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THE WORLD IN THE MAKING

*By the Same Author*

THE TRAVEL DIARY OF A PHILOSOPHER

*Edited by Count Keyserling*

THE BOOK OF MARRIAGE

# THE WORLD IN THE MAKING

*Die Neuentstehende Welt*

By

COUNT HERMANN KEYSERLING

★

TRANSLATED BY

MAURICE SAMUEL



JONATHAN CAPE

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MY LIFE AND MY WORK  
AS I SEE THEM





# MY LIFE AND MY WORK AS I SEE THEM

## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

**T**wo spiritual life-principles, almost independent of each other, co-operate in all religious and metaphysical movements: that of the written word and that of oral tradition. And experience goes to show that both are really needed to keep alive in all its singularity the living content of a spirit. The written word as such does not contain the principle of its own interpretation; fundamentally speaking, it may be interpreted by each according to his likes. To establish the real meaning, that is, the meaning as seen by the founder, is the function of oral tradition. This observation I have prefaced to more than one of my lectures, to explain why I speak instead of confining myself to my books. The personal intervention of the founder of a school of thought is to his contemporaries what tradition is to later times. And in the interest of my work I see myself compelled to intervene personally, for all ready-made schemata of concepts and categories – all, without exception – from which my readers involuntarily proceed, must fail in the face of my meaning. I am a

philosopher – but not in the sense accepted by the modern West. I stand for spiritual regeneration – but not in the sense of any religion extant. I am a thinker – and yet my temperament is surely that of the man of action – that of the *condottiere*, even. I want to live for all, and yet, more than any other man, I am taken up with myself. I want to set an example – and yet I have more faults than most; and what is more, I do less than anyone else to hide them. Finally, in my utterances I am manifold and complex – and yet, whatever others may think, I am conscious of complete unity of being as well as of purpose and achievement.

Those who know me personally are beginning slowly to understand. But I cannot get to know others personally in the numbers called for by the range of the modern world. I cannot, in the years still left me, even visit all the countries in which I am read. I regard this book as the most actual of my works and believe it should have the widest appeal, because, without being explicitly philosophic, it deals with the practical tasks of life in this age of transition. Its translation into the language most widely spoken throughout the world furnishes me, I should think, with the best opportunity to supply my readers, through the medium of an

autobiographical sketch, with the co-ordinates which determine the sense of my thought and activity. And I consider this introduction particularly necessary for my Anglo-Saxon readers. The 'success' of my *Travel Diary* is of little personal interest to me; what I am exclusively concerned with is living effect, and the recognition of the writer and artist in me is, in this respect, perhaps more dangerous than the enmity which, in an ever-increasing measure, has been evoked in Europe by the first perception of the true meaning of my work. That enmity naturally proceeds from those who do not want to progress, because they do not understand that we stand on the threshold of a new era, which calls for *μετανοειν* — a change of mind, no less than the dawn of the Christian era did, and in the same sense. And Anglo-Saxons are particularly prone to misunderstand me, because they find it harder than others to conceive that a man is able to serve others precisely by living for himself. Thus a great many Englishmen see in Goethe, who certainly meant more to humanity than all the humanitarians since the eighteenth century put together, nothing but a 'colossal egoist.' This arises from the fact that their particular point of view is rooted in social consciousness. To whatever degree an Englishman may live for

himself, he never resorts to an inner isolation from the society to which he belongs, and the moral foundations on which it is reared. Hence, from one point of view, the political and social value of Anglo-Saxondom in its good sense. And yet this very attitude renders almost impossible the kind of work which can only be performed by the isolated individuality. Anglo-Saxondom has indeed produced great believers but it has not produced a single questioner, and therefore not a single solver and renewer who will bear comparison with those produced by the Greeks, the Germans, and the Russians. In critical times it is precisely the questioners who are most needed. The task which in critical times precedes all others is the laying of new moral and spiritual foundations. And in this connection the first thing to be done is to become conscious of the *new* possibilities which unfold before progressive mankind. And to achieve this knowledge the individual must get in contact with his own deepest self, irrespective of all social ties and obligations. For in the case of the individualized man all creative thought and emotion issue in the final analysis from the sanctum of his personality. Thus the Goethe type of egoism – which differs from the life-quality of the seeker for salvation among the early Christ-



ians much less than that 'living for others' which typifies the regular social worker – is an indispensable premise for all spiritual-intellectual pioneer work in the service of mankind.

The fact that only the 'egoist' can be a pioneer in spiritual-intellectual work ceases to look like a paradox as soon as we understand that in all circumstances every man is an integral part of mankind, serving it as an organ; that in all circumstances, no matter how he thinks and feels personally, whether as egoist or altruist, as saint or sinner, the individual represents mankind and lives for it. The difference lies in this, that now he may do it for good, and now for evil. The exact proof of this verity will be found – in addition to what this book contains – in my books *Unsterblichkeit* and *Wiedergeburt*. Here I want to say only this: Just as every man, such as he is, is conditioned by his parents and by his environment, in the same way the personal elements in him are always, for by far the greatest part, similar to the personal elements in others. The psychic changes which differentiate one generation from another manifest themselves alike in a great many individuals; just as, on the other hand, all individuals perpetuate the identical organic type. For that reason the best method by which a man can find out the truths

which apply to all is to study his own mental processes; and he can therefore best serve the needs of all by realizing his own ideals of personal spiritual increase. Naturally, not every man is equally apt for this: every man with an essentially social attitude is, in fact, fundamentally inapt for this. It is rather the business of those whose particular frame of mind and particular introversion of interest render them capable of a deeper form of self-consciousness. In this case such 'egoists,' and only such, are by vocation the organs of others; for they alone are able to bring into the field of the conscious that which is the need of all. It is as exclusively their task to look within themselves as it is that of the eye to look outward. From the point of view of others, therefore, there is nothing more absurd than to take their self-centredness amiss.

Well, I am without a doubt exceptionally self-centred. I lack every fundamental social instinct. Essentially lonely as I am, comradeship and even friendship have never meant much to me, even though my friends have never been few. Even the reality of family bonds made no deep impression in my consciousness – and even in my childhood the words of Jesus, 'Woman, what have I to do with thee?' spoke more directly to me than any other. And since

I have children of my own I see in them less my own flesh and blood than strange souls entrusted to my care. And yet I have never lived for myself alone, for my ego was never my own last resort. Even as from my childhood onward I saw in my body nothing more than an instrument, which I never felt to be identical with my self, so I felt my ego to be, in its essential nature, an instrument of humanity. As I felt in my earliest years that this ego of mine was possessed of exceptional abilities, so, from childhood onward, I devoted myself with unswerving consistency to a life which would give it the right training. But this life was, as such, only a means, and never an end in itself. I am in my nature unable to enjoy things passively; I have always believed, with the classicist, that 'to enjoy passively is to deteriorate'; only creation, expenditure of self, brings me joy. Thus my 'egoism' has, in its very nature, a super-personal significance. It is for this reason that my conscience has never been troubled by it. From this point of view, therefore, it is clearly the same whether I live exclusively for myself, as I did until 1919, or for others, as I have done since then. This living for myself on super-personal grounds acquires a character especially perplexing to many by the fact that I am in my nature unusually unself-

conscious; I have progressed not by introspection but by experimentation. I have learned to know who I really am and what I am really capable of, always and only through external effects, and in the majority of cases these effects have astonished me. And as I have never written because I *knew*, but in order to *learn* – the plane of projection of the paper brings my unconscious up into the conscious – it follows that essentially I am an improvisator. The result is – 70 per cent of one's life being improvisation by re-action; that is to say, improvisation dictated by destiny – that, seen from without, my line of life has seemed extraordinarily inconsistent. From my own point of view, however, that line was the expression of pure consistency, because it was the consistent pursuit of the two aims for which alone I have lived: the attainment of complete self-consciousness and of complete self-realization. And at this point I have run up against a second prejudice, which, if not Anglo-Saxon in character, is certainly English; for the English instinctively see something wrong in self-consciousness. This is justified when related to political tact, physical grace, or athletic fitness. But intellectually and spiritually there is only one line of advance – through increasing consciousness. And, as this book will



show, to-day absolutely everything depends on consciousness, for the characteristic of the age which is dawning is precisely alertness and intellectual mastery.

But this must suffice in the way of abstract introduction. I proceed now to a brief sketch of my development up to the date of writing – June, 1926. He who understands its trend and then goes on to read my works will certainly be safeguarded from many misunderstandings. For the benefit of those who do not read German and yet would like to know more about my philosophy than can be gathered from the few books of mine translated into English, I may say that there is a very good French summary of my ideas, *La Philosophie de Hermann Keyserling*, by Maurice Boucher (published by Rieder, Paris). It is somewhat schematic and too strictly logical, like most French works; but there is nothing in Boucher's book that I could not accept as, on the whole, a correct rendering of what I mean.

★

I WAS born in the year 1880, on July 8, Russian style (July 20, Gregorian Calendar), on the feudal estate of Könno, in what was then Russian Livonia – a scion of a family interested in intellectual and spiritual matters for the last

seven generations. A Keyserling, Cæsarion, was the most intellectual friend of Voltaire and of Frederick the Great. To another Keyserling, Johann Sebastian Bach dedicated one of his most beautiful works. In the house of still another Keyserling, Immanuel Kant spent several years as family tutor, and the two succeeding generations of my forbears were pupils of his. Of my grandfather, Alexander Keyserling (the story of his life as told in his own letters, edited by his daughter, Baroness Taube, and published by the Vereinigung Wissenschaftlicher Verleger, Berlin, makes very instructive reading), the founder of Russian geology, the Councillor of Alexander II, the leader of the liberal wing of the Esthonian feudal nobility, and finally the all-honoured sage of Rayküll – of him Bismarck, the friend of his youth, used to say that he was the only man whose intellect might have intimidated him. (The last expression of the old Keyserling type was the poet, Edward Keyserling, the son of one of Alexander's brothers.) My father was cast in another mould, but he too was gifted above the average as orator, politician, and leader of men. Of him my grandfather used to say: 'If Russia ever becomes parliamentary, Leo will be the first man in the state.' In my father it was the Slavic blood which dominated;

it came through his mother, *née* Countess Cancrin, daughter of the finance minister in the time of Nicholas I – Count George Cancrin, the founder of Russia's fiscal system; his mother's mother was a Countess Mouravioff, her family being of old Boyar stock of Tartar origin, and claiming to trace its line back to Jenghiz Khan. My father was a typical Russian *grand seigneur*, reminiscent of both the old Rostov and Pierre Bezuhov in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. But his nature, though more problematical than that of his forbears, was still without extreme hereditary tensions.

In me, however, such tensions were taken over through the blood of my mother, a Baroness Pilar von Pilchau, whose mother, again, was the last prominent representative of the baronial family Ungern-Sternberg of Grossenhof, a race of violent feudal chieftains and even buccaneers: the Mongol *condottiere* of the same name, Ungern-Sternberg, rendered famous by Ossendowski's book, found its type in this race. The Keyserling-Ungern-Sternberg tension is the physiological basis of that particular polarity of my being out of which the special rhythm of my life, with all the spiritual and mental aims it set itself, was to emerge. For this violent contrast, united in a single spirit, was bound to lead to a transmutation of aptitudes which, in a

different setting, would have found different expression. I was on the one hand the most sensitive of beings, impressionable and suggestible beyond description, of feminine receptivity, trustful and adaptable, quick of perception; while on the other hand there was in me the man of volcanic violence, of primitive vitality, with the instincts of the conqueror and ruler. And, since the synthesis of such diverse elements could bring forth fruit only in later years, this was bound to lead, in my childhood, to an inferiority complex which no adjustment seemed able to remedy. On the one hand I felt myself to be, in my sensitiveness, inferior to the masterful man of force represented by my mother's line; on the other hand, in my animal nature I felt myself inferior to the intellectualized Keyserlings. In order to repress this feeling of inferiority I gave myself as little as possible to reflection, and lived each day unto itself as far as was possible for a child who was by nature keenly observant and of quick apprehension. I grew up with only the most occasional contacts with children of my age, being surrounded principally by tamed animals; my earliest aptitude was that of a Hagenbeck<sup>1</sup>—

<sup>1</sup>The organizer and director of the famous natural zoological gardens of Hamburg. — *Translator's note.*

a child of nature, interested only in the hunt. My ideal was to become a traveller and discoverer. With my distinct gifts for drawing, for modelling, and for music, I did nothing; for they did not interest me. The intellectual problems of the scholar interested me least of all.

My essential aptitudes were understood neither by myself nor by those about me, but as long as I remained at home (until my fifteenth year, when, on the death of my father, I entered the highest class of the Russian High School of Pernaú, I was educated by private tutors), this lack of understanding led to no conflicts whatsoever. The situation changed when, barely fifteen years of age, and still abnormally child-like, I entered the company of my eighteen- and nineteen-year-old classmates. Because of my sensitiveness, which took every act of aggression as a brutality in the face of which it was perfectly helpless, I felt myself so completely inferior to my comrades that, driven by sufferings which I had never thought possible, I undertook, for the first time, *to transform myself*. I did not for an instant doubt the possibility of such an act. I gave myself with the utmost vehemence to the task of suppressing all that I considered inferior in myself, whilst developing only that side of my



nature which would enable me to hold my own in the new surroundings. I was determined to become exclusively the man of force: such a man, I felt, already resided within me, but because of the sensitiveness of my intellectual-spiritual organism, and no less because of the highly intellectual environment of my home, coupled with my isolation from companionship with children of my own age, it had remained undeveloped. One year after leaving the high school (I spent the twelve-month interim studying in Geneva), this 'man of force' had temporarily overmastered my conscious life; I had developed into the primitive type of the gorging, guzzling, vociferous university student. From 1898 to 1900 I was beyond a doubt the most unspiritual, the crudest type of animal among the *Korpsstudenten* of Dorpat; a perfect model for one of Jordaens' bacchanalian paintings; a paragon of primitive health and brute strength. (I refer the reader to the picture of Auerbach's cellar in Goethe's *Faust*.) As such I won recognition in the circle in which I moved, and my satisfaction was great.

But this happiness did not last long. Barely a year after I had become a *Korpsstudent*, I received, in one of our duels, a wound which severed my *mammalia interna* and which, had

it not been for the extraordinary recuperative power of my physical constitution, would have cost me my life; but the consequence of this event was a debilitation so extreme that for years afterward it was physically impossible for me to make the concept of the man of force the focus of my sense of human values. This external circumstance led to my reconcentration on the man of spirit. Just as it was the *recognition* of the superiority of my rougher school-mates which had aroused to mastery the man of force within me, so the same process was applied to the man of spirit. Again I changed myself; again, with a new vision, came a new desire. It is true, of course, that the process operated almost unconsciously. I understood only imperfectly what was happening in me; all I actually noted was that the wild life of Dorpat had suddenly become wearisome. And so, physically twenty years of age but in reality much younger, I left my home university after a year and a half of residence. For the last six months I had indeed been working seriously at chemistry, but in that environment no important results could be expected. I left for Heidelberg, to resume the studies in the natural sciences begun at Geneva. There, in the course of a few weeks, I became so radically changed that friends from Dorpat who

came to visit me only a few months later barely knew me again.



Now, following my grandfather's example, I studied geology; indeed, judging from external appearances, geology as an end in itself; my doctor's thesis, submitted in the spring of 1902, was in this science, the subject being a study of the Forellenstein of Gloggnitz; indeed, *par excès de zèle*, I completed in the same year a second work on geology: an investigation of the volcanic area of the southern Tyrol; the theatre, later, of the Austro-Italian war, the geologic maps of which were in part drawn by me.

But as a matter of fact, there began with my departure from Dorpat a period of unsuspecting and yet expectant preparation like that through which the innocent girl lives before her marriage. Once I had made my decision in favour of the man of spirit within me, the spirit rose to mastery, not through the medium of my consciousness, but rather of my unconscious; and my unconscious directed me towards aims for the understanding of which my consciousness lacked the proper organs. The conscious determined only the outward framework of my efforts. I

carried out, in the letter, what I had undertaken. But from month to month I felt ever more clearly that I should be at something else, something I did not yet know; and under the spur of this feeling, I felt and groped spiritually in every possible direction. But I met in Heidelberg not a single example, not a single abstract ideal of effort, which could excite in me a corresponding endeavour. Of all the sciences, philosophy, as it was taught in the university, appealed to me least. My nature – so I felt – wanted something other than that which science offered; but I did not know what it wanted, for the intellectual men in whose circle I had moved till then in that place had been exclusively scholars, just as the spiritual traditions of my family had been those of scholarship.

It was then that I read Houston Stewart Chamberlain's *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*. The impression produced on me was tremendous. It suddenly became clear to me that if I could meet the man who had written this book, I should soon find out what my purpose in life was; for towards him alone, amongst all whose works I had read, I felt a sense of relationship. It was really in order to become acquainted with Chamberlain that I went to complete my studies in Vienna. A

happy chance, in the person of a friend of my father's—the Indologist and student of comparative religion, Leopold von Schroeder—enabled me to meet, on the very day of my arrival, the object of my distant admiration. The effect of the living impression was even profounder than I had hoped. I looked up with enthusiastic veneration to this man, a quarter of a century older than I; and he requited my veneration with a friendship filled with wise and understanding guidance. The effect of Chamberlain's continuous influence was extraordinarily fruitful. In his nature, closely related to mine in many respects, I believed that I saw myself, such as I really was, as in a mirror. I found there that centre of polarization which I needed to readjust my nature, so that, on the one hand, it could begin to unfold, and, on the other, emerge from its state of chaos to become a cosmos. In any case, I rightly recognized in him the artist nature which was in me, and in this wise discovered a relationship towards my own especial structure which till then I had no more understood than had those around me. Thus of a sudden I learned to see as of positive value that which till then I had considered inferior: my feminine sensitiveness, my impressionableness and emotionalism, in brief, all that which,

gauged by the ideal of the masterful man of action no less than by the ideal of the loftily clear scholar that my grandfather had been, was a minus quantity. In this I was strengthened by the example of another friend, one nearer my own age, Rudolph Kassner, the mystic, one of the deepest – though perhaps least easily understood – thinkers of our time. For two years I passed nearly every afternoon with him, and it was he who opened to me the treasures of mystic literature, and whilst he awakened me to the knowledge of my natural bent, gave me the sense of the art of writing. For at that time the ambition of the writer was quite remote.

Soon there took place in me ‘a transvaluation of all values’ and a corresponding inner revolution. As once in Dorpat my consciousness had centred exclusively on the man of force, so now it centred on the artist-understander; it was the only ideal which had any validity for me. The vitalization which this transposition effected was extraordinary. The feeling of inferiority disappeared, and in its place emerged a proud, confident self-consciousness, frequently unbounded in its expression. Those vital energies which could no longer find a means to express themselves in my weakened body wove themselves into the now recognized particularity of



my mind and soul. In 1905, with the completion of the *Gefüge der Welt*, I was, in fact, already outside the sphere of Chamberlain's influence, and the opinion which Adolf Harnack later expressed, that Chamberlain had only been a spiritual midwife for me, was, from his point of view, quite correct: yet it is due to him that I have been reborn as a spiritual personality – therein lies the point. I thus owe Chamberlain, who as a man was much greater than anything expressed by his books, an eternal debt of gratitude. My Vienna days – from 1901 to 1903 – were, thanks to him, days of amazingly rapid progress. From the moment that I understood my essential nature and glimpsed its creative centre, every peculiar individual activity acquired a *meaning*; and correspondingly, there awoke in me the impulse to develop my manifold aptitudes, towards which I had remained indifferent till then. But in the case of this 'meaning,' I was not confronted with any objective purposefulness such as I had before sought in the natural sciences: thanks to Chamberlain, it had become quite clear that, being what I was, I had to set as my goal not objective achievement, but personal perfection. And it was the result of this insight which enabled me to perceive for the first time the two fundamental

truths which were later to be the key-note of all my productivity: *that recognition means salvation, and that the quality of a spiritual life depends wholly on its ruling centre.*<sup>1</sup> Before I knew what I was to do, all within me was aimless and therefore fruitless chaos. No sooner had I acquired the inner attitude corresponding to inward truth than all my energies became creatively active.



MY re-action was one of boundless happiness. Yet the stage which had begun in Vienna seemed a light one only during the brief stretch of time in which I simply had to study things and give technical training to my aptitudes in order to register an inner advance. Very soon my problem took another turn. Moving onward from the stage of becoming and receptivity, I had to find the road to being and creation. But this road, such as I saw it, I not only found very late: the time of seeking without finding was one of bitter difficulty; for my volcanic temperament had never reckoned with time, had never been able to understand why these lightning-like intuitions and resolutions of mine were not able to achieve, with their own

<sup>1</sup>The first motif is treated in full in the *Travel Diary*, the second in *Schöpferische Erkenntnis*.

rapidity, completely satisfying realization. Ever since I left Dorpat there had dominated in me, as I have said, the man of feeling and understanding, delighting in giving himself. Since my meeting with Chamberlain this state grew to such intensity as the absolute and exclusive affirmation of the sensitive focus of my being, that henceforth I recognized in myself only that part which in my Dorpat days I had despised and inverted, and even went on to attribute the highest worth to all the faults belonging to my artist nature. I became as extreme an æsthete as I had once been a *Korpsstudent*, deliberately incompetent in practical matters, hating all actual activity, and even proud of the nervous weakness from which I suffered at the time. Yet the vital man of force in me was not for that reason dead. He worked all the more energetically in my unconscious; he revenged himself for my contempt of him by violently bringing about nervous disorders and breakdowns. What was I to do, without abandoning the adjustment once accepted?

My answer was one of brutal repression, which, being in its way the 'ab-reaction' of the *condottiere*, however faint, to that extent gave me some satisfaction. This brutality I carried so far that during the years of my period of prepara-

tion – it lasted until 1911 – I denied myself, by a conscious act of abnegation, and to an increasing degree, with brief interludes, anything like a really personal life. This began from the time when I finally recognized the impulse to cognition, or rather to understanding, as the dominant element of my essential value, and realized simultaneously that in this lay the key to my self-determination. For after there had arisen in me, during my Vienna days, the desire to be only the ‘artist in general,’ I soon recognized that I was no poet, but, as Kassner put it in a phrase which struck me very much at the time, the exact opposite of the poet, the Platonist. What I was to be, then, was not the poet in contrast to the knowledge-seeking scholar, but rather the *understander* – I was already conscious of the contrast between knowing and understanding which was later to lead to the founding of the School of Wisdom, in contradistinction to the university.

But if understanding was in any way to be my life-task, then I had to achieve *complete* understanding; from the very beginning I set myself this proud standard. On the other hand, my studies in the natural sciences did not go for nothing. I accepted it as a self-evident premise that whatever knowledge can be trained in one

is bound up with empiric aptitudes. I thenceforth set it as my goal to transform my intellectual and spiritual organism into such a perfect instrument of expression that it would ultimately be able to conquer *all* those barriers hemming in human nature which were not objectively unconquerable. Such a thing, I believed, *must* be possible.

On the other hand, how was this to be achieved otherwise than through the repression of all that within me which would encroach upon the objectivity of my understanding? I dared not entrust to my personal ego any monopoly over my spiritual-intellectual organism until the former had outgrown all possible error. So, for years, I did not permit myself the possession of any personal opinions; for years I gave myself up in turn solely to those influences which I considered requisite, and abandoned myself completely to them; with the result that, because nothing really meant anything to me as soon as I had assimilated it inwardly (which in most cases happened very quickly), I appeared to be without character or consistency. For by then my instinct had already adopted the working hypothesis that complete understanding, like every other perfect achievement, was nothing else than the expression of the perfect

relation between the real self and the real world of externals. Such a relationship can be attained only by him who, before he has reached the stage of spiritual ripeness, remains completely open to all experiences and influences, thereby avoiding all premature crystallization; and thus it will come to pass that the absolutely right views, concepts, and other forms of expression of the individual life will in the long run arise of themselves. Moreover, I knew even then that the disputatious attitude hinders inward growth; to dispute, that is, to wage war, is possible only from an accepted basis, whereas the whole point is the achievement of a higher basis. Thus the only prohibition laid down later in the School of Wisdom – prohibition of argumentation – became the one negative imperative of the period of my development, and to-day I can affirm that it is chiefly thanks to my strict observance of this imperative that I have never stood still, but have been able to advance under every influence. The spirit, too, is an organism which has to be fecundated if it is to grow beyond itself.

Yes, in my Vienna period I already saw the ideal man such as I described him later in my *Gefüge der Welt*: one raised above all opinions, knowing all things directly and perfectly because he stands in necessary and direct relation to



the *totality* of the universe – an image which anticipated my later doctrine of the insoluble cosmic situation; for at this early period I was already convinced of that which was later to be expressed theoretically in the *Travel Diary*: namely, that understanding premises before everything else a corresponding inner state, and is in no wise to be attained merely by outward study.

It is now quite clear why the period in question was, in spite of all external appearance, a very difficult one. An ascetic of a peculiar kind, daily and hourly combating the man of force within me, I remained for a period of ten years, in spite of temporary aberrations, in an attitude of essential passivity and receptivity. I came to no decision, either inward or outward. In spite of all my struggles, and these were not wanting, I aimed with complete consistency to be that which most regard with horror: completely characterless. For I did not want to become a finished product, I did not want to crystallize out, until the last possibilities in my aptitudes had developed completely. During this period I was guarded by that dæmon which, acting towards my person like some detached and individual power, directed my life-course from the very beginning out of the depths: directed it

with such precision that fundamentally I 'dared' not act any more freely than a convent girl (although the form of discipline was essentially different), while on the other hand I 'had' to do various things which only the most stiff-necked pedant-moralist or frantic adventurer would demand of himself. It was a violently one-sided life that I led, however universal its spiritual experiences might be. The man that I had been before coming under Chamberlain's influence remained completely repressed; I permitted myself to resume an active attitude only when I was convinced that the process of training had been completed; this occurred from 1911 onwards, during the writing of the *Travel Diary*.



**B**UT I do not wish to anticipate. From Vienna I proceeded, in 1903, to Paris, and from there made several visits to England. In time I became as completely alienated from geology as I had become from the life of the *Korpsstudent*. Conscious of my northern barbarianism, whose values I now discarded completely, I first gave myself up primarily to the influences of the perfection of form peculiar to Latin culture; I observed and I studied – few perhaps have studied Gustave Flaubert, whose

peculiar asceticism had had a decisive influence on the process of self-education described above, as ardently as I, or assimilated so greedily the style of the Western European art of life. I also did some work, writing short articles – of no literary merit whatsoever – on æsthetic subjects for various newspapers, and frequented, as a *causeur*, the *salons* of Paris, which offered me a very friendly welcome. Then, suddenly, my creative subconscious broke through to the surface. In February, 1904, there suddenly began to emerge, of itself, the *Gefüge der Welt*, as an instinctive reaction to a particularly violent emotional shock – much as a musical improvisation might emerge at the piano. It was a very wonderful experience. It is true that under the influence of Chamberlain, with the writing of whose *Kant* I had been intimately associated, I had studied Kant, Schopenhauer, and Friedrich Albert Lange; I had further, during two periods of frenzied reading in the British Museum in London, rushed through some other departments of philosophic literature. But critical philosophy, a subject I had not turned an ear to at the university, had never been a personal matter, and that I myself should become a philosopher in the Kantian sense was outside all my expectations. For it was precisely

in systematic thinking that I was particularly weak. The pigeon-holing of thoughts which the scientist can hardly dispense with, was altogether alien to me; because of my nervous weakness I was unable, until my thirty-second year, when I took up Indian Yoga exercises, to concentrate uninterruptedly on any subject for any length of time; in my essential construction the element of fantasy so far overbore the impulse to exact research that, *for this very reason*, I gladly submitted, during my student years, to the discipline of the science of experimental chemistry and crystallographic measurement.

And now there suddenly arose within me a critical philosophical work of my own! Whether the contents of that work represented truth or error I could not say from personal experience; for the work had detached itself from me like an independent organism. At the time when this work was produced, my attitude was so essentially one of receptivity, and of suspicion towards everything subjective, that I would not let myself be bound down even by my own creation. But I hailed the work joyfully as a token of creative force within me, no less than as a guiding impulse from within: in spite of all the objections that might be raised – and not least on the basis of this very book, as I recognized

from the outset – I was clearly destined for the vocation of a critical philosopher; it was *this* vocation which was to prove the field of my future endeavour.

This conviction held firm till 1911; the ‘cosmic viewpoint’ which the *Gefüge der Welt* tried to posit, ‘The World from Nature’s Viewpoint,’ the title originally given to the *Prolegomena zur Naturphilosophie*, the especial *tout comprendre* of my *Unsterblichkeit* – all these were so many symptoms of the fact that it was along the path of critical philosophy that my line of endeavour should lie. Thus my process of self-training entered on a new course; it was not merely understanding, but critical understanding in the Kantian sense, which was henceforth to be my ideal, whatever violence I might be forced to do my nature in the pursuit of it. I furthermore found, at this stage of my development – as I had previously done in the case of Chamberlain – the right pace-setter. This was Alexander Wolkoff-Mouromtsoff, the Russian of da Vincian gifts to whom I have raised a monument in the fifth volume of the *Weg zur Vollendung*.<sup>1</sup> He was, as it happens, anything rather than a

<sup>1</sup>The semi-annual organ of the School of Wisdom, sent free to members of the Society for Free Philosophy (address: No. 2 Paradeplatz, Darmstadt, Germany).

philosopher; but he was supreme as a critic in general. But then, philosophers who are such by vocation have never played an essential rôle in my life. From 1906 on I was, indeed, associated as a friend with Simmel, and, from 1910 on, with Bergson; but both of these I have less to thank for than the many statesmen, artists, and, above all, women, with whom I was in contact during the years of my development. Practically every one whose goal was not only increased knowledge but increased being, has had the same experience: a man can learn in the essential sense only from those whose natures are different from his own, for, by the law of polarization, only they can provoke an advance in his spiritual and mental constitution; whereas all that one can learn, at the sorry best, by disputation with one's own kind, one can also learn equally well by one's self.

The period from 1904 to 1911 was as a matter of fact a period of transition in every sense. It covered a great many events and activities, but not a single real decision. Shortly after the completion of the *Gefüge der Welt*, I fell so seriously ill, as a result of years of overwork, that my recovery was in reality the beginning of a new life. Then, through the Russian Revolution of 1905, I lost all my possessions,



for the first time; true, this loss proved to be only imaginary, but it was none the less real for my consciousness. At that time I had no relation whatsoever to practical reality, was quite helpless in the face of it, my relation to the world being only that of a testing re-agent; and so from the outset I simply accepted the fact that the matter was at an end, and exerted myself not in the slightest to regain my lost fortune; thus, when it returned to me of itself I received it as a new gift. So real, indeed, was that loss in my consciousness, that I spent two years in the conviction of complete poverty – an experience which was later to prove very useful. In 1906 an attempt, warmly supported by Wilhelm Dilthey, was made to establish me as *Privat-docent* in the University of Berlin, an attempt which ended with the polite but none the less decisive refusal of Alois Riehl. From 1906 to 1908 I lived in Berlin, though not uninterruptedly, for that period comprised a number of journeys, in particular a very important one to Greece. It was in Berlin that I wrote *Unsterblichkeit*. This work was born of the impact which an afternoon spent on the strand at Anzio made on a half-visionary state in which I found myself (in this connection the reader may remember the picture of the wave at the end of the

book; I had spent the winter of 1905-06 in Italy). Of all my earlier books this one is the dearest to me, because, though in itself as yet a purely phenomenological work, it was the first expression brought forth from within of the literary awakening of my metaphysical perceptions. In the autumn of 1907 I delivered, at what was then the 'free' University of Hamburg, a series of lectures which appeared in 1910 under the title of *Prolegomena zur Naturphilosophie*.

Then in 1908 occurred the most important change in my outward life since I had left Dorpat: I took over the ancestral estate and settled in Rayküll as farmer and forester. It is true I did not remain at home all the time, and my new outward profession never absorbed more than a part of my time. I did a great deal of travelling in between, made the personal acquaintance of what to me were the interesting personalities of Europe, or continued such friendships where they already existed; I also did a great deal of writing, including the majority of the papers which have recently been collected into *Philosophie als Kunst; Schopenhauer als Vorbilder* (now included in *Menschen als Sinnbilder*), the three purely scientific treatises *Zur Psychologie der Systeme, Das Wesen der Intuition und ihre Rolle*

*in der Philosophie* (published in *Logos* I, 1910-11, Vol. III, and *Logos* III, 1912, Vol. I), and the address to the Third International Congress of Philosophy, *Die metaphysische Wirklichkeit* (Bologna, 1911). In February, 1911, I lectured again in the free University of Hamburg, this time on an historical-philosophical subject: the progress of philosophy in the transformation of its formulation of problems; in March of the same year I delivered the above-mentioned lecture in one of the plenary sessions. But the important thing is that from 1908 on, I was no longer the passing sojourner on earth that I had felt myself to be since my Vienna days, but that, whether or not I recognized it within me, I occupied a definite place in the natural and cultural order. Correspondingly, everything I did was played off against a new background, and there were released in me energies the very existence of which I had forgotten since my inner metamorphosis in Vienna. However little I was interested in the routine of the agricultural profession, however unequal I seemed at times to it, there was in Esthonia only one opinion about my pioneering work in land-culture. I carried out with enthusiasm the irrigation works and improvements begun by my father; I discovered new methods in forestry

and cattle-breeding. It would seem that the same energies which since 1920 have been working themselves out in the spiritual reformer found their first expression in my efforts to transform the inherited estate into something new and more perfect.

But the more I appeared to be the completed man, whose life-ways were definitely and finally set, the more unsatisfied I felt. There came over me the irresistible feeling of an increasing emptiness. From year to year I felt more and more clearly that all I was doing, and had done till then, was not what I should be at in reality, was not the thing for which I felt myself destined, the thing for which I had been preparing for years, for which, indeed, I was still preparing. Inwardly, my agricultural activity meant nothing at all to me. Indeed, as the man of spirit I stood almost in a relation of enmity to the man who had found in this work his positive self-expression; I was afraid that the inherited part of me, the type part, with which I was personally not identified, might ultimately overbear that individual essence which alone I recognized as my self. But even my intellectual productivity was no longer what it had been in 1904-07. If it was true that my ability had increased, it was true, on the other hand, that its consum-

mation was increasingly automatic. My best achievements left me inwardly cold. They in no wise represented the real expression of my being. It became increasingly clear to me that even my critical philosophizing, seen in and for itself, obviously lay on the same plane as my musical and my artistic and plastic talents, on which, in my childhood, my parents had based so many hopes, and which I nevertheless refused to develop because I felt that they would never become the instrument of utterance for my essential being. My essential being! . . . But was it not precisely that which I had been repressing for a whole decade? Did not my dissatisfaction, in the last analysis, proceed from the fact that I had lost my relationship to my essential being? It had certainly not died in me; for this fact, there was already sufficient testimony in the pressure in the inner deeps of my nature; the more the days passed, the stronger it became, the more it made itself felt, now breaking forth in explosions, now losing itself in extreme introversion. A phrase which George Simmel had uttered in the early days in Berlin again occupied my mind: 'You will assuredly write many more books, and good books at that; but that is not the point at all; that lies in the realm of your *ability*. But your real task seems to me to lie in

the realm of *being*, to present in one way or another a form of *being*.'

'Being! . . .' Truly enough, it was just that which, since my Dorpat days at least, I had not presented consciously; much more had I made use of every opportunity to prevent or inwardly to evade the operations of my subjective self. One day – it must have been in the spring of 1911 – the scales fell from my eyes: the aim I had set myself till then, the transformation of my intellectual-spiritual organism into a perfect and obedient instrument of cognition, *had* already been achieved, as far as I could at all achieve it; the unintermittent attitude of receptivity on the part of my whole nature, maintained until my thirtieth year, *had* brought to birth what I had striven for – the synthesis of my changeable complexity, which was fundamentally able to take any mould, into unity on a higher plane of meaning. In those circumstances it was no wonder that I felt unsatisfied: adjusted as I then found myself, nothing new could happen in me; I was like one who keeps on learning by heart a piece which he already knows thoroughly. For if from time to time I did something that for the man of Vienna and Paris was new or different, my inner adjustment remained exactly the same, and it is on the inner



adjustment that everything depends. That brief instant of fecundation, the new recognition of the truth, sufficed to set in motion a new process of ripening, which ran its irresistible course without any conscious effort of mine. By the spring of 1911 I had left the period of pure preparation behind me.



MY new problem then was how to grow personally into that intellectual and spiritual body which I had been preparing so long and so carefully. I had denied the primitive man of my childhood and adolescence; since that time I had not been, in the personal sense, a complete man; correspondingly, it was impossible for me to know any real personal experience or to possess any personal convictions. I had been nothing more than a medium for what, from the viewpoint of my consciousness, had been alien influences within or without me. I now had to embody my own true person, and since, unlike others, I had never embodied in myself anything but my infantile ego, the event meant nothing more nor less than this: *that the moment of my real birth had come*. That process which in most people is completed with the twenty-first year could only, *might* only, now

begin for me. I worried little as to the manner in which this birth was to come about. That manner was pre-ordained by the facts of my artist-nature, as well as by the wide-awake condition of my whole being, owing to which every transformation took place consciously and by means of my own free will. I understood at once that the manner of my emergence could only be through spiritual creation; that I first had to exteriorize my being in order to be able afterwards to conquer it for my own person. Before long I also knew in what specific form this would be achieved most successfully: namely, by using the changes which a journey around the world would naturally effect in me as the instrument of expression for my essential personality. By consistent concentration on this spiritual goal my essential being, I felt, would take complete possession of its instrument of expression with the greatest speed and certainty.

In October, 1911, I embarked at Genoa. One year later I was back in Rayküll. But anyone who attached the least significance to these dates or to any other material fact connected with my journey around the world would be misunderstanding me completely. It is obvious I could not have penetrated into these alien cultures as deeply as people to-day think with-

out being acquainted with them. But I never really cared for these cultures; I have never had any particular interest in China and India as such. I undertook my journey around the world in exactly the same way, on the one hand, as one sets out to study the materials for a novel which has already been conceived, or, on the other hand, as one submits to a cure, the effects of which are accurately known in advance. For *me* only one thing mattered, to have *my own* experience – just as, in making a journey around the world, a spirit rooted deeply enough in its self is really revolving on its own axis (since under given circumstances all spiritual and intellectual utterances are equally natural); – through the gamut of this experience I was to win through to a higher unity of being. Thus I did not even have in view, as a direct object, the exploitation of my journey for the purpose of a world-philosophy; this was bound to emerge as an inevitable result from the fact that my nature is capable of learning and experiencing only through creation and presentation. In the ordinary meaning of the phrase I added little to my knowledge in the course of my journey. At the time I undertook it I had developed far enough already, virtually and potentially, to look through and beyond the various cultures, religions, and

philosophies which are the ultimate values for most minds: I *had* evolved from the critical philosopher into the philosopher of 'Significance.' But I became conscious of my new state only when, thanks to the experience of the journey, I became theoretically clear as to the meaning of it. And it was impossible for me to present that condition convincingly to others before I had actually found the specific form for its presentation; for it is only the strictly appropriate expression which gives to meaning reality on the plane of fact. In advance I recognized this form in that of a prospective travel diary. The plan was accepted before the journey began; day and night during the journey it determined my attitude; its working out covered the years between 1912 and 1918, although by 1914 everything except parts of the section from Japan onward was already completed. I put more labour into this work than into any which preceded it, eliminating whole chapters and writing new ones, treating the entire work from the musical point of view; for all complexity had here but one purpose: the expression of myself in the process of my birth. Thus seen, this work really means nothing more nor less than the process of my own spiritual birth expressed in artistic values: hence its effectiveness,

otherwise inexplicable; hence the unbounded happiness which the process of its creation kept unceasingly alive in me. What I felt was: I had in reality lived till then only for the purpose of bringing forth the *Travel Diary*, for it was really in this creation that I had actually been born. I believed that I had reached the goal of my endeavour. And it was only then that I perceived the true significance of my critical work: its purpose had been to clear the path for me. Science is only the grammar of the world. But one must master it to be able to speak.



THE *Travel Diary* was to appear in the fall of 1914. After I had corrected the second proofs of the first volume, the hour of Europe's destiny sounded. Officially I stood in the Russian camp. However long I had been aware of its imminence, I inwardly felt the World War to be, from the spiritual point of view, utterly senseless, a moral and spiritual atrocity; for *to me* the problems for which it was fought meant nothing at all; I was, as long as I could remember, the European, for whose historic birth the collapse of so many ancient statehoods would in the last analysis have been a good thing. I sought at first simply to ignore the war;

for nearly a year and a half I continued to live in the detached condition of the *Travel Diary*. Thanks to the many years of my asceticism, the contact between my consciousness and my personal being was so slender as to make this possible; for as a child I had been essentially warm-hearted and sympathetic. Thereupon I was seized with the profoundest gloom. That wide world in which alone I had really felt at home existed no more. Europe, it seemed to me, had run its course; I even corresponded with Motono, the Japanese Ambassador at St. Petersburg, in connection with a plan of mine to retire to a monastery in the Korean Diamond Mountains. But then, of a sudden (as far as my consciousness was concerned), there was set in motion within me a deep-reaching process of transformation, the outline of which had already found expression in the closing section of my *Travel Diary* (written in 1917).

It had been my belief that with the *Travel Diary* I had reached my climax, and had completed my life-work with it. During the years of my isolation in Rayküll (I was found useless for military purposes) it became clear to me that this work represented only the *beginning*. The *Travel Diary* was the living process of my birth. And now it was obviously my task to



live after having been born. But the more the process of time coalesced my ego with my empiric destiny, the clearer it became to me that the attitude of the *Travel Diary* made this task impossible. The state of complete detachment which that attitude both produced and premised precluded all further fruitfulness, in the worldly sense. It was only as an ascetic that my continued existence could contain any meaning. But – and for a long time I refused to admit this, until I recognized the fundamental logic of the situation – I was becoming less and less fit for an ascetic existence. As I now saw, I had not yet emerged with absolute completeness in the *Travel Diary*. The writing of that book had, indeed, meant for me an apokatastasis, had meant a ‘restitution’ of lost being. It had made me more human, more normal. But it had not yet released the full man. *He* was now thrusting independently towards birth. Naturally I did not perceive even then what was going on in me. I knew only this much: that the *Travel Diary* had made me more vital than I had ever been since Dorpat. I therefore could not face the question of completing my life in desireless contemplation without a feeling of contradiction.

If it was true that the man of the *Diary* was,

in the moments of his greatest height, related to the Buddhistic ascetic who, by understanding, transmutes all reality into unreality, it was also true that that man had been nothing more than a stage in my development; yet, for all that, those moments might, from the spiritual point of view, have been my greatest. Unless it was my desire ultimately to end up with suicide, my life had to continue in another mould. All this led to a new transformation in my inner attitude. Through the horrors of the World War I first realized clearly that detachment in the sense in which I had achieved it was not an ideal condition. However deep the theoretical insight might be which it permitted, it could be, in every other respect, only an expression of superficiality. And beyond a doubt I had, in many respects, remained or become superficial. I now recognized the tremendous danger implicit in that one-sidedness which I had consciously practised for more than fifteen years. I had indeed developed my cognitive side to the last degree which my talents permitted, but at the same time the active side of me had remained practically untrained. And that side did exist; it existed overwhelmingly. The longer destiny condemned me to immobility and inactivity (as compared with my previous wonted activity),

the more did I feel, in the lower deeps of my being, an unconquerable impulse towards activity; moreover, through continuous contact with my native soil all those faculties which I had possessed in my childhood and had since then repressed came to life again. And with this it became clear that every original human aspect had been thoroughly stamped out in me, that I had turned myself artificially into pure intelligence remote from this world; just as the poet, taking the material of Nature, creates a form of life subject to entirely different laws. Since all my equipment and training had been directed solely towards *understanding*, it was only through intellectual cognition that I could achieve the state of full being. However strong the impulsional essence of me might be – there are many who still see in the elementary fury of my instincts and impulses the savage – it was only through a process of understanding that it could become accessible and subservient to my consciousness.

But in order to work out my being it was necessary for me – I saw this clearly now – to accentuate some tendency other than I had hitherto accentuated; I had to shift the pressure back to the vital primitive man in me. There was nothing more to be done by starting from the

spiritual side. If I was to register any further progress, the whole of my nature had to be reborn from the spirit. And I now saw, further, that only after this process had been successfully accomplished could I really become that which I had depicted myself to be in my *Travel Diary*. So for the fourth time I set out consciously to transform myself. The years of almost complete isolation in which this transformation unrolled were a single continuous process of meditation. First I evoked and took upon myself, through the medium of memory, and to the extent that it was accessible, the whole of the past through which I had lived and with which I had hitherto refused to identify myself; every error I had committed, every pain I had suffered, every impure thought, was confessed within myself, raising into the field of my consciousness everything that I had repressed. Wherever the opportunity offered itself, I created a conscious relationship between my metaphysical self and those facts which happened to present themselves as the instruments of my expression; and with the strictest consistency I so worked on myself as to become a man whose well-defined personality should, in all its aspects, give practical worldly expression to what I had hitherto thought realizable only in the form of universal

understanding. And thus the consummation of the preparatory period, which I had once taken for the very climax of life, became only a preliminary stage.



AT the time of writing I am still in that process of transformation which began with the war years. From the nature of the task before me, this condition will not come to a close (if it come to any) before my old age. I could not, in Rayküll, judge what its first effects were going to be. But hardly had I, in 1918, returned to the world – in the spring of that year the Germans occupied my native country, and in the autumn of the same year, exiled by the Revolution, I was forced to leave it – than I learned that my meditation had not been without its fruits. The vital forces of my boyhood emerged with renewed strength; within an extremely brief stretch of time these forces experienced that increase in specific gravity and charge which becomes evident in every man in the forties, as a powerful personality, as compared with a man in the twenties – a process which under ordinary circumstances is stretched over a number of transitional stages. But in particular there awoke in me that long-repressed

will to action – a veritable *réveil du lion*. With increasing volcanic power, these awakened energies of the man of action continued to thrust me forward. Baron Roman Ungern-Sternberg, the Mongolian *condottiere* made famous in Ossendowski's book – one of the most clairvoyant minds it has ever been my fortune to meet – declared in 1915 that he could see me in the future leading cavalry charges and founding empires. At that time I could not believe my ears. But how many of those who have only known me since 1920 would believe that for nearly twenty years I was a shy, supersensitive artist, helpless in the face of life, the passive object of every influence, practically incapable (because of my aptness to see every side of a problem simultaneously) of making a decision, of going through with anything, of exerting any influence, without any outward desire, utterly disinclined, in any struggle, to emerge as the leader? How many of them would believe that throughout all the years of my youth I was considered weak-willed? To this extent does everything depend on a man's attitude towards himself: that which he will not affirm within himself can never develop. Now, when I no longer repressed in myself the man of force and action, the original duality of my being began to inte-



grate into unity. In the course of this process I gained increasing faith and conviction and, correspondingly, increasing strength. My life became increasingly fuller. For now I was no longer a thing isolated in the universe; I consciously co-operated, with all my energies, in its development.

And the usual thing happened: no sooner had I consciously made myself a part of the universal process than the latter, which till then had maintained towards me the same detached ironic attitude as I towards it, drew me into itself as a necessary part. The tremendous seriousness of life's reality, towards which, in spite of the frequency with which its cruel hand had been laid upon me, I had maintained the attitude of the disinterested observer, became from now on for me an all too personal experience. In a moment of extravagant national passion the Esthonian people thought it possible 'legally' to base its national existence on the expropriation of those whose love towards their native soil is responsible for the entire culture of the country, on the basis of which alone the new state is able to exist. I am speaking of the Balts who settled in Esthonia seven hundred years ago and who since then have been the undiscourageable champions of Western culture in the East: a race German in origin and in language, which,

because of its peculiar history, rich with the records of combats, has been transformed into a human type as individual as the Americans are in comparison with the English. The first constituent assembly of the new Esthonian state resolved upon an 'agrarian reform' (put into effect with frantic haste), which it can only be hoped the ripening political wisdom of the people will some day reconsider. Overnight we Balts were dispossessed of every inch of land, of all our live and other stock, and that practically without compensation, for the officially promised indemnification (which to date — 1926 — has not been paid) would represent not even a minimum percentage interest on the capital value of our confiscated possessions.

It was an act of expropriation which, in its radicalism, is without parallel in modern history; for it was performed without even that background of doctrine which we must, when all is said and done, recognize in the Bolshevik policy of expropriation: in Esthonia the principle of private property, for all other cases, is still regarded as sacred. Besides all that, the Balt landowners had not only lived for centuries for their country: from 1918 on, when they knew they were doomed to destruction, they continued, in so far as they were permitted to

remain in the country, to work for the good of the homeland; and the Balt youth were in the foremost ranks of those who shed their blood to liberate Esthonia from the Bolsheviks. Thus, at a single blow, I lost all of my possessions – the economic worth of which had become considerable through the work I had spent on them.

During the years until the moment of my final break with the past, and while I was rebuilding my life on a new foundation, my contact with the homeland which I knew in my inner consciousness to be lost to me, but which was maintained in the illusion of letters, was like an open wound. . . . So it was; I, the detached individual, was in reality more deeply rooted in my homeland than most. For if in my earliest years my conscious mind had emancipated itself from all bonds, the unconscious part of me remained for that reason the more deeply rooted, in childlike dependence, in that homeland. In the years following the loss of all my possessions, I had to struggle for more than my personal livelihood, from lecture to lecture, from book to book: in 1919 I married a young woman<sup>1</sup> accustomed to the highest standard of

<sup>1</sup>Count Keyserling married a Countess Bismarck, granddaughter of the Iron Chancellor and sister of the present Prince Bismarck. – *Translator's note.*

life. This marriage of mine, at what seemed to be the least propitious moment, represented a conscious symbolic fulfilment: I now *wanted* to take all human destiny upon myself. Before long I was the father of two sons, and it became my duty to find new ways in which to live up to the level demanded by the continuation of the cultural tradition. And this maintenance of a high standard was the more necessary from the point of view of my personal mission. In the confines of a narrow external life I felt unable to spread my wings, very much like an eagle in a sparrow's cage. At that time it was physiologically beyond me to adapt myself to the earning of money. I had once for all been settled as the independent country gentleman – a circumstance which had been strongly ratified by my artist-nature. But what made it most difficult for me to adapt myself inwardly to the new situation was my own personal philosophic conviction. I had surely no right to complain. Of all the Russian and Baltic refugees, I probably fared best. I also knew, with that part of my nature which belongs to these things, all the joys which success and victory can give; and I knew them keenly, for not only did I succeed, but my combative instincts are strong.

Yet that part of my nature was not the ulti-

mate part of me. My consciousness never had its centre in it. One of the few things which I have never been able to appreciate is that specifically Anglo-Saxon view according to which the one aim of every man's life should be to achieve worldly independence and power. I think this view legitimate only in the case of the non-spiritual man, or of the spiritual man only before he has reached maturity and is, as it were, on probation. All my life long I have held (and where others were concerned I have given practical expression to this view) that it is simply unjust to mankind not to see to it that creative spirits focused solely on spiritual values shall not have to give thought to material things. They, on whom all human progress depends, really have no time for private business. Besides, to expect of them, when their nature is to give, that they shall 'earn money' is as contrary to reason and even common sense as to accord to others the right to beg for a living. The instinctive repulsion felt by everybody towards the business touch in the creative spirit is actually based on this psychological circumstance. The man of spirit *must not* be forced to think of a livelihood (which is not to be taken to mean that he must necessarily remain poor, but that he must naturally command whatever means

are called for by his mission). This was understood by mediæval Europe, which relieved such a man of all economic worry through the instrument, proper to that age, of the monastic institution; in the days of its greatness the whole Orient understood it, too, regarding it as a communal duty to maintain by gifts every representative of the spirit, for the precise reason that such a type is deformed inwardly by being forced to make money; thus Confucius was, during the years of his homeless wanderings, quite naturally supported, together with all his disciples, in accordance with his rank, by the countries through which he happened to be passing; and to this day China remembers with shame that he was forced to starve for a number of months because two states on whose adjoining borders he happened to have camped were at war with each other. This point of view is in my opinion the only right one, and I hope that soon a practical way will be found to give it general expression in the modern West, in whose present crisis the maintenance of the spiritual as a power on earth is more urgently needed than ever before or in any other place.<sup>1</sup> Thus I considered

<sup>1</sup>As I think this matter of the utmost importance, I reprint here a practical suggestion which has been published, from October 3, 1926, onward, in the papers of several



it utterly unworthy that instead of having to think only of giving, I had to adapt myself to the point of view of the merchant.

And there was nothing else for me to do. I did not fit into any of the existing professions. Even if my friends had taken up the founding of the School of Wisdom with the partial object of providing entirely for my livelihood – as universities do for their professors – it was shown to be, precisely on account of those psychological factors which have been mentioned, impossible to organize it in the form answering to this purpose; a man such as I am – so the majority of those who know me, feel instinctively – must give of himself generously; take, never. So it came to pass that instead of being supported by the School of Wisdom, I myself have been its main supporter. . . . Thus the pressure of external misfortune was made heavier by inward revolt.

countries under the title of 'The Peter's Pence of Literature,' and with which, among others, Romain Rolland, Richard Strauss, Siegfried Wagner, Thomas Mann, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, and the sister of Friedrich Nietzsche have identified themselves. The reader will readily understand how to apply to his own country what was written in particular for Germany, for of course each nation ought to look after its spiritual property itself, independently of others. (The article will be found immediately following this sketch, on page 92.)

But all these personal difficulties, on the other hand, were in the beginning only the other side of a deeply desired fulfilment of destiny. I, too, have learned by experience, that most often a man's mission is against his personal inclinations. Seldom is anything considerable achieved unless there is this tension between desire and duty; the truth is that if it were not for the compulsion of personal necessity, very few men, if any, would ever have given up the whole of their lives to their mission for all. Without this necessity, which compelled me to tolerate what was really a grotesque discrepancy between my aptitude and external circumstances, I at any rate would never have liberated in myself that force which issues only from self-conquest. Indeed it was thanks to my personal misfortunes that I learned to know myself at all. Just as I first learned to speak because I had to talk, so it was necessity which taught me what my position in the world really was, and, with it, my task in life. And since I set to vigorously, my natural sphere of action soon defined itself of its own accord, so much so that what I had hitherto pictured as the function of private and personal necessity could with equal justice be called the way of my mission. Seen in this light the path of my life since 1919 may be traced in the

terms that follow. The years of meditation covering the war period had fused the theoretical man of understanding, who had been helpless in the face of practical reality and who had so long led a separate existence, with the whole man in me, and had re-established contact with the roots of his elemental impulsional life. Since, in my personal essence, I had always been the man of action and of expression, of intuitive grasp, swift decision, and effective speech, in many essentials even the born statesman, it resulted from all this that what had hitherto manifested itself as intellectual receptivity and imaginative projection, now externalized itself in practical forms. Or, as I would put it: the sense-perceiver became, of himself, by a process of organic transposition, the sense-realizer. And in this I quite naturally became fitted for a life-task which till then I would have regarded as the remotest of all possibilities: the task of the practical reformer from the standpoint of the spirit.

But I have not in any wise sought to become this; the rôle was imposed upon me by the influence which I was involuntarily exerting. In 1914, before the outbreak of the war, when I had completed my *Travel Diary*, I was convinced that my hour was not to come during

my own lifetime; it was for that reason that I continued to play with the idea of leaving Europe for the Orient, to wind up my life as a hermit. But when, in 1918, in Germany, I again breathed in the psychic atmosphere of the West, I at once felt how greatly the war had changed things. The vital effect of the *Travel Diary* soon showed that my personal problem had thenceforth become the problem of the whole West: that I, the outsider – and it was as such that I was still mirrored, for a long time, in a consciousness held captive by the past – had become a representative type. For the effect of the *Travel Diary* was just what I had meant it to be, however little this may be appreciated by the majority to-day: the new, higher plane of consciousness on the level of which the conflicts which were also the ultimate cause of the World War are not solved but simply dismissed.<sup>1</sup> For me this was the final proof that there is no such thing as individual isolation, that each in reality represents all, that he who solves his personal problem thereby involuntarily helps everybody else. Thus my duty towards others demanded that I live a public life for the highest good of

<sup>1</sup>To what extent fundamental life-problems are altogether beyond solution, and can only be dismissed, is shown in the chapter *Spannung und Rhythmus* in *Wiedergeburt*.

others. In effect, to give back to religious and other life-forms, through apprehension of their meaning, their lost depth; to make all action the expression of being; to find for all meaning its corresponding form of expression, and, *vice versa*, to transform all externalized knowledge into essentials, to build character anew on the basis of a relativity inevitably implied in progressive knowledge: these, my personal problems, which I have dealt with in detail in my two most vitally important books, *Schöpferische Erkenntnis* and *Wiedergeburt* (if I am to be remembered at all, it will be for the sake of the impulses which these contain, and not for the sake of the *Travel Diary*), are the critical problems of our entire age. Not I alone will find personal salvation in their solution – the same holds true for anyone who fundamentally represents the same stage of development, i.e. for any Occidental whose life does not lag behind that of his age.

Under these circumstances it is natural that the moment of my entry into active life should have marked for me a period of increasing significance. What I said and did served to clarify the meaning or intent of the endeavour of distant circles. And this applies to my failures no less than to my successes. It is not so easy to account

for the fact that I so swiftly discovered that form of effectiveness which was best suited to me. It is true that instinct protected me from any dangerous commitment; I rejected the offer of a university career without an instant's hesitation, with the observation that the university was five hundred years old, while I was only forty – that it was therefore stronger than I, and I had to perfect my own form of life. It is true that in 1910 I had already given publicity to some of the basic ideas of the School of Wisdom. But that the school should actually have been founded, that it should have shown itself capable of continued life and development, must obviously be attributed to 'Providence,' in whatever sense the word be taken. The interest shown by Otto Reichl, my German publisher, in getting me to settle in Darmstadt; the particular and unusual personality of Grand Duke Ernst Ludwig of Hessen, whose magnanimous initiative made possible the material founding of the school; the fine spirit of understanding and of co-operation shown by the chief counsellor, the present President of the Society for Free Philosophy, Count Kuno von Hardenberg: – if a new foundation was to be laid for my life it was necessary that all these factors should emerge in conjunction in order that I should definitely



decide – and should keep to the decision – to link up my fate with Darmstadt. Nor was the first constellation of events sufficient; that providential aid had to be extended; for, during the first years, my inner revolt against these bonds was so strong that again and again I was seized with the desire to destroy my own work. For, as I have said towards the beginning, I am anti-social by nature; there is no *joy* for me in being in company with people; the instincts of the schoolmaster are alien to me, and it is only duty, thrust upon me by the recognition of its possibilities, which keeps me from resuming a life such as I love personally: – a life of solitude.

But it was precisely the almost daily conquest of my inclinations, the tension between my desire and my mission, which, as I have already said, proved my blessing. It guarded me from falling into a life of routine, a very pressing danger. It sustained my work as a well-spring of life. It made possible a harmony and correspondence between the inward and the outward, between meaning and expression – a relationship which was continuously alive, which never became mechanized, which rose to life daily out of death, which persisted throughout all change. When the School of Wisdom was opened on the 23rd of November, 1920, I had not the slightest

idea how it was going to develop; for I was entirely without experience as a teacher. My first thoughts on this subject are contained in the first and second volume of the *Weg zur Vollendung*. The supplement to *Schöpferische Erkenntnis*, written in the autumn of 1921, already presents another picture. In December, 1922, I had occasion to refer to the School of Wisdom in the autobiographical sketch which precedes Volume IV of the *Philosophie der Gegenwart in Selbstdarstellungen* (the sketch differs entirely from this one, being much more fragmentary from the human point of view, and dealing more fully with the objective side). I said there: "The School of Wisdom should much rather be called a strategic headquarters than a centre of study; it is exactly for this reason that it evokes so much enmity. It undertakes, by means of the proper psychological methods, to in-build the impulse of life-renewal on the basis of the spirit, which I stand for, into the broad body of historical reality. But primarily I feel myself to be, in sharp contradiction to the man of the *Travel Diary*, a statesman and field-marshal. Aiming at sense-realization, I must be a *Realpolitiker* before all; my purpose being to thrust the world one stage farther ahead, my first thought must be to set things in motion. To-day I am just as

one-sided as I was all-sided in the days of the *Diary*, and that for the same reason and as a result of the same metaphysical attitude. For it is clear that metaphysically it means one and the same thing to anticipate all complexity from the point of view of spiritual unity, or to turn the particular, such as it presents itself, into a symbol of the universal: which is the objective of my teaching in the School of Wisdom, however different the empiric conditions of these activities may be. In this wise, *Schöpferische Erkenntnis* is the necessary complement to the *Travel Diary*. The state in which I found myself at the time is best reflected in my opening lecture to the fourth session of the Society for Free Philosophy, *Spannung und Rhythmus* (now included in *Wiedergeburt*). It is indeed in the tension between the two poles of my being, translated into a special rhythm, that the Alpha and Omega of my practical effectiveness is to be found. Since these two poles are literally in complete opposition, there exists between them an extreme tension, so that the resulting rhythm must be extraordinarily vigorous. This is the whole secret of my stimulating energy. It is not because of originality in the presentation of truths which I alone have perceived, but because certain truths, most of them immemorial and all

of them known as such to many others, have found in me a long-range transmission apparatus, that I am able to help others on their way.'

A year later a new situation had again arisen. Thanks to psycho-analysis, with the practice of which I first became acquainted in December, 1922, through Oscar A. H. Schmitz, and the theory and practice of which occupied me for two years thereafter, the hyper-tensions of my nature, as they had been till then, were converted into normal tensions. I became more calm, saw myself more clearly. To the degree that my relationship to the world and to myself was cleared of conflicts, I was enabled to live my mission with increasing certainty. Thus the outward form of the School of Wisdom expanded ever more definitely out of the semi-dependent 'thing' which it threatened at first to become, into the sheer instrument of expression of the living impulse which it represented.<sup>1</sup> For it was only with this purpose in mind that I had founded it. I had been afraid from the beginning that it might become what the majority had hoped it would become – a successful institution living its own life. If it is im-

<sup>1</sup>For more detailed information regarding the organization of the School, see the Prospectus of the School of Wisdom, obtainable at No. 2 Paradeplatz, Darmstadt, Germany.

possible for a church, as the transmitter and shaper of a given faith, to represent without distortion the religious impulse which it serves, it is doubly impossible for an instrument of transmission which serves the understanding, and which seeks to transform life on the basis of understanding. For understanding is always a strictly personal matter. It can be inducted from one person to another, from one spirit to another, only in a special situation which cannot be repeated, and only in a manner which is unique each time.

Still, there did emerge, out of a body of experience, fixed rules even for the special and individual. I improved continuously in the art of saying to my personal disciples, in a minimum of time, exactly what they needed to hear. The transmission of the impulse of the School of Wisdom in the written word by means of the semi-annual bulletin, *Der Weg zur Vollendung*, also found, in an increasing degree, its special, appropriate style. In 1922 our sessions assumed their final form; it was only then that I discovered what I consider to be my most original gift — that of an orchestral conductor of the spirit. From that time on, year by year, Darmstadt is taking up the fundamental themes of the universal polyphony and treating them in an or-

chestral form on the new level of understanding, thereby imparting a new meaning to them. In 1925 this particular technique of infusing meaning reached what is so far its happiest written expression in *The Book of Marriage*. For that reason I refer those among my readers who cannot come to Darmstadt, and who are not interested in pure philosophy, to this book even more than to the volumes of *Der Leuchter*, the year-book of the School of Wisdom, in which all the proceedings of the sessions are published. My polyphonic style of thinking bears the same relation to that of my philosophic predecessors as polyphonic music does to homophonic (single-stranded melody). That was even then the proper style of the *Travel Diary*; in that book, too, I had made use of the multiplicity of cultures, philosophies, and religions only for the purpose of uttering something which was quite individual and definite, but which lay upon a higher plane of understanding. At the Darmstadt sessions I do the same thing in the conscious distribution of rôles, uttering the new in the form of a rich score which makes possible the production of effects which no man, thinking alone and for himself, has ever achieved. For no brain, no spirit, is equally able in all problems. Furthermore, the counterpoint of opposing points of



view which, on a higher plane, are shown to be complementary must, in the mouth of the individual, inevitably produce the effect of mere contradiction.

I owe the discovery of the polyphonic style of thought chiefly to three experiences. First, was the total impossibility of solving essential problems on the plane of projection of the accepted academic philosophy, which is based not on the apprehension of living meaning, but on verbal definitions. Second, was the impossibility of giving intelligibility to solutions reached in a spiritual space of higher dimensionality except along familiar lines of thought. And finally I was led to my discovery by the positive experience that when a group of spiritual values which harmonize properly in rhythm and quality is apprehended *as a unit*, we experience something which is qualitatively new and individual – just as new and individual as the chord A-E-G is in comparison with the individual tones which compose it. Since it is in my nature to be able to see in the complex the expression of a higher unity, and to determine the right relation of the part to the whole, I found little difficulty, once I had made the technical discovery, in presenting the higher form of insight, which I had in view in the harmony resulting from the orches-

tration of the usual, partial points of view. It was this that the Darmstadt sessions were supposed to do and did. I do not advocate relativism, but rather absolutism on a higher plane. On the other hand, within the higher unity of this absolutism all the values which hitherto were considered of ultimate validity emerge as relativities, just as every new criterion of thought assigns a relative value to the one which it displaces. Thus in him who comes to Darmstadt and listens in the right fashion, not in reflective or in critical mood, but so adjusted that the partial perceptions of the truth shall be able to coalesce within him into a higher unity – in him that coalescence will actually take place, even if the process is at first unconscious. Darmstadt does not, then, represent any new abstract theories, but is the concrete experience of a new, higher, spiritual reality. It creates, in this wise, the premise for new abstractions. It brings about that transformation in a man whereby he can see the world in another way, with deeper and better insight.

But the significance of the Darmstadt centre does not end with its sessions. The centre had to be founded to give reality on the plane of facts to the new attitude towards life which I stand for, so that the things which I say and do

might find the proper spiritual atmosphere for their acceptance; for essentially I am *not* a schoolmaster, not a university professor, not an ideologist. Darmstadt in no wise represents a fixed programme, *for it is nothing more or less than the living centre of a new manner of life which issues from the spirit*. Thus, instead of becoming a petrified institution it is developing more and more into the pure functional form of an original way of life. Whatever I do publicly is a manifestation of the School of Wisdom, and its effect is in the same sense. I already absent myself from Darmstadt half the time. But wherever I go, Darmstadt goes with me. For everything that I say and do publicly is said and done in behalf of the new attitude which I embody, and which I naturally apply to every individual problem. The same holds true in regard to this book in its attitude to the world in the making.



WHAT, then, is the ultimate meaning of this new attitude? What is the purport of my life and work? To what extent the wisdom to which I refer is fundamentally different from modern philosophy, my *Travel Diary* has shown in reference to the world surveyed in sum; and

the same thing, applied to the actual problems of our time, is shown in the last chapter of this book, sketchily and paradoxically, but perhaps for that reason with all the more effectiveness. Such abstract theory as may express what I stand for, the reader will find in my two chief works, *Schöpferische Erkenntnis* and *Wiedergeburt*, particularly in the former, which is really the introduction to the School of Wisdom, and which I hope to publish shortly in an English translation. But in my case a complete understanding of the whole matter can be reached only through an understanding of my person. It is for this reason that I have written this self-interpretation. It is for this reason that I must add the following.

Speaking quite abstractly: however little I may have completed my life-task so far, he who has read this sketch attentively up to this point can no longer have any doubts on the fundamental answer to the questions as to who I am and what my part is in this world, especially when he thinks back to what I wrote concerning myself in the Himalaya section of the *Travel Diary* and remembers at the same time that I have passed beyond that state. My significance is not to be sought in any individual view, or in an individual attitude, whatever these may be;

it is to be sought in the general rhythm of my life and in the general possibilities which this symbolizes. The rhythm is born within me of the tension between two diametrically opposed individualities which, as such, are extremely one-sided and, as I myself have felt, inadequate; this rhythm begins with the striving for absolute knowledge, it proceeds then to transform external knowledge into a life altogether conditioned by knowledge; it then turns this mode of life into an instrument of self-realization and aims finally at that world-ascendancy (*Weltüberlegenheit*) which I have described in *Schöpferische Erkenntnis* as the ultimate ideal of humanity. It is only on the basis of this rhythm that there is anything special to be understood in me; and that same rhythm, again, gives pragmatic significance to each and every element in my life, be it, as such, perfect or imperfect, for good or for evil. To me applies in the highest degree that phrase, so seldom understood, of Goethe's old age: 'It is only the inadequate which is productive'; I say 'in the highest degree,' because my nature, such as it is, leaves unusually much to be desired in every conceivable respect, so that it was precisely this admitted state of imperfection which was the basis of my growth and my enhanced creativeness.

Accordingly, if I am to venture on definition, I see my significance primarily in the demonstration of *the extent to which the qualities which almost all people accept in themselves as final and fixed by fate can be transmuted by the use of sufficient force and insight* – proving that to this extent man can literally become the master of his own fate, that his spirit is really creative, and that therefore world-ascendancy (*Weltüberlegenheit*) and the state beyond history (*Übergeschichte*) are not Utopian aims but thoroughly realizable. From this it follows, then – I am only a man like all other men – that the new epoch in history which is even now dawning (as described in this book) can in simple reality set in motion an upward shift of the level of all humanity. I have always been very critical in my attitude towards all the special elements in myself; I cannot remember ever having been satisfied with myself in this sense. Very few people can have found it anything like as hard as I did to make something of themselves, for very few characters present the same mixture of elements so wholly contradictory and in part even dangerous. If it was possible for me to make of myself something more than I originally was, then the same must be possible for every one else. That is



why I can surely serve as an example to all men.

And then, unless I am much mistaken, there may be found in my life and work hitherto the demonstration of a further truth of general validity; namely, that *the individual, at every moment of his being, actually reflects a cosmic situation*. There is really no such thing as private life; the personal always has a super-personal significance. But on the other hand, cosmic destiny is always reflected in subjective necessity, so that one is seldom justified in making a distinction between what a man does and what happens to him. From this follows not only the responsibility of each of us before God and man for what we do and even think in private, which has always been taught by religion; – something which is new to this time and therefore of more importance follows: namely, that it is a mistake to differentiate on the basis of principle between the life which the individual leads for himself, and the life which he leads for others, or for a cause. It is possible to differentiate only in practice and for each case separately. Only he who lives for the super-personal can, in the deepest sense, live for himself. On the other hand, only he can live a super-personal life to whom the super-personal

is a personal necessity. He who recognizes this truth will be cured of the most dangerous superstition of our time: he will never again see in a 'cause' as such a self-sufficient goal; he will never again elevate the purely objective attitude into something higher than the self-centred attitude. On the contrary, he will see that the greatest curse of our time is precisely this impersonality, this disregard of the living person. But in the last analysis no one can change his original disposition. In his nature he is what he is, whatever he may think. He should therefore be just as generous and charitable towards himself as he is expected to be towards others. There is consequently only one true formulation of the problem of life: to develop those gifts which you have, such as they are, for the good of all.

As this brief autobiography shows, I have never believed in dead things. I have always ascribed more importance to what people are than to what they pretend to live for. My attitude towards my faults has always been as objective as my attitude towards the weather. At first instinctively, and later with increasing consciousness, I grounded myself on the postulate that under all circumstances I had to accept as it was the internal and external material of my life, and under all circumstances to live my own

personal life. The relation of the intellectual and spiritual tasks of a man to his gifts and the fortuitous incidents of his life is much the same as that of the melody drawn from a violin to the strings on which it is played. Thence the blessing of inner tension and inner difficulties. I have directed all my energies along the channels of those gifts which I *really* possessed, in the one direction in which alone I *really* could decide of my own free will. And my success lay in this, that the more consciously I recognized and pursued my personal aims, the more importance I acquired for others. So there is clearly only one categorical imperative of general validity: that of the courage to be true to one's self. 'Living for others' is then something which emerges of itself out of the reality of the human cosmos, in the complex of which every person is involved whether he recognizes it or not. So that, in complete contrast to what most of the schools teach, we should say: Let every one openly and sincerely look before all else to his self-development. Nor need one fear that this inner readjustment will jeopardize the social achievements of our time. To love is just as natural to man as to take, the instinct to give himself is as normal as the acquisitive instinct. Since only an infinitesimal minority is able to

develop outside the existing framework of human relationships, it follows that the majority will, in seeking their own perfection, thereby most effectively be furthering the common weal. This requisite re-formulation of the problem would in fact change very little in the total of the external picture. But the external picture will at once assume a new inner significance. The individual will only then be given the inner opportunity to strive for perfection with a clear conscience. Only then will he be able really to *love* others, and not merely to interest himself impersonally in them – for there is only *personal* love.

But in the social sense this readjustment will perhaps lead to even more obvious progress, for it is only by means of this adjustment that every quality will, as such, find the right circumstance in which to work itself out. And it is on this that everything depends. It is the predominance of quantity over quality in every direction which, more than anything else, imparts to our age its touch of decadence. Mass and motion are fundamental factors of a dead thing, not of a living. In this wise the wealth and the restlessness of our age are symptoms not of life, but of spiritual death. There is nothing more hostile to the spirit than a democracy which appraises

everything by the standards of mass and motion. Nor is there anything more un-Christian; for what Christ taught was the infinite worth of the human soul, of *every* human soul, as against which no earthly power – even no moral power – was of the slightest significance. To numbers Christ attributed the least importance.

My life teaches, further, as it seems to me, that man can learn to know himself only by the experimental method; and only by allowing life to experiment with him, i.e. by submitting fearlessly to all its influences, can he grow out of his original state. Just as that which we call freedom only consists in electing deliberately to live life dangerously, whereby the old is transmuted into the new, into that which was not before, so the reality of each phenomenon declares itself only through its effect. Of itself, introspection leads nowhere; for introspection can orientate us only with regard to the past and the present, never with regard to the future. And in the same way every static regulation, though it be formulated in the name of the loftiest ideal, is as such without living worth; it answers a purpose only when put to use by living initiative, just as the knowledge of harmony and counterpoint can lead to authentic artistic creation only when put to use by the

born musician. Thus initiative is the only road to salvation. A man must be as objective in his attitude towards his own nature as the chemist is towards the chemicals whose properties he studies. And, like him, one should see in one's personal qualities the elements which can be combined into a new and higher synthesis.

And now, in closing, I may say what my doctrine, as distinguished from the philosophy of the schools, ultimately teaches. *It stands for the living soul as opposed to the concept of abstract man.* It is from this viewpoint that it formulates all the old questions anew. 'Abstract man' was the invention of the eighteenth century. Like every other working hypothesis, it had its good points, for man is by his nature unable to invent something totally false; mathematically speaking, abstract man is the integral of the intellectual side of man. This side of him is essentially impersonal; for it there exists only the general, not the particular. To-day we know – to what extent, this book demonstrates – that the intellectual man is only a fragment of the whole man. We know that from that side of him no farther advance is to be expected; that he who seems to-day to be progressive in the sense of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is really retrogressive; nay, that farther progress along



this path would lead to destruction. Like every other historical stage, the development of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, also, was in its nature one-sided, giving a higher development to only one side of man. It affected only the intellectual side and whatever lies within its creative province. For that reason it could not imply spiritual and moral upward growth. For all moral and spiritual values are rooted in the subjectively personal – something which does not exist from the viewpoint of abstract man. For the latter there exists only the general, the universally valid in the quantitative sense. For that same reason no recognition which issues from the premise of the abstract man could break through to the living man. Therefore all the theories of the last centuries were in the last analysis false.

There is no such thing as pure reason in Kant's sense; no such thing as pure will in Cohen's sense; there is no such objective substance as the 'conscious,' and no objective 'unconsciousness.' In reality there are only living souls whose various gifts may be seen in the light of abstraction, just as, by abstraction, we may analyse the living body into its anatomical, physiological, and biological elements – which, however, have no existence of their own.

Mediæval Christianity really understood human nature much more profoundly than does the modern age. Its understanding was more profound essentially because it saw the divine or metaphysical roots of human nature and its outward manifestation in this world as one whole. There is in reality no division between the metaphysical and the empiric as generally understood,<sup>1</sup> nor is there any between body and spirit: the only valid distinction is between meaning and expression, a distinction which does indeed set a boundary between the inner and the outer, but not in such wise that certain realms of being are definitely and finally relegated to the spiritual or to the material; it sets that boundary only to the extent that meaning is the background of everything, that everything embodies meaning, and yet nothing is bound to bring its own meaning or significance to perfect realization. But to repeat: the working hypothesis of abstract man was neither a misleading path nor yet a blind alley. With it we have been able to discover and to create much that would have been impossible without it. For that reason it would still be wrong to deny the achievements of the last two hundred years; what we must do,

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the detailed treatment of this question in the chapter, *Jesus der Magier*, in *Menschen als Sinnbilder*.

however, is *to realize anew the actuality of the soul on a higher plane of understanding.*

And I think that the ultimate purpose of my philosophizing is to point in theory the road to this consummation. I seek to integrate all the achievements of the age of science with the reality of the concrete man. And the purport of my practical effort is to show, as well as I can, how the inner man must readjust himself, what must be the new premises of his life, in order that he may reunite soul and spirit on a higher level. That I should be doing this as a seeker, and not as one who has found perfection, gives to my life, unless I am much mistaken, the ultimate significance which it can possess for others. Salvation can never be forced upon others; we can help them only by setting before them the acceptable symbol of their own endeavour. He who has already reached the goal can never give direct help; he makes his utterances from premises which the others lack. He who would help must be like those he seeks to help, except that he must perhaps be above them in truth, courage, and honesty. Qualitatively, I am in no wise different from others. I am no master, no superman. I have only this one advantage, that every moment of my life I have sought and struggled, that at no moment have I ever been

satisfied with myself, and that I have always sought to become something more than I was at the moment.

It is only because I am convinced that, because of this circumstance, I can be of help to others, that I speak of myself. My life is bound up in the utmost immediacy with my work. Whatever I write, or say, or do, is always nothing more than the partial expression of that which I am here for. In this wise I consider it my direct human duty to make public not only my thought, but my life. This exhibition of self is not a pleasure. One who has lived for forty years as jealous of his independence and his privacy as any country gentleman ever was, whose instincts are for solitude, whose self-consciousness asks for no man's recognition, whose law of life demands distance and will not suffer intimacy, one who, finally, is so sensitive that he is painfully affected by every disturbance in the psychic atmosphere — such a one does not, it may well be believed, lead a life like mine out of inclination. If I only dared, I should draw back into solitude to-morrow. But I may not do this as yet. The mission which I believe to be mine forbids me to give way to personal and private inclination.

THE PETER'S PENCE OF  
LITERATURE

**D**URING a recent visit to Weimar, where I had the opportunity of conferring with the local custodians of the spiritual legacy of the past, I conceived some ideas which, I thought, were of especially practical value. My training in political finance is not sufficient to enable me to be certain that the particular form in which I express what I mean will meet every objection. But in any case I believe the intent of these ideas to be right. I therefore set them down here in the hope that they will provoke a widespread discussion on the subject.

According to current German law, the literary legacy of an author is 'released' after the lapse of thirty years from his death. In other words, it is placed freely at the disposal of any one who wishes to exploit it. That the protective period of thirty years is too short, and that I hope soon to see it extended to fifty years, in accordance with the practice in other countries, I mention only in passing: as long as the inheritance of property is regarded as valid at all, it is, to say the least, fair that the grandchildren of a creator of spiritual values should still enjoy the usufruct of the legacy. But this observation is made, as I

say, only in passing. *I think it wrong that a spiritual legacy should ever be released, for it is this very act which invalidates the original intention that the legacy should be transferred completely to all mankind.*

The world having become what we find it to-day, the idea—originally only that of America—that the state of prosperity is the normal state (the intent being that it *should* be so) and that wealth is the relevant exponent of all values, has triumphed historically. And this circumstance may be appraised in the purely positive sense by five considerations: First, because in the world of to-day it is in reality very easy to turn every quality into a source of wealth. (In this connection we need only remember that Germany, in spite of defeat, and in spite of her tremendous debts, is rising again irresistibly: a small capital, rapidly used and re-used, means more than an immense capital which cannot be transformed, or which can be transformed only with difficulty. Thus, to-day, capital is rather the effect than the cause, just as, for Hegel, God was the effect and not the First Cause.) Secondly, because a narrow life demonstrably constricts and deforms. Thirdly, because the psychological injuriousness inherent in the acquisition of wealth disappears as soon as wealth



has become the tacit and self-understood basis of life. Fourthly, because on this earth the spiritual, too, can be made fruitful only by material means. Fifthly, and most important of all, because it is the privilege of the sovereign spirit to impart to facts whatever meaning it desires. The old idea that the creation of ideal values should not pay was also nothing more than a free idea imposed by man, the creator of idea and meaning; and it is one which stands or falls according to man's attitude towards it. For this reason prosperity should be regarded as the normal state of things from the historical point of view, and material wealth should be accepted as the expression, faithful to the spiritual meaning, of every possible value. If, thanks to the World War, things are in many respects very different in the Europe of to-day, it is nevertheless certain that in spite of the consequences of the war, in a very few decades poverty will be overcome to an extent unheard of hitherto. The guarantee for this is to be found in the universal 'materialism' of the masses.<sup>1</sup> And if things are as I have indicated, is it not utterly contrary to sense that the highest spiritual legacy of mankind should not as such represent a material power?

<sup>1</sup>Cf. my book *Politik, Wirtschaft, Weisheit*; also the present volume.

I wish to illustrate these observations by the example of Weimar, an example which is both familiar and obvious. Classical Weimar has been lifted out of the secular into the eternal. For Germany it has much the same significance as classical Athens would have had for mankind if it had been preserved, and before long that significance will exist not only for Germany but for all mankind. It is quite certain that before long Weimar will become one of the most popular centres of pilgrimage in the world. From what I hear, the state does all sorts of things for Weimar. But it will continue to accumulate other obligations, which will progressively absorb its exclusive attention. Moreover, following the line of its development, the state will tend more and more to become the expression of the Socialist idea in the sense of the care for the well-being of the masses. Its rôle will therefore become, with progressive exclusiveness, that of the adjuster who maintains justice and fairness in the relations between the various forces of life. It will accordingly be able to do less and less for purely qualitative matters; that is to say, it will find itself in increasing contradiction to the sense or meaning of such matters, and when this is the case it will inevitably show itself more and more inadequate for

tasks of the kind. It follows logically – the idea has been demonstrated in detail in my book *Politik, Wirtschaft, Weisheit* – that if the qualitative is to continue its rôle, *it must consolidate its position more and more independently of the state.*

In regard to Weimar, the state of things is such that the Goethe House itself is being maintained, barely, but the Goethe heritage – perhaps the richest spiritual legacy of mankind – does not command anything like the means it needs to work itself out as it could and should. It is only in relation to the antiquarian aspect that a certain degree of success has been achieved, while in regard to prospective aspects, which are a million times more important, nothing at all has been done. By prospective aspects I mean here the spread and encouragement of the vital spirit of Goethe, which is to be reincarnated in his children and grandchildren. Matters stand much worse with all the other exponents of Weimar; worst of all with the Nietzsche archives, the maintenance of which, owing to the utterly inadequate period of protection, is threatened with discontinuation in the very immediate future. And yet we must remember that Nietzsche is without a doubt the first and greatest prophet of the world in the making.

Is not this state of things perfectly shameful? Spiritual Weimar should in its own right be able to command a budget of a million marks. It is only thus that the legacy of its great spirits can become as fruitful as, ideally speaking, it ought to become. It is only thus that it can grow and reproduce itself as it should.

But here I shall be interrupted with the objection that the plain fact is we lack money for the purpose. And with that I come to what is really the practical aim of this article: it will be a trifling matter to obtain this million-budget for the future as soon as it is recognized, first, what is at stake, and secondly, how the thing is to be started.

As far as the first half of the problem is concerned, I need add little to what has been said already. The spiritual values of mankind will, in an increasing measure, be recognized as humanity values. Putting the point in extreme form, I would say that the maintenance of the spirit of Weimar is of much more importance, from the point of view of humanity, than the maintenance of the German state. And for centuries to come, this will be true in an increasing degree of all authentic spiritual values. As I have proved in detail in my new book, *Menschen als Sinnbilder*, there exist in the

domain of the spirit not abstract, but only concrete and therefore personal values. It is not only in the case of Christ that we have to do with a strictly *personal* spirit; the same is true of every spiritual creator. Consequently, it is a fundamental principle that in every case we must direct all efforts to this end, that the purely personal character involved may be completely retained. And obviously this can take place only if the relevant spiritual legacy – the Goethe legacy, for instance – becomes an institution living by its own right, as the Christ legacy lives in the institution of the church. Only when it is *not* the state, *not* an alien-spirited power – only when the spiritual legacy maintains and directs its growth and continuation in its own right – only then have we a guarantee that the personal element will be retained. On the other hand, the fact that this objective is attainable along the path I have indicated is made obvious by the continuation of the person of Jesus, in contradistinction to all other spirits, thanks to the church; so that not another word need be wasted on this subject. I may therefore pass on without loss of time to the second point: that is, how the thing is to be started, in order that the institution analogous to the church may arise.

The situation is, as a matter of fact, extraordi-

narily simple. *Spiritual possessions should never be completely released; a certain percentage of what these bring in as returns should be retained for the common benefit.* And, be it noted, the income should not be turned over to the state, which would then use it up for any purpose it might choose – probably for the support of idiots – but to an institution, analogous to the church, but yet to be created; an institution devoted exclusively to the service of the spirit. It is very obvious that a proposition of this kind will call forth the most vigorous protests on the part of many publishers, but I really cannot see why private individuals should derive especial profit from those possessions which have been taken away from the natural heirs. Quite naturally, the usual argument will be invoked against this proposition, that it will serve to raise the price of a commodity which was intended for the good of all. But in the first place, this rise in price does not represent anything considerable – for otherwise the works of living or protected authors would hardly be read at all, in comparison with those of dead or unprotected authors, whereas the contrary is demonstrably the case; and then the competition between many publishers would naturally lead to an increasing lowering of price. In



the second place, mankind will inevitably be growing richer. In the third place – and most important – this argument has no weight whatsoever against the counter-argument, *that only with this percentage can we create a fund which by means of a new Peter's Penny shall be able to ensure the continuation of a spiritual heritage, just as the original Peter's Penny sustains the Catholic Church.* Whoever raises the further argument that the sums to be obtained in this fashion will never amount to anything of consequence forgets that hundreds of years, thousands, still lie before us, in which these sums may go on accumulating. He forgets further what all historical experience goes to show, namely, that once the needed institution is in existence, it will attract important legacies and gifts in various forms, which will help it over the first difficult stages. But if there is any one who thinks that the immediate insurance of these spiritual legacies is as yet unnecessary, let him remember that we are rapidly approaching the barbaric age of the chauffeur,<sup>1</sup> and that everything therefore points to the prospect that without a special form of insurance these legacies will never be secured. Taking into consideration what I have said above, I, for my part, see

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter I of this book, pp. 120–162.

no valid objection <sup>8058</sup> against the fundamental proposition. It is obvious that the working out of the suggestion will lead, in the course of centuries, to the accumulation of ever larger property. And it is equally obvious that it will be much easier to find men who will serve the idea of the continuation of the spirits of the great according to their meaning and intention, acting as the immediate servitors of the literary heritage, than it would be if the choice were left to government officials. All that is needed, in order that something of enduring greatness and of infinite importance may be achieved, is a quite trivial and harmless legislative act.

The importance of such an achievement would, in my opinion, far exceed that of any other act since the coming of the post-war period. And this legislative act could, without any ado, be made retro-active for all writers, even of the remote past. I cannot see any reason why the publishers of authors who no longer receive royalties should not, after a certain period, pay over a certain percentage of their income on new editions, just as naturally as every one of us, without fuss, pays taxes which have been newly enacted.

It is only at this point that I come to what I consider the most important issue. The Peter's

Pence of literature must under no circumstance serve any charitable purpose. Charity is the business of the state. Before long, its *sole* purpose will be to serve the greatest good of the largest number. As against this, and in view of the irresistible growth of the overpowering chauffeur world, it should be the exclusive function of a body which is not represented in the state to take care of the qualitative. It is utterly contrary to sense that the heritage of great spirits should serve the purpose of supporting asses. In the case of the new institution, which is yet to be created, we must have to do only with that which represents the highest degree of quality, i.e. something which is focused on the aristocratic and hierarchic; for in the eyes of the spirit there exists only more and less: there is never equality. So that the institution, analogous to the church, which is to be created, must from the outset be so organized as to further only that which has the highest value. In the case of living writers this process will involve a certain degree of error, though it is equally true that if the right men are chosen for this senate or consistory, and – I emphasize this – if they are made as independent as judges are, success should be easier to attain than in any other analogous domain. But in the case of the dead,

all error can be removed; and it is this which is of primary importance. The achievement to be aimed at is the perpetuation of the spirit of the great in the same sense that the church perpetuates the spirit of Jesus and of the saints. And in order to pick out the right spirits, the same processes must be set on foot which are employed by the church when it proposes a canonization. By the time a spiritual legacy has been set free, it will not be difficult, in the majority of cases, to determine whether this particular spirit belongs to the 'saints' or not. Should the answer be in the affirmative, then his spirit must for all eternity be supported by an endowment.

I have put the chief emphasis so far on what is due to the great ones of the past. But what I am really aiming at is of course not the past but the living future: the continuation of spiritual life. By means of the legacy of the dead – the Peter's Pence of Literature – the living creators of spiritual values can be delivered from the necessity of earning money; the creative workers of each age can become independent of both political and financial powers. Were it not beautiful if the poets of the ages to come needed no more Maecenasses to keep them, because they were supported by the legacy of Homer?



THE WORLD IN THE  
MAKING





# THE WORLD IN THE MAKING

## INTRODUCTION

**T**o later times the contemporaries of one period, in so far as they share its common life, invariably appear as the children of a single spirit. However great the occasional differences and contradictions may be, they belong to each other as the complementary partial expressions of a higher unity. And that which later times recognize again and again, the present should gradually be able to anticipate. I therefore preface this book with the claim that its content, in so far as it possesses truth and value, represents more than the record of my personal re-action: it is the partial expression of a super-personal movement of the spirit.

How this sentence is to be understood in general, the present book explains in its opening chapters, as also, from a somewhat different point of view, does my introduction to Berdjajev's *Sinn der Geschichte*. I wish to deal here with a specific aspect of the question. Let us compare with one another the spirits which have demonstrably given to the present age living impulses of an effective historic nature: for instance, Spengler, Frobenius, Freud, Jung,

Coué, Bergson, Le Bon, Lenin, Mussolini, Wells, Bernard Shaw; differing greatly as they do from one another, working and producing in fields so varied, each one yet has something of what the others represent, if not explicitly, then implicitly; and in the latter case, he has it most precisely when he represents the direct opposite, for in this world of polar systems opposites are so inevitably bound up with one another that he who personally sets down a specific positive sets down its negative also. Thus future scholars will demonstrate cases of precedence which to the objects of their studies are beyond conjecture. Most probably they will even be prepared to demonstrate cases of plagiarism which, among the living, if they were to come across them, would give rise to the bitterest feuds. The nature of things is such that those to whom something new occurs represent as inescapably a unified whole of significance, as the other group which has inner resemblance because of similar education. In the realm of the spirit, too, Nature makes no leaps. The original is he who from a given base moves a little distance upward or forward. Whoever was in advance of his time was so only by a few generations, which in the general drift marks no great difference; and in every case his direction

was already shadowed forth in the past. The bare possibility of absolute originality thus disappears. In order to say or do something original one must, consciously or unconsciously, be acquainted with what exists already; for this reason no one has ever produced anything original in domains where the idea of growth holds good, apart from first beginnings, without having studied; for this reason, too, young civilizations, active within the framework of old ones, bring forth nothing new for a long stretch of time, however gifted be their representatives.

In so far as one knows or embodies the elements of the possible new, he in no wise represents only that which is his own. In cases of historic significance something further flows from this. Only he can be the leader of his time or of a time to come who represents something so close to it that it becomes clear to others in the light of their own assumptions, for each man follows only him who leads to the aims of his own unconscious. These considerations should finally make it clear not only *why* creative individuals of the same period, as often as they apply corresponding talents to the same domain, hit upon the same conclusions, or the same sum-total of significance, but why they are bound to do so. Spengler's fundamental ideas

occurred independently (and earlier) not to Frobenius alone: I know of several scholars of whom the same is true. Even so Fascism and Bolshevism represent the same thing, but under different mathematical signs; and these two movements, of opposite polarity, certainly grew from roots entirely independent of each other. Even so Couéism is a distinct variety of what I call sense-realization; the most varied schools of philosophy cultivate the 'philosophy of significance.' It follows thence that, from the point of view of life, the question of precedence is without essential interest: what occurs to one man might also have occurred to others, if it has not actually done so. And the question loses all significance as soon as the following becomes clear to us: no one can fruitfully represent that which is not proper to his own personality; for the life-force of a spiritual impulse depends solely upon 'who,' not upon 'what.'<sup>1</sup> For this reason a man can create life-values only with the thoughts which reveal him personally. These thoughts are undoubtedly his, whether they have occurred to him or whether he adopted them, for to discover and to understand are metaphysically one; the advantage of the former

<sup>1</sup>Compare the exact explanation of this fact in the chapter *Was Wir Wollen* in *Schöpferische Erkenntnis*.

is to be found only in the realm of the empiric, where all 'significance' in the domain of meta-physical reality has its ideal place. That this is so is proved by all counter-tests applied to the unoriginal. It is certain that these can plagiarize and imitate. But they can produce no living effect with that which is alien to them. By means of the alien, they do nevertheless utter their own, whether it be that they misinterpret what they adopt in a manner thoroughly their own, or that they kill its living spirit by the destruction of its only appropriate form, or else that they tear the isolated truth out of its proper context. For this reason alone, later scholars are able so easily to determine the real creators of original ideas.

If the question of originality in its generally accepted sense is thus without significance among essential minds, wherein lies the special significance of the individual? In this connection we can ignore the question of natural endowment, the presupposition of which is self-evident: that the unendowed should be able to produce the extraordinary is an assumption contrary to sense. The special significance of the individual, wherever it occurs, consists in this, that owing to his special adjustment and aptitude he is better able than others to recog-



nize and to express, in thought and act, definite, generally significant possibilities of development; so that, to this extent, it plays the rôle of an organ of the collective whole. Historically seen, things are disposed entirely in this fashion and not otherwise, for the singularity of the individual embodies in itself no worth for others. Only the eye is fitted to see, the ear to hear. But from this it follows further that one's significance is unquestionably bound up with the proper recognition of the limitations of the domain perceived and affected through a given organ, and of the limitations of one's own aptitude. It is because only the rarest among the gifted recognize their 'natural sphere of action,'<sup>1</sup> and not because they are too one-sided, that so few amount to anything in the history of humanity. In undertaking something more or something other than in them lies they impair their own creative function; for the fruitfulness of a faculty depends wholly on its proper adjustment to the core of personality and the surrounding world accessible to it.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the exact definition of this concept in the paper of the same name in the tenth part of my *Weg zur Vollendung*.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the study, *Schopenhauer als Vorbilder*, in *Menschen als Sinnbilder* (published in 1926). For further treatment of one-sidedness as symbol and mode of self-expression, see the series, *Spannung und Rhythmus*, in *Wiedergeburt* (1927).

Every one is inevitably one-sided, since no one is equally apt in all things, and every light throws its correlative shadow. But he who correctly recognizes his limitations, and so adjusts himself that he works only on the basis of those advantages which are an actual, living part of him, bears the same relation to the sum of humanity as the eye does to the sum of the body; and actually he cannot help producing what is valid and profitable to all. That not only most creators but, in the first line, the largest majority of critics, fail to recognize this state of things, need be noted here only in passing. They seem hitherto to have been ignorant of the elementary truth that possibilities and limitations go organically together – for which reason, for instance, the introvert cannot have any direct outward effect, for his aptitude calls for living and not for expression; and conversely only he who faces outward can transmit to others that which the former lives, but for that reason cannot himself experience it to the same extent – and that both may have roots of equal depth.<sup>1</sup> And they further lack

<sup>1</sup>C. G. Jung's *Psychological Types* offers the clearest explanation of this fundamental truth. I myself first clarified this question in 1910 in the instance of the relationship of Germanic to Latin culture (now in *Philosophie als Kunst*).

the elementary discernment to understand that for the body in general only the positive counts, whence it is not only contrary to sense, but also evidence of a defective sense of responsibility when, in regard to the rare spirits who have anything at all essential to contribute, they insistently stress what these are incapable of. For they thereby prejudice their positive effect.

From these general considerations issues the special character of this investigation. After a lifetime of steadfast endeavour to discern truly my sphere of action, I believe I have advanced so far that on the whole I represent only the things which I have actually mastered. For this very reason I believe myself able to serve in the capacity of an organ. But I am only one organ among others, and therefore able to experience only specific aspects of the totality of reality in such a way that I may regard it as my task to show them to others. The present work has as its theme the psychological background of history and culture. For that reason it necessarily coincides, for considerable stretches, with the work of Spengler, Frobenius, and Jung. On the other hand, however, I hardly take up their particular viewpoints at all, or, if I do, only incidentally, for my problem does not call for the answer to theirs; nor do I feel myself called

upon to take any stand of my own towards them, for I lack the authentic disposition of the culture-morphologist or of the mind-paleontologist; and criticism in a given field, by one to whom this description applies, is meaningless. Nor does my approach to the question call for any treatment of the eugenic and race problems. How little I fail to recognize their great importance is shown in my paper 'On the Right Choice of Mates,' in *The Book of Marriage*; but the point of view to which their respective solutions lead in no wise affects the validity of what I establish, to the extent that it be correct; and it is on this that the stress of primary importance must unquestionably be placed, for which reason race hygienists, if they wish to attain the good, will have to orientate themselves by it.

Finally, my attitude towards the question does not call for the examination of destiny in the sense of cosmic and astrological predestination. However completely reality, as it answers to that concept, may be proven, the chains of causation and the setting of goals which I represent remain valid nevertheless; the former in the sense of specific co-ordinates of fates, the latter as the road of its fulfilment in the good. I deal here exclusively with that which has the same importance for me as sight has for the eye. My

range of cognition is a particular aspect of total reality: the aspect of meaning, or Logos. That which I call Meaning or Sense underlies life, in all circumstances, as creative principle, however the particular matter may best be described in terms of collective psychology, morphology, race biology, and astrology; if I take its meaning aright, then my view holds good independently of the accuracy of what these sciences maintain. Furthermore, I am by nature no specialist and no theoretician. As the last chapter more closely demonstrates, the seizure of sense or meaning, my most individual capacity, operates throughout all possible matters independently of theorizing. Moreover, in the case of this book, this is for me only the first step towards possible sense-realization. And here I come to the main point. However apt my nature may be for the inward contemplative, I write here as the Promethean, not as the Epimethean: not that I may experience passively, but that I may create; here the emphasis lies, for me, not on cosmic destiny, the burden of which has been with me, even more than with most, a personal experience, but on human freedom. I do not write in order to set forth what is or what might be, but that *thereby the best possible may be brought about*. And this, moreover, in the historic sense.

To this extent I write in a certain measure as statesman. I am concerned only with large relationships and with the aims of mankind as a whole. For this reason I treat the problem of the individual only in so far as the goal of the regeneration of mankind can be reached solely through the individual; for the requisite point of juncture of this issue lies in the depths of the soul. He, therefore, who accuses me of not making sufficient allowance for the individual for his own sake will be quite right, but he should bear in mind that no commander who was concerned with individuals and not exclusively with the victory of the army, ever won a battle, and that the aptitude of the commander can accompany that of the pastor only to a certain point. I have sought in this work to deal with that domain of investigation which lies within my gifts, and to remain strictly within the boundaries which result from the essentially practical formulation of the question.

He who seeks to obtain something from this book – and why should he read it else? – will take as they are the limitations which his very aims set to its possible importance. He should not demand oranges from an apple tree. But if he accepts the given formulation of the problem as possible, and likewise the working



hypothesis that my manner of seeing and treating things may serve as an organ for his own life, then, I am convinced, his efforts will not go unrewarded. Particularly if he sets out with the assumption, first, that I only apply myself with the utmost possible sharpness of logic I am capable of because to understand means to transform a situation, and secondly, that my theories are not aims in themselves, but are put forward only for the purpose of reducing the meaning of a given reality to the grasp of the intelligence, and so preparing the way for the practical realization of the deeper meaning; if he will only assume this, then the reading of the book must take him forward personally. He will then be rid automatically of false approaches to the question, and forces will thereby be released. But he must, to be sure, read the book from beginning to end in the right order. This came to me as the result of psychological considerations. I show first the road to the culture of the future; thereupon I make clear the meaning of the new situation into which the development of our time by its destiny debouches. I then define what the right concept of progress really is, whereby the rôle of free initiative may find its exact delimitation as against blind growth. Finally, the clarification

of the particular having led the way to an understanding of underlying principles, I specify the manner and the importance of creative thought.

To conclude, it should be pointed out that this work belongs, together with two others, to a single creative period, and that he who wishes to understand me completely should not neglect to read those also. Of these, *Menschen als Sinnbilder*, in which, among other things, I clarify the meaning of possible prophecy, with Spengler as the example, and of magical force, with Jesus as instance, appeared in the autumn of 1926; and *Wiedergeburt*, in which the assumptions preceding all my thought and work, including this book, are elaborated, appeared in the spring of 1927.

TOWARDS THE CULTURE OF  
THE FUTURE

ONE need not accept Spengler's premises in order to recognize that the old culture is in the throes of decline. This, however, holds true not of the Occident alone; all traditional culture on this globe is perishing. Why this should be so, and what positive possibilities for the future issue therefrom, the observations in this first chapter are to make clear.

In the first place, what does 'culture' mean? Rightly understood, it means nothing more nor less than *a life-form as the direct expression of spirit*. This brief definition freely includes whatever may be stated at all concerning culture: that it is attachment, and therewith commitment, to a living past; that every one of its manifestations is symbolic, with the double force that whatever is cultural presents a meaning equally as it embodies this meaning in the corresponding plastic form; that it is exclusive and for that very reason rigorously limited; and that it is an essential unity, for which reason every single part of it premises its entirety and refers back to it. Culture is a spiritual organism; a definition

which holds true whether Spengler's theory of the culture-soul or Frobenius' Paideumatic theory or any other theory hitherto formulated holds or not. From the same definition it equally follows that external civilization, which can very well be culture, may be no culture at all; this holds when its outward expression has no inward meaning; when the foregoing does not apply to the particular formation. The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of a state of barbarism.

It will be difficult to make quite clear what particular condition relates to those spiritual organisms which we call cultures, for all abstract thought has the personal subject as its ultimate premise. But the same holds true of all life-forms, not least of the individual human soul, of which Schopenhauer already warned us to speak as of 'a well-known and properly accredited person.' This, too, is in its origin an aggregation of the most divergent impulses and tendencies, hardly more easily seized in its totality than the various parties of the German people, and the conscious ego is by no means the normal common denominator for all. If unification is successful, this ensues only by way of exception, without exclusion of a considerable part of the psyche which leads one or several separate lives

with other reference centres than the ego. Setting aside the question of a possible subject, things are not more complicatedly or more unintelligibly disposed in the case of collective souls; and of these the culture-soul presents the highest possible expression, just as the unified and thoroughly educated personality does in comparison with primitive man. Indeed, formally examined, they are not disposed in any other way. No impenetrable partition separates psyche from psyche, as it separates body from body. The unconscious of all runs together etherwise. All aggregations of individuals necessarily create a true super-individual unity which transforms the individual into something other than it was before. What marriage does in this connection (as may be seen in the introductory paper in my *Book of Marriage*) is only the highest expression of what occurs in every personal conversation, in every meeting. So collective souls emerge at every moment, and a collectivity increases its mastery over its component parts in proportion as the relationship is more enduring and many-sided and as it faces as a whole other collectivities. And thus when we keep the real state of things in view, we are by no means concerned with postulates in our acceptance of the culture-soul, but with a more

or less felicitous designation for indubitable truths. It depends on this alone as far as we are concerned. Quite independently of the accuracy of the Spengler or the Frobenius theory, collective states and thus cultures, too, are true, independent life-unities, no matter if they present primary or secondary formations.

As such they are naturally subject to the law of growth and decay. There is not a living thing which is not subject to constant change; there is not a thing the outward expression of which, in the sense of possible development, is not limited. Cultures die, once they are exhausted: when the meaning which they embody has found its extreme expression they must congeal. That is their natural death, and it was on this kind of end that Spengler laid the chief emphasis. But as a rule they die even sooner; namely, when they come in contact with other life-forms which disrupt their unity. At this point it becomes especially clear how much more pertinent it is to examine the meaning of things independently of established theories. Whatever cultures are in the last analysis, their emergence into the phenomenal world is due to a special state of balance of their component parts. What is true of a definite condition of the individual soul – that it is what it is by virtue of



the definite manner of association of definite psychological elements – is just as true of the collective soul. Each is as it is because of the existence of definite constituent parts distributed in definite balance. It maintains itself throughout their transformation, just as the individual remains identical with himself throughout the transformations and metamorphoses of his mortal condition; but in either case, not beyond a certain point. Should this limit be overstepped, the unity collapses. And thence we can already understand why all traditional culture on the earth is and must be in a moribund condition; the psychic condition of all historically determinant people has changed to such an extent that it is no longer susceptible of unification in the traditional sense. And this change consists of *the definite shifting of the stress of importance in the construction of the soul from the untransferable to the transferable.*

All cultures hitherto have had their centre of gravity in the irrational – impulsional, emotional, a-logical, Eros-wise –; and the irrational is essentially untransferable. Here no possibility of a passage from monad to monad exists. To this extent primitive cultures really correspond more or less to the idea which the human being has of plant-life: they are tied down in

space and time, immutable as types, not to be taken over from without. Spirit in its widest sense, from the Logos to the intellect, is, as against this, essentially transferable; the truth seized by the intelligence is fundamentally equally intelligible to each one; intelligence breaks through all boundaries; understanding – an innate knowing not to be derived from anything – is by its origin an understanding of the alien-souled, whereby it dissolves the exclusiveness which otherwise prevails. The more the spirit develops, a process which signifies a true progress of growth, the more important becomes the transferable as against the untransferable. For that reason one is not really justified, even in the case of the ancient cultures, in placing the chief stress on their exclusive elements: if the then known world could become Hellenized, or Hebraized in regard to religion; if, since then, we all have a part in the Greek and Jewish worlds, then this circumstance constitutes the more important fact as compared with the untransferable uniqueness of their original condition. In spite of this, Spengler's main thesis applies to all preceding cultures, for, to return to the fundamental definitions of the beginning, none of their forms were capable of life except as the expression of a pre-existent unified spirit.

Hellenization and Hebraization succeeded only in so far as the living Greek and Hebrew spirits either made the direct conquest of a sphere of culture, or, as was the case with Christianity, became part of a new synthesis in the form of a living inheritance.

History hitherto affords no instance of that which is fundamentally transferable actually carrying out its own transference, and leading an at all independent life. For Christian culture, in order to be taken over, presupposed conversion; and the social culture of the eighteenth century presupposed the European society of the time. Generally speaking, the premise of all transference hitherto has been living tradition in one form or another. The present-day condition of mankind has in this matter changed radically. The intellect, having become more highly developed (just as the brain is more highly developed as compared to what plays the rôle of the nervous system in plants), has emancipated itself from all traditional bonds; the conscious has become centred in it, and the final result of this process of re-channeling, begun long ago, is that human life takes its character from the transferable. The actual centre of the psychic organism lies elsewhere to-day than at the time of the growth of the cultures which

have governed hitherto. What this signifies will best be clarified by an examination of the meaning of the *technical transformation*<sup>1</sup> of the world. To place the emphasis on the barbarizing character of the technical is to put the question falsely. There is no doubt that the unlimited possibilities of application which, independently of time, place, and all other conditions, are characteristic of every product of the purely technical, are opposed to the sheer concept of a possible manifestation of culture in the traditional sense; that which can serve as a life-form at all times and in all places cannot, under the premises valid till now, be an immediate expression of spirit. But the chief consideration is not to be found here; culture in its ideal sense is, as history teaches, anything rather than a necessary life-form. On the other hand, it is quite certainly not true that our present state of civilization points to a termination; on the contrary, never since the time of the migrations of the peoples has the human race appeared so young; it is precisely its young or rejuvenated sections which to-day embody the determinant factor of progress.

<sup>1</sup>In German, *Technisierung*, which means, strictly, the technification of the world: its having become technical. — *Translator's note.*

The essential consideration is that the spiritual organism of man has made such progress on the side of the intellect that all old states of culture must die out, by reason of this transformation in the affirmative sense. No perfection can survive an independent continuation of growth on the part of its constituent elements, and should one of these be in essence far-working, reaching out above itself, then it must consume that which is incapable of change. It is precisely this that the triumphal progress of the technical illustrates with complete obviousness. Wherever the technical penetrates, no life-form of the pre-technical epoch can long endure. In Europe to-day, it is just those French and English circles whose ripened culture withstood disintegration longest which most clearly prove that it is quite impossible, as a lover of cinema and radio, as motor-racer, aeronaut, and matter-of-course globe-trotter, to remain tied to life-forms the possibility of which depends on narrow inner and outer boundaries; their latest representatives, when compared with their fathers, produce the effect of new, traditionless, and unburdened people. And the same state of affairs, in an extreme form, emerges in the non-European world. Whereas in Europe, whose culture, after all, gave birth to the technical in the course of

its development, some possibility does appear of the old and the new existing side by side up to a certain point, – the technical overwhelms irresistibly all the old traditional element in the non-European world.

And it succeeds in this with terrifying velocity for one reason, the recognition of which makes quite clear the meaning of the whole process: that in the case of the technical we have to do not with the extraordinary but with the self-evident. Just as mathematical truths are essentially self-evident, obvious, being immediate to every human body and mind, so are all technical possibilities. This explains why it is precisely the cultureless peoples and masses who respond to these with the greatest directness and rapidity. America became technically transformed more rapidly than other countries because at the beginning of the process its inhabitants were the most uncultured of Occidentals; to-day, again, extreme transformation towards the technical meets the minimum of resistance among the youthful eastern peoples. The true situation became clear to me on the memorable day when I discovered that my son, then three years old and not particularly gifted technically, understood at once the fundamental principles of the motor-car, which to me still savours of the



mysterious. Technical discoveries are really self-evident in essence, just like mathematical truths: it suffices to hit on them once. To do this independently and for the first time is not every man's business, but to make discoveries is certainly not every man's business. The extent to which a thing perceived is self-understood or left remote finds its best measure in the number of those to whom it is at once evident when placed before them. And the technical is evident to a larger percentage of every people than any cultural achievement since the Stone Age. Soon there will be no person in the world not of subnormal intelligence to whom wireless will not seem just as simple as the multiplication table. This brief examination should furnish immediate proof that the pre-technical condition is everywhere doomed, and that those who preach the doctrine of 'back from the technical' are nothing else than bad romanticists. Not only because, as long as the masses decide progress, it seems out of the question to hold up a development which so appeals to them; but above all because in the transformation towards the technical we have to do primarily with the positive, with a step farther towards the subjugation of Nature through the spirit; with a higher development of psychic humanity.

These considerations refer us back to fundamentals. Technical progress is only a particular expression of the development of the intelligence. Whatever the former brings about holds good necessarily for the latter. That which is born of the intelligence is in all cases intelligible, and whatever is intelligible is also fundamentally self-evident. To that extent every new-found truth is only Columbus' egg over again. If, in the construction of the soul, the stress once lies on the side of the intelligence, then intelligibility becomes the supreme motive force. It is an increasing practice to reject as a prejudice whatever cannot be explained; that is, unless the matter in question can demonstrate its validity from another angle, which demonstration satisfies, in its own manner, a need of the intelligence. This is the reason why, among modern masses, it is, typically, only those whose livelihood depends on that which is inexplicable to them – the weather, for instance, in the case of sailors and peasants – who hold fast to a traditional faith, while factory masses increasingly fall away from it. The same reasoning explains why God was enthroned in religious Russia with such especial thoroughness, and why the Marxian interpretation of history, which is both primitive and rationalizable in the

highest degree, now appears clear even to those who were so lately steeped in the simplest form of religion. Whatever is irrational is essentially inexplicable; where the criterion of reality is provided by the intellect, the irrational must continue to appear unreal until the intelligence is sufficiently developed to take its meaning also. And is there, in irrationally developed life-forms, anything which, seen from the viewpoint of sheer intellect, is not born of prejudice, sustained by prejudice? Until quite recently, a Brahmin who made a journey overseas lost his caste. Quite rightly; the fine web of prejudices which weaves the traditional Brahminic type cannot endure a breath of fresh air.

All cultural types so far, even when less extreme, can be classified as alike, in this sense; they are all the product of prejudices, from the point of view of those whose conscious life is determined by intellect alone. These, however, constitute the masses to-day, and until further differentiation they bear the prime significance of history – but this, again, on the self-same grounds of superior development of intellect. Once the main stress lies on the transferable, then its importance increases proportionally to numbers. And precisely because great numbers are for the most part susceptible to the element

of the transferable in the technical, mechanistic-materialistic thought, etc., there emerges a circle of action and re-action which in itself suffices, in the modern world, to ensure the decisive power to that which represents the masses. Let us now link up this last truth realized with the other: namely, that every culture is the expression of a concrete state of soul. If this is so, then a culture of the abstract is possible only to the extent that a concrete type dominates, which, because of its psychological condition, embodies that culture; in reality every culture hitherto has endured only as long as the man who represented it lived; when he died the culture always came to an end, even though the biologic foundation might remain unchanged.

Which type, then, embodies the modern mass-spirit? It is the *chauffeur*; he is the determinant type of the present mass age, not less than the priest, the knight, the cavalier were that of another. The chauffeur is primitive man made technical. Technical endowment is closely related to the savages' gift of orientation; the technical as such is the self-evident; the mastery of it evokes in man emotions of freedom and of power – with greater fierceness the more primitive he is; under these circumstances it is thoroughly self-evident that the majority of people

incline to-day towards the chauffeur type, that every boy wants above all to become a chauffeur (he often *says* engineer, but means primarily chauffeur); and, with the exception of the spiritual leaders, the first representative types of the new world in the making everywhere belong, under names however various, to the unified chauffeur type. Compared with the European, the smart American was already a chauffeur before everything else, but not in the pure form, for he grew up in the spirit of a time which had not been rendered as primitive as that of our modern youth, whose determinant view of life derives, directly or indirectly, from trench life. But the Fascist is nothing else than the Italian chauffeur type, the Bolshevist the Russian; and the chauffeur type, in all its nakedness, is most surely found in the average progressive Asiatic. *Hence* their enmity to all tradition, their primitive passion for force. From which considerations there follows, among other things, one consequence of extreme importance; namely, that it is beside the mark to judge historic movements primarily by the doctrine they profess. Man of the world of antiquity, and, later, the mediaeval knight, presented the embodiment of that which he professed, completely enough. A like congruence

has never been brought to realization by any faith-conditioned type, – which, given the loftiness of religious ideals, could not be otherwise.

In the case of Bolshevism, its success in Russia has least of all to do with its Communist theory; the success is founded almost entirely on the fact that, owing to this theory, the chauffeur type was able to take over the reins of power – a type which, far superior to all others in practical matters, and particularly in Russia, will not let itself be dislodged; to which end this type must naturally support that doctrine which ensures it the mastery, whether it means anything to it or not, just as the Popes of the Renaissance defended Christianity irrespective of all personal unbelief. For the same reason Russia will remain (from the European point of view) essentially Bolshevist, even if another life-view and another system of government shall have dislodged those at present in power; for the Bolshevistic type will still remain at the helm. All abstract refutation is in fact impotent in the face of a living type. If a given type has risen to power because it embodies the spirit of the time, only its degeneration or its disappearance can change the situation, and this is a process which has hitherto, in all cases, called for an extremely long period of time. And the next in line for



disappearance is obviously not the chauffeur type but the old cultural types. But if these types die out, then the old culture disappears altogether with them. For every general condition achieves continuation only through specific concrete types, just as generations do through a succession of individuals; and for this reason the dissolution of the living tradition means the dissolution of its 'meaning.' So the culture of Egypt has died out even though the Fellah belongs to the very race which once produced Pharaohs; so the Arabic culture died out, even though the substratum of blood still persists. To-day all the old culture on the face of the earth is perishing, because the new determined type of man disavows it.

The death of the old culture as a consequence of the development of the intelligence is an aspect of real destiny, for it implies nothing less than the displacement of an earlier type of man by a more recent one which, because of its special aptitude, is *unable* to continue the old. We need only examine the European youth of to-day; its lack of understanding of that which meant everything to its fathers is perhaps without parallel in any range of generations in human memory; or, if it shows any interest, that interest resembles the interest of the

American in mediaeval Europe: this alone demonstrates how radically the psychic totality of condition has changed. But the death of the old has a still deeper cause than any we have yet examined, one which finally explains the cataclysmic character of this present end – and indeed, since the decline of antiquity, no revolution has been equally cataclysmic. Through the transformation of the psyche, in the sense first of that development of intelligence which disrupts the old unity, and secondly of the shift of emphasis in that direction, the conscious has for the time being lost its contact with the living deeps; and since life is rooted in meaning, has thus become meaningless to the modern mind. But there follows from this an increasing predominance of the impulse to self-destruction over the impulse to construction. Life is in every one of its moments both birth and death, destruction and construction, just as a melody can be understood empirically only as the *simultaneous* upwelling and dying out of the tones which compose it.<sup>1</sup> *Where* the decisive emphasis is to be laid depends upon the *meaning* of the process; as seen from without, it depends upon whether its fulfilment within

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the exact explanation of this thought in the chapter *Werden und Vergehen* of *Wiedergeburt*.

given limitations calls for an end or for continuation; as seen from the viewpoint of the conscious, upon whether a given life-tendency incorporates meaning for it or not. Should this life-tendency be felt as the fulfilment of a meaning, then the impulse of construction retains the mastery; if the contrary, then the victory goes to the impulse of death. And since, as we have seen, the intellectualized conscious has lost its contact with the living deeps, so life must present itself to man as meaningless; for the external, which never does seem to end well, has meaning only in reference to what is deepest and most fundamental. Thus it is anything but astonishing that this age should have as its distinguishing characteristic the suicide of the peoples. All the types of the past seem to have aimed directly, through their blunders, at the provocation of their own death. Just as Germany, since 1890, has literally left nothing undone to hasten her own decline, even so all aged types on the face of the earth behave.

Examining the events of the last ten years from this point of view, one is astounded to note how the unconscious, where life in its preceding formation had lost its meaning, unerringly crosses all the purposes of the conscious, and brings death in the place where the

latter intends more life. And life in its preceding formation *has*, in fact, under the new psychological premises, become meaningless. Only the new types can experience it as a fulfilment of meaning. And inversely, from this very cause springs the vitality of the chauffeur type and the formidable power of the movements which he sustains, like that of Bolshevism and Fascism. And from this point we can penetrate somewhat deeper into the obscure essence of the so-called culture-souls and thus determine more closely how it fares with their death and regeneration. The concept of the culture-soul is synonymous with that of a specific totality of significance into which the separate expressions of life are soldered and which they embody. This meaning is, wherever it exists, the first essential: it creates the facts. The third chapter of this book will deal with that aspect of the question. If a meaning can no longer express itself in the material at hand it becomes lost, just as a thought does when the words which express it are taken apart – just as the soul does when the body dissolves.

In what way, then, are *new* meanings built into the phenomenal world? The empiric premise is, exactly as with the earthly embodiment of a new soul, the cross-fertilization of two

already existent life-units. The empiric aspect of the new depends unconditionally upon this cross-fertilization; sense-realization is nowhere possible except through existing means. Wherever the individualities of the parents are fundamentally unfit for unification, there, exactly as in the case of cross-fertilization between two incompatible races, we obtain, as a first result, offspring which may be classified, according to the circumstances, under the concepts of barbarism, Alexandrianism, eclecticism, syncretism, or the mere outward civilization of undisturbed savagery. A new culture springs up when there emerges from the blend the equivalent of a new fixed race. Thus the living Catholic Church was the final product of the syncretism of late antiquity. But a new culture can in no wise spring up rapidly, be its spiritual father a very god. Great individualities may anticipate it in their persons; the majority follow slowly in their footsteps. For a long time the new culture can manifest itself only in a one-sided development of those parts which have already developed the complete image of the future. From this springs the deliberate cultivation of primitiveness and one-sidedness in all modern youth. From this, once more, springs the vitality of the futuristic Fascists and

Bolshevists. From this, too, it follows that the Orient, where the adoption of the Occidental spirit has introduced a tremendous process of psychic bastardization, must pass through a long period of psychic, if not of political, chaos. It is impossible for it to force its way through to a new culture quickly. In this respect we Europeans are better off; for we need assimilate nothing like as much of the alien to become new.



IT is therefore easy to demonstrate not only that all the old culture on the face of the earth is perishing, but why this must be so. But one may, with the same fundamental certainty, prognosticate what new condition will supplant the old. It follows immediately from the relationship of identity between birth and death that *the death of the old is already the birth of the new*. This fails to hold only in the case of complete and absolute death – and this, as we have seen already, is out of the question as far as the present age is concerned; rarely has the human race appeared so young. A new culture in the old sense certainly need not arise, but at once to interpret this possible circumstance as decline indicates prejudice. The cultural condition is



the highest possible to humanity; it is the one thing that finally gives to man's endeavour its ultimate sense; yet one need not deny the means because of the end. And so the outlines of the regeneration may be deduced with complete certainty from the underlying facts in the decline of the old.

Without exception, the old cultures perish in that, in the new psychological disposition of the human race, the transferable dominates the untransferable. Consequently the positive elements in the emergent world can be distinguished from the old, before all, in that the emphasis lies on what is common to all men, rather than on what is exclusive. It is all a matter of emphasis. It is a complete misconception to look for something new, *toto genere*, in the place of the old. The psyche is essentially an organism of 'meaning'; this meaning creates, keeps alive, and changes the state of things in sole correspondence with itself. The component parts of a psyche may, therefore, as such, remain the same; it is the mutual relationship which determines the resultant picture, much the same – if we look at it externally – as with chemical bodies in their relation to the elements. It is quite true that the quantitative combination is of importance in the first case too; in man of to-day the

intellectual side is more highly developed than in early man, not only on the qualitative, but also on the quantitative side. But in man of to-day the quantitative growth is a result of the shift of significance. And the facts themselves, as soon as they are grasped, demonstrate that already in our own times the generally human is of incomparably greater importance than all that is particularistic – and the generally human as against the particularistic is fundamentally nothing more nor less than the transferable as against the untransferable.

Whence arises the triumphal progress of the universalist theories, going from the imperialists of Anglo-Saxondom, of Islam, and of the Catholic Church, through the ideology of socialism to the tremendous world-impulse of Bolshevism? The impulse of that progress lies in nothing else than this, that in each of these movements the living emphasis lies on the general as against the particular. It is not as though certain abstract ideas, hatched by the abstract intellect, emerge with the deliberate purpose of conquering an obstreperous reality, but the very reverse: the new universalistic reality is itself the material basis of the power of attraction of the universalist theories. There could not otherwise have occurred this coinci-

dence of full tide for all these universalistic life-views, together with the pressure of the essentially particularistic towards universalization – like the pressure of Lutheranism towards a world-church. We see once more what a misconception it is to refer the triumph of a life-view to its exact content. Nothing is farther from the mind of the modern world than the idea of permitting itself to be drawn back into the Catholic fold; yet the traditional Church profits from the general tendency of the times. Jews alone really have a communistic feeling for life, and that because of their singular existence since the time of Sennacherib; and yet communism plays a tremendous historic rôle in so far as it is, among other things, a bearer of the universalist idea.

So it seems quite certain that we stand on the threshold of a universalistic age. For the reasons already adduced, we must enter first upon a mass age – the more the transferable dominates the untransferable, the greater is the rôle played by numbers – but on the other hand, it is at the very same moment that there begins (as I have already shown in the historical series, in *Schöpferische Erkenntnis*) that history of mankind which could not unfold until, in the consciousness of man, the transferable had won such a

degree of predominance over the untransferable that the separate unities of races and peoples lost their predominance over the real and recognized all-embracing human unity. As the idea everywhere precedes the fact, so this state of things externalizes itself primarily in the triumphal progress of the universalistic life-views. But it already externalizes itself, in addition, as a political reality. We stand to-day under the sign of the most comprehensive grouping of all times. It is, moreover, a grouping which is due not to external compulsion, as in the case of the pre-war empires, which to-day are everywhere in the throes of mortal agony, but to unity of outlook, which is a direct demonstration of the accuracy of our premises.

The first instance of this grouping was the Entente; the unity of outlook of the western powers in their opposition to a foreign entity alone held them together. Since this unity was a business combination created *ad hoc* and included an admixture of alien elements, it was naturally bound to break up at the end of the war – but only, that with the break-up there might arise something of similar import which answered still better the purpose of a durable relationship. Since Versailles there continue to spring up over the whole world, under forms

which are neither distinct nor understood (for the reason that they appear for the first time), combinations of unparalleled dimensions. The ripest of these is the Anglo-Saxon world as a whole, which revolves not about a single focus, but, like the ellipse, about two: London and New York. The second is the pan-Islamic world, still extremely indefinite because of excessive political disruption, and externally still weak, but already of tremendous intensity. The third and most important combination is that which has the Russian Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as its centre. To-day this virtually includes almost the whole of Asia, and its break-up is out of the question before the liberation and reconstruction of Asia has become a complete actuality.

The spiritual factors and components of this unity can be accurately defined. The Soviet idea represents four extremely important tendencies simultaneously: the emancipation of the East from the imperialistic West; the emancipation of races and classes hitherto oppressed; the idea of technical development without exploitation; fourthly, and most important, the acceptance by the Orient of that which it lacked hitherto: namely, the Occidental striving for mastery of the earth, which we for the most part

see one-sidedly as materialism. And the Soviet idea represents this with an irresistible power of attraction, for it employs in the process modes of thought which are bound to be intellectually clear precisely to awakening masses. This applies by no means least to the Marxian modes of thought, for their 'materialism' corresponds, both in itself and in its historic emphasis, to the first need of all the physically oppressed; it is for this reason that their materialism wakens to spiritual productivity so many who have hitherto remained inert. The first two elements of the Bolshevistic power of attraction need no further clarification, for their meaning is obvious. But the third and fourth should be somewhat more closely examined. Should technical development, which all the peoples of the Orient desire to-day, succeed without exploitation, then, given the premises which are valid to-day, it can only do so, theoretically (I ignore the practical realizability of the idea, for that has nothing to do with the power of attraction), through the Bolshevistic method and no other; for it alone withholds power and rights from private capital. Now with regard to the fourth element: from the psychological point of view the triumph of materialism implies for the Orient the exact opposite of what it implies for



us: that is, in complete reality, the equivalent of the adoption of the Christ impulse by the pagan world of the Mediterranean. The Occident was at all times worldly inclined. In order to become wider and deeper it must have an impulse of a spiritual order. The Orient, on the contrary, was always spiritual; what it lacked was precisely the development of a worldly inclination, so that materialism can actually prove to be a true gospel for it – and the more so when its development has risen to a diabolic pitch. For, let us repeat, it is not Bolshevik theory that matters, nor yet the Russian reality as such; what matters is the actual life-forces it serves as guiding symbol. Russia will not remain, nor will the Orient become, communistic; like Christianity, the Soviet impulse will pass through the greatest variety of embodied forms, differing with every cultural sphere; and it is quite possible that the original form of embodiment may, after the paradigm of the Spanish Inquisition and the later Catholic Church, be consigned to oblivion by a later conspiracy of silence; for there cannot be the faintest doubt that the spirit of the Tcheika is the most abominable form in which the Satanic spirit ever reigned on earth.

It is not on the reality, but on the symbol, that

everything depends. In this sense I do not doubt at all that centuries to come the Orient will be using botched-up Russian words with the same psychological significance as we use Hebrew words. Moscow has definitely become the symbol of the imminent rebirth of the entire Orient into the modern world. And if this be so, how can the races belonging to the Soviet sphere of culture help feeling that what is common to them is superior in importance to that which divides them? So keenly do they feel this that the power of the Soviet idea was the first to succeed in smelting together the greatest variety of races into a semblance of a state without resorting to conquest; and this signifies the gathering up of the national and the super-national into a higher unity.

And thus we come to the fourth new grouping, the European, the one which concerns us most. In what manner and in what form this grouping will ever come about, and whether it will ever be explicit, cannot be foreseen. For my own part, I cannot conceive that a panorama as essentially manifold as Europe can ever submit to such unification as the American, or the Russian world-empire, unless it be accompanied by a complete ruin of spirit and soul. It is Fascism, should the idea of it reach out beyond

Italy, that might be the first, with us, to create a super-national unity, for Fascism is in the last analysis identical in meaning with Bolshevism: that is to say, it embodies, under a negative index, a similar principle, and so it may come to pass that the feeling of community which it creates out of itself will at some time prove itself the stronger as compared with the national feeling. But to me it seems improbable that this should ever conquer the whole of Europe; the opposing forces are too strong for that. In this respect the external development which inevitably proceeds from the Treaty of Versailles, seen in its totality, moves much more in the direction of an intensified particularization. *But this particularism will, on the other hand, continuously dwindle in importance.* The political independence of the newly-created states is already nothing more than a euphemistic expression for complete lack of independence. Examined economically, even the independence of the hitherto great European powers, with the single exception of England, is seen to be only a euphemistic expression for debt-slavery to America or to anonymous financial concerns. Theoretically speaking, these bonds could possibly be shaken off, but as a matter of practice this will hardly occur because of the over-

exhaustion of the European peoples, who seem to have been rendered, for decades to come, incapable of any violent effort.

And at the same time there arises everywhere, above all particularities, a new European feeling of community of quite another sort than any which Fascism could ever bring forth. This feeling finds nourishment in three sources. First the common and identical war experience of the youth; secondly, the single-minded attitude of the opposition of youth towards the older generation which had made such a wretched mess of things;<sup>1</sup> thirdly, the instinctive feeling, growing ever stronger, of a common lot and of a common fate, which grows within the races of a defeated continent in the face of the formations, waxing ever greater, of the extra-European East and West. But above the mentioned groupings, there already arises, as we have seen, a still wider and greater unity, whose existence finally demonstrates that the new world in the making is a whole of unparalleled unity.

<sup>1</sup>The pamphlet *Die Aufgabe unserer Generation* by Prince Karl Anton Rohan is exceptionally instructive with regard to the frame of mind of the new generation. It is of further interest as an expression of the manner in which the impulse of the School of Wisdom, which the author has been visiting regularly since 1921, affects a young, independent spirit of the new type

Throughout the whole world the chauffeur type is the determinant element within the masses. Everywhere the younger generation differentiates itself in the same way from the old; the most recent Englishman (as may be seen in Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga*) bears a closer resemblance to the Bolshevist than to his Victorian grandfather. Everywhere the same rhythm bespeaks the spirit of the times.

The modern dance is, in fact, more instructive in this regard than any piece of sociological research. Why does every one to-day find in the negroid primitive the most fitting instrument in which to live himself out? Because the psychic state has become so different from that which preceded it that the traditional forms no longer retain any meaning. And since new life-forms impregnated with soul and spirit have not yet arisen, it is only the primordial which can be at once authentic and effective. So the relation of the sexes stands under the sign of a reversion to the days before the Fall, lad and lass frolicking together with the innocence of the beasts of the field. But the youth of to-day differentiates itself again from children of nature by the fact that in their psyche the transferable predominates over the untransferable. To this extent their manner of life finds its symbol

not in primitive men, but in the high-powered car. It is mechanistic through and through. Despite astonishingly numerous instances of high endowment, its inner life is poor; perhaps no generation has been poorer since the time of the great migrations. It hardly knows love, hardly knows emotion in its traditional sense; if it finds the possession of personal feeling 'un-modern,' it does so because it has none. In the case of the higher emotions we are indeed face to face with creations born of the spirit; Nature knows nothing about them. So the vitality of modern youth lives itself out normally only in a life of sport. For, quite logically, sport means more to the child of to-day than it has meant to any kind of man since the masses of late antiquity. There are, of course, circles to which this description does not apply; but in a mass age, minorities without a following count for nothing as far as its general character is concerned. Our picture is true to whatever is representative of the general phenomena of life. And further, whatever is representative is so similar in spirit over the whole of the earth that there cannot be the slightest doubt that a universalistic era is dawning.

So far we have dealt only with the majorities. But since leaders and led always stand in a cer-



tain relation to each other (only he who on his side is representative and therefore recognized can lead), it is *a priori* certain that all that has been stated so far can also, *mutatis mutandis*, be applied to the leaders. If the chauffeur is the determinant mass-type of this age, then only that man is able to rule to-day whom the chauffeur recognizes as standing above him, in the same way as the squire, in his time, recognized the knight. In him the transferable must prevail to the highest degree; he must be still quicker, still more energetic. And actually all the leaders who are successful in the large sense since the World War, belong to the same type. They are all supremely intelligent, quick, intuitive, psychological; i.e. able, in reckoning with the reversion to the primitive in the character of the masses, to influence them. In this respect the Bolshevist leaders head all the rest. They bear no resemblance whatsoever to traditional leaders, but appear to-day to be absolutely superior to all of them, without exception. The Fascist chieftains belong fundamentally to the same type, and so do the determinant economic leaders in Western Europe. Only this type can to-day achieve success along large lines. Where this type is lacking or has not yet come into power, there is either chaos or stag-

nation. The old types no longer have any power of suggestion; their prestige is gone. And just as all masses, on the basis of fundamentally similar construction, understand each other in an extraordinary manner, so, in the same way, the leaders understand each other, whether, for example, they are working together or fighting each other. The unification of Asia could never have come about with such rapidity if the new leaders had not felt an instinctive solidarity in the face of everything that was old.

It is clear that the same holds true within the oligarchy of leaders which actually, not nominally, rules Western Europe and America. In this we would also find the proof, by reference to a representative leadership, of the domination of a new, universalist time-spirit based on a new general condition of the psyche, which has itself come about through the shift of the conscious from the untransferable to the transferable. The last hiatus in the complete picture is filled by the living counter-movement. Whence comes it that missionaries from India, Persia, China find a hearing among us to-day, that everything Christian is becoming catholic (in the literal sense of the word), that the ranks of the Theosophic movement, in its largest conception, advance continuously into new terri-

tories? Not from the eclectic adoption of the one by the other, but from the following cause: that the *living* problems which strive to furnish a new meaning to life present themselves everywhere in the same way; the representatives of the most widely different faiths and life-philosophies understand each other, because the vital emphasis lies on what is common to them. Through the shift in the psychologic structure life has everywhere and in the same sense become meaningless, for everywhere its metaphysical roots seem to have withered away. To this is added the common threat, levelled against all, which arose from the anti-metaphysical mass-spirit. I have already shown that the development of the intelligence of the masses must lead to the triumph of the materialistic life-view. To this extent we stand on the threshold of the most irreligious, indeed, the most anti-religious epoch of all times. In Europe this epoch may not take overt form – but as against the masses launched into motion in the rest of the world, particularly the Orient, this means little or nothing, since for the spirit of this age only huge numbers count.

This is felt instinctively by all who are metaphysically and religiously conscious. So they, on their side, are drawn ever closer and closer to

each other; if not in outward form, then in the sense of a living feeling of community, and in this fashion they too forget the exclusive-particular in favour of what is common to all. So that if we now take in, at a single glance, all the ruling and the opposing forces, we become aware of what is literally a globe-encircling unity of time-spirit. No particularity of the past can maintain itself in the face of this new, tremendous phenomenon. Everywhere the human race either renews itself irresistibly – or else it perishes.



WHAT we have described hitherto was the general psychological condition. That this is anything rather than a cultural condition is obvious on the surface. And for a long time to come there will unquestionably be no possibility of culture on the earth. Nevertheless there already lie implicit in the new circumstances the preliminary conditions of new cultural possibilities. Geometrically speaking, we need only continue the lines in order to project a fundamentally unerring picture. Let us refer back to the three main elements which have destroyed or are destroying the old cultures; namely, the technical, the development of the

intellect, and, above all, the disappearance of meaning from life in its present form. With regard to the first: if the technical is something essentially self-evident, then sooner or later it must become a matter of course, for every problem, as soon as it is solved, ceases to exist for the conscious; and this means that the technical can hardly continue to hold captive the imagination of mankind. Despite its greater extension, the technical already means nothing like as much to the West as it did twenty years ago. The element of surprise is gone and will never return, not even if it should be proved possible to bring the moon down to the earth; for fundamentally every future possibility is already predicated. For this reason the most recent technical achievements must, as a matter of fact, soon meet with the fate which overtook the bicycle in its day: where originally there were only gentleman riders, this method of transportation has to-day ceased to be a means for the achievement of distinction; and only that which distinguishes can possibly be a goal for the ambitions. After all, once the technical has become, as it inevitably must, a matter of course in the same sense, it will mean to the spirit neither more nor less than the material of the technical once meant; then all of its achieve-

ments will have become the tacitly accepted foundation of a subsequent state of things. But in this, the contrast which we love to make to-day between civilization and culture will have lost all meaning; for that which is peculiar to the former will by then have become the premise for *all* life. And in this, too, the level of all inquiry will have shifted, and shifted everywhere, moreover, in an upward direction – for there can be no doubt in this matter, that man, the conqueror of Nature, is something more than man, the victim of Nature.

The same applies to the development of the intelligence in general. Problems of the intellect can capture the imagination vitally only so long as, on the one hand, their solution appears ‘problematic,’ and, on the other hand, the conviction exists that the intelligence can solve all problems and is, in the last analysis, decisive. This conviction cannot long reign even among the masses, however far they are behind the *élite*, and that, moreover, for two reasons. In the first place, there lies immanent within every single discovery of the intelligence the totality of all further development, so that the latter must follow close upon the former. In the second place, the exclusive emphasizing of the intellectual leads indirectly and with the utmost



rapidity to the realization that its field does not include the totality of life, but, on the contrary, excludes what is of most importance, for that which has been crowded out of the conscious asserts its reality with the greater fury through the irrational and irresistible power of the unconscious. And so the chief characteristic of our time has already become the attempt again to lay the emphasis of the conscious on the central focus of life. As long as this attempt bears the character of a re-action, little will be achieved; neither the primitive Christianity of newly-reawakened Russia, nor the primitive element of the American, nor even the unrejuvenated Catholic Church has any historic future; for the temporary irreligiousness of our time has as its cause an actual transformation of the psyche, which, in the sense of a life turned towards the future, cannot create for itself a living relationship with superannuated forms. But the metaphysical movements which make for the realization of the new condition must, sooner or later, triumph over the reactionary. And should the psyche in this wise have reached again its only right adjustment, should a new relationship have been created between the surface and the depth, should all extremes have played themselves out – then *culture in the sense defined at the*

outset, i.e. '*a life-form as immediate expression of the spirit,*' will again become possible.

And that in a much more comprehensive sense than before. For then it will be an *ecumenic culture, a universal human culture*. Particular cultures in the traditional sense are henceforth out of the question, for the transferable has a permanent mastery over the exclusive. But *a universal human culture will then become possible for the very reasons which make culture impossible in the immediate future*. Then the spirit will be able to express itself by means of a Nature perceived through the intelligence and conquered by the technical just as immediately as it expressed itself by other means in times past. Then mankind will again become religious. Then great art will once again be possible. There cannot be great art to-day, however numerous the talents which are born and trained; for art as an expression of the essential presupposes an existing culture. Art is by its nature a secondary expression of culture; only philosophers, statesmen, and founders of religions are builders of culture. Let him who labours under the delusion of art as a creator of culture only recall this, that the artist is feminine in his nature, creates only under a stimulus, or because of somebody else; so much so, indeed,

that it is often difficult to say whose share in the production of a great work of art is greater, that of the artist or that of the patron. The patron as the promoter of the new begins to loom large only when art has become the essential expression of the times and has assured importance to that extent. Only one kind of art means anything at all to-day: that of the chauffeur, futuristic painting and the jazz band. But that is something pre-cultural.

It is true that the impulse to culture springs from a special sphere of the spirit; its rise can never be traced to natural evolution. The third chapter will show to what extent, in spite of all that has been stated so far, the higher training of humanity is at no time a necessity. But what is decisive in connection with this chapter is that a spiritual impulse cannot intervene until there shall have been created the preliminary conditions of the phenomenal in the sphere of expression; until, religiously speaking, the time is come. But the conditions preliminary to the formation of a new, higher culture are on the other hand identical with the causes of the decline of the old.

THE MEANING OF THE ECUMENIC STATE

IT is the purpose of this chapter to put the conclusions of the preceding chapter into more definite form. I call the new condition into which mankind is growing the ecumenic. The new, higher sense-realizations which this makes possible and calls forth are dealt with in detail, from the viewpoint of fundamental principles, in my *Wiedergeburt*. We are concerned here solely with the *means* to this sense-realization. And these must at the outset be clearly recognized. For, as I have proved in *Schöpferische Erkenntnis*, comprehension of meaning and *Realpolitik* must go hand in hand in order that sense-realization may be attained.



MANY centuries have yet to pass before the laws of human development will be apprehended to any extent. For the present, we can say with certainty only this much, that it is conditioned by three cross-interfering, yet completely independent chains of causation: cosmic influences, heredity, and spirit-born

self-determination. Under 'cosmic influences' I group whatever is included in the old concept of environment: those influences whose successive effects have given rise to the geologic differentiations of epochs, no less than the climate of every section of the earth's surface; or that which Frobenius understands under the term 'sphere of culture'; or the bounds of time which the general order of nature sets to limit the duration of every particular condition, as well as Spenglerian destiny; or, finally, divine Providence, to the extent that this does not imply the spiritual and does not work through self-determining human souls. We are not in a condition to make more exact differentiations in this matter if we desire to avoid rash hypotheses. By 'heredity,' I mean the descent of blood as well as tradition. In the case of man in his historic aspect, the synthesis of these two constitutes the true reality of heredity; for the inherited spiritual adjustment and the inherited level depend to the extent of at least one half upon the nursery. As soon as the chain of tradition snaps, the soul-spirit type dies out, as we have seen, even though the blood continues to be transmitted with the greatest purity. But on the other hand, this should not be understood to mean that upbringing is everything; that

assumption is thoroughly controverted by the experience of the last century. It is much more proper to say that from the point of view of culture, blood and tradition constitute an indivisible entity. Earlier ages made a fundamental distinction between spiritual paternity and mere education. While the latter always remains something external, the former as necessarily governs the character of the soul as the blood-inheritance governs the aptitudes. And cultural history can exist only on the basis of the organic co-operation of physical and psychical traditions.

The validity of this construction, moreover, can be fundamentally demonstrated in the light of the following general observation: after Bergson's critical proof of the objective reality of memory, or rather, of the things remembered, there is no difficulty of principle whatsoever in identifying in our minds the memory of the Inorganic as advocated by Hering, and the Mneme of Semon, with the objectively existent collective unconscious explored by Jung, and in this fashion subsuming heredity, in the special sense in which it is usually accepted under the general concept of cosmic memory: the concept of which alone corresponds to the primary foundation, whereas the accepted concepts spring from a process of abstraction. Time is



general reality in the sense of Bergson's *durée réelle*. In the world of the psychic just as little is lost as in the world of the physical. I need not at this point discuss more intimately the chain of causation of spirit-born self-determination; it comprises all that is historical and cultural to the extent that this owes its existence to the initiative spirit or creative fantasy; that is to say, to the free individual subject.

The three great chains of causation mentioned above are conceived to be in a constant state of cross-interference, so that it may properly be said that from the human point of view, every cosmic situation can be fixed only by three simultaneous co-ordinates. But the preponderance lies with the one or the other in accordance with the circumstances. This held and holds true of cosmic influences in prehistoric times. In the beginning of history the same held true of heredity. And the more the conscious awakens, the more decisive becomes the factor of the freedom of the spirit. For this reason, Spengler is least right, the more intellectualized the human conditions are which he examines; that, for instance, one should be able to-day to desire, for cultural-morphological reasons, only that condition which he prophesies – the only alternative being to desire nothing at all – is a

completely erroneous assumption. For the same reason, too, the state of things which is at the foundation of Frobenius' concept of the 'sphere of culture,' and the reality of which I consider proved, is of progressively decreasing importance. Granted, for instance, that this scholar's assumption is correct, that Germany will from now on dissolve her association with the matriarchal Occident and enter into a new union with the patriarchal Orient, the cultural-morphological state of things will by no means be the most important consideration. Much more important is the new unity, which has been created by the shift of centre of the psychic organism of mankind towards the transferable, and which must lead into an East-and-West division on the Eur-asian continent on non-cultural morphological grounds. In this chapter I wish to show in large outline to what extent the new condition may indicate absolute progress, and with that bring my examination of the foregoing material as near to a conclusion as the nature of the problem permits.

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WHEN disciples lay their life-problems before me for the first time, I frequently find myself impelled to put to them the ques-

tion: What is it in their destiny that they cannot change? In most cases this indicates 90 per cent. of the tasks which occupy them. I then explain that only the problem which is *soluble* can at all answer to the bare concept of problem. If there were such a thing as the desirable 'in itself,' then the whole of humanity would long ago have committed suicide, for such a one as the individual might wish to be in the abstract has never existed. As a matter of fact, every man who does not misconceive himself makes his demands of destiny on a basis which is not only already given, but which he also accepts within himself; for what he always essentially desires is only ascent or advance as such; the form which this endeavour takes on in the concrete depends on the special circumstance. If, for instance, the poor man wishes to become rich, the Cræsus is easily drawn by the same motives towards the monastery. And I have never yet met a case in which the recognition of this association did not divert the energies towards an attainable goal, thus immediately disposing of the life-problem on a high plane and rousing a feeling of happiness. It is exactly in this fashion that we must examine the destiny of races and of mankind if we wish to judge rightly what can come to pass at times.

The weight of the unchangeable lies upon us at all times with tremendous oppressiveness, whether it proceed from fate or from karma. I do not wish to expatiate on what is, in this connection, self-evident. But if we only set before us an undistorted picture of the compulsion which the fixed combination of cosmic influence and heredity exercises in every country with a more or less continuous history, then we recognize clearly how narrow is the range of possible transformation in the life of peoples.

To offer only a few glaring examples: in Italy the spirit of the earth seems to be so strong that, in spite of all culture, it always and ever leads to man's being born primitive. And the primal forms of his life seem in exactly the same way to be bound up with Nature. If one lose oneself in the spirit of an Etruscan grave, and after that in the spirit of a patrician home of ancient Rome, and finally in the spirit of a modern Italian *casa* of tradition, one finds that they are all the same. The same compact seclusion of the house, held together by molecular cohesion, and for that reason tremendously stable; but it is extraordinarily difficult to set free fixed energy. This is the *eternal* Italian. This eternal quality externalizes itself in time as an unparalleled degree of obligation drawn

from custom dating back to the dawn of history; thus no man pays his taxes more readily than does the Italian, for this is the one thing which, from Roman times down, he recognizes as the normal expression of his subjection to government. For the same reason he does not rebel against what, from the point of view of modern agrarian theory, is a most objectionable latifundian system, whence it becomes clear to what a small extent revolutions have to do with actual evils; were it otherwise, Bolshevism would have arisen not in Russia, but in Italy, its true causes being of a purely psychological nature. But how can this mass be put into motion? Only through the despotism of a minority of different character and of compensatory mobility. So, from the very beginning, there has always existed as a counterpoint for the continuous essence of Italian life the Mussolini type of ruler, whether this was constituted by a special stock, like that of the ancient Romans, or, as the rule indicates, by the individual Cæsar or *condottiere*. It is very unlikely that a change will come for Italy in the rhythm described here as long as there are Italians with the structure they have had hitherto.

Or let us take Russia: The condition which is presented by Bolshevism to-day is *identical* with

that of Russia around 1500, a condition which corresponds to that of a Russian peasant of to-day. His demand for land everywhere dates from that period, when the nobleman held it for its usufruct in return for state service. Again, in the state of that time, just as under the Soviet system of to-day, life was understood only in terms of 'service.' One 'served' as shopkeeper or barber when occupied in Moscow in this capacity. For this reason, the whole future belongs to Bolshevism until a more modern general condition arises. Or let us take religion: In my *Travel Diary* I have shown with what difficulty the transplantation or displacement of firmly rooted religious forms is achieved. Or forms of government: Neither French centralism nor English parliamentarism has stood the test in Germany. Why? In order that centralism may be of real value, a people must be disposed to see in its head the representative of the whole body, and to recognize him as such. This holds true of the French. Every man in any way distinguished is hailed by every Frenchman as representative, no matter what his personal attitude towards him may be; such a one naturally makes his way to Paris and, in one way or another, to power. No German recognizes another as representative unless he



shares his opinions down to the smallest detail. For this reason centralism can be achieved in Germany only as the cohesion resulting from external pressure, and when this comes from without it produces impotence within, since there is no living conviction behind the unity. The fate of the Germany of Wilhelm II proved this only too clearly. Parliamentarism in Germany comes to grief for analogous reasons. It succeeded in England because there every man sees in his opponent his own kin, which implies the supremacy of national unity over all factionalism. This is symbolized by the fact that on state occasions the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition walk side by side, and it is considered ill-bred to harbour enmity towards a man because he is a political opponent. What German ever recognizes his opponent as being of his kin? It is psychologically impossible for the English system to succeed in Germany. The Germans are a caste people, similar in this to the Hindus; it is part of their natural, born attitude.

And thus we arrive at what organically differentiates one people from another, and we may conceive to what extent this acts as the element of fate towards all that is desirable in the abstract; every people embodies a specific

adjustment or attitude. The psychic material is everywhere practically the same, even – with the exception of the few inferior races – with respect to endowment; for every people produces highly-gifted individuals. What distinguishes one people from another is the centering of the fundamentally similar, that is, the point of focus, about which the total relationship of meaning seems for the time being to revolve; and only because this is so can members of alien races be assimilated into new peoples,<sup>1</sup> can Nordics be French in France, English in England, German in Germany. To what extent the given adjustment depends on blood, on psychic heredity, or on cosmic influence, cannot be determined once for all; the ratio varies from case to case. The influence of environment unquestionably predominates in North America; environmental influences also certainly predominate in the case of all authentic cultures. With regard to blood, the importance of race in its widest sense (Aryan, Semitic, etc.) is over-estimated, and race in its narrower sense generally under-estimated. Within all the basic races, the highest types are possible as minorities; yet none of these embodies in itself

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the more detailed exposition of this idea in the chapter *Weltanschauung und Lebensgestaltung in Wiedergeburt*.

any spiritual value. It does seem as though definite basic adjustments, which to a certain degree may be regarded as carriers of values, are given with the original race. Thus Luigi Valli demonstrated the probability<sup>1</sup> that the life-problem in the European sense is a purely Aryan matter (although, again, this is contradicted by the fact that the Jews are to-day the chief representatives of the European problem-complex, and that German race-theorists deny an original problem-complex to the Nordics).

But on the other hand, advantages in success can also be traced to original inferiority; first, in the general way as understood by Adler. Only he strives who feels some inadequacy in his condition.<sup>2</sup> Among the peoples this general truth is so evident that it is typical of those whose national unity is least perfect that as compensation they produce the greatest individuals. Hence follows the unparalleled greatness of individual Jews, Greeks, and Germans. This greatness never was and never is representative, but sprung from antithesis. But the sense of inadequacy can become productive in another

<sup>1</sup>Cf. *Lo spirito filosofico delle grandi stirpi umane*, Bologna, 1921.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the exact exposition of this idea in the chapter *Psychoanalyse und Selbstvervollkommnung*, in *Wiedergeburt*.

way also. A paradoxical example illustrates this: The Germanic peoples were the most progressive hitherto, probably less on account of their superior endowment than on account of their slowness; before they succeeded in thoroughly understanding a spiritual impulse, it had time to permeate their entire psychic organism. Hence the astounding metamorphoses of the English from crisis to crisis; it is also among them that the experience of the World War has so far had its most creative effect; whereas for this very reason the quick-witted Latins show the least faculty for change. By this means, then, the transition from the influence of the blood to the influence of the spirit is effected. But however this be (in the foregoing sketchy observations I have frequently exaggerated of set purpose), for reasons of one kind or another, there are with all peoples fixed adjustments which play the rôle of a fate to every forward thrust of freedom. Here lies the spiritual justification of all national, religious, social, and political exclusiveness. If the unconscious has once been fixed in a definite adjustment, then sooner or later every attempt at sudden change can only call forth counter-movements proportional to the incompatibility of the influences—such as nationalism, religious revivals, political restora-

tions. For this very reason Catholics seldom lose their faith under analysis, whereas Protestants, carrying in their blood no similar firmly fixed tradition, must as a rule find a new personal synthesis when they have lost their balance. At any rate, it follows unquestionably from the foregoing observations that freedom can reasonably do no more than proceed from the recognition of this towards an ineluctable destiny. All history teaches the overwhelming power of this destiny. The transmitted tradition, as long as it remained alive, everywhere conquered the too alien, if only in the sense of the grafting of the new on to old roots, as is demonstrated by the Teutonification of Christianity in the North, its paganization in Italy; the Brahminization of Buddhism in India, and its secularization in Japan.



THERE is therefore a fate which is the ineluctable basis of every manifestation of freedom. And the concept of that fate embraces a much wider reality than most people apprehend; receptivity towards specific spiritual influences also belongs to this. The character of a people, its religious and social types, would very readily be subject to change – which they are not – if the

same spiritual impulses were everywhere to produce the same effect. The last great demonstration of this truth occurred in the case of the Reformation, which remained absolutely victorious only in certain specific, congenial territories. A very clear demonstration in our own time is seen in the attractive or recruiting power of Bolshevism; Bolshevism as it is has a foothold only in Russia; its conquest of Asia ensues in the form of metamorphoses. In the meantime, its economic idea has attractive power only among patriarchal peoples, to whom the Germans also belong. In modern terminology, such peoples originally do not understand property, but only income. Among the matriarchal peoples, contrariwise, the original instinct is for property, for which reason the extension of the Russian economic idea, even in the most modified form, into France and England, seems to be out of the question. In the course of the progress of consciousness, this fate of an original disposition does not, strange though it may sound, experience a decline, but rather an accession of power. Wherever the consciousness is dormant, one's own particular quality cannot play the determinant rôle; it can, for that reason, be repressed, and should this be done long enough and purposefully enough, it undergoes a change, just as



all life adapts itself to the overwhelming power of cosmic influences. For this reason, denationalizations, conversions, even transformations in fundamental psychic disposition, have everywhere been achieved in the past, wherever the victors and rulers pursued this end wisely and consistently.

To-day, however, the conditions preliminary to such repression of the peculiar are lacking, for nowhere is the essential being of the various folk, religious, and social types any longer so unconscious of itself that it will not resist violence with all its strength. Thence, in spite of the universalistic spirit of the time, arises the general demand for self-determination of the peoples and for cultural autonomy. Thence, conversely, comes the picture everywhere presented of inquisitorially hard methods of repression, where the rulers refuse to reckon with this spirit. We therefore come to an extremely important correction of the general picture sketched in the first chapter. With the conscious there grows not only changeability, but, side by side with it, the obstinacy of the unchangeable. This is the reason why the new world in the making is, in spite of its universality, one of such extreme nationalism and particularism. In the measure that the predominating importance of the transferable creates tremendous groupings

and assimilations, the exclusive, irrational part of the soul becomes in compensation more powerfully conscious of itself, and strengthens itself in the face of the danger of repression. In the course of the general universalization, this process can, on its side, only grow in intensity; the unchangeable, as such, must manifest itself with ever-increasing distinctness. Races will, of course, continue to perish, and new ones will be born. When we reflect that the biological foundation of the human race is to be found in few roots, if not in only one, and that nevertheless race follows race, culture follows culture, we cannot but expect that this will remain fundamentally the same until the end of the world, if only for the reason that – however the psychic factor may change – the factors of cosmic influences and of heredity will continue to persist as independent forces; and racial transformations proceed from these much more than from spiritual influences.

For all that, looked at fundamentally, the obstinacy of the unchangeable must not decrease but increase. On the whole, more races will live on in the thousands of years to come than lived on in the past. Nevertheless, we now come back to what distinguishes the newly-rising world from all that has existed hitherto. Within the

new condition *the unchangeable can no longer mean as much*. The shift in the emphasis of importance in the soul, with which the first chapter dealt, gives a new meaning to the unchangeable. And it is on this emphasis that everything depends. In primitive cultures the superior importance belongs to magic relations as compared with all other relations; no rational observation, no power of facts, can outweigh it. In religious ages, it is religious ties which make the decision in the last analysis. Nations in the modern sense exist only since the time of the French Revolution, for it was only then that the will to power of the peoples awoke as such. The nation is actually not the people as such, but the people as a power-organization. From the last example, it becomes particularly clear to what extent the shift in the emphasis of importance changes the reality; it is therefore worth while to pause over it. If the nation is essentially the people as power-organization, then, without the opposition of other nations, it can as little define or determine itself as can the individual husband or the individual friend. So that if wars of nationalities for one reason or another become impossible, nations will also cease to exist as units of importance, just as peoples in the mediaeval sense, or in the sense of the ancient

*polis*, and just as tribes and clans no longer exist as important things in the modern West.

This one example should serve to make clear, as regards all single elements, how the transformation in the disposition of the conscious and in the general psychic condition described in the first chapter assigns to that which I call fate another and more secondary rôle than it played before, in spite of its relative increase of strength. The emphasis in the general psychic condition rests on the transferable, the universal. Thus all that is exclusive and particular manifests itself from the outset *within* the universal relationship. And even though nationalism and particularity should receive the greatest conceivable accession of strength, their effect in the future can be nothing more than a tension *within* the universal condition; they will only have more internal importance. In other words, the German and the Frenchman of the future will no longer be such in the last analysis, but an ecumenic individual of French or German nationality. From this it becomes clear, then, why it is precisely the universalist Bolsheviks who encourage the particularism of all peoples and why they have thereby experienced not disruption, but on the contrary a tremendous intensification of their power. From this it

becomes further clear why the universalistically conceived League of Nations constitutes itself in the first place on the basis of the self-determination of peoples. And from this it finally becomes plain why, with the dawn of the universalistic era, the Internationale did not triumph, but was, on the contrary, an historical failure.

The new grouping which bespeaks the spirit of the time is precisely *not* international; it is supernational, resting still on the basis of an extremely assertive individuality of the peoples. At the same time the nations will, as already said, no longer play a decisive rôle in the future, and just as little will the states. New forms of socialization are arising irresistibly. Among the many possible, one finds its futuristic pattern shadowed forth in the Soviet Union, which, in its form of free association of peoples, now realized for the first time, is the inheritor of traditional conquest. Another of the possible new forms of socialization corresponds to the picture of that world of economic determinism whose general lines I have sketched in *Politik, Wirtschaft, Weisheit*. The consolidated final picture of the new grouping is not to be foreseen as a cultural sphere. Yet this much is certain, and the circumstance cannot be too sharply emphasized: the ecumenic state is not a condi-

tion of equalization, but one of extreme tension, which fact alone suffices to demonstrate that in its case we have to do with a positive element; it is quite essentially *not* a condition of equalization. Certain levellings-up necessarily occur during the course of its growth, for if the transferable becomes predominant for all persons in the same sense, it must remove many traditional differences. Perhaps most of the particularizations handed down from the past will perish. But only that thereby new ones may arise, on the basis of the common, universal human. Conditions of ultimate equalization have indeed been established again and again, but they were those of death or of approaching death. In our own time, life is renewing and rejuvenating itself.

Since creative life can only exist on the basis of tensions, and since the tensions of the ecumenic conditions are greater and more manifold than those of any condition hitherto, this one consideration suffices to demonstrate that nothing lies farther from the mankind of our time than a permanent levelling. The tensions of the ecumenic state are, in fact, much greater, much stronger, and much more manifold than in any preceding condition. From within, the extreme nationalistic holds the universalistic in equipoise, and reconciliation between the two ten-



dencies is not to be thought of; for centuries to come, they will be in a state of polar tension, which is proved by the one fact that they are represented by various racial sections which will never be able to reach an understanding.<sup>1</sup> The various forms of ecumenic grouping – the European, the Russian, the Islamic, the Anglo-Saxon – will, on their side, feel themselves the more in opposition to each other, the more they feel themselves fundamentally the children of a single spirit, for fundamental antagonisms exist only among brothers. And within the individual great groupings, community will again manifest itself in the form of extreme tension. The relations between the materialistic majority and the metaphysically and religiously oriented minority will be characterized by extreme tenseness; the highest tension will prevail between the leaders and the led. It is one of the blindest prejudices of our time to believe that community must dissolve distance; among Europeans this premise holds only for Jews, who for that very reason have not only never been a ruling people, but have altogether achieved very little as a people, because molecular cohesion – the speci-

<sup>1</sup>This thought has been developed in detail in the paper, *Eine Vision der kommende Weltordnung* in the tenth part of my *Weg zur Vollendung*.

fic form of their relationship – cannot transform itself into free motion. Productive community premises the maintenance of distance, between married persons as among all others.

And so, to come back to the political, I see the centre of the future European unity precisely in Franco-German tension, and not in Franco-German compromise. And as a matter of fact, all the great epochs of Europe were those of Germano-Roman tension, whether they had their symbol in the relation between Emperor and Pope, or in Franco-German hate or in Franco-German love. Hate, too, is a form of community; indifference alone is not. So, as I am convinced, the immemorial Franco-German hate will yet die out in the happiest historic union of all times, if only the two people will recognize the tension as the right order of things and give up all ideas of equalization.

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**T**HUS, then, the ecumenic condition, the manner of whose rise is described in the first chapter, will, in its final expression, be even more tense and more colourful than that of the Middle Ages; and this, moreover, precisely because of its universal character. For every strong movement evokes, by reflex, correspond-

ing counter-movements; every unification, compensatory accentuations of differentiation. The spirit of contradiction is the very nerve of life. Whatever is alive wants, by that token, to go on living. If a universalistic time-spirit reigns, it vitalizes simultaneously the exclusive; if the emphasis of importance rests on the transferable, then this gives intensified force to the irrational. Let us, along these unfolding perspectives, follow the individual case still farther. I showed that, among peoples, the possibilities of greatness in the individual are by experience proportional to the inadequacy of the whole. In the same sense the hardness of the Russian type of leader bespeaks the softness of the Russian mass; the emotional subjectivity of a part of the German people, the dominating impersonal objectivity of their rulers. The same primal law cannot fail to determine that the future unification of mankind shall lead to a development of the individual and an enhancement of his importance never before known in history; hence to universalization, and at the same time to the intensification of the phenomenon of Cæsarism. We may compare those who to-day are the *real* leaders – the Bolshevik chiefs, Mussolini, and, in the West, the great economic leaders – with those of the pre-war period; although we stand

only at the beginning of the process, the former far surpass the latter in intuition and consequently in general mental ability.

Only great spirits can, in fact, direct great organizations. Since small spirits are unable to do this, these, wherever they may still be found at the helm, will inevitably disappear everywhere; the need of the age will in the long run inevitably lift the men of greatest endowment to undisputed leadership, and that in spite of all envy, just as in Russia need has united in a common task the most gifted men, who would otherwise have made war on each other as a matter of course. In the long run this process cannot help leading farther to a molecular shift, which must result in a new order for all life on the basis of the idea of quality. We thus reach from another angle the conclusion that the democratic era, regarded as a whole, lies behind us. As soon as a movement has attained its goal it comes to an end. Thus it is exactly because the democratic idea triumphed in the war that a new aristocratic order is everywhere emerging. Fascism and Bolshevism, both aristocratic systems in the extreme, demonstrate with exceptional clarity, by the fact that the former is directed by a former socialist while the latter wears the garb of Marxism, that in the forma-

tion of the new aristocracies we have to do with the historically logical consequence of the exhaustion of the democratic movement.

In America, whose history diverges from that of Europe, the same law of historic counterpoint manifests itself in the fact that there, where family trees mean absolutely nothing, we find the fundamental idea of the social order of our Middle Ages prevailing in a new form. Herein we find the significance of eugenics. American public opinion found its way to eugenics primarily through the intelligence test, to which all recruits in the World War were submitted. After this examination, which, if I remember rightly, took as its standard the normal intelligence of certain specific ages – those of six, nine, thirteen, and sixteen years – had shown that the majority of Americans are mentally less than thirteen years of age, and that a higher standard of intelligence depends on a superior heredity, the early collapse of the belief in equality, with all its corollaries, may be considered certain in that country. With all these fragmentary beginnings of a new aristocracy, the atmosphere of development is still, to be sure, that of a mechanistic idea of ability. But in its final form it cannot possibly mean anything else than the shift of emphasis from what a man can do to

what he is, for in the last analysis all worth has its foundation in *character*. Because our own culture is one of mere ability, it is perishing to-day.<sup>1</sup> The 'expertocracy' of the future will therefore again be charismatic; that is to say, the question of 'who' will in every case precede the question of 'what'; the decisive element will be sought not in the thing, but in the man that does it. But the sense of this will be the rebirth of the caste ideology of ancient India. No activity will be considered proper to any man who was not born for it.

And after the unification of mankind has become an historic reality, this rebirth will certainly manifest itself within the community of peoples. That the caste institution on a racial basis is not nonsensical was demonstrated once by India and by our Middle Ages, is demonstrated to-day by North America, where, precisely through free competition, the special aptitude of each people finds expression on specific levels, which they do not recognize as determinant for the sole reason that they do not wish to recognize them at all. Once the idea of an 'expertocracy' based on what a man is has triumphed in the mind of men, then the peoples

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the chapter *Seins- und Könnenskultur in Schöpferische Erkenntnis*.



too will, along large lines, find their respective levels on the basis of their endowments. No longer will any people set its highest ambition on something which others can do better; each will incline to that for which it is best suited. So I wrote in another connection. The train of thought of this work demonstrates the accuracy of the prognosis reached through another chain of causation. I say expressly 'accuracy,' not merely 'probability'; my 'prophecies' were not concerned with conjectures concerning what might or might not be, but with the anticipation, by apprehension of significance, of the psychologically inevitable consequences of what to-day is already historic reality. Within every living unity composed of independent parts the same process inevitably goes on, as long as life is in the ascendant, as in the individual soul; for collective and individual souls are analogous throughout.

The question whether, henceforth, men desire again to recognize quality in contradistinction to quantity simply does not exist; they will *have to* do it if they wish to go on living, — and the instinct of self-preservation is everywhere the final decisive factor. Just as no 'right' can subsist which cannot assert itself, and just as it can assert itself only where the psychological premises favour its recognition, in just the same way

those life-forms always inevitably consolidate themselves which correspond to a given real situation. The increase in importance of the individual is a necessary corollary of universalism; differentiation on the basis of performance of work, i.e. on the basis of quality, is the necessary consequence of every expansion beyond existing boundaries – if the individual parts within the whole which conditions them wish to retain their own being and to go on living. It is a universal phenomenon of life that the pre-existent whole conditions its parts; to this extent the community precedes the individual, and whether he will have it so or not, it is the *needs of the community* which determine the state of equilibrium. However different the manner of it may be, social differentiation and shift of equilibrium, seen as a whole, result independently of all personal vacillations, just as the brain has developed into the controller of the human body without the consent of the organs, which have thereby lost in importance.

This is the meaning of the irresistible triumph of the spirit of the age. It triumphs because it is the psychic expression of an *organic* state either existent or of recent inception. It is not related in any way to the value of 'theories' as such; those who continue to dwell on these

theories are political and historical ignoramuses. In 1920, I was already foretelling that despite their victory, England and France would have to experience their own 1918, and this has since come to pass; sooner or later Locarno was *bound* to follow Versailles, for the spirit of Versailles is in flagrant contradiction to the true situation. All the hopes of German romanticists who do not understand that since the World War a new era has set in, and who would like to undo its consequences, must, in spite of the 'accidents' which may seem to cross the natural development of things, be disappointed. They only *seem* to cross it, for only those accidents can acquire significance which occur in the direction of development.<sup>1</sup> Whatever does not correspond to the times can obtain no support from the unconscious. The ecumenic state emerges irresistibly, for the reason that the bonds which created and maintained the previous conditions are dissolving for the benefit of new bonds, just as embryonic organs disintegrate for the benefit of organs destined to an independent life, or become cogwheels in a larger organism. So the following predictions must inevitably be fulfilled.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the chapter, *Die Symbolik der Geschichte*, in my *Schöpferische Erkenntnis*.

The state in its present sense, which has not always existed, will mean relatively little in the ecumenic state; it will serve, above all, the welfare of the nations; it will take as its province the justice and the fairness of relations between individuals, groups, and the total mass. The nation will no longer be the ultimate expression of the human community, any more than the clan or the municipality is to-day. In this way, national wars will soon become as impossible as religious wars are to-day. If, as has been demonstrated in the foregoing and in *Wirtschaft und Weisheit*, the chief emphasis in the West is to be laid primarily on the economic, economic supremacy in the long run must inevitably abdicate in favour of the cultural; for the cultural is the integral of all life-interests. In this wise, foreign policy as the all-important quantity it is taken for to-day will have lost its rôle. But this prognosis does not, on the other hand, speak in favour of our present-day pacifists, liberals, and universal human fraternizers; quite the contrary. To repeat, the ecumenic condition will be one of much greater tension, and thence of much greater possibility of conflict, than any which has preceded it. For that reason, its pioneers are not the compromise statesmen, but solely the heroic universalists whose prototype is presented

by the Bolsheviks. Indeed, even narrow-minded nationalists work better for the ecumenic state than the compromisers. Since in this matter we have to do with an organic state, theories and doctrines are, as such, irrelevant. What matters is the effectiveness of the actual, existing forces; which, in the long run, on the basis of living experience, will inevitably become integral parts of the new total order.

And indeed, the ecumenic state already exists in fact; this was shown in the first chapter. It is for this reason that all living movements (but, be it noted, only they) are fundamentally partial expressions of it. And from this there finally proceeds for us the right standard for the evaluation of the one-sidedness of the representative types of our age. It is true that, in comparison with previous types, these are paltry in their effect. The youth of to-day has become primitive beyond all belief; the chauffeur is by no means a lofty ideal, and the leaders of neither the Bolsheviks nor of the Fascists are prototypes of culture. It is with justice that cultured Italians see in the latter barbarians and barbarizers, while all Russians of the old culture see in the former the negators of their best spirit. But new life never springs except from a tiny seed. In as much as the old condition is historically

dead, the new men can in no wise embody it. A new cultural condition, in which inherited tradition, reared on a new foundation, wakes to new life, is, on the other hand, possible only as a manifestation of maturity. Youth can never do more than shadow forth that which adults alone are able to complete as a rich picture. In the case of a radically new departure such as that of to-day, it is in the nature of things that the most primitive components shall define the first manifestations of the possibilities of a later synthesis.

This is the *raison d'être* of the archetype of the chauffeur as primitive man intellectualized and technically transformed. From the point of view of the possibilities of the future, his emergence is to be appraised not in the negative, but in the positive sense, because in him there have on the one hand reappeared in full strength those primal forces which in the epoch just past have been weakened or submerged by differentiation, and which alone are able under the circumstances to build life anew, while in him again, on the other hand, the intellect plays the leading rôle in correspondence with the new condition. From both these considerations, together with the circumstance that it is less burdened with education and therefore more courageous in its own inspiration than were pre-



ceding generations, arises this appearance of the particular endowment of the latest generation, which is misunderstood by the majority. The man of ecumenic culture of the future will certainly be neither the son nor the grandson of the chauffeur; he will spring from other germ-cells. Within the human community, growth and differentiation proceed in the same way as among physical organisms. A general, invisible plan directs all; the most primitive, the most necessary to life, arises first; the higher values, proceeding from special primal creation, take form only later. And when these are completely evolved, then that which arose first loses in importance, if it does not actually retrograde or perish completely. Thus Bolsheviks, Fascists, the chauffeur, will hardly be found later as determinant types; in the end their rôle will in all probability be revealed as that of an embryonic stage. But here and now it is they who are the builders of the ecumene. The man who, in an effort to better the world, seriously pits against them, even if only for a single moment, all those countless movements which, without being an expression of things to come, arise solely from an understanding of perished ideals, from emotional moods, from vain longing, completely ignores the signs of the times.

HENCE in the ecumenic state we are concerned with a real new organic condition into which the human race is growing. It is in itself – this fact, which the next chapter will establish, should be expressly emphasized at once – not yet a carrier of spiritual values. The fact that the Bolshevists, who understand the state of affairs so well, make use of this new organic condition to give reality to tendencies directly hostile to culture (to such an extent that they deny and combat the deepest things in man, and indeed dream of installing in power a Satanic spirit) proves in itself that the world of meaning and of values is not to be found within Nature as such. A condition is never anything more than a means of realization for the spirit. But as such, the ecumenic state does indeed present something richer than any known before, for in it there organizes itself the richest heritage of human experience. This side of the problem calls for somewhat closer attention. We have seen that there is such a thing as a cosmic memory existing objectively. No event, no experience, is ever lost. We have seen that the development of the sphere of the intellect destroys the old cultures, because the new, richer condition disrupts the traditional synthesis. If we include in a single glance these

truths and the particular conclusions contained in this chapter, we are able to determine exactly what this process means. A new, complicated synthesis is growing up as the premise of all special life-activities, in a manner analogous to that of the inorganic world, in which etherons unite to form electrons, electrons to form atoms, atoms again to form molecules, and these finally to form complicated bodies which go on to function as independent units; and, as in the organic field, individual cells unite to form multiple organisms. But whereas in the physical field there cannot without prejudice be any question of the superiority of the complex over the simple, because every standard applicable is imported from an alien world, the quantitative concept of 'more,' as applied to the built-up body in the psychic field, is altogether relevant; and because this is true here, and only for that reason, could the principle of it be discovered and transferred as a matter of course to the field of the corporeal.

I should certainly steer clear of a theory of the descent of psyches analogous to the Darwinian theory. The primordially simple does not of necessity evolve into the higher form, nor does such a development, where it does take place, continue steadily; nor, finally, does a long and even final process of devolution ever appear to

be entirely out of the question. The chains of causation which determine the events are too numerous; the events themselves do not generally move in straight lines, but rather in the form of cycles, and the causes behind the transformation of organisms apparently proceed more from the cosmos – using this word in its astrological no less than in its astronomical sense – than from the enfolding terrestrial world and from themselves. In the world of man this view is strongly supported by the frequent astounding difference in ability between father and son, and the sudden group emergence, within the bodies of peoples, of gifts seldom or never observed before. Nevertheless, in the psychic field, the richer and more differentiated synthesis does unquestionably rank higher; for in it the state of things corresponds precisely to that which we call the superior. And just as unquestionably, there are times and places in which higher psychic syntheses arise without any presumable change in the psychic endowment. At one time this occurred only in the case of special cultures. To-day it is occurring within the body of the whole of mankind. And the occurrence is made possible by the fact that the new levels of consciousness and intellectualization have led to such a yield on the part of the cosmic memory

as, in its degree and kind, was hitherto unknown. On this new level, mankind must, on the one hand, combine in the unity of a collective soul – a unity which, as we saw, predicates specific differentiations and integrations; and, on the other hand, because of the domination of the Logos, the more complicated body will assume general superiority; for the upward trend and thrust of the spirit has introduced a determinant component into the total psyche, something which was never the case before.

To this extent, given no cosmic contingency which shall hinder it, a steady progress of which there was no hint in the past can henceforth ensue. And thence it becomes clear how the impoverishment of the conscious, which is predicated by the automatization of certain specific processes, may be regarded not as something negative, but rather as something positive. These processes do not cease; they only stop presenting themselves as problems of the conscious, for their problematic character disappears in automatic activity. The same phenomenon is already to be met with on the physical plane; the higher the multicellular organism, the greater the proportion of processes which, representing the secondary life-activities of the whole, operate automatically as

subsidiary functions. In regard to the psyche, I have, in another place, represented the state of things thus: that life-problems are not to be solved, but only to be dismissed; the only possible positive solution consists always in the rise of a new positive condition within which the old problems, while continuing, unsolved, to sustain the life-process as a secondary function, simply cease to present themselves.<sup>1</sup> Against the concrete background of our present observations, the meaning I then intended should become perfectly intelligible.

If, within the ecumenic state, the problems of nationality, religious belief, democracy, etc., no longer present themselves, it means that the ecumenic state is enabled on the basis of the settlement of the old life-problem, to proceed to the formulation and solution of new problems. Conscious life can never cover more than scraps of the inward and outward reality. For this reason it is obvious that, viewed from within the new state, certain facts and relations disappear beyond the range of vision. We find herein one of the reasons why the youth of to-day no longer understands many of the problems of the older generations, and with this again is related

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the chapter *Spannung und Rhythmus* in *Wiedergeburt*, which takes up the question dealt with concretely here, and carries it to a solution from the point of view of principles.



the fact that the component parts of a psyche cannot become manifest in every synthesis, just as in every organism, for reasons which we are only beginning to grasp, a part of the gene which resides in it must remain latent; this latent part emerges, renewed, in later life-units. But on the other hand the new condition makes possible the formulation of new and – to the extent that old problems have been settled in it – higher and greater problems. The spirit is to-day the determinant element in the human soul, and its possibilities lie on another plane than the facts of Nature which to the soul mean nothing more (requisite though they are) than the instruments of realization. Genius perceives these relationships as a matter of course, while merely to suspect them is the most that can be expected of the average man; noble birth, as Rudolph Kassner once said ingeniously, is, above all, economy in experience; as long as their vitality remains at a high pitch and their condition corresponds to the spirit of the times, peoples of ancient culture are absolutely superior to young ones, because their instincts start off from the point which cruder ones reach only after reflection.

To that extent, then, every higher condition connotes a higher level of *existent* sense-realization. From all these considerations it should

become conclusively clear that in spite of much that is revolting in its first stages, which alone are visible to-day, the ecumenic state means more than a mere change in that which has existed hitherto; it means, primarily, organic progressiveness. Indeed, it means this precisely by contrast with the most recent past condition. The age of progress was, as I have more closely established in *Schöpferische Erkenntnis*, a grammatical age before all. Its concentration on the sheer alphabet of life, on facts as such, characteristic in this connection, could be appraised in the positive sense only as the way of school-children. Ecumenic man will once again be in a condition to live his life on the basis of a meaning immediately realized. Having once mastered syllabification, he will again direct himself primarily to the task of speaking in the language he has learned. In the ecumenic state, *homo faber* ('inventive man') – to use Danzel's apt definition – will, on a higher foundation, be able *de novo* to transform himself into *homo divinans* ('intuitive man').<sup>1</sup> An indication of this is already to be found in the rapid growth of intuitive, occult, and magic endowment, as well as in the newly-awakened understanding for

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the paper on Count Hardenberg, *Okkulte Gesetzmässigkeiten*, in *Leuchter*, 1926 (*Gesetz und Freiheit*).

psychological, i.e. living, reality, in contrast with dead exteriorization of mind. Thus does this spirit make possible the realization of the highest human value, primarily the value of the 'world-ascendancy' (*Weltüberlegenheit*). The manner of the transition from bare possibility to reality is the subject of the next chapter. Here and now, something more remains to be said on biological lines.

The ecumenic state is primarily a condition transmitted and developed from within; it is memory, rejuvenated and apprehended in a new form. From this circumstance, many deduce that it is nothing more than a destiny, which we can do nothing more than fulfil. But they forget that a living memory, since it is a living thing, is therefore transformable. A life-experience is for ever a component part of something which is becoming and changing. To the extent that life is essentially meaning, it unceasingly transforms all facts into something new; even to that which has already happened, it continuously imparts new meaning, in that it weaves the dying tones of life into the texture of new melodies by the continuation of themes. Thence emerges the existence of that reality which the concept of the transmission of acquired characteristics finds it so difficult to apprehend. To the mechanical manner of thought, this must for ever remain

obscure, for the mechanical mind cannot possibly conceive that not only does the past create the future; the future creates the past, as well. It is thus, and not otherwise, in actual life. Where the spirit has not yet been raised to the level of the dominant tone, there the factor of transformation means little as against the factors of cosmic influence and heredity. But where the level of spiritual consciousness has been attained, it can become the chief creator of realities. The infusion of new meaning creates, through the externalization of new values, a new surrounding world, to which the existing life-units adapt themselves. Representations and ideas act on spiritual man in exactly the same way as chemicals act on protozoa. The new condition of the parent organism affects the germ either directly or, as Danysc thinks, by the fact that what is in its nature immutable develops along different lines in a different surrounding world.<sup>1</sup> Life is for ever in a state of flux. Original creation is for ever with us. This is why progress is ever possible in spite of fate. Every fate is, for its part, susceptible of transformation into a new fate. And for humanity, this transformation can be achieved by spiritually conscious man. One only needs to know from what point to set out.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. *La Genese de l'Energie psychique*, Paris, 1921.

## THE TRUE PROBLEM OF PROGRESS

WE must now indicate the relationship of natural evolution to true progress, the progress conditioned by the spirit and the only kind spiritually significant for us, and thence examine the problem of our times. To a certain extent this has been done already, in another connection, in my introduction to Berdjajev's *Sinn der Geschichte*. But that other connection, by its nature, developed another approach to the question, which barred the treatment of much that is pertinent here. For that reason, the observations which follow are not in the nature of a repetition; they mean something more than a supplementary addition to what was there demonstrated.



LET us begin with a closer investigation of the relation between theory and historic reality. Every view of history which takes into account both the profounder relations and the bare facts in correspondence with their significance, comes up against the remarkable antinomy that on the one hand the process of

history is (in the broadest sense of that term) logical, while on the other hand, ideas and theories count for nothing. In whatever fashion we choose to understand the logic of history, there cannot be any doubt that it is spirit which works itself out in accordance with its own laws. But it is equally certain that the given leaders of a time, i.e. the real historic personalities, have employed the ideas which men believed in only as a means to ends fixed in the last analysis by their irrational impulses, and that those who have looked upon ideas as the ultimate reference points, i.e. the theoreticians and ideologists, have always come to grief. The solution of this discord may be found in the following formula: *An idea does not rise to historic power on the potency of its truth, but on the basis of its representative character.* It must correspond with the spirit of the times. To correspond thus means, on the other hand, to appear obvious for the period in question; and that is obvious which bespeaks a given psychic reality as its fitting expression.

Let us consider the element of compulsion in women's fashions and the foundation for this compulsion. It is true that the fashion is 'set' by a few big modistes for the season in question. But why are there only a few of these? And



why is it that their creations are received at once with general approbation, as obviously correct? Because that which these few discover personally corresponds with that which all hanker after. The great modiste is the one in whom the rhythm of the feminine need to charm and please – which is just as subject to law as any other natural phenomenon – becomes conscious; he only ‘projects’ that which all feel the impulse to create from within, but which they do not know how to create because of lack of consciousness. That is why every fashion seems the only one possible for its season, and is at the same time so ephemeral. Every outlived fashion is and must remain repellent until the day comes when the rhythm of the impulse to change brings it back again.

To the extent that we are speaking of the obviously intelligible and not of abstract truth, the problem of the spiritual, formally and psychologically examined, is primarily one with the problem of fashion. Since man has existed, no art-style and no ideology has ever been disposed of by objective criticism; in fact, the latter has always begun to exercise a strong effect only when the time had come for the former to die a natural death. Few instances are needed to make this perfectly clear. The

whole of cultivated France of the eighteenth century swore by Rousseau, though his fundamental ideas are for the most part false; this was due to the fact that his ideas corresponded to the unconscious will of that period, which was set on self-destruction in the same sense as was the period of the World War. In the first decades of the nineteenth century, the doctrines of Hegel, who was perhaps the least intelligible of all thinkers, and who a few decades later was actually no longer intelligible to any one, were obvious to most Germans; this is to be attributed to the fact that these doctrines were representative of a real, specific condition of the psyche of that time. This condition, in which the emphasis of importance lay from the outset on the progressive consciousness of inner reality and on its apprehension by the developing intellect, was drawn by Hegel's philosophy into an intellectual framework whereby the events unfolding acquired a satisfying meaning. And since the meaning which Hegel gave to the facts of life – in correspondence with the profundity of that great thinker – vitalized the true roots of the spirit-essence, his world of ideas, as it developed through hereditary transmission and metamorphosis, was able to bring forth the tremendous powers of the Marxist and

Bolshevist ideologies, which, however completely we may refute them, are to-day patent to millions. The visibility of ideologies is not a function of their abstract truth, which may or may not exist; as in the case of fashion, it depends solely on the fact that a specific ideology does for the time being correspond to a real condition of the soul. *The living reality of the psyche in its broadest sense, and not the idea as such, is, on all planes, the ultimate issue*; it gives truth for the time being even to that which is logically false.

From this we may already obtain a glimpse of the meaning of the fundamental historico-philosophic antinomies formulated at the beginning of this chapter. To the extent that ideas are the exponents of historic realities, their logical development will be a reflex of these – but logical development is not itself the exponent of historic realities; for this reason every ideology must come to nothing. For this very reason, too, every great realistic statesman must necessarily move along the line of the idea, even though, as far as his consciousness is concerned, he is merely following his instinct for power. For the reality with which he reckons, and which he cannot obviate if he is to attain his personal goal, is itself the living meaning of that which is only mirrored by the idea.

IF we wish to understand the processes of history, we must, therefore, make the basis of our inquiry neither the ideas nor yet the bare facts; we must start out from the totality of the psychically real, which comprehends or contains both. In this manner, approaching the problem from another angle, we have again established that in the case of the psyche we are dealing with a real organism. To-day this organism is generally called the unconscious, and it is usual, moreover, to differentiate between the personal and the collective unconscious; it would be well, however, to replace this term by another as soon as possible. For in the first place it opens the door wide to all sorts of mystic instincts and interpretations, when the psychic field, in which there are no objective facts to correct an errant imagination, demands above all the severest clarity and coolness; in the second place, it accentuates a negative quantity, the *not* conscious or *not wholly* conscious, when actually we have to do with something eminently positive. It is true that man is conscious of only a very minor part of his psychic reality. But for that very reason we should, in making our definitions, place so much the less emphasis on him, and give our attention all the more to the psychic reality as such, whose characteristics

include ability to acquire a certain degree of consciousness.

It is only in such a definition that the emphasis is from the very beginning placed where it belongs, for it is only thus that we cease to see a problem in the following facts: first, that only the smallest minority of great spirits ever knew what they were actually doing; secondly, that whatever is creative springs from the fount of the unconscious; thirdly, that a great many ideas are only to be interpreted as subjective compensations of true reality; and fourthly, that only the smallest minority of ideologies have ever been true to facts in the slightest degree. Bolshevism as a reality is anything rather than Marxism; the true spirit of the French Revolution corresponded only remotely to its catch-words of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. *Current ideas are essentially symbols of reality*; they are symbols which, as soon as they give clear expression to that reality, serve as instruments of apprehension and action. Levy-Bruhl has shown that the mental representations of primitive peoples are altogether alien to our concepts of logical sequence; nevertheless they serve to guide real life with great accuracy. The profoundest wisdom of mankind has been transmitted in the form of myths which can to-day

easily be disproved; yet their meaning is immediately intelligible to every one who thinks deeply enough. Even the concepts of modern science, and especially of psycho-analysis, are for much the greatest part indicative symbols. Science does indeed struggle unceasingly towards the complete reconciliation of meaning and expression. Yet, from the viewpoint of science, man the doer remains for ever primitive; for his is essentially the non-theoretic type. For this reason, a philosophy of history can, without prejudice, proceed only from the premise of the totality of the psyche.

And this real totality has its being and develops in time in just the same way as the totality of physical life. Here, too, the individual factor is primarily the expression of the essentially super-individual. Here, too, the singular, the exclusively personal, is the rare blossom on the stem of the non-personal. It is impossible to contest the fact that this is so, however difficult, nay, however impossible, it may be to understand it. All primordial ideas are collective. There cannot occur to any one a thought which is not implicit in the general possibilities of the spirit of the age. The contemporaries of a given time and place always stand for the same thing. If any man is literally



as original as the majority of men would very much like to be, then he is sterile, and thus, from the point of view of life, a moribund type, and, for the most part, diseased. It is one of the most important conclusions in Adler's psychology that he who is alien or hostile to society is unequivocally pathological. It is here also that we find one of the psychological roots of Buddhism; whosoever thinks of man as an isolated being, and of all great life-philosophies Buddhism alone does so, can desire only one thing – the end. Social bonds do indeed represent primal realities, and so true is this that, as I have shown in *Weltanschauung und Lebensgestaltung*, mankind is there before the man. It is, again, extremely difficult to get more than a suggestive concept of this state of things. But if, in our imagination, we hold fast to the analogy between the psychic total and the physical reality of life, then, as was demonstrated in the first chapter relative to the most recent events, we do at any rate recognize this much, that in the development of the psychic in time we have to do with a real phylogenetic process. To different conditions there correspond different mental attitudes, different possibilities of recognition, which, on their side, build up corresponding instruments in the form of images,

concepts, and ideas. From these, again, there issue corresponding philosophies and theories which, to the extent that they seem obviously true, embody, under all circumstances, the symbolization of inner (not outer) reality. In this wise we come again to the starting-point of this investigation: Life-philosophies are primarily not true, but representative.

We may now go a step farther. If things are so disposed as we have presented them, how is a logic of history at all possible? If historic ideas are in themselves nothing more than the representatives of something, so that to this extent the question of true or false is altogether out of the picture, how could all great historians and all the profound philosophers of history prove that it is not only possible, but rational, to conceive history as a spiritual complex? After we have rightly formulated the general problem in the foregoing pages, the answer is not far to seek. *To the extent that 'meaning' is the creative primal cause of all life, man is in his profoundest nature a spiritual being.* For this reason, only the 'true' can correspond wholly to him. There is nothing physical in life which is not created and directed by the highest wisdom. In the sphere of the psychic, knowledge and wisdom are likewise the original founts of being; to

think or to understand falsely begins as a privilege of the conscious. For this reason, truly representative ideas, i.e. those which are directly clear to great majorities, never appear false at bottom; examined in the abstract, they embody in any case at least partial truths, and concretely examined, the intellectual image of a real state which, to the extent that it shows itself apt for life, is also justified in the eyes of the intellect. For we lack a foothold outside of ourselves from which, looking inward, we might refute creative life itself. But this consideration, again, does not necessarily lead to the idea of the relativity of all truth, for only that which the spirit can vindicate from within is fitted to life. In the last analysis, truth corresponds with life, untruth is self-corroding, i.e. leads to extinction. Thence it becomes particularly clear how the historic process can be taken as logical even in individual cases; since, however long and tedious the process may be, the false does ultimately refute itself, there remains in the long run only what is not contrary to reason, so that it is not difficult for the intelligence subsequently to weave into the logical train of things circumstances which have arisen in the most irrational manner. And where consciousness is awake, this logical train can always, even if not in

its totality, be assimilated to the goalward-striving scheme of progress, for there is such a thing as that which we call cosmic memory. All that has passed away lives in all of the future. Every fixed 'true reality' becomes the starting-point for a further life-thrust, so that where the character of the general condition is not stationary, and where a process of destruction does not disturb the continuity, progress is, as it were, inevitable.

The degree to which the meaningfulness of life corresponds with that which man envisages under the concept of reason is naturally proportional to the degree of development of his intellectual functions, and to the extent to which the emphasis of significance of the totality of life rests on these. Where these remain undeveloped the logic of history can be conceived only in the same sense as in the case of fashions; i.e. that which may in this connection, too, be called logic, amounts psychologically, in such a case – for the reason that the process is essentially full of meaning – to the evolution of impulse, sensation, and feeling. In the case of spiritually awakened man, the Logos side predominates. And thence we can understand at once why, for every type of man, a specific stage of evolution was the necessary pre-requisite for a process of development which, one way or another, could

be conceived as progress, and, in particular, why it is only within the body of the intellectualized mankind of to-day that progress has become a determinant imperative. This imperative means nothing else than the following: that the laws of development of intelligence and reason shall be the governing factors for the wholeness of life. Instinct, emotion, and sensation are used up in the unchanging status of the things that are as they are; they possess no component which presses towards movement. In contrast to this, the thrust of forward development is immanent in every apprehension of intelligence and reason; immobility is a contradiction of the essential character of these spiritual functions, for they live only in motion; it is only faith which holds fast the ever-moving flux of thought.<sup>1</sup> And if intelligence and reason demand progress, then the Logos principle, in its highest expression, externalizes itself as the struggle towards a purely inward goal of higher worth. Where the intellect, thus understood, becomes the dominant note in the conscious, the law of human life demands not only outward extension, but also, above all, a deepening. From this point on, all natural living becomes

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the development of this idea in the chapter *Das Problem des Glaubens* of my *Unsterblichkeit*.

an instrument in the struggle towards salvation. The possibility of a logic of history therefore by no means demonstrates the independence of the idea as a spiritual power; it only demonstrates that *man awakened is an essentially spiritual being, for which reason all his psychic processes, which in any event must move in accordance with their own specific laws, must be dominated by the setting of spiritual goals.* So that the problem of progress in its broadest sense, is not a problem for theoreticians and ideologists; it is most certainly the life-problem of the spiritually-influenced man.



LET us now, in order to clarify the approach to the right formulation of the question, take a few concrete examples, the last of which is the vital problem of our time. We obviously have no intention of exhausting, in this, any specific problems of history; we take these up only in order that the fundamental principle may be made thoroughly intelligible. When the ancient pagan world was succeeded by Christianity, the spirit of reason, till then so certain of itself, saw itself stripped of value, even treated with contempt. In the eyes of the world, folly then had a higher currency than the sublimest wisdom; the irrational feeling of love



was then supposed to mean more than the deepest possible insight. Most assuredly this attitude on the part of primitive Christianity was false, and therefore the ancient wisdom did not have to wait long for a partial restoration on Christian foundations. But at the beginning it was the hostility to reason which triumphed. Why?

First, because in the man of antiquity the adjustment of the psychic organism had held its affective side in a state of repression; this was bound eventually to express itself; in the majority this occurred in the form of frantic debauchery and, in the Christian minority, in the form of a boundless upwelling of the tide of love – which, as the ‘right’ adjustment, carried off the victory. Secondly, because in its development the spirit of antiquity had utterly exhausted the possibilities inherent in it, for which reason the further continuation of historic life could ensue only on the basis of new premises making rejuvenation possible. Up to this point we are concerned merely with a process of psychologic compensation; the fact that the most one-sided and, in many respects, most primitive ideas of primitive Christianity (not of Christ) – we need only compare its concept of justice, based on the motive of vengeance, with the sublime views of Marcus Aurelius! – ap-

pealed universally to that period of revolutionary transition is due solely to the circumstance that they corresponded with a specific state of things, a state of masochistic-affective reaction of the psychic evolution of humanity. But this does not suffice to explain Christianity as a spiritual power. *This is to be explained by the fact that the struggle for higher spiritual values built itself into the process of compensation.* The idea of something beyond Nature and reason was unknown to late antiquity. It lacked the organ of perception for the irrational and truly supernatural which lie implicit in the mere fact of the uniqueness of every being, whereby birth and death become a tremendous destiny in every individual case. But in that 'beyond the horizon' of late antiquity the really metaphysical is to be found; there, too, lies the original fount of life. And thus the naïve faith of some Galilean fishermen became the vehicle of a level of cognition attained by no thinker of that time. But to carry this farther. In the Renaissance period the outlook of antiquity again came to the fore. Psychologically seen, the reasons may be found in the following considerations. There set in with Christianity an essentially ascetic human phase which found a very inadequate compensation in animal crudeness. This means

that the majority of the earth-bound energies – from reason to the senses – remained during that phase repressed to a high degree. And as the original Christian attitude lost in life-force – and not only individual life-forces, but collective life-forces, too, are essentially finite – the emphasis of importance shifted over once again, though of course in a Christian setting, to those forces which had shaped the life of antiquity.

But here again the meaning of this historic process is not explained wholly by psychological compensation; the forces of antiquity entered into play on the level of a higher understanding. Personality as such had meanwhile become conscious of its worth. Since all infusion of meaning takes place through the subjectively individual, this acquisition of consciousness already implied, as such, a profounder apprehension of meaning. The higher intellectual value of the new condition appeared first in the fact that what was, from the psychological point of view, a reversion to antiquity, prepared the way for something alien to the latter; to wit, our modern mastery of nature. We shall find the same relationship of things in the Reformation. The evolution of mankind follows a rhythm analogous to the rhythm of breathing; periods of expansion are thus necessarily followed by

periods of contraction. Thus, psychologically, the Reformation movement means nothing more than the compensatory contraction after the tremendous expansion of mediæval Catholicism. It began within the body of the Catholic Church, and there continued even more energetically than within the Protestant churches which broke away from the former; for, psychologically viewed, the counter-Reformation undoubtedly connoted a much more powerful process of contraction than that which Protestantism, emerging soon as the pioneer of intellectual freedom, ever embodied except in its very earliest beginnings, and this held on until the law of rhythm made a counter-movement inevitable. But here, too, we must not look to the process of psychological compensation for the final explanation of the total historical phenomenon. The new psychological constellation was immediately exploited by the Logos. *That* now penetrated the phenomenal world more deeply than ever before. The process of contraction made possible a process of precision. It is not without reason that the exact sciences sprang from the period of the Reformation. It was only in a state of contraction that the intellect could become an instrument of precision. It was this state which made possible

a progress subject to regulation, such as we know it.

Let us now examine our own time from the same point of view. Its dominant note is the idea of *progress*. We have already alluded to the general significance of this fact; since spirit must in its nature progress, the fact mentioned can mean only one thing, namely, that spirit has become conscious to a degree never dreamt of before. This one circumstance explains why the philosophy of Hegel seemed so obvious to his age; his philosophy gauged the value of a condition by the degree of consciousness it gave expression to. But the modern concept of progress finds its representative type not in Hegel but in that general philosophy of progress, the range of whose vision is so much narrower and shallower. Briefly explained, it stands for nothing more than this: that the improvement of the material, moral, and mental circumstances of our life shall completely satisfy life's meaning. How could so crude a life-philosophy ever become authentic when the intellect, in its modern sense, represents only a small fragment of our spiritual being? It could not help appearing obviously true, because the purely intellectual side of the psychic organism had, since the seventeenth century, become ever more

dominant; and the consciousness ultimately recognized – indeed, *could* recognize – only the intellectual side as true reality; except in the form of a mute tension it knew of nothing else within itself. As we have seen already, the concept of progress corresponds exactly with the natural momentum of the intellect. With regard to all other functions of spirit and mind it is simply devoid of meaning, for which reason there never was any question of progress during the time of dominating spirituality or of dominating affectiveness. But the ideology of progress did indeed correspond with the condition of the nineteenth century, as no other could have done.

Moreover, as it is perhaps well to emphasize to-day, this was true not only for evil but for good. It is owing to this ideology that the intellectual side of the human species has developed with unparalleled swiftness to an unparalleled degree. Granted that intelligence is in itself nothing profound; here, too, as in all important cases, development was guided by the Logos of the depths. Every spirit and mind expresses itself through the existing means of expression. Thus all the deeper thinkers of the age of progress used the intellect as their instrument whereby to apprehend and express that which to other ages was accessible through other



means; and it is owing to this that the depth of life became for the first time accessible to the general consciousness. For it is only intelligence that each man possesses, and it is only the 'intelligible' which each man can understand. So it is precisely from the point of view of realized depths that we all have cause to be thankful to the age of progress.

To-day mankind is passing through a new crisis. The idea of progress has become the gospel of the masses, which accordingly finds its ideal image in the chauffeur, the technicalized savage. But to the *élite* it no longer means anything. This is due to the inevitable fact that the latter are several generations in advance of the former. In them the expansion of the psychic organism on its intellectual side has, to the extent that was possible on the given foundations and in the sense of upward growth, reached its natural limit. And since the given foundation was not primitive, a synthesis like that of the chauffeur, proscriptive of the higher and the more profound, appears in their case to be psychologically impossible. Their own self-consciousness as well as all external experience teaches them that a development onward and upward can now be achieved only by drawing once more into developed, conscious life the

non-intellectual forces, the impulsional as well as the irrational and the super-intellectual. The suppressed, impulsional, still harmless half a century ago, is to-day a threat to life. It has broken off into an independent being which, out of the obscure deeps, attacks the external life as an enemy; and this must result in a serious disturbance of equilibrium for the individual no less than for the community.

The first chapter has already shown to what extent the true cause of the present world-crisis is to be sought in this suppressed impulsional; externally it became active not through the masses but through the ever-recurrent 'blunders' of the upper classes. It is this typical condition of the individual that has made historically possible the timely discovery of the unconscious and its treatment by the methods of psycho-analysis. But the repression of the sphere of impulse and instinct did more than create an enemy to conscious life; it sundered conscious life from its true living roots. Hence the continuous emasculation of vitality characteristic of all spiritual life in Europe during the last few decades. Herein we find the true cause of that which makes us feel civilization as something in growing contrast to life — which does not hold to the same degree in America, because

the condition there resembles more closely that of the primitive chauffeur type on the one hand, while on the other hand, having been consolidated as a state of civilization in earlier times, when religious bonds had not yet been weakened, it contains much of the irrational which has been repressed with us. The same emasculation of vitality, on the other hand, was the cause which led to the increasing over-valuation of the purely impulsional, from Nietzsche's 'blond beast' on. But this intellectualization did more than break off the impulsional side and weaken the vital force; it also led to a compensatory reduction of the higher non-intellectual forces, whether they be irrational, like the emotions, or super-intellectual, like the organs of metaphysics and religion. It was precisely he who was most progressive spiritually who experienced an increasing physiological difficulty in becoming conscious of his own super-impulsional depths.

And thus the intellect, lifted to a sort of autocracy, like every force of Nature at work outside the framework of a vaster relationship, became increasingly a destructive force, and its destructive character became the more evident as its positive possibilities were exhausted. Thereafter the intellect was only experienced as that which disintegrates the irrational. And

this it can assuredly do: every emotion analysed into its basic elements ceases to exist, unless it can prove its reasonableness; every phenomenon which is seen through loses, as Buddha was the first to recognize, its character of finality and therefore also its binding force. What wonder, then, that faith in progress was converted into a denial of progress, and worship of the intellect into hatred of it? It was precisely in the most cultured circles that the irrational as such was suddenly idolized. Just now, when mind means more than ever before, there are many who attribute everything, the good and the bad, to blood and race. Where in the Germanic myth we already find the clever dwarf presented as superior to the pure simpleton (*reiner Tor*), to-day, when intelligence is no longer necessarily bound up with ugliness (the beginning of all growth is ugly; in the primordial myth, cleverness is always clothed with ugliness, because superior knowledge disrupted the very unintellectual state of perfection peculiar to that time), it is he who is to save mankind. A Johannes Müller, who damns all intellectualized life as 'death-in-life,' a Ludwig Klages, who denies the creative spirit and sets up as an ideal the purely passive attitude of the Pelasgian – not to mention the innumerable swarms of

minor prophets who see the proof of a higher mission in the mere possession of moods and emotions – all these are being hailed as saviours. An outlook of this type characterizes most of the latter-day regenerative movements, from the ethical and religious movements to that German Youth movement which saw its ideal in the mere condition of youth as such, and in its later stages looked for its ideal in some sort of qualified ‘experience’ (*Erleben*). But none of these movements led to a higher creation; nor could they do so, for they are all movements of reaction; that is, they seek to combat or to deny *that which is already in existence*.

To return to Johannes Müller and Klages: the former is without doubt authentically religious and the latter metaphysically profound, but both of them are so in a form belonging to an outlived state. Thus they may well become, for every individual, the symbol of the profound, which is equally true of the wise men of the most primitive ages; but they cannot point out new ways. And this is the only thing that matters to-day. We find in existence to-day an organic state of high intellectuality, to alter which is beyond the power of any conscious will. And this state implies very specific possibilities of farther development, and no others.

What avails it to exalt the certainty of instinct where it has organically disappeared? Henceforth it must be replaced by deeper understanding. For that reason – to take only one example – it is only the recognition of the meaning of marriage which can to-day build up that institution anew; it is only eugenics which can improve the race.<sup>1</sup> For the same reason it is the psychology of the unconscious whose starting-point is the will to understand, which to-day is alone capable of affording to the conscious access to the sphere of the emotions and instincts. The same holds true, *mutatis mutandis*, for metaphysical and religious reality. To-day every doctrine which does not start from the spirit is a false doctrine, however well it is meant. Since in every age types ranging through every stage of Nature are to be found living side by side – the character of the age being determined by the type which dominates – the reactionary attitude must, to be sure, correspond to many of those (though by no means all) who adopt it. But it is unthinkable that these should achieve any historic importance. One cannot get beyond progress by retrogression. As long as people try to awaken to life the inward depth in forms belonging to

<sup>1</sup>Cf. my two articles in *The Book of Marriage*.



an outlived state, the chauffeur must needs retain the mastery over those who may know and feel a great deal more of life; for, from the point of view of the masses, the chauffeur is the progressive type; this is proved conclusively by the vitalization its synthesis gives to all the life-forms of a primitive type. There are times when certain life-forms must disappear, however fine they may be in themselves, just as the saurians were bound in time to disappear. Every specific phenomenon is essentially finite, and the state of perfection generally precedes the absolute end only by a step. To this extent it is even contrary to sense to accept Goethe's ideals as guiding beacons to-day.

Life is utterly unsentimental; it cares not a snap of the fingers for the longings of romantic souls. And as far as they are concerned it is perfectly right, for life is always capable of conjuring up new perfection in place of the old. To that extent all the lamentations over the end of the old culture demonstrate one of two things: simplicity or cowardice. But this much is certain: should there arise nothing more fitting to the time than the aforementioned counter-movements against intellectualization, then the slow submergence of all the world's traditional cultural types must inevitably follow,

as already has come to pass in Russia by violent methods. And should it come to this, then, since the life of the spirit, too, is carried on only through heredity, as the last chapter has shown – for which reason the snapping of the thread of tradition must lead to the death of the species – centuries must pass before an organic condition corresponding with that of the *élite* of to-day can again arise. In cases where this ‘fate’ is absent, there, as the last chapter has likewise shown, no spiritual initiative can lead to that process of higher creation which is still possible to-day.

And so the task which now faces us is to show what ideology corresponds with the *élite* of our world in the making, if it is to become a better world, in the same sense as earlier ideologies – in accordance with the conclusions reached in our historical digression – corresponded with the conditions of the past. Since the upward development of the intellectual side of life has once for all become a fact, and since the central focus of life is fixed immovably there (immovably, because the spirit is in its essence not passive, but active; and because intelligence only directs action; and, finally, because the demand of certain ‘deep thinkers,’ that the emphasis be shifted back to the unconscious is reduced to absurdity by the mere fact that, for the subject,

unconscious life is not life at all), one thing only, made up of two components, can lead to a higher, positive condition: an inner transformation thanks to which, first, that which the age of progress has suppressed – impulse and soul – will become bound up in a new unity with the anticipatory spirit, whereby, however, it will be the spirit which will retain the emphasis and fix the level; while, thanks to the same transformation, the spirit as such will become so deepened that it will even grasp the meaning of the irrational. Since the focus of consciousness will henceforth reside in the spirit, the former will no longer be able to build into the unified relationship anything which does not appeal to it as possessing a meaning.

But nothing in life is meaningless, for life itself is meaning. Wherever the case appears to be otherwise, the spirit has not understood deeply enough; for even sicknesses and malformations always have their positive meaning. To understand this is to transform the spirit of itself from a destructive to a constructive force; the successful work of psycho-analysis (in its broadest sense) demonstrates this daily. And where a meaning deeper than that which has hitherto been determinant is built into the phenomenon (granted that it accord with

reality and is not illusory), there ensues a revitalization. For since life has its root in meaning, the possession of meaning immediately connotes vitalization. And only because this is so has every great idea, be it the Christian idea, the idea of the Reformation, or that of the rights of man, always rejuvenated mankind; and if the chauffeur to-day commands the greatest vitality, it is only because his idea gives truly heightened meaning to life which is primitive or has been rendered primitive. But it cannot give meaning to a higher form of life. Seen from the point of view of the fundamental possibility of sense-realization to-day, the chauffeur represents only a very faint overtone of meaning. For that reason he will not be the world's saviour.

There is needed a deeper basal tone of meaning, such as has determined historic life hitherto, to renew the unity of life. Then that unity of life can achieve its renewal without the surrender of anything it has gained hitherto in the development of culture. Then life may experience a regeneration without being forced to go back to beginnings. For let us repeat: fundamentally, rejuvenation never ensues in the form of reversion to the primitive as such, but through the infusion of a new meaning which vitalizes the old phenomenon – even the

deepest roots of physical life drawing their sustenance from that metaphysical meaning. And there are times when only the driving of the roots into deeper meaning than has hitherto sustained phenomena can supply to life the bare possibility of continuation. This holds true of the life of our own time. The roots are not sunk deep enough in the soil of the metaphysical to feed with life the rich summit of the tree of modern humanity, and for that reason the tree is withering. But should those roots strike deep enough, the summit may not only blossom anew, but may even attain a wider spread. Then, out of our present state of civilization, a new culture could spring direct. The ecumenic state could thus attain its perfect consummation, in the double sense that the soul would simultaneously experience its final spiritual formation and the highest psychological integration possible at the time in question.

In the foregoing considerations we shall find, again, the only possible positive solution of the problems of modern culture, for this solution alone reckons with the organic character of the soul and gives full consideration to the facts in their true relative importance. And hence it becomes finally clear how really infantile are all efforts to regenerate life by non-intellectual

methods; the protagonists of such attempts are merely playthings in the hands of the Mephistophelian Bolsheviks. Since life is rooted in 'meaning,' and meaning has become capable of self-consciousness, it is impossible for anything which does not accord with that accessible meaning ever to infuse other meaning into life. And for this reason, in the world of to-day, even the religious movements with the deepest-reaching roots, still failing as they do to take into account the thoroughly intellectualized state of present-day humanity, have no historic future. Crusades presuppose a psychic condition which, on the whole, is not apt to be found even in Russia. Mere emotions are not transferable; no mass has ever been moved save by that which was the vehicle of a new idea which infused new meaning into life. Even as God once created the world, the Logos alone is the principle of initiative and transferability. Emotions and feelings are secondary and static formations. In given circumstances they can embody a spiritual impulse, and in so far it is true that spirit can become effective only as it is able to command emotional formations in the capacity of shock troops. But they can never be anything more than the shock troops of the spirit. Because we can see through them to-day, the



thoughts which were once able to move other periods can no longer serve as the all-conquering reserves. But on the other hand, it is precisely the religious side of life which, when it embodies deeper understanding, can experience a tremendous regeneration. For that which constitutes religion is precisely the ultimate meaning of life. The more deeply 'meaning' sinks into the spirit, the greater, and not the less, will be the living force which man will feel in those real threads which bind him to the cosmos.<sup>1</sup>



WE have thus come far enough to be able to take up again with concrete intelligibility the problem of the principle involved, and from that general principle to reach the definitive abstract formulation of the problem of our day. We have noted (p. 219) that the possibility of a logic of history does not demonstrate the independence of the idea as a spiritual force; much rather does it demonstrate that awakened man is essentially a spiritual being, for which reason all his psychic processes, while they do in all respects proceed according to their own

<sup>1</sup>The train of ideas in this passage is really a résumé of that presented in *Schöpferische Erkenntnis*, and in particular of that fuller development of it contained in the chapter *Was uns Not tut*.

specific laws, have as their dominant notes the setting of spiritual goals. If we envisage at a single glance the contents of this sentence together with what we have learned with regard to the state of things to-day, we shall be in a condition to provide a relevant answer to the decisive side of the problem of progress; that is, to the question, as to what relation exists between natural evolution and the domain of freedom. The processes of history are always and everywhere logical and, after the event, can always be fitted into the scheme of a logical framework; for life itself is meaningful, and only that survives which accords with meaning. But if freedom once steps in as a directive, error always becomes possible; it by no means follows of necessity that what is immediately right should be done; the decision of freedom may equally be in the direction of the continuity and increase of life, or in the direction of its destruction.

As a rule, that which is right comes through only after long detours. And in between, so much has perished that what was originally right no longer corresponds with the possibilities which remain; and that which is right under the new circumstances, seen in the abstract, presents something of less value than what was originally possible. Thus, with regard to the

land, Bolshevism has brought to fruition nothing more than Stolypin's agrarian reforms, but this through the detour of a tremendous destruction. An examination of that which the majority of the choice spirits of our time have brought forth already reveals to us with frightful clarity how easy it is to miss the meaning of the higher development possible to us. But has not that meaning *almost always* been missed, except by rare individuals who remained for the most part unsuccessful? Is not history, however logically it follows through, nothing but a single series of missed opportunities? The world of antiquity need not of necessity have collapsed as completely as it did; the impulse of the Reformation could have worked itself out to better effect; there *might* have been made at Versailles a peace representing the ideals of Wilson. . . . The logic of natural development can run a logical course only in general. It is not in the nature of things that it shall make the best of a temporary situation. On the contrary: since the most general law of Nature is that of inertia, and since it needs a tremendous effort to overcome the routine of the traditional, even though this should be headed towards extinction, or to overcome the counter-movement to onward perfection, man seeks primarily to make as

little as possible of every opportunity and never to take a step forward unless compelled by circumstances.

In the closing lecture of the Darmstadt session of 1925, *Der letzte Sinn der Freiheit* (published in *Gesetz und Freiheit*, in *Leuchter*, 1926), I showed that man wants anything rather than to be free; for to act freely calls for the supremest exertion of effort. And, furthermore, that this means the emphasis of the element of risk in life, whereas what he seeks primarily is security. Under these circumstances it is extremely easy to see why history should to such an extent be nothing more than a series of missed opportunities. In its application to history, no contention was ever falser than the one that in this world everything happens for the best. It is a contention which holds true on the plane of Nature, where the concept of error can have no content and where all processes are directed by the highest wisdom. It may perhaps be true in its application to the cosmic, for it may be of little moment in the universal process whether man fulfils his destiny for good or for evil. But from the human point of view, the decisive fact is that it is at once possible and yet *not* inevitable that the process of history shall culminate in that fulfilment of meaning which

man must and can demand from it on the basis of the principles of spirit immanent in him. And in this connection the final decisive fact is that this question demonstrably depends on the intellectual initiative of living men, and that they consequently bear the complete responsibility for the issue, whether the perpetually logical process of history leads to the good or to the evil, whether it consists of a constant upward movement of life, or whether it leads to extinction.

And only now do we reach the *real* problem of progress. The word 'marching' already premises the existence of a 'marcher.' The material dealt with in both of the preceding chapters and in the larger part of this chapter only covered the natural background of the true problem of progress. The first two chapters showed what evolves of itself on the basis of the co-operation of the logic of Nature and the free decisions taken in the past; therein we were concerned with the given foundation of all free decisions which may possibly be made by the present. The first observations of this chapter showed how the positive element in every historic process – positive from the point of view of the spirit – was never a self-evolved product of natural development, but came about only through the fact that creative spirit, working

outward from within, formed the given psychic material in correspondence with its aim and ideal. Now since man, in the last analysis, identifies himself only with his creative element, and therefore thinks and acts from the basis of a given fate, and never *towards* fate, *the true and actual problem of progress is the problem of the free attribution of meaning*. On the plane of history, the concept of which, unless understood as sense-fulfilment, is devoid of content,<sup>1</sup> the ultimate decision lies with the creative spirit; whether that spirit recognize it or not, it is the real deciding factor. Only that comes to pass which the creative spirit decides shall come to pass, either as commission or omission. In this respect it is meaning which creates all the facts. What a fact 'is' in the life of the individual depends, first and last, on what it means *to him*, to him specifically. Thus one man in a state of utter destitution may be completely happy. Others, outwardly the darlings of fortune, may wither miserably; and the essential characteristic of the great man is, that being what he is, he can by his attitude towards adverse events

<sup>1</sup>Cf. with regard to the particular totality of meaning presented by history, the paper *Geschichte als Tragödie* in *Wiedergeburt* and the study *Vom Interesse der Geschichte in Philosophie als Kunst*



give them a meaning which transforms the unpropitious into the propitious. For actually the attribution of meaning is not interpretation, but the transformation of the event. He who in his inward soul sees the world in a new light transforms the outward world by that token.

In this respect there is only a shade which sunders the sage from the creative statesman; if the former is inwardly so exalted above things that nothing external can importune him, the latter, by a like superiority, can give to those events, the overwhelming majority of which he must accept like anyone else, a new direction. And it is only at this point that we can fully appreciate to what an enormous degree history has been hitherto a 'series of missed opportunities.' Man has never demonstrated – not even approximately – the degree of superiority, initiative, and responsibility which was theoretically possible. But it is at this point that we also begin to appreciate how tremendous the possibilities would be if he once became clearly aware of the real power at his command, and if he were once prepared to follow its intellectual and moral consequences to their full conclusion. Hitherto, as we have seen, he has almost always followed the inorganic principle of the minimum exertion of force. Yet let us examine, by way

of contrast, two historic manifestations of diametrically opposed spirit, both of which, however, have transformed the world: Jesus Christ and Lenin. For the reasons exposed in the historical digression of this chapter, the world was ripe at the time of Jesus for a new spiritual impulse, for the impulse which the antique world had begotten had run out. It was further indicated circumstantially that the new impulse, if it were to become effective, had to emerge in some emotional embodiment. And that the general direction of the coming regeneration of the spirit could have been known in advance is shown in the vast bulk of similar lore taught by the teachers of that time. But that the West should have become positively and unifiedly Christian is to be attributed solely to the work of Jesus and his great followers. It was through their instrumentality that a specific new spirit was built into the framework of temporal circumstance, and it is thanks to them that this spirit became its living soul. Thanks to them alone, the compensatory-psychological transformation in the spirit of the time was turned into the material of true progress.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The concept of the only true progress—progress not in the outward, but in the inward sense—is defined in the chapter *Was Wir Woollen in Schöpferische Erkenntnis*.

And now as to Lenin. In spite of all the tendencies of the time it was by no means inevitable that Russia should become Bolshevistic. It became so because a supremely powerful mind possessed of a supreme knowledge of the psychological, logical, and material means, built, with supreme consistency, into the perfectly clearly recognized reality, that which he desired to have thus and not otherwise. From the last instance we perceive with complete clarity how sense-realization is achieved. I certainly hold no brief for Lenin's particular terroristic method; that he should have used it, that he should have been compelled to use it, is due to the fact that his spirit was Satanic to an intense degree. But to that extent he was acting, throughout, in accordance with reason; to that extent his method holds, *mutatis mutandis*, for every kind of sense-realization. Sense-realization is never achieved save by the most material *Realpolitik*.<sup>1</sup> The world is a spiritual thing, which must be dealt with in spiritual fashion. And this does not mean that high ideals have in themselves the slightest power, but that they must come to realization in such wise that exact account must be taken of the meaning of all

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the chapter *Politik und Weisheit in Schöpferische Erkenntnis*.

phenomena in their right relative proportion, and that these phenomena must be so manipulated that their peculiar laws shall effect that which the spirit intends – just as the electrical engineer manipulates the specific nature of lightning in the service of human welfare. The problem of the religious founder and that of the philosopher present the same technical aspect as does that of the conqueror of Nature. And thence we come to the final and most profound cause of that which has made history hitherto little more than a series of missed opportunities.

All great spirits were realists, like Lenin. The words of Jesus, even superficially examined, are veritable treasuries of sober, healthy common sense; probed to their depths, they are the highest manifestation of the art of magical expression. This means that they are so conceived that their meaning, when it penetrates deep enough, must transform spirit and soul in accordance with their own peculiar laws;<sup>1</sup> in the case of Jesus, surface and depth were in perfect harmony. Paul, Augustine, Luther, Ignatius Loyola, were less realists than Jesus to the extent that they had no similar direct relationship to the real ultimate depth of spirit and soul, and

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the development of this idea in the chapter, *Jesus der Magier*, in my book, *Menschen als Sinnbilder* (1926).

had only a slight first-hand knowledge of the divine reality. But they were to that extent the more realistic as political spirits. Otherwise they would have achieved nothing. As against that, the majority who desired to do good were idealists; that is to say, they pursued the idea without thought of, or even in direct contradiction to, the reality – in other words, by making use of means that were not at hand. And in this they failed to grasp the real meaning of the spiritual, whose business it is to transform phenomena. As to the large masses – they have always seen in the service of the idea an activity divorced from reality; they have always mistrusted him who sees things in their right perspective, and to that extent the greatest tragedy of all truly spiritual spirits did indeed consist in this, that this prejudice – which in its deepest sense is a gesture of self-defence on the part of the indolent against the power of the spirit which threatens a transformation – inhibited them in their effective efforts. Thence we may take the true measure of the superficiality of those who imagine themselves or others to exhibit a special profundity in refusing to take into account the laws of phenomena. The pure introvert may perhaps be unfitted for this, but he is not for that reason more profound than the

world-mastering spirit, however much more wide the range of his inward experience may be; he merely possesses a different adjustment, and that an unfortunate one as far as the way of the world is concerned.

A Jesus was, because of his knowledge of men and his capacity for expression, much nearer to a Northcliffe – and that despite all ultimate contrast – than to any German idealist. The idealism which manifests itself to-day (this does not apply to the idealism of Fichte) is the life-philosophy of wilful impotence which tries to lift itself to greatness by abusing this wicked world. It is here that we must look for the psychological root of most of the belief in destiny as well as of the prevalent form of belief in the great man. There is, indeed, such a thing as destiny. Entirely apart from the cosmic dispensation (a concept not to be denied), every man finds himself burdened by the karma of past generations and of his own record, every free decision being made on the basis of a given situation – so that to this extent each one must work out his own destiny. But he who thence attributes everything to fate renounces the one thing which may at all be regarded as the manifestation of man's freedom, and thereby renounces equally the one thing which remains for him to do in



the sense of cosmic dispensation. It lies within the scope of freedom to give to events by means of a specific decision at a specific moment, a new direction and a new meaning, and practically everything depends on this. Belief in destiny and *amor fati* are in any event the premise of all freedom; he who lacks the courage to look straight in the face the reality which conditions him, who blinds himself with illusions of his own spinning, lacks the first preliminary to the exercise of freedom. But that belief in destiny, that *amor fati*, must not have the last decisive word. He who says: 'Here I stand; God help me, I can no other,' must be a pitiful sort of person, *unless that 'must' of his gives expression to the compulsion of the deepest spirit, of the deepest insight.* Thus we pass over to the false belief in the great man. The greatness of such a man, where it really exists, consists in the fact that he embodies a superior insight. He must indeed *embody* this, not merely possess it theoretically, for it is only when that insight animates his whole being, when in him the Word becomes flesh, that it can have living effect; only then is it implicit in every utterance, in every silence, in every act, in every abstention; only then does it continue to give living evidence of itself in the souls of

others. But it must be really *insight* that he embodies.

There is not in the whole of human history a single case in which the claim to greatness was sustained unless the claimant was the bearer of a spiritual impulse. He did not even need to understand that impulse in the abstract – it lived on in him none the less. His ‘must’ was always the dictation of the creative spirit. And it is specifically on the basis of his *insight*, and not on the basis of some play of moods, that the great man believes in his destiny. And has it ever been the habit of a man of this type just to leave the conduct of things to the Almighty, as the general run of believers in destiny picture to themselves? Most certainly not! The great man has always known exactly that the cosmic dispensation expressed itself in free decision precisely through the instrumentality of his daring, and that in a given situation he was the Man of Destiny precisely to the extent that destiny revealed itself in his freedom of choice. The great man never appeals to a higher force for that which he himself is capable of; like Jesus, he has embraced of his own *free* will even that destiny which destroys him – embraced it, if not in knowledge, then certainly in faith, in the ‘as if’ sense of Calvinistic

grace by election. It is on this point that everything depends. But as regards destiny in the sense of karma, the fulfilment of which absorbs at least 90 per cent of the activity even of creative spirits, it is obvious that this was taken into account by every great man. No great man has ever seen himself as the master of his life, standing on his own foundations after the fashion of the sentimentalists, who take their emotions, moods, and passions with the utmost seriousness, for metaphysical forces, in order that they may thereby reinterpret their weakness and cowardice as the signs of a high vocation.

Every great man has known that even as a personality the last word with regard to himself did not lie with himself, has known that his personality, even if its metaphysical core were eternally unique, served simultaneously, on this side of the eternally unique, as the organ and instrument of expression of the sub-individual and super-individual; for which reason he has never taken the personal, either in himself or in others, with any seriousness, except as a matter of tact, and, as soon as the domain of the private was overstepped, attributed not the slightest importance to its exclusiveness or its uniqueness. Assuredly there is a possibility of unique greatness not solely in initiative action,

but equally in renunciation. But then this must occur in the sense and spirit of Buddha, who, in never-relaxed effort, really renounced life; but this, again, can only be achieved by extreme soberness and clarity. Buddha, on his plane, was no less a *Realpolitiker* than Lenin, and resembled anyone rather than the average gentle Buddhist. It was my duty to deal thoroughly with the problems of destiny and of the great man,<sup>1</sup> because the false belief in these was the strongest buttress—strongest because least easily seen through—of the hostility to progress. And now it should become quite clear that in the last analysis the problem of progress runs into the problem of the initiative of the spirit. Mankind progresses ‘of itself’ only to the extent that the life-process, with a meaning in itself, finding fulfilment only in the ‘right’ where the conscious spirit has awakened, takes by nature as its dominants the continuous setting of spiritual goals. But the highest possibility of a given situation was seldom recognized hitherto, and the consistency needed to build that possibility into the actuality in the making was always lacking. One may for this

<sup>1</sup>The problem of freedom, in its totality, was dealt with in the Sessions Series of 1925 of the School of Wisdom, published in *Gesetz und Freiheit*, Vol. VII of *Leuchter*, 1926.

reason say that until to-day the human race has barely exploited the possibilities of progress dormant in it. Great successes of sense-realization have been achieved only occasionally by the spirit of evil. The latter had an easier task before it than the former. The same spirit of inertia which so fanatically opposes progress toward the better places itself readily at the service of the spirit of evil. Moreover, the manner of its domination, by force, is dear to masochism, that component in every soul which it is so difficult to overestimate. But before everything else, it demands no independence. The good, however, can be done only by the free will; otherwise, it loses its meaning.



THE problem of historic progress may thus be considered to have been solved on the basis of principle; with regard to the concept of essential progress, which affects only the individual, the reader is referred to the chapter *Was Wir Wollen in Schöpferische Erkenntnis*. Let us now turn back to the condition and the task of our day. The first chapter showed what was the inevitable course of events; the second chapter made it evident that the ecumenic state, as compared with that which preceded it,

represents a higher organic standard. And in this many may find the consolation that, on the whole, things are becoming better of themselves. Our last observations, however, have denied every foundation to such expectations. The *ultimate* decision lies with the free initiative of the spirit. The spirit of Lenin gave to Russian life a form which is in the first place a direct contrast to the kingdom of heaven on earth, but it none the less represents a life-form born of the spirit which has found as yet no foil in Europe.

And indeed Europe still lacks a new meaning-giving impulse. This explains its chaotic condition. Movements and counter-movements run wild and undirected. Not utterly so, indeed, for in the life of Europe the conscious spirit already plays so great a rôle, and the possible body of the still soulless psychic organism is already so clearly outlined, that everything before us yet seems to acquire meaning as an embryonic phase, and to that extent permits us to anticipate the infusion of meaning still to come. But a positive attribution of meaning is still lacking. Fundamentally, things are with us to-day as they were nearly two thousand years ago with the Mediterranean world before the Christ impulse breathed a new spirit into it.



The sole sense in which spiritualization is attainable under our present premises we have already seen (p. 233). Only the conjunction of soul and spirit in a deepening of the latter so that it shall become the focus of the totality of life can bring us salvation. But our last observations on the significance of spiritual initiative permit us to perceive the task of our time with even more precision. Once the spirit has become as trained and as conscious as we find it to-day, then the burden of responsibility which rests on man's shoulders is heavier than ever before. Then his freedom becomes the decisive factor to a higher degree than ever before. The false appraisal and misjudgments of the leaders of previous times were of little significance, for then life was dominated by the untransferable; and for that reason the spirit, being able to achieve but little, was also able to spoil as little. On the whole the decision lay with 'destiny.' In the world of to-day the main emphasis lies on the transferable, and just as wireless spans the oceans in an instant, so, in the briefest interval, every thought produces all the extensive and intensive effects latent within it. For that reason, errors in thought produce catastrophic results such as only cosmic catastrophies have produced hitherto. For instance,

the World War and its consequences. But for that very reason, clear-sighted initiative, together with a corresponding consistency, can, on the other hand, bring about in very few years revolutions which otherwise could hardly have matured in the course of centuries; for instance, the Bolshevising of Russia and its radiation throughout the entire Orient. We are in no wise concerned here with 'destiny,' but with the work of the human spirit, for which the latter bears the full responsibility. From this it follows, then, that to-day the general possibilities for good as well as for evil are infinitely greater than they ever were before — *as well as for evil*: in this world of polar law, opposites necessarily go together. And from this it follows farther that a good issue to the present crisis lies more clearly within the realm of possibility than ever was the case before, but on the other hand, such an issue depends entirely on man's recognition of his higher responsibility and his acceptance of all its consequences. But this means, above all, the following: only profoundest and clearest understanding shall make the decision; only the fundamental accentuation of the decisive significance of free resolution shall have moral validity; every appeal to destiny or to inner compulsion must be

fundamentally discountenanced. Destiny will take care of itself. God does his own directing, as best He may. *Man* can to-day fulfil his task under the exclusive condition that he espouse his freedom completely and exclusively. The deepest understanding and the highest sense of responsibility can alone bring salvation to-day. To this extent the nurturing of illusions and flirtation with opinion (in contrast to insight) is to-day – except in the case of an *ignorantia invincibilis* – nothing short of criminal. The circles of the idealistically-minded, who are of the contrary opinion, represent to-day a destructive element – let their membership be composed of the finest and most gifted spirits. Destructive, because they are a double aid to those who would make use of the initiative of the spirit to infuse into reality an undesired meaning, first by their own refusal, and secondly by their discouragement of those who could serve the right cause.

How is it possible for any man not wholly graceless, who indulges his lofty moods and emotions, or who harks back enthusiastically to classical times and preaches their gospel – how is it possible for such a man honestly to believe that, in comparison with any Bolshevik leader of consequence, he represents any force what-

soever? He can believe it only if he is too indolent or too cowardly to see reality as it is. Assuredly the issue can also be influenced, Chinese fashion, by abstention from action; but only when this abstention has as its foundation the clearest understanding of meaning; after Christ and Buddha, no one was clearer in his judgment than Lâo-Tsze himself. But at its present stage this new world in the making is not a world containing possibilities of productive abstention; to-day it is the Bolshevik leaders who are the pace-setters. Therefore only he who is of equal worth in the realm of spirit and will has any historic future; only he can be of any significance in the dawning ecumenic age. For in view of its expanse and the multiplicity of the relationships which indicate its living nerve-system, only he can play a rôle in that age whose spirit is all-encompassing, extremely swift and supremely powerful of will. In this I have nothing to say either against the introverted (inward-contemplative) types, or against those who are silent in the land. These, in the time to come, as in times past, will know the profoundest personal experiences, and bring forth the most finished creations—that is the organic privilege of the introverted type; they are the cement which provides for the main-

tenance of spiritual treasures. But they will not participate in the decisions of *historic* destiny. In accordance with the 'symbolism of history' (see the chapter on this subject in *Schöpferische Erkenntnis*), only those have a voice in the decision whose dispositions answer to the demands of the time. And thus I come to the *living type*, which can alone bring to realization the possibilities of higher construction.

We have seen that every culture and every condition has its carrier in a representative type. The determinant mass-type of this age is the chauffeur. His born leader has as type the present-day Bolshevik and Fascist leader. But the possible higher culture will not be the creation of this army. That world-embracing organization of the ecumenic age can become a culture-organism without the detour of centuries of devolution, only if those parts of it which I described in the second chapter as the living opposition should develop upward into the carriers of the new meaning which the chauffeur-world, too, can point to as its own basic note. I have already shown how, on the face of the whole world, there is emerging an involuntary union of those who, conscious of the meaninglessness of the world of to-day, are striving for the creation of a new meaning; they

are to be found equally within the body of all nations, religions, and creeds; this is the cause of the universalistic efforts of all religious unions. But the mere effort at unification means nothing. That section of mankind which desires and represents the deeper side of life finds itself to-day in the position of an impotent minority to a degree perhaps never to be observed before. The general character of this age is materialistic and anti-religious. If men of education have already passed through the materialistic stage, the masses are only just entering it. And as far as numbers have the power – and in this age numbers have such power as they never had before – the masses *are bound* to obtain the mastery. The choice spirits have made too many mistakes, have shown too much blindness, for this still to be avoidable.

One thing remains to be done: to organize all our forces to the end that there shall be produced, from within the *élite*, as soon as possible, a determinant type who, as the carrier and embodiment of a meaning capable of animating *all* life – the depths as well as the surface, the metaphysician as well as the chauffeur – shall involuntarily exercise a universal power of attraction. As compared with the spiritual leadership of the past, this type is completely



new, as the chauffeur-type is completely new. This leader-type must be as swift as he is deep, as psychologically as he is metaphysically conscious, as apt for *Realpolitik* as for the apprehension of meaning. He must embody the new ideal of *world-ascendancy*.<sup>1</sup> He would be superior to all types that have hitherto existed to the extent that he would be not one-sided, but all-sided; not exclusively spiritual or holy, but just as world-mastering as he is profound; integrating into unity within himself the whole width and tension possible to mankind. To breed out this type is the historic task which has fallen to Europe's lot. This *type*: this does not in any wise mean to raise up to renewed empire any given race – be it even the Nordic. However important blood may be, and whatever value of encouragement there may lie in the biological idea of breeding, the formulation of the problem which sees in racial purity an end in itself is fundamentally erroneous. The idea of race has an historic future only to the extent that it can institute, within those races which have demonstrated their superior value, a process of such selective breeding that they can cope with the demands of the spirit of the time. The decision

<sup>1</sup>See the exact description of this type in the chapter *Weltüberlegenheit* in *Schöpferische Erkenntnis*.

with regard to importance belongs to the spiritual type only. A Siegfried would to-day hardly be suitable as a non-commissioned officer. And if the Nordic race be not fitted, in relation to the new spirit of the age, to rule, as is demanded, then, all prejudice to the contrary notwithstanding, it must forfeit its claim to importance, as has happened before with races that were rulers in their time – nor will this be for the worst, but, on the contrary, for the best.

We repeat, then: the task of Europe is to breed the new, determinant culture-type. As the leading material power, Europe is played out. But on the other hand, it has already passed psychologically beyond the stage in which the chaffueur and his chieftain could be the finally decisive element. Here even the masses have fundamentally outgrown the possibility of a determinant materialism. So that – if we may institute a parallel – Europe to-day plays the same historic rôle as Palestine once played within the framework of the Roman world-empire. To-day the spiritual light may no longer be looked for from the East; from now onward, the East will become the carrier and the symbol of materialism, even though it should continue to harbour the most profound-minded minorities. To-day it is only in shrunk-

en, weakened Europe that the light can rise again. It is *here* that all the problems of human importance present themselves. It is *here* only that the new 'meaning' can be born as an historic force. And this not only because with us the life-problem of the apprehension of meaning has already become acute, but also for two empiric reasons: First, because the technical-intellectual side is already completely developed, and for that reason no longer constitutes a problem; to that extent the body is already ripe for re-animation, which does not apply to Russia and certainly not to the Orient. Second, because the ecumenic state is the richest in tensions which human history has known; the leaders of that age must consequently embody in themselves, must be able to bear within themselves, more tensions than any type of man before them; and to-day it is only the European who has grown up to the complexity and contradictoriness of these tensions. In this wise, then, Europe is the Palestine of the world in the making. It is, primarily, only its laboratory. It can become its cultural forecast and finally grow into its determinant focus. It can be of greater significance to the future than it ever has been to the past. Its first duty is to guard the metaphysical and religious spirit in

the midst of the new wandering of the nations, as the Church did in the midst of the earlier wandering. But its true and ultimate contribution is not, as many believe, to create the counter-world to the materialistic Soviet-world, to uplift the divine as a foil to the Satanic, but rather – to give it extreme expression – to win to that inward focal point from which both the divine and the diabolic in man may be reconquered from the former. For it is only the new, higher synthesis of world-ascendancy which has an historic future; even the realm of the purely sacred lies irretrievably behind us. But whosoever shall have achieved that one thing that is needed, the higher synthesis, in and for himself, he will have done the most important thing that there remained to be achieved for centuries to come. And he will have done it for all.

. . . Yet it need not come in this wise, and should it come in any other fashion, then Europe will disappear as the embodiment of any significance. Great prospects always imply corresponding dangers. Thus I return to the demand that only the deepest spirituality, allied with the soberest clarity and steel-like consistency, shall be the deciding element in Europe. In the steel-like newly-rising world, even the bearer of the spirit can achieve importance only as a knight.

No dancing star arises this time out of the spiritual chaos. All the pious expectations of tender souls will be disappointed; all mere 'experience of life' will show its historic unimportance. I know well that these contentions do not sound pleasant, especially in the ears of many spiritual people. To reverse oneself, to deny what one is accustomed to assert, to desire the new, is unpleasant; to dismiss cherished illusions, painful. It were so much more comfortable if a saviour were soon to appear who would relieve the individual of all responsibility, or if a fresh theory would only create a new, soft cushion that we might slumber on, or if destiny were of itself to work all things out, or if a life of emotions in the old, intimate circle sufficed to bring regeneration to the world. . . . The world to-day is far, far different than many highly spiritual individuals would like to have it. To their souls especially must that new world in the making, as it is in reality, be revolting; and more revolting than anything else must be the type of its predestined leader. Again there rings out on every side the old cry, new-fashioned to the time - 'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?' To what extent only plain, clear wisdom can bring salvation to-day is to be shown in the last chapter.

ONLY keen, clear understanding can be the salvation of our time – without which no new life-feeling, not even a religion in itself! Only understanding transforms. If the transformation instituted by the Christ-impulse within the body of western mankind issued from a new way of love, it could do so only because love, given the psychological premises of that age, was the most fitting instrument of a profounder understanding. For emotions cannot produce effects at a distance; they are transmissible only by contagion, and contagion never passes beyond the boundaries of a given circle. That which has held until our time holds of our time in the highest degree. From now onward only a spirit-body, as the vessel of a spiritual impulse, can express the intellectualized and amazingly perspicacious condition of the mind of our times. And though, remembering those large circles who simply do not see the matter thus, it may be disputed, one thing to us is certain, that only the most transferable form can achieve the contemplated end. For only such a form acts quickly enough. And everything depends on rapidity, for the reason that



the counter-spirit to this form, which alone possesses the capacity to rebuild true culture, uses the advantages of the immediate transferability of the intellectual with complete mastery. He who wishes to realize this new culture must possess at least as good a mastery as the former over the means of possible sense-realization. He must, in short, show the completest proficiency in the law of psychological management – magical expression, with the widest range of effect.

The following observation should make this quite clear. To-day, the true intermediary of the spiritual is not the writer of ponderous tomes, but the journalist. The majority of people think they have given to this fact all the consideration it merits if they deplore it. In this they exhibit a criminal superficiality. It is true enough that journalistic technique seldom serves the finest spirit. But this does not in any wise alter the fact that to-day it is the kind of technique which can achieve most. Very few have the time and the taste for the reading of heavy volumes. For them, scientific values must be prepared in the compactest and most practical form if they are to assimilate them. And further, be it noted that this circumstance does not in itself indicate superficiality on the part of the reader, but

rather a higher development of the intellect. He who catches the drift of a matter in the content of a brief phrase is as absolutely superior to the one who needs laborious argumentation as the man of pithy expression is to the man of pompous phraseology. That the journalistic gift is in itself no indication of inferiority is proved by the single fact that, without exception, all great statesmen were masters of the journalistic method, in their manipulation of the masses, and that the ablest directors of our time have come from the ranks of the journalists. The gift in question means in itself nothing more nor less than the capacity for brief, telling, and effective expression. What else, indeed, was characteristic of the most effective among the profound spirits of all times – be they kings or sages – if not this very gift? Were they not all to this extent not simply journalists, but indeed super-journalists? With our present-day rapidity of intercourse, when all the representatives of evil make allowance in masterly fashion for the new spiritual condition, it is only the super-journalist who can, in any event, achieve significance for the good. That which distinguished Jesus, Lâo-Tsze, Heraclitus, and Nietzsche must be in the highest degree characteristic of the representative of the spirit who would lead to-day.

It is therefore a sign of complete lack of understanding to believe that, because only re-cognition can save the world of to-day, therefore new philosophic systems or theories, or big books in general, which leave nothing unsaid, will acquire increased importance in the future. On the contrary, such works on the whole will mean progressively less; they will henceforth only prepare the material for the magical expressions of the mighty. Their historic hour has sounded. Nor has that hour sounded because in the future spirit will be taken less seriously than hitherto, *but on the contrary because spirit will mean more, and because it will be understood better than ever before what spirit really is.* The age of the reign of theory was in the last analysis nothing else than an age of the spirit misunderstood. Sense-realization from the side of the spirit calls for a fundamentally different attitude from that of the scientific age. The clarification of this point is the purpose of this last chapter.



IT is necessary at this point to make a wide digression, and above all to approach the significance of theory from a new angle. We found (Chap. 3) that the problem of progress

is not what it was fancied to be by the nineteenth century; it is not ideas in themselves which are the final arbiters of history; their effectiveness depends on the extent to which they represent living realities of the time. If we look at the same relationship from another side, it must strike us that theory as a whole has nothing like the importance which is attributed to it by the spirit of the time. When Einstein's theory of relativity first found general acceptance, there was hardly an after-dinner conversation in which its revolutionary content was not discussed, and only philosophers hesitated to commit themselves as to whether, even if its complete accuracy were taken for granted, it really represented something so revolutionary. From the vital point of view they were in the right. However close the premises of Einstein may have brought that pure concept of Nature, which is the goal of science, they will have altered nothing in our world-experience, in the double sense of our true adjustment to the cosmic relation and our immediate attitude towards and within it – an observation which of itself leads to the other, namely, that even the discovery of Copernicus did not mean as much as we have been taught to believe. Even if, in an indirect way, this discovery may have lifted man towards a greater

mastery over the powers of Nature, in his true attitude (not simply as a theoretical commentary thereon) he has remained just as geocentric as he was before – if, indeed, it were not truer to say that it is, thanks to this discovery, that he became geocentric; the Greek, who felt himself to be subject to cosmic destiny, doubtless felt, to that extent, more Copernican than any modern whose personal judgment constitutes for himself the court of final appeal.

Another example: the results of the World War have shown with the utmost clarity that fundamentally it makes very little difference whether we live under a capitalistic or a socialistic regime. Where the latter existed, events have shown that a new order of things in itself only created a new foundation and circumstance for the exercise of the struggle for private property. This experience demonstrates that an essentially new order in property relationships would postulate from the outset the decline of the instinct for private property from its place of predominance; hence it follows further that if this decline had actually occurred, the character of the external order of society would not be a matter of consequence. I limit myself to these two examples. I think they suffice to make clear the fact that the abstract spiritual did

not play even anything near the rôle which the nineteenth century ascribed to it.

Does this signify that the spiritual was something of no concern? It means something else: *that the usual concept of the spiritual-real lies much too close to the surface.* That which makes the spiritual what it is is what it contains of meaning. If one succeeds at any time in showing that a certain spiritual value has another meaning, i.e. occupies another place in the total relationship of life's meaning, then that act alone has fundamentally defined a deeper spiritual value as the reality. What issues therefore from the consideration of these examples is not a substitution of psychology for philosophy, but rather the elevation of philosophy to a viewpoint which will permit us to envisage idealism – in its broadest sense – from the side of meaning as part of a greater whole. If for Kant philosophy was already implicitly the doctrine of the right accentuation in the totality of life's meaning, then, in order to reach its consummation, philosophy must set as its goal the ideal of the absolute, ultimate tribunal of meaning accessible to the human spirit. We may immediately see from this to what extent the premise from which idealistic thought started was erroneous. What may be deduced



as special theoretical doctrine is not the entirety of spiritual reality; the forces which create theories constitute only a part of the real spiritual forces. It is true that right epistemology and *Gegenstandstheorie*, right logic, phenomenology, etc., are, as demands, both fulfilable and necessary; our spiritual organization demands one-sided illuminators, in order that it may see for itself specific sides of the real; and an abstraction begun and carried out in conformity with rule, which does not step beyond the bounds of the total reality, always gives expression to some existing relationship. For all that, the product of such an abstraction is, as such, an artificial formation. And if the coherence of the sense of the spirit should be centred in it, then it amounts to a projection of reality upon an imaginary surface. This is the real reason why no theory has ever been demonstrated to be true – no theory *can* be true; at best it can only be to the purpose. For the same reason, no explanation of the world has ever done what it has been asked to do; since such a thing is only imaginable on the plane of projected theory, which means from the viewpoint of the man with a will to understand – not situated in the centre of experienced reality but upon an eccentrically situated plane of projection – a

final explanation of the world is altogether unthinkable. The more complete such an explanation, the more unintelligible it would be, i.e. the more contradictory of its own meaning – just as we already find the completer explanations of the physical universe unimaginable and inconceivable. Its ultimate principles would have to be even more artificial excogitations, comparable to even more imaginary mathematical values than are those of physics.

But that which a projecting theory is forever unable to do can be achieved by *sense-realization*. The latter has no interest whatsoever in principles; it deals directly with the meaning. Meaning is the real cause of life; it reveals itself to the relevantly gifted spirit without any intermediation, exactly as the reality of the visible reveals itself to the open eye. If once a spirit is rightly adjusted to the cosmic relation of things, it cannot help seeing the human relationship of things in their right perspective; the false perspective is the result of skew, i.e. eccentric adjustment. Concentric adjustment is, on the other hand, the original position; it possesses, *mutatis mutandis*, all the peculiar advantages which distinguish Euclidean space as compared with all other reference systems that may be thought out: whatever he may think, man per-

ceives and understands the spatial only in the framework of three dimensions. Now it is quite clear why apprehension of meaning existed at all times, even when all the premises were lacking for a relevant world-explanation; we *live* before we theorize; the acquisition of consciousness is independent of any capacity for explanation; to know, on the other hand, is – as the normal relationship between the real thing given and the subject capable of real reception and thought – organic, innate perception. Granted that a relationship is real, and granted that it has become known as such, then the most primitive individual to whom this applies may anticipate the discovery of the most recent science and may surpass, in the judgment of intelligence, the greatest scholars. For no proof in the world can do more than make a thing evident, and proof never means anything more than a reassuring roundabout way to intuitive knowing.



Now in what way is sense-realization at all possible? This is what science, from its eccentric base, rightly asks. Seen from the point of view of life, the question is devoid of meaning. There *is* sense-realization; it is a pri-

mordial phenomenon; meaning as the creative foundation of the living thing is indeed not logical, but is experimentally demonstrable,<sup>1</sup> just as light is demonstrable by the fact that it illuminates, whatever be its physico-chemical explanation. One may object to the term 'meaning,' but this is a grammatical question not touching the essence, and its decision in one direction or another changes nothing of the nature of the thing. Even science, whatever stand it take, proceeds from the fact of possible apprehension of meaning, but, in accordance with its special position, it refers the results of this apprehension not to the true focus of intelligibility but to a virtual centre lying outside. This applies equally to all modern scientific philosophy. If, with Kant, the latter refers all reality to the cognizant subject, then it makes the theoretician in the spiritual man the whole of him. If it refers that which I call 'meaning' to ideas, or values, or a transcendental 'ought,' then it explains the spiritually primary phenomenon by means of postulates or secondary formations. These two examples suffice to make it clear that modern scientific philosophy and that which humanity has always known as

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the detailed steps of the proof in the chapter *Was Wir Wollen in Schöpferische Erkenntnis*.

wisdom do not lie on the same plane. The latter, which primarily does not explain, but knows, envisages by its nature the total relationship of all the possible products of science. And where it becomes the focus of action of the personality, its primary knowing as primary apprehension of meaning is, as compared with philosophy in its modern sense, not only the basic, but also, from the point of view of life, the higher. For it alone is capable of animating the totality of life direct from the spirit; it alone is capable of infusing spirit directly into life.

It has already become clear that there is only one thing capable of imparting a new spiritual impulse to the world – philosophy as wisdom. In its primal attitude this is fundamentally different from science, and its cognitions lie on another level. They do not refer back to the basic principles of a possible theory, but to the ultimate living premises of all that can be imagined. For that reason it is only the exceptions among them which can be logically demonstrated. But they are, on the other hand, demonstrable as valid in their effect. Wisdom is in its essence not a theoretical, but a vital and practical matter. Its first appeal is therefore not to theories of cognition, but to healthy common sense, i.e. the ability to see all things in

the vicinity in their right perspective. And its ultimate appeal is not to an abstract ontology – not even to that ontology which might stand as absolutely right – but to the immediate perception of the cosmic totality in such perspective that all its components emerge in the same ratio of importance that they actually bear to one another. And since life itself at its root is meaning, something further follows, something which finally dissolves the parallel of science and wisdom. *Wisdom means creative force.* All life is a constant vitalization issuing from the spiritual source of that which in itself is meaningless, or of the vessel of a secondary meaning-content. As the spiritual source alone sustains physical and psychic life in its processes, so, where it develops to the conscious spirit, it alone is capable of transforming the given phenomenon; for it is only through the new infusion of meaning that anything new can come out of the eternally identical elements of Nature. In exactly the same way, it is possible for anyone, *to the extent that something new occurs to him*, to say something new with the identical twenty-six letters of the alphabet. But *only* if that be granted; the letters of the alphabet, as such, conceal no meaning. As long as meaning is grasped only by the intelligence, its force



spends itself on the plane of projected theory: hence the impotence of all ideas and theories as such. But if the conscious centres on that meaning, then it becomes life-force. Then it operates just in the transformation of the phenomena with the same immediacy as the spiritual centre of the individual does in its control of the actions of those parts of the body which are subject to the conscious. From this it will appear obvious that *one* great man signifies more in the way of progress than the aggregate of all which can enter under the concept of 'thing.' Every man in whom the Word at all becomes flesh has thereby become a living spiritual force, which no theory as such is. In reality, the 'material thing' is that which matters least. Even those beautiful things which we call philosophy, religion, wisdom, politics, etc., do not exist in reality, if by reality we are to understand immediate effectiveness; there are only living men, always with their individual adjustments – even if these individual adjustments can be abstractly conceived within the framework of a type. What it all depends on is this: that meaning, deeply apprehended on the one hand, shall on the other hand be infused into life as thoroughly as possible.

IF thus, as the preceding chapters of this book have shown, only a deeper apprehension of meaning can lead to a new culture, this must not be taken to mean that salvation will come from a new, definite doctrine, from a new theory. He who expects this misunderstands the situation fundamentally. The scientific-theoretic age lies irrevocably behind us, because its concept of spirit was too narrow, too specialized. What we are concerned with is the bringing about of a new inner condition in which the spirit, conscious of its inward depth, shall again be able to operate with complete immediacy; I say 'again,' because this was impossible to it precisely in the scientific age. To this extent we may see that what is needed is not the elevation of wisdom, in contrast to abstract philosophy, to the rôle of determinant force, but the elevation of the living sage, i.e. of the completely spirit-conscious, spirit-ruled man, in contrast to abstract discipline. But if wisdom is to that degree a state, how can wisdom be acquired? Is it not purely a matter of endowment, i.e. a matter of grace? It may indeed be learned under the one limitation which applies to all things: namely, that only he who is fittingly gifted can profit from study. *The state of the sage is that of the rightly adjusted man.* This it is which distin-

guishes him essentially from others — not serenity, tolerance, composure, and whatever other attributes prejudice may prescribe as indispensable to the wise man; these may or may not be there, for they are not part of the fundamental characteristic. The state of the sage is, let us repeat, essentially that of the rightly adjusted man. Now a false adjustment on principle can always, through transposition, be transformed into a right one; for the Logos is the principle of initiative and transferability. To understand is to transform. It is true that many adjustments are so firmly fixed that it is very difficult, if not totally impossible, to transpose them; in principle, since to understand is in itself transforming, it is always possible, for the psyche is a total relationship of meaning, and as such can be focused on any point; and the very recognition of a false adjustment means to be rid of it. This has been proved by psycho-analysis and in particular by Alfred Adler's 'individual psychology.' In the same sense, deepening is, as a practical matter, often unattainable, yet in principle always possible, for the ultimate depth lives in every one, and it is only a question of making it conscious. Now since the transformation of a human state means in practice nothing else than that its most gifted

representatives shall become different from what they were and then set the tone, the limitations described above in no wise diminish the historic possibility. The requisite transposition and deepening – and I call that the training to wisdom – may therefore ensue.

But it calls, indeed, for other methods than those used by science. Seen from another angle, wisdom means the faculty for magic, i.e. the faculty to influence and transform life directly through the spirit.<sup>1</sup> Thus it can be learned only by the methods of magic. I cannot elaborate this subject here. But for the purpose of this chapter in its relation to the entire book, a few directive instances may be given. Why was Confucius wont to say: 'He who does not strive in effort, him I will not help on. He who does not knock for the expression, to him I will not open. He to whom I show one corner and he cannot transfer it to the other three, for him I will not repeat'? Because only the self-activity of the spirit and the soul can initiate the transformation. No man should be told more than is requisite for him to know to enable him to reach by himself the stage that he should reach; just as a poem is to be distin-

<sup>1</sup>Compare the chapter *Jesus der Magier* of my book *Menschen als Sinnbilder*.

guished from a mass of letters primarily by the fact that not all are used and that they are not set down in random fashion, so all living effect depends, among other things, on the right relation between speech and silence. For that very reason the man into whom we seek to infuse a living impulse should not have so much explained to him that he can store the meaning of what has been said into his memory – for there it loses its transforming power<sup>1</sup> – nor should we enter so deeply into objections that the suggestive power of the stated idea becomes weakened. Living procreation is, indeed, essentially different from learned discussion. For him who has a given practical aim in view, the latter is under all circumstances worthless; what matters to him is not who is theoretically in the right, but what it is he wishes to achieve. For that reason the watchword of England's wise policy is not 'understanding' but 'Never explain and never apologize'; by *not* entering into argument, but rather by the preservation of the tension, one succeeds in transmitting one's condition – given that this is superior and firm enough – by the compulsion of suggestion.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. regarding the difference between projected and living cognition, the study *Erscheinungswelt und Geistesmacht* in *Philosophie als Kunst*.

For the same reason the sage, under certain circumstances, will refrain from insisting even where he is most concerned; for he knows from experience that a word thrown out at random often sinks deeper than a word hammered home. For the same reason, on the other hand, he is especially fond of the use of paradox; for this, as I have shown in my treatment of the problem of producing effect through distance in *Natürlicher Wirkungskreis* (in *Wiedergeburt*), has an explosive effect.

But enough of examples; I do not wish to tell too many tales out of the School of Wisdom. Furthermore, the purpose of epistemological observations within the framework of a political-psychological book is already fulfilled. They were intended to show to what extent the traditional condition of the intellectual *élite* was not one of dominating spirit, but rather, on the contrary, of spiritual impotence, and to what extent a radical inner transposition is needed, if the spirit is to bring about that which to-day it alone is capable of bringing about. These observations were further intended to indicate how the requisite transposition, deepening, and higher training are attainable in a practical way. At the close I wish once more to summarize, in short, clear sentences, in what manner rebirth



may come in a large way. Since it is a question of the transformation of state, new theories, new forms of faith, new solutions of the world's mystery *are entirely out of the question*. This time no new Messiah will deliver the world. Since progress can spring only from the initiative spirit, from intensified activity of freedom and heightened acceptance of responsibility, it follows that no sort of 'other,' or outside, thing – be it a traditional theory or an accepted God – can relieve the individual to the slightest extent. Henceforth every man must want to be his own saviour. This holds true – as I especially wish to emphasize – even under the premise, which I personally accept, that in the last analysis the decision lies with higher powers; for the realm of possible freedom remains for man, under all circumstances, his exclusive field of decision.<sup>1</sup> Henceforth it all depends on *each* individual. Only when a large enough number of individuals have solved their personal problem can there ensue through this medium a molecular transposition of the whole. Fundamentally the question must not read: 'What is to be done?' or 'What will happen?' but, in every case, only: 'What shall *I* do?' The fact that in the future

<sup>1</sup>This fundamental truth is proved in the chapter *Der Letzte Sinn der Freiheit of Wiedergeburt*.

also all definitive progress will be instituted by individual great men, and that these will perhaps mean more than ever before, changes nothing in the general nature of the problem. The really great men will assume the leadership only on the day when a rightly oriented minority has come into being. As Bismarck said: 'A man is only just as big as the wave which surges beneath him.'

And yet one may ask: If this be so, if everything depend on the individual, on *each* individual, what does this book mean? The answer is that when this book is read aright – that is, not with a critical-reflective approach, but meditatively, with a view to perfect inner assimilation – it will, to the extent that I have succeeded in finding the right expression, of itself set in motion within every reader the transformation and transposition which he personally needs, whether in the sense of a bitter apprehension of the world of circumstance with which he must deal, or in the sense of a deeper understanding of his own spirit-soul problem. In both cases it will mean: to have disposed of false formulations of the problem and to have made room for new, more relevant formulations. Marcus Aurelius wrote: 'Just look at things from another side than that from which you

have seen them hitherto, for that actually means to begin a new life.' This sentence may be paraphrased in the following fashion: Only *show* things from another side, and all those who perceive them will of themselves begin a new life. Under all circumstances, each one must find his way in the positive sense for himself, just as no man can relieve another of the labour of breathing. More than to institute the process of self-discovery of his way in another, and to hasten that process, lies beyond the power of any teacher. Wherever one has sought to do more, whether by indicating methods which might be equally useful to all, or by predicting specific issues, he has in effect not liberated but enchained. But at this turning-point, everything ultimately depends on intensified self-determination.



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