europe through Rudolf Steiner. The region of the Middle will have to be prepared for this, both in the sense of destiny and also outwardly. The polarity between the Middle European region of the spirit and the city of power will bring about this preparation, but in the future a balance will have to be found between them. Like Rome to Greece in the fourth cultural epoch, so stands London to Middle Europe in the fifth cultural epoch. In the fourth cultural epoch the call was: away from the Mysteries to power and Rome. It was a movement towards the West. In the fifth cultural epoch, the call in Middle Europe in the future will have to be: away from Roman power, and back to the Mysteries. This will be connected with a movement towards the East.

Human souls bear the results of one cultural epoch over into the next. The Roman Empire has repeated itself in the British Empire through the Roman souls who have reincarnated in this British Empire; some of the Roman, more Greek-inclined souls will find themselves in the middle of Europe.

The monotheistic Jewish culture with its Mars forces became through its rigidity a servant of Rome. The Germans were, just like the Sadducees, servants of the political Rome, servants of the Anglo-American economic empire and harden themselves in an abstract, nationalistic State. They set themselves against Michael just as the supporters of Akiba and Bar Kokhba set themselves against the message of the messianic Mysteries which had become the central Fact of the Earth.

Like Jehovah and Michael, the ancient Hebrew Mystery stream and the German spiritual stream confront one another. Jehovah led mankind into the Roman shackles; Michael casts these shackles off again. With his inner light Michael wants to illuminate the divine world again for human beings and help them return to the paradise from which Jehovah had to eject them. The impulse which entered with Rudolf Steiner clearly lies in the line of continuity of the main stream of human development between two opposite poles, seeking the Son. When individual soul development began with the lighting up of the Sentient Soul, this stream went out from Egypt's services to humanity and led exoterically to the western spiritual life; esoterically, it led to true Rosicrucianism, in order finally to unite exoteric and esoteric Christianity in the new Mysteries.