Creating

Social

Sacraments

by

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Preface

This book represents an attempt to penetrate to the heart of social life, which is essentially something holy, a sacrament. The patron saint of social life is John the Baptist, and its divine inspirator and helper is the Elohim Uriel, who stands with the other six Elohim under the direct guidance of Christ. What arises through their guidance may be called the Christian social impulse. Since Uriel is almost unknown, we will explore his activity first, in "Five Urielic Considerations." These were first published in the magazine *Lazarus* (Raisdorf 1989/2;1991/1;1994/1,2,3) and revised for this book.

My intention is to gather together building blocks toward a sacramental approach to social life—not to replace the ecclesiastic sacraments, but to stand beside them. Both social and ecclesiastic sacramentalism are subject to Uriel. Each assumes that Christ faces us in every human being. That is why throughout the text, I have capitalized the word "Other" when referring to fellow human beings.

I take sole responsibility for this book, although I must credit many indirect collaborators. Sigismund von Gleich (1896–1953) deserves first mention; this book is dedicated to him. As my fatherly friend and unorthodox initiator into anthroposophy, in jest he long ago named me his "adjutant," who was to follow him—again, in jest—as he set off, after the war, to conquer Europe for threefolding. His adjutant did not remain faithful. The meaning of his last work, *Die Inspirationsquellen der Anthroposophie* (Zeist 1953, 2nd edition, Stuttgart,1981) particularly, escaped me. Then, eight years ago, when I began this work, the sponsor of my attempt—encouraging, helping, reminding, consoling, and wishing to remain unnamed, pointed to the Inspirationsquellen, and I "overheard" it. Once the text existed in rough outline, I discovered that the foundation for what I wanted to say was already laid by Sigismund von Gleich in that book and in two articles in *Blätter für Anthroposophie* (Stuttgart 1951/1,5). From beyond the threshold he again served me greatly. What he had worked through and published dispelled my last doubts as to whether what I was able to say about social sacramentalism was publishable at all. May this book express my *amende honorabile* and my gratitude for my great teacher.

Others across the threshold stand behind this book—partly through what they gave me during their lives, as Karl König and Stefan Lubienski, and partly through what they have meant to me after their deaths: through their work, remembrance of them, and also because I was able to experience them as lovingly accompanying my work. Among many others, I also mention Carlo Pietzner and Valentin Tomberg. Tomberg's lectures given at a conference of the Anthroposophische Vereenigung in Holland in August 1939 (*Die vier Christusopfer und das Erscheinen des*

Christus im Ätherischen)[1] have accompanied me since 1943 on a long but fruitful detour through science. These lectures proved to be an important key when I stood before the portal of the Christian social impulse.

Whom of the living shall I name? Would I not have to thank everyone who has given me insights? It seems misguided to think that I wrote this book. I am certainly not referring to any sort of mediumship here, but to my concrete experience of Rudolf Steiner's observation that almost everything we can accomplish is due to others. In this sense, I can say that this book was written in me by the living and the dead, by human beings and angels. If I misunderstood them or did not do them justice because my ability to form the thoughts was deficient—that, so to speak, is my contribution.

I would particularly like to credit four people whose work I found helpful—even though, through their different approaches to the topic, they arrived at conclusions different from mine. The truth is after all manifold. In his wonderful *Parcivàl Trilogy* (Dürnau 1987–1991), Bernd Lampe first assured me that I am not the only one searching for the social sacraments. I owe him very much, and regret that my development of the theme did not allow the inclusion of his insights, which come from a very different perspective. The situation is similar with Gerhard von Beckerath, whose *Umrisse eines sozialen Kultus* [*Outlines of a Social Cultus*] (Mitteilungen aus der anthroposophischen Arbeit in Deutschland, Stuttgart III/1990), as well as many personal conversations, inspired me. Athys Floride—who, like Bernd Lampe, I have never met, is the third influence I would like to mention. His Begegnung als Aufwacherlebnis (Dornach 1982) revealed him to be a brother in the "secret order" of Urielites who seldom meet one another except in spirit. I must also acknowledge Sergej O. Prokofieff. His work in general, and *The Occult Significance of Forgiveness* in particular, was helpful to me.

As a true friend, Taco Bay accompanied the birth of this work with his help. The concept of social sacramentalism first entered my will when I was working with a small circle of people he had called together to develop thoughts on the theme oratorium-ambulatorium-laboratorium.

As a teacher for several years in the priest's seminar of The Christian Community in Stuttgart, I had the opportunity to take part daily in the early morning Act of Consecration of Man, which otherwise only those preparing for the priesthood may attend. Here I was able to observe what sacraments are capable of effecting. The mood there enabled me for the first time to describe the beginning of social sacramentalism—without yet calling it such—-and thereby to experience that within this form there are also people looking for the Urielic stream.

While lecturing in the training for threefolding in the Netherlands, I also had this experience, here with very young people who did not aspire to become priests. That some of them today responsibly represent the social impulse in various areas is a sign to me that souls exist today who want to work out of the Urielic stream.

I was also privileged to work for several years with a very small circle of people who wished to become social priests. To address this theme frankly, to wrestle with the questions in company, was a gift.

I.

Five Urielic Considerations

About Urielites

If we want to speak about "Urielites," we must first get rid of the idea that all anthroposophists are "Michaelites"—and of the attendant misunderstanding that whoever is not a Michaelite cannot be an anthroposophist. Anthroposophists who can perceive different streams constantly meet non-Michaelites; but because of the above-mentioned misconception, they like to attribute everything to "Michael." This does not serve the sincerity of anthroposophists or the manifoldedness of anthroposophy—and certainly not Michael himself, since he is in no way "xenophobic," but especially cosmopolitan.

Certainly, we live in a Michael age. In it, all beings serving Christ subject themselves to his service, especially Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel.[2] Thus they work together for the progress of humanity. If we take this fourfoldness as a starting point, we can better understand today's (bad) habit of strongly asserting one's own impulse. This habit makes it clear that each stream needs to be supplemented by the other three.

In the history of the Anthroposophical Society, the Raphaelic impulse assumed undisputed importance beside the Michaelic impulse; in practice, even more importance. Gabriel's impulse is accepted in one sphere—avoiding his somewhat "notorious" name, and not always wholeheartedly—the arts. Uriel's religious and social impulse has been excluded to such an extent that some authors presume to call Uriel, the "light of God," by his Greek name Oriphiel—or Satan himself. This is taking what appears in the light of God—and also what belongs to the negative aspects of humankind—and ascribing it to Satan. Interpreted only in terms of Michael or Raphael, the social impulse is presentable: as idea or therapy. It is actually neither.

The misunderstanding begins with the word "social." "We have so many wonderful social setups." Do we? The true social impulse is certainly not revealed in types of activity. Why should, for instance, caring for the sick, charity, or welfare be more social than cleaning toilets? Certainly, we can define the social impulse: to make the distress of our fellow human beings the motive for our actions. But who knows another person's motives? We can also attempt to grasp it in terms of deeds: Anything social is a sacrifice. (I mean a true sacrifice, not such things as, for example, the acceptance of inevitable underpayment—almost everyone feels underpaid!) One can only sacrifice what one can call one's own; but what is really our own? Only our consciousness. Everything we normally call "our own" is cast aside at the threshold; we had these things on loan. At the threshold, even part of our consciousness is left behind. What we

take with us is the unsolved social problem (GA 172/1964/165).[3] Although "sacrifice of consciousness" is a frightening term, we may remember that the greatest sacrifice of consciousness was given in order to make the future possible for humanity. The archetypal social phenomenon, the key to the world of the social, is a sacrifice of consciousness. The "Other" can be revealed to us only when we fall asleep. Only by this sacrifice can we help the Other in their distress, as only the Other can help us. Here we touch the essence of the polarity of the Michaelic and Urielic impulses: broadening of consciousness versus sacrifice of consciousness. Must I add that they aren't mutually exclusive?

Perhaps we should ask if there are reasons to consider the development of one's own consciousness as more important than that of the Other. Is attaining higher consciousness truly a positive motive for involvement with anthroposophy? From a social standpoint, it looks very different. The importance for the individual of a training based on the example of great personalities—against which nothing should be said—contrasts sharply with what is important in the social realm: There, the ones "ahead" of us are not important, but rather those who are left behind. "In the new mysteries, the highly developed person becomes the servant of those less advanced" (Harrie Salman in *The Social World as a Mystery Center,* Raisdorf 1994, p.152). Who does not know the suffering of those who cannot keep up when a group marches ahead? And who does not know the feeling of happiness if someone has enough compassion to turn around and accompany us? It is the goal of social striving that every person come along; humanity will not find its true destiny if even one soul is missing. Only humanity as a whole can form the whole body of Christ. This is true for everyone, whatever their path. However, the timing may be different on various paths. Do we wait until, at the end of our path, we are sent back by the Greater Guardian who demands: "Take your brothers and sisters along!" Or do we hear this call at the beginning, and travel the path of the Lesser Guardian later, if necessary, in order to be able to help our companions?

Many such polarities reveal themselves when people of different streams try to work together. We might say that we have accepted a Michael-Raphael axis—and have rejected the Uriel-Gabriel axis. As intelligence and truth-seeking are drawn to work in the therapeutic realm, to practice change and intervention, so the social impulse is drawn to the principle of form. But it is a complete misunderstanding of the social impulse to want to elevate it into an abstract password for love of humanity—although that might make it more popular. Perhaps unfortunately, the social impulse is actually very earthly and concrete. That is why it catches us in our earthly desires, the cravings of the body as well as of the soul. This meeting is uncomfortable.

Under what circumstances are we willing to share with our fellow human beings in a loving way? Do we not see one another as enemies rather than as kindred? Do we school ourselves in social life—for example, by working in "communes" out of trust in the Other, with the good of the

Other in mind? Our experiences in this regard do not flatter self-conceit. Any such experiment is a thorn in the eye of the self-righteous. Do we take our fellow human beings as they are? Do we accept their right to illness, craziness, laziness, eccentricity, criminality? We do not need to "help" other people, but to accept one another as human beings—not only in theory. Can we accept one another without succumbing to the Raphaelic impulse to want to heal someone right away, to want to free one another of our "abnormalities?" Living like this could make the rhetoric regarding free spiritual life into a real social category.

Are we ready to grant freedom, not only personal but also legal, to our fellow human beings? Are we learning to master ourselves to the point where we can guarantee every coworker the possibility of self-development and protection against discrimination? Or do we find that the "guardians of higher interests," the "more advanced," or whatever other euphemisms for power and arrogance we prefer, should decide what is best for our coworkers? Where human dignity is guaranteed for every fellow soul, we speak of social threefolding. Michael and Uriel are connected with it. Where I collide with the (rationally acceptable) prohibitions adopted to "protect" my colleagues, I awaken to self-knowledge and may experience a broadening of consciousness—a necessary compensation for the loss of consciousness inherent in being social. Threefolding is the gift of Uriel for Michael's time (the next three to four centuries). It is a structure that calls for Michaelic consciousness. Those who prevent this not only forsake Uriel, but place themselves beside Ahriman against Michael. One can be social only in freedom; no one can be forced. Even the admonishment to "behave a bit civilly" is antisocial, since it does not accept the being of the Other. Although we should not demand that anyone be social, we can protect our fellow human beings against unsocial actions on the political-institutional level. All too often we are unaware of this. Unfortunately, Hermann Craemer's statement from 1923 (see GA 259/1991/367) is still valid: "Half unconsciously, all members said to themselves: I take up the thought of threefolding only because otherwise I will not be seen as a full member."

Those visiting Agrigento in Sicily have to go outside the temple area to find the sanctuary of Asclepios. In ancient times, everything connected with intervention in nature, including human nature (what today we would call the Raphaelic-therapeutic), was conspicuous. In our time, we tend to push the social impulse out of the sphere of society. Yet today more than ever, we meet souls who have come to earth with this impulse. They have become too numerous to be adjusted "Raphaelically." Are they denied "temples" because they work with anthroposophy differently from how we're used to? It is not difficult to leave them outside a closed door, but then which beings do we make room for instead?

The Urielic Gesture

It is only too understandable that everything arising out of the social impulse meets reluctance. The church has for centuries used charity,

caritas, toward suffering fellow humanity as a means of education, but in essence it was marked by self-interest, because charity was promoted as a key, opening the gates of heaven for the soul. It was further perverted in the middle classes by linking the right to receive help to such things as churchgoing, for example. A relatively small number of groups (such as the original Franciscans or the Chasidim), and individual personalities (like some of the saints), acted out of the experience of their fellow human beings' distress—they did not make sacrifices for the sake of their own soul. On the institutional level the social impulse had almost no influence; for almost two thousand years we have lived within a social hierarchy. When human consciousness was more group oriented, self-interest was subsumed within the interests of various associations and affiliations. As self- consciousness grew, the fundamental law of sociology—with the individual at the center—replaced group consciousness. To uphold the associations indispensable for our psychic as well as biological needs (fundamental social law), coworkers and other community members were pressed into pre-Christian structures with ever more forceful means. Because the hierarchical model of forced labor was accepted as common (and ultimately, as a given) it is not surprising that everything proceeding from the social impulse—the impulse that turns every human and institutional habit upside down—-is experienced as unrealistic, if not even foolish or insane.

Although the social impulse is only very recently a Christian concern, there is no reason to tiptoe around this subject. In this chapter, then, I shall consider a particular aspect of our human behavior in a Urielic light. Remember (see the "First Urielic Consideration") that, seen from the social standpoint, the Other is taboo. His or her peculiarities, demeanor, (bad) habits—in short, the Other's entire being—are not to be judged. The moment I correct someone, the Other becomes an object for me, and I renounce their principal equality with myself. It is not simply a matter of "finally telling X the truth," for that includes the veiled reproach: "Why do you do it like that, anyway?" or whatever technique we use to clothe our disapproval. In all such cases we want the Other to be different. What gives us that right?

With this insight we have not yet entered the social realm; we still remain in spiritual life. The social impulse lives exclusively in deeds— even the non-deed of modesty. The insight that the Other has the same right to his or her peculiarities as I do, even if theirs should strike me as irrelevant, is only a prerequisite for the social to arise—for me to take the distress of the Other as a catalyst for my actions. As long as I experience other people's distress as something to correct, at most I relieve myself of my own irritation with them.

One cannot and should not demand that anyone else respect the nature of the Other. We can only try it ourselves in full freedom. Maybe in time we will come to accept the Other as they are, not only out of insight, but out of inner clarity. It would be a further step in our social development if, out of our inner conviction, we could stop wanting people to be other than they are. Heinz Zimmermann quotes Simone Weil in *Wege zur*

Christus-Erfahrung (Dornach 1991, p. 214), who "wants to get to know people in order to love them as they are. Because if I don't love them as they are, I don't love them—my love is not true." These are steps on the path to a social humanity. In the meantime, we can forbid ourselves to judge one another. And since we are dealing with something public, we can even prohibit such judgments in certain social situations, as we shall see. "You were not appointed by some court to be judge," wrote Christian Morgenstern. There is only one exception: if someone asks for my opinion. Then I may express it, not because I want to change the other person, but because they themselves wish to change, and my judgment may be helpful. This is a preliminary sketch of what we might call the "Urielic gesture," or the fundamental social mood. We will see that the institutional sphere needs additional framing conditions, but for now, we will remain in the personal realm.

In interpersonal relations, we must first consider whether a question has been asked, and if so, whether it has been asked of us. For example, if someone says, "I wish someone would quit smoking for me!" this exclamation could be rhetorical, it might express a search for the right helper, and could also be a call to me for help. If we are not completely certain it is the latter, we had better remain silent. Something similar is true for unexpressed questions. Not everyone voices a call for help, but many people find themselves so "in tune" that they perceive calls for help that are not made. There, too, social tact demands that we remain silent if we are not completely sure—if only to grant the person in distress enough time to express his need for help in a suitable form. This modesty belongs to another age. In the past, it arose out of customs and etiquette, out of the group-orientation of social life, and did not apply, for example, to people of "lower rank." Such modesty should have been taken hold of in its positive aspect when the ego took precedence, and now its opposite holds sway. [or] Then I should have taken hold of this modesty, but its positive aspect wasn't understood, and now we elevate its opposite.] Today, everything is a valid topic for discussion, which seems to mean we must be able to tell one another whatever we think of them. This is supposed to lessen tensions, according to professional psychologists. We pay large sums of money for professionally crafted insults. This is not actually even something new. The Tibetans have long known that emptying the soul lifts our sense of well-being. On a certain day every year, anyone can scream into anyone else's face whatever they dislike about them. The rest of the year, however, this is strictly forbidden. And on this day, people are wise enough to plug their ears.

Disqualifying another human being as a person does not solve any problems, except perhaps the one of how to deal with one's own indignation. When we "let off steam," it is at the expense of the Other. With the exception of saints, no one can bear to be criticized in their peculiarity—although there are people who know how to conceal or ideologize their hurt feelings. Usually unconsciously, but no less existentially for that, in personal criticism we experience that we are seen

not as an individuality but as an object, a thing that can be changed—like a tool that does not quite fit the hand. Rudolf Steiner sometimes called such criticism the modern form of torture. We know that it can go as far as social murder. Conversation—more delightful than light, according to Goethe—is misused to the point where it can serve black magic. The wonderful so-called "healing conversation," for example, which can be used as a therapeutic tool when everyone involved seeks to find the faults in themselves that cause difficulties in a group, is transformed into its black-magical opposite if those present look for a scapegoat to take the blame.

I personally refuse to accept unasked-for criticism. If someone finds it necessary to look for an inner defect behind my opinion—-whether it is the insinuation that I stepped out of bed on the wrong foot or the declaration that certain deficiencies in my soul make me unqualified to..., the conversation is ended. This, by the way, is not only for social-theoretical and social-hygienic reasons, but is also practical, because such a conversation almost always ends with strife and hatred.

> I shot an arrow into the air,
> It fell to earth, I knew not where;
> (...)
> Long, long afterward, in an oak
> I found the arrow, still unbroke."
> – Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Should one then allow everything? Before we come closer to this question, I would like to say that the effects of personal criticism expressed in indignation, rage, or anger are usually not as catastrophic as those that are delivered in carefully prepared lectures and reprimands. We know from experience that in a temper, we say things we don't really mean. The targets of our ire in such outbursts are much less likely to feel we are treating them as objects. Swear words are relatively harmless. In my experience, so-called therapeutic and pedagogical remarks injure most. These are also destructive when they are veiled as "criticism on the issue." In the depth of their being, the person being reprimanded differentiates very well whether the criticism is meant objectively or personally.

In this regard, then, what is customary will have to be turned upside down if we want to do justice to the social impulse. Just as we can defend ourselves against reprimands by cutting off contact, so can we take the initiative when we ourselves are tempted to lecture others when we "suffer" under their peculiarities and behavior. We can practice making requests based on our own weakness and needs, rather than pointing to another's faulty demeanor. "There is another nicotine-addict poisoning the air" leads, if not to a fight, then at least to discord. "Would you be willing to refrain from smoking in this room because I cannot tolerate the smoke?" gives my weakness as the reason for opposing another's behavior, as well as my inability (particularly where there is an evident physiological reason) to change myself. This contains no moral reprimand

I am speaking about the inter-human reality we do not like to see. It flatters our self-image if we clothe our vice in willingness to help. Because there are two possibilities in any conflict, we see the splinter in someone else's eye sooner than the beam in our own: they should change. It doesn't even occur to us that we should change ourselves. This is our normal *ad absurdum* attitude—to want to change the Other as if they were an object arousing our anger. The technocracy we have created is also based on a wish to make people function socially. When another person's behavior becomes unbearable and the request for consideration of one's own weakness does not help, not even a reprimand is helpful, and certainly not verbal abuse. One could then call upon a judge as a neutral resort. The law gives us what is rightfully ours—we can claim no more than that.

In the above, we are dealing with a question of rights—"right," taken in the broadest sense: You and I. If we enter a different sphere the Urielic gesture is only partially valid. Because of confusions and misunderstandings, a few words may serve to clarify this.

In the sphere of spiritual life, that is, in the relationship of the soul to the spiritual world, the issue is not the Other, it is truth. Here spirit-fighting and competition reign. The freedom of the dissenter to express his or her opinions is opposed by my own to radically fight against them. There is neither a right to nor an obligation for protection—as long as I meticulously restrict my criticism to what the other person has made public. Anyone who considers their product mature enough for the marketplace must be prepared to face criticism. Conversely, one ignores all that was not meant for the public. This is valid for anything we have learned from personal conversations, and applies to, for example, Steiner's unpublished lectures: the first more out of social hygiene, the latter more out of scientific hygiene. This is true—again, against the fashion of the times—also for the deceased.

The motives behind a person's expressions or deeds are also private. Often someone will feel moved to reveal their own motivations, but otherwise hypotheses and assumptions are disrespectful to the soul-life of the Other. "From a certain standpoint, it is simply destructive to search for the deeper reasons behind a decision" (Georg Buß, *Von der sozialen Wirkung des Wortes*, in Erziehungsfragen, Stuttgart, 1989/5) It is permissible to ask: "How did you arrive at this conclusion?" insofar as one remains in thinking. Thinking can be retraced. "He had bad experiences in Dornach, that's why he's against "Netzwerk Dreigliederung" leads away from the point of contention and is socially unhygienic—it does not matter whether or not the assumption is true. Most assumptions, even if they are not prohibited, express a negative or positive qualification that belongs to the sphere of judicial life, the sphere of "inner rights."

Whether Mr. Smith is upset because I misplaced a comma or because my presentation of threefolding is completely wrong, he should be allowed his reaction—even if his choice of words seems inappropriate. We remain in spiritual life. But if he attributes my misplaced comma to my difficulties with punctuation, and those difficulties to a deformation of soul, he then

intrudes in something that is none of his business and does not contribute to the solution of the problem. One can only utterly refute this. If he calls my opinion on threefolding the purest communism, one can argue about it; but if he calls me a communist, he compromises the respect due every human being and should not—so to speak—be surprised about receiving a slap in the face.

There are exceptions. People who consciously publish untruths—which it is possible to know only in the rarest cases—deserve no protection. Without personally defaming them—even under the circumstances—we may conclude that their work need not be taken seriously and that any further involvement with their efforts is futile, because such writers eliminate themselves as conversational partners.

Let me say again that the social hygiene described here is anything but obvious. Too often we consider an author's work through the filter of personal suspicions.

Turning from these principal considerations surrounding the social impulse, we can ask how the problem shows itself in the middle realm. Especially in institutional life, that is, where people work together toward a common goal, personal expressions of judgment—from insinuations to damnation—act as poison. Yet the focus on a goal may make it necessary to correct coworkers. Does the social impulse leave us in the lurch in this dilemma?

Let us first assume that within any kind of institution we can always find spiritual life, judicial life, and economic life. While in individual relationships such differentiations are left to the participants, the institution, through its judicial life, is capable of structuring behavior in the three different areas. Although any criticism that serves the discovery of truth (in nonpersonal matters) is permissible in spiritual life, for instance, this does not mean that such criticism may be expressed at any time or place. The institution works toward a goal, and this goal can demand certain restrictions. But it may never—from any standpoint—make criticism impossible at all times and in all places. On the other hand, the institution's reality demands efficiency—an order-and-correction-structure—within certain limits I won't go into right now: What would things come to if the shop steward could not make decisions and correct mistakes? A little coarseness in this regard is hardly ever begrudged because the context justifies it. "Would you please be so kind as to pass me the hammer?" would really seem ridiculous. Compare this with the militaristic order of judicial life. "Hurry, you fool!" called out by the master when the situation calls for speed should hardly be taken as an insult by the apprentice. If, on the other hand, the field-marshal roars to the recruit: "Can't you go slower, you lame pig...," the recruit immediately feels degraded.

The healthy way to handle criticism in an institution finds its expression in the democratic-republican principle. Since I wrote about this extensively in the *Erziehungskunst* (followed by a discussion with Hans Peter van Manen—see editions Nr.1/Stuttgart 1988, Nr. 7-8/1990 and Nr. 11/1990), I want to only touch on the aspects immediately concerning the topic:

- First, the scope of a task must be defined. Mandates for it are given out democratically. During the term of the mandates, any criticism of the responsible parties is prohibited, even in the form of "questions" and "suggestions." Only in an emergency may the mandate be terminated prematurely, but the person originally given the mandate may not be criticized. I must add here that this principle, originating with Steiner, is not commonly followed even in anthroposophical institutions. All too often, the way other colleagues do their work is subject to signals or other euphemistic complaints. Only when those carrying mandates are confident that their work is truly not disdained are they inwardly free to ask colleagues for advice—and perhaps to look within themselves for the causes of less than fortunate results. Only then does an institution start to truly breathe.
- Secondly, the democratic-republican principle is about an institution's actual sphere of rights: prohibitions, and sometimes also orders. These arise democratically, and require coworkers to see that what they have accepted out of insight (mental) or on the basis of practicality (vital), they are not always able to fulfill. We can understand (mental) that we are supposed to arrive at work on time—and still get up too late (vital). Someone can understand that it's forbidden to harass women at work—and still allow their hands to wander.

Now, it is inappropriate to moralize about the above-mentioned trespasses against democratic agreements. The personal criticism we recognized to be unsocial would then poison institutional life. How can we resolve this dilemma?

The solution is a "supervisor." Someone is democratically elected out of the insight that the keeping of the agreement must be controlled and, if necessary, enforced. The supervisor—this uncomfortable office should be rotated frequently—does not moralize. He or she points out lapses to "transgressors," and if necessary, brings the problem to the judicial organ of the institution. There again, there is no moralizing. "How is it possible that a cultured man like you, again...," is inhuman and undignified. The judicial organ will do no more than determine the consequences of the inappropriate behavior.

Certainly not all possibilities can be regulated in advance. One can prohibit certain incivilities that are harmful to the goal of the institution, but one cannot order civility. "Don't always slam the door in my face" will hardly be a prohibition, neither the uncivil slamming nor the uncivil remark. But only the chairperson of the meeting is allowed to interrupt someone who is speaking. The position of chair assumes impartiality. Not: "Don't interrupt me again!" but: "Chairperson, would you please see to it that I am not interrupted!"

Again, I must say that unfortunately, the habit is reversed in many institutions. Prohibitions are not popular. "Such things have to come about in the living process of being together." To this end, coworkers receive

"heart-to-heart talks" from all kinds of people who consider themselves justified to initiate them. That is, until the institution is morally sour and the coworkers become surly. Then the psychologists appear, to work on conditioning and motivation with psycho-technical know-how. It can certainly be a momentary help. We must recognize, however, that this does not come out of the social but out of the therapeutic impulse, and thus the result cannot be a social one. We don't need examples for this to be clear. It comes about when people are treated as objects—but this should be prevented from the outset by not allowing the personality of the Other to be the subject of debate. "The dignity of a human being is inviolable." If we take this statement from the German constitution seriously, it is an exact description of the Urielic gesture.

On Scourging

On the path of the stations of suffering that we call the "Imitation of Christ," the second stage is the scourging. It is one of the five Passions that occurred on Good Friday, after the washing of the feet (on Maundy Thursday after sunset, and thus, seen spiritually, on Good Friday) and before the crowning with thorns, the bearing of the cross, and finally the crucifixion itself unto death. The entrance into hell, and the breaking of the spell of death on Saturday are connected with the Resurrection (Easter Sunday); forty days later follows the Ascension. (For our topic, we may disregard the question why Resurrection and Ascension are also considered stations of suffering.)

In the four Gospels, we learn nothing about the scourging other than that Pilate ordered it. We will see that the moment in which the governor gives this order is very important.

In various instances, Steiner pointed to the seven stations of suffering as stages of a Christian path of initiation with very similar, indeed, almost the same words. I quote from GA 99/1979/156 as it relates to the scourging:

> One undergoes the second stage, the scourging, through absorbing oneself with the following: How will you fare when the pains and the scourging of life storm in on you from all sides? You should walk upright, you should strengthen yourself against everything that life brings as suffering and you should bear it. This is the second fundamental experience. It is sensed outwardly as an itching and twitching all over the body, and inwardly as a vision in which one sees oneself scourged, first in a dream, then in mystical sight.

This description, also typical for the other stations, does not at all proceed from Christ's actual scourging, but rather from a meditative experience of feeling ("How will you fare?"), even from an imagination, that finally leads, through the perception of one's own body, to the (historic) experience of being scourged. This stage on the path of initiation is only

loosely connected with the Imitatio. Steiner separated the "purely Christian path" into individual paths of development, describing soul-exercises by which individuals may work toward vision. Soul development follows from the exercises themselves, independent of any outer occurrence (compare GA 131/1958/II). This becomes clear when we see that immediately afterward, Steiner presented the Rosicrucian path as a more contemporary one, and substituted the first. Seen in this light, Steiner's treatment of the stations of suffering arises out of his mission to lead people on the path of strengthening their thinking toward the spiritual world.

It should be clear today that this path is not that of the medieval searchers for Christ. They immersed themselves in the seven stations of suffering with increasingly strong feelings that arose out of compassion for the suffering Christ Jesus. Through this process, the spiritual senses could open. (Compare also Stefan Lubienski, *Mens en Kosmos*, Eemnes/Diever 1993. He describes the connection between the stations of suffering and the lotus flower.) One may say that here one stands before a true path of feeling. At that time—before the great mystics—it was probably the only path toward independent spiritual experiences not liable to charges of heresy. (See also part 2, Chapter 4.)

I feel ever more certain that following either of the two paths—proceeding from the historical stations of suffering or proceeding from certain feelings—bears little fruit. In our time, there is another way to approach the stations of suffering, and that is to focus our feelings on the suffering that Christ has to endure today. Steiner said of the Christian path that it is legitimate, but difficult to walk because it requires a long retreat into solitude. This is not true of the possibility mentioned above. It is not necessary to enter into certain feelings and to work to increase them, so that out of them eventually the marks of suffering blossom; we can proceed from what is done to Christ by people today—sufferings that any feeling person cannot fail to perceive. What we do to the earth, we do to his body; what we do to our fellow human beings, we do to the Lamb of God, who carries the sins of the world. What we do to ourselves when we degrade ourselves, he carries in his sheaths.

What scourging does Christ suffer because he takes the sins of the world upon himself? The nearness of the etheric Christ can lead us to reexperience the present martyrdom. Not the thought of the martyrdom of Christ, not the indignation over our own experiences or what is brought into our homes through newspaper and television should occupy us in those hours of contemplation, but rather, experiencing the occurrences of everyday life as his suffering in our fellow human beings can lead us to discover our own guilt. Then we are already at the cross-bearing.

No path of cognition is walked through this imitation in the common sense. We may rather look toward the path of Parcival: to know out of compassion. The stations of suffering are in no way relegated to the sidelines. They are fundamental forces in humanity's development, although they may form themselves differently at different stages—for example, the transition from the group to individual experience. Let us

take concrete incidents from the new era as a starting point for these considerations.

All four Gospels describe the peculiar fact that Pilate had Jesus scourged after, as highest judge in the country, he had found no fault with him. Luke and John even let him pronounce this three times. The drama will repeat itself in heightened form on the third stage of suffering. Before Pilate gives over the accused to the Jews, he washes his hands in innocence (Matthew 27,24), and states again that he is sending an innocent person to death. One cannot help calling Pilate a knower, that is, someone still cognizant of the occult meaning of judgment, who—with the use of apparent cultic symbolism—plays his role of executing judge, consciously making a wrong judgment to serve the world-drama. He sends Jesus, whom he finds worthy to be the king of the Jews, to the gallows. It is too shortsighted to see Pilate simply as a servant of Caesar who purchases peace with the death of an innocent person, while the Sanhedrin, the high council of the Jews in Greek and Roman times, defends itself with regard to the judgment of Jesus—a common process even today. Pilate defies the Jews until the finatical masses force him to exchange the seat of judge for the role of governor of Rome. And he defies the Jewish leaders when he publicly names the crucified one "king of the Jews."

What may have induced Pilate—an honest judge who seems to us a very normal, modern human being who, on the other hand, has preserved the sense of justice of republican Rome—to have an innocent man scourged? Would we not, out of our consciousness today, ask: If the government demands a judicial murder, can it not be carried out without cruelty? This thinking is shortsighted. In those times, the impulse to punish wrongdoing still reigned—if it was not possible to punish the one at fault, an innocent person would suffice. Up into the last century this impulse, in a decadent form, still lived in the institution of the scapegoat, for example. A few gifted students from poor backgrounds were usually admitted into the schools and boarding-schools for children of the nobility and wealthy burghers—a "Christian" gesture. If one of the noble offspring transgressed in some way, his origin protected him from the thrashing considered appropriate punishment. But justice demanded punishment, and so the thrashing was given—before all the students, who were thereby presented with the impressive spectacle of the nemesis, avenging justice—to the recipients of charity, the scholarship students. This was the scapegoat.

We should certainly be outraged about this perversion. But we should also always examine the other side. Seen cosmically, there has to be a balance between crime and atonement. Is that not why Christ took the atonement of humanity on himself? It is more a question of whether and how human beings may make themselves executors of divine justice. What happened in those schools was completely in the spirit of the pre-Christian sense of justice, an Old Testament world in which Jehovah again and again allows substitution in sacrifices. Pilate also belongs to this world. Now the question stands before us: Did Pilate have a dark

premonition that before him stood the one who would carry the sins of the world, and that the outer mark of scourging belonged to him?

Be that as it may, this principle has an eternal quality. It is still valid today, but it is transformed into a Christian one. Steiner described this as the necessity that karma be fulfilled. But the one at fault does not have to bear the consequences. Someone can take it from the guilty one, in full freedom. With this we are at the heart of the second station of suffering.

The scourging, therefore, was executed on someone innocent; the "imitation" has to proceed from this fact. For the Christian path, which is not walked for one's own completion, it follows that the imitation can never be about the acceptance of one's own karmic strokes of destiny. To accept the latter calmly belongs to the individual path of development. In imitating what Christ underwent before us, we take up strokes of destiny that would otherwise have to fall upon other human beings, probably out of their karma, as Christ Jesus took upon himself the strokes of destiny due sinful humanity as a whole through the scourging ordered by Pilate.

We are called to cooperate in this act of redemption not out of karmic duty, but out of love for our fellow human beings as individuals, not yet—as in the deed of the Son—through an act of redemption for the whole of humanity. This would be too abstract for our consciousness, would remain merely in our thinking, and would therefore not allow us to experience the intensity of the strokes. We can feel the intensity more readily when we take on the karma of specific people who turn to us in their distress, whether their request is expressed or not. Here we come to something Steiner saw as a task of members of the Anthroposophical Society: to carry karma for each other!

What can bring a person to carry the karma of another? Not an advantage for one's own soul, because we cannot do anything for ourselves (in a direct sense). Perhaps we discover that what the other person will be able to do once freed from his or her karmic obligations is so important to humanity that we wish to carry those obligations for them. It would be comparable to the provision of a scholarship—not by institutions, but by private people out of their personal income. In this motive one senses the proximity of a future economic life, of universal brotherhood.

We come even closer to the events in Palestine in situations where the helping gesture arises out of compassion. One then stands in the Christian-Buddhist tradition we can recognize, for example, in Francis of Assisi and Elizabeth of Thüringen. Behind the impulse to carry another's karma may also stand the consciousness that as we ascend we must bear the descent of others in our conscience. A step further is the experienced insight (not simply the thought) that all human beings are members of one body and cannot partake of bliss (ascension) when others are left behind in their distress. Finally, such an impulse may arise out of pure Christ-love, the longing to take part in his work of redemption, and therefore to bear beatings that otherwise he would bear. In this way, we can look into ever deeper levels of the work of love that was placed like an archetypal picture before our eyes.

Much of the preceding, adjusted to the specific cases, should also be valid for the other stations of suffering. Scourging was chosen here because of its special place in the social structure. Thus we can call this consideration—merely an introduction to the social problem of redemption from sin—a Urielic one. Since we cannot exclude the danger that there are those who would make a superficial game out of the taking-on of karma, I want to stress that the latter can be justified only under the guidance of the Lord of Karma.

Redemption from Sin

The first chapter, About Urielites, establishes the existence of a Urielic stream alongside the Michaelic, Raphaelic, and Gabrielic ones. Out of it come religious and social impulses; it is the home of the socially engaged.

The second chapter, The Urielic Gesture, is completely practical: How do we face our fellow human beings out of the Urielic impulse, on the personal as well as the institutional level? There we present some life lessons: Never degrade another person as an object, never sacrifice one another for "higher interests." The Urielic ideal is not to wish that another person be any other than he is or wishes to be.

As an intermediate step in the third chapter—after the step into practice—we dared to explore the background: Can we actually imagine taking up the karma of our fellow human beings and, as representatives of the Other, taking certain blows upon ourselves? What makes a human being do this?

In a fourth step, we will now try to plumb the depths of the Urielic impulse. This can be no more than an attempt, and does not claim to be a documented truth, but is rather meant as a call to consider a topic that today can find only tentative expression.

What do we actually know about Uriel? He is seldom mentioned in the Old Testament, and is usually not characterized. Old Jewish writings and prayers mention him. Steiner's statements are also very sparse—except in the so-called "Erzengel-Imaginationen" (in GA 229). We can find the most important indication in GA 265/1987/336: "Four mighty, sublime beings stand in the cosmos, each facing north, south, east, or west. In this way they form the cosmic cross.... Facing north stands the one who is especially connected with Saturn development...he [is] called Uriel." For the well-versed anthroposophist the question arises immediately: How does that conform to the statement in GA 237 (August 8, 1924) that under the leadership of Oriphiel, the Saturn genius, the other planetary intelligences opposed Michael? A conversation with Hans Peter van Manen helped me to see that even though both beings are connected with Saturn, they need not be identical. With this in mind, the quotation above may be read differently. Uriel appears neither in GA 229 nor in GA 265 as a time-spirit, but as "connected with Saturn development." This must refer to the condition of Saturn when the time-spirits were still in their human stage. Now a different light falls on the "four sublime beings." They are the leaders of the "past planetary conditions of the earth," whereby Uriel led the Saturn condition, Raphael the Sun condition, and Gabriel

the Old Moon condition (all in GA 265/336ff). Michael, on the other hand, leads the whole Earth development and harmonizes the continuously active forces of the other three. The four "sublime ones" are therefore four of the seven Elohim that rule not epochs, but Earth incarnations. "These beings of the Elohim accompanied the Old Saturn, Sun, and Moon existences in a creating and ordering way and also participated in the Earth existence" (GA 122/1976/88). In this sense we may now imagine that Uriel administers the fruit of Old Saturn from now until "the end of time." (On the further activity of the leaders of previous planetary existences compare GA 161/1980. But the Elohim represent, individually and as a sevenfoldness, the principle of good: Christ is their regent (GA 110/1972/189).

I still want to think it probable that Oriphiel is only the Hellenistic name for the Hebrew Uriel, and that we therefore have to do with one being. As gods (angels) once walked among humanity in earthly form and still remained gods; as Michael incarnated in a man (GA 265/337; see also Else Nassenstein, *Die Michael-Christus-Wesenheit*, Basel 1989) and still remained one of the Archai-Elohim; and as the Kyriotetes-being Sophia "developed" out of the fourth hierarchy "down" to the tenth (see also Sigismund von Gleich, *Die Inspirationsquellen der Anthroposophie*, Zeist 1953, p. 30f—2nd. edition Stuttgart 1981; as well as his two "Sophia" articles in: *Blätter für Anthroposophi*e, Basel 1951/1 and 5) without losing her being, so nothing prevents the thought that Uriel as time-spirit appears under the name Oriphiel and as such takes on himself an activity—ultimately positive for humanity—that brings him into opposition with the Michael-genius as planetary intelligence. Just this antagonism was necessary for human development. As a being that experienced his human stage "before" the beginning of time, that is, "before" Old Saturn, in an earthly sense he stands beyond good and evil (compare also GA 229/1955/66f).

We enter our topic of the redemption of sin directly if we add another statement made by Steiner in *Beiträge zur Rudolf Steiner Gesamtausgabe*, Nr. 67/68, Dornach, 1979, pp. 6–7): "When that black era approaches [i.e.,when the Evil One consumes human beings and spoils them down to their very physicality], then fighting and war amongst kindred will work in a horrible way and the poor bodies of human beings will suffer terribly, struck by illnesses and epidemics. The mark of sin will be impressed on human bodies, visible to everyone." Tschingis Aitmatow points a light toward that time, and that mark of sin, in his novel *Das Kassandrama*l (Zürich 1994). Then a different Archangel will reign: Oriphiel. He must come to stir humanity—through terrible tortures to stir them to their true destiny. In order for this to happen in the right way, a small group of people must be prepared today so that they will be able to spread esoteric life and lead humanity during the black era to come in four to six centuries.

Those who experience the urge today, during Michael's reign, to take part in spiritual life are called to serve the archangel Michael, and under him to develop the maturity needed in future to be able to rightly serve the terrible Oriphiel as well. A sacrifice is demanded of those who want to

devote themselves to a higher life. One should receive spiritual life and experience awakening only on the condition that in the future, one will use oneself, one's will, only in the service of humanity.

In four to six hundred years, the group of people being prepared today will serve the god Oriphiel in order to save humanity. "... Oriphiel is called the angel of wrath, purging humanity with strong hand...Then [after 1879] Michael began his reign and around the year 2400 Oriphiel, the terrible angel of wrath, will again take the lead. As before [in the previous Oriphiel era, 247 BC until 107 AD], the spiritual light will shine into the darkness bright and radiating: the Christ will again appear on earth, even though in a different form than before. To receive him, to serve him, to this are we called."

Around the year 2400 we may expect humanity to appear in the light of the Father under the gaze of Uriel. It will no longer be possible to hide reality, which will be transparent even to sense-perception. This underscores the statement by Steiner that in the future, reincarnation will prove itself because one will be able to read in people's faces whether or not they have meditated in their previous incarnation. Human souls will become conscious with horror that their place in humanity and in the cosmos, shown in the light of Uriel, cannot be changed anymore until the end of time. In this scenario one may experience what the churches call "eternal damnation."

Now we must experience Uriel and Oriphiel combined. As a time-spirit, Oriphiel appears as the angel of wrath holding penal judgment. This is semblance; in reality, humanity has brought about the horrible destiny itself. The good Father (Luke 18/19) does not punish. He lifts the curtain. He allows his light, Uriel, to illumine reality. Time goes back to Saturn; beyond it is eternity. And because evil is simply the good in the wrong moment, there is no evil there either, only divine justice; this means that everything is in its place. Since there is no "time," it is a place for all eternity. In a certain sense the human situation becomes comparable to that of animals. However, the animals came into their tragic situation without fault, and do not know of it. The human soul, on the other hand, begins to know under the firm gaze of Uriel: Oriphiel may appear as punisher; as Uriel, he is revealer.

Nevertheless, Steiner speaks of a small group that will possibly be able to rescue humanity. To understand this contradiction means to recognize the mission of evil. The soul will cry when it becomes aware of its situation—it will cry for help if it cannot help itself. Is there help? There will be. There will be fellow souls filled with mercy, through knowledge of their participation in guilt or for the sake of their love for Christ. Mercy is more than compassion. Compassion is the soul's receptivity for the pain and suffering of the Other. Mercy is a need of the heart to move toward action in order to help the Other. But the cosmic balance must be kept. We may take on the destiny of others, a part of their destiny, only if what we take from them we carry ourselves. Now we begin to understand what sort of sacrifice is demanded from those who want to "rightly serve the terrible Oriphiel." Now the mission of the Urielites lights up. In this act of

redemption the religious and the social will unite: All future Christianity will be Manichaean, that is, will want to redeem evil—in cosmos and humanity.[4]

Before we follow this topic in the next consideration we will have to occupy ourselves with yet another question. Steiner was clear that we can balance our own karma, but the disturbance of cosmic balance, and the divine justice connected to it, is not yet achieved by doing so. It is the Son, Christ, who as "Lamb of God" has the authority to carry this part of our wrongdoing for us. The bearing of another's karma also does not allow the helper to make up for the cosmic indebtedness of the Other. But where we come near one another in Christ's name—and that means out of pure love, without any secondary motive of one's own advancement— there, promised Christ, he is among us. Christ will then bring the cosmic part of the sacrifice. We may also say it differently: Only where we work out of pure love for the Christ will he enable us to take part in his healing activity. This Urielic mission has no limit. As long as one human being begs for redemption, there will be Urielites there to help him—even beyond the final judgment, apocalyptically indicated by the sign "666," as Albert Steffen describes at the end of his moving book, *Mani* (Dornach 1965).

Steiner spoke in 1907 about the era of Oriphiel, for which a small group may prepare itself. The coming darkness is beginning to appear more and more strongly already in our time. We need not wait until our sins become visible physically. More and more souls are beginning to perceive themselves in their fallenness, in their hopeless situation. The epidemic of soul illnesses— also prophesied by Steiner—has already appeared, and neither psycho-pharmaceuticals nor soul-massage will be very helpful. We must ask whether there are already people today who are willing and able to carry the karma of their fellow human beings. If so, how can they prepare for their task? It is an acute question with regard to the apocalyptic turn of the century. To treat it with due seriousness, let us explore it more fully.

Redemption from sin is not a human task. It is, as the Lord's Prayer expresses, the privilege of the Father to whom Christ Jesus, united with all humanity ("deliver us from the evil") turns in prayer. Therefore we are always concerned with a trinity: with the Father who has the power to be involved in our lives through His laws; with the Son, who proceeds from the Father in order to accomplish the work of redemption; and with humankind, conscious of its sins, and wanting to be redeemed from them in order to gain entrance into the New Jerusalem—humanity reunited in the Holy Spirit. The work of redemption thus does not require the participation of a second human being: It requires of human beings the will to part with their sin. Christ brought freedom in this regard. No one shall be redeemed against his will. "My sins go with me into my grave," wrote Hendrik Marsman. A human being may only take part in the work of redemption out of free will, as an act of love. Christ gave humanity the authority for this when he filled himself completely with his will to sacrifice, and the will of the Father also works through him. Christ promised his help in the active work of redemption if we approach one another in

his name. "In my name" is a prerequisite for his presence where two or more are gathered, as well as for the fulfillment of intercessions and supplications. The Church's repeated reproofs against anthroposophy's emphasis on self-redemption are untenable, as is the reproof regarding the redemption of the sins of our fellow human beings. We can intercede actively for another, understanding active as a readiness to help carry another's karma, to atone for their errors and thereby call forth divine mercy. We can redeem the adversaries.

Let us take the Lord's Prayer as a starting point. We should always keep in mind that this archetypal prayer has many layers—the following is only one of many! There is the supplication: "Lead us not into temptation." The Tempter turns to our unpurified soul to tempt it to deeds or non-deeds (sins of omission). We already know, through our conscience, that the Tempter's grip is evil to our soul. Through our conscience, which human beings acquired as an inner capacity in the course of our development, Lucifer, the tempter, is already overcome. We can be immune to him. We experience our own weakness (not the strength of evil) when we give in to him. And we redeem him when we do not give in. Thus, this supplication in the Lord's Prayer may also be understood as a call for help to redeem Lucifer. In our time he must experience, he must witness, that all the faults he has invested us with—passions, impurity, addiction to power, greed, and honor—all for the sake of our own development! continue to work in us even while he is already overcome (see also GA 110/X).

If nevertheless we succumb to temptation, we take the misdeed into our next life as debt. It is then built into our life-body as karma, with the will to lead us to where we can make amends for our mistakes. The hour of Ahriman, the spirit of lies, has come. He works toward our losing any sense of karma. He arranges situations in such a way that we reject opportunities to free ourselves from our sins. Our ignorance is his most dangerous weapon. The Lord's Prayer points the way for us here, showing how we can wrest from Ahriman the destiny we have chosen with the Lord of Karma. Where we forgive out of pure love those who have indebted themselves to us, a feeling for karma arises within us. We tread the path of karma, which frees us from our earthly debt in such a way that Christ is willing to bear the cosmic part of it. Insofar as we are successful, Ahriman can be redeemed from his task, can go to sleep.[5]

What happens when Ahriman reaches his goal? Then our debts eat ever more deeply into the life-body, attract more debts, become sins, and cause our hardened selves to push away the one who could say of himself: "I am the life." Then the bread—the body of Christ—will not be able to nourish us. Therefore the supplication: "Give us this day our daily bread." Our spirit-being becomes torn, and with it breaks apart the only one able to lead humanity out of our deep fall. Where the I of humanity can no longer exist, the Antichrist appears—the Antichrist who bears the paradox that he must rightfully be called Nothing" (compare GA 241b/1977/XVIII). At this point, we can no longer help ourselves. Here sounds: "But deliver us from evil." Only the grace of the Father can help here; but we can call

upon this help when human love carries sinners' destiny, thereby securing the advocacy of Christ. When Nothing is again filled with divine forces, the Evil One is redeemed, and may return again into Nothing.[6]

To be social is to make the distress of our fellow human beings the motive for our actions. Here is the archetypal distress. Here is the utmost consequence of evil. Here originates the social.

Mercy

Before we address the last question of these Urielic considerations, let us not confuse what is here meant by social with how that term is used today in various contexts. Most current usage derives from psychology— that is, it refers to intervention in another's soul life. This is also true in situations where the soul is approached with the intention to reach the spirit. I have nothing against this as long as the person approached is clearly *asking* for soul guidance, and is willing and able to accompany that guidance consciously. We stand here before the words of John 10, that those not entering through the door (of the I am) are thieves and murderers.

The social, not as Raphaelic but as Urielic activity, proceeds immediately from the I of the Other, that is, from the higher I connected to the Christ. The answer to someone's distress does not come out of the helper's consciousness, but out of the higher I of the one in need. The answer can therefore never be the solution to anyone's problem. It can only present the spiritual aspects of the pressures at work in a situation, what Steiner calls "speaking out of Sophia" (GA 103/XII), so that one can make a decision in freedom, for him or her self.

We are certainly not conveying new information when we reflect for someone in distress the pressures at work in their situation. The art is to hear the one question, usually unspoken amidst the many voiced, that actually expresses the question living in the higher I, which is there answered already. This is why the answer—if it comes—presents itself out of the moment as a kind of illumination proceeding from the higher being of the Other. The social helper is no more than a midwife, and must speak in down-to-earth language that the one seeking help can understand.

Should it really be necessary to delve into another person's soul life, the same process is required—that is, light must fall on their soul life from out of their own being. When necessary, we must also work together to understand someone's instinctual life, and even their physical uniqueness. These characteristics are our instruments, after all. Again, there is no "good advice"—if possible, we should only point out the lawfulness of the situation at hand, without relation to the one seeking help. In the light of Uriel, only the truth is appropriate; what is subjective or wishful has no place there.

I am fully aware that what I am describing here is a goal for the far distant future, and is achieved today only in the rarest cases. But this ideal must stand before us so that we do not lose sight of the goal, on the one hand, and on the other can be clear that there are different ways

to help in life. This is important. Help for the soul, therapy, is the realm of Raphael. Its path is very different from that of Uriel's redeeming activity. Both spheres are often implied by the word "healing," and we need to avoid confusing the two.

In a lecture on August 19, 1916 (GA 122/XI), Steiner pointed out how the world radiates in the light of Michael as truth, in the light of Gabriel as beauty, and in the light of Raphael as goodness. We can experience this goodness when a therapist wants to free a patient lovingly from his or her difficulties; when a human being meets an animal with compassion; when a person bows in gratitude and caring before a plant; and indeed, when—making the laboratory into an altar—one delves into the lawfulness of matter and uses it to serve humanity (technology). Steiner did not mention Uriel in that lecture; as so often happens, the fourth remained unnamed. I am convinced that from Uriel radiates justice. I do not mean what we commonly call justice; that is hardly more than a base image of it. When I speak of justice, I am thinking of what Plato called the highest virtue: that everything in the world has its rightful, appropriate place. By his lights, everyone has his or her proper, just place in the cosmos, and may leave this place only when others create a balance for it.

Maybe the concept of justice becomes more immediate if we consider what Steiner means when (GA 237/1975/37) he characterizes the path of the deceased as follows: "The just consequences of humankind's earthly life are administered [Being is lead] by Exusiai, Dynameis, and Kyriotetes in the astral sensing of the cosmos." Here human deeds are assigned a place in the cosmos. We are assuming that the Elohim Uriel is one of the Exusiai. (See also Lex Bos, "Die Wirksamkeit der zweiten Hierarchie im sozialen Leben," in *Mitteilungen aus der anthroposophischen Arbeit in Deutschland*, Stuttgart 1994/II. "Thrones, Cherubim, and Seraphim resurrect as their beings of deed the just creations of humankind's earthly life.") Cosmic justice follows karmic justice: human deeds become the deeds of the first hierarchy. What was created in time has found its just place in "space."

What we here call Raphaelic and Urielic are different qualities—neither is "right" or "wrong." That one can find the other despite the differences in their tasks is apparent from the common leadership of the seven Elohim by Christ. People on earth will still separate into different streams for a long time to come—this is healthy. Everyone must reach their goals on their own path—and one can certainly also tread two paths. A trivial but graphic comparison may illustrate this. It is quite possible to learn shipbuilding and to study theology at the same time. The skills needed for the two disciplines are completely different, even if both lead to Noah's ark. When I speak about the Urielic path, nothing whatsoever is implied about other paths. Steiner expressly gave the Rosicrucian path for the Raphaelites. It is therefore important to differentiate where both streams meet. For example, when he arranged the sections of the School for Spiritual Science, Steiner expressly assigned the nursing profession to the therapeutic stream. This is appropriate if one sees nurses as the

physicians' "right hand"; that is the aim of nurses' training—it did not only arise out of practice. Thus nurses are pulled into the Raphaelic stream. On the other hand, if one looks to the inner calling, the nurse stands beside the patient—if need be against the physician—a Urielic activity. The nursing profession will come into its own only if hospitals are led by nurses and the therapists assume the role of guests. Then the nurses will be able to ensure that patients receive the help they need. The difference between today's practice and what I expect and hope for the future will manifest in different paths of training. But it would be interesting to learn how many nurses today already know how to apply the fruits of the Rosicrucian path.

Those going the Urielic path should be clear from the start that no reward awaits—not in the form of a new, higher consciousness nor in any new skill. One's own growth process is an impossibility on the Urielic path. From the first step, the taking-up of the Other, to the last and most difficult step, taking on another person's karma, one shoulders additional burdens. The patron saint of Urielites, John the Baptist, voiced the motto of this path: "He must increase; I must decrease" (John 3), which we can also express as: The Other is more important than I am. The Baptist says it of Christ Jesus; the Urielite says it of every fellow human being because we meet the Christ in one another. The quintessence of Urielic behavior is contained in Christ's words: "What you have done to the least of my kindred, you have done to me" (Matthew 25,40). It is the basis of the archetypal social phenomenon that we fall asleep in order to receive the Other in ourselves; it is grace if the higher self of the Other speaks within me. At first—and this will change on the path of training—-it is also grace when what has been revealed in sleep can be carried over into day-consciousness.

This is why one cannot practice the archetypal social phenomenon in the actual sense. As a spiritual law it is present in every human meeting, whether the topic of conversation is trivial or highly spiritual—indeed, whether a conversation occurs at all or "only" a wordless meeting with the Other takes place. For quite a long time to come, this process will occur in sleep-consciousness.[8] Only when, in the course of our development, humanity has achieved continuity of consciousness will the last phase, the conscious retrieval of what was perceived in sleep, have come into the force of our will. It will still remain grace, however, whether the higher being of the Other wants to reveal his or her concerns to us.

We shouldn't conclude from this that we must then wait passively until it suits a higher power to bestow grace on us. We can infer otherwise by considering the sacramental act of union that occurs only when one faces another person in Christ's name (as in John 14,14). So we can be active, we can prove ourselves worthy of grace—but we cannot force it.

Here I want to mention a path many have chosen; it is almost self-evident in light of the above. It is the Imitation of Christ. (For my understanding of this term, which can be interpreted in many ways, see GA 343/21, and part 2, Chapter 4, this book.) We saw in the second station of suffering to what depths the imitation of scourging, the scourging of

Christ, can lead in our time. In the subsequent stations, the last traces of pride disappear in the experience of the crowning with thorns. We can relate the carrying of the cross to all humanity; death and descent into hell to the whole earth; and finally, the Ascension to the giving-up of the self, the splintering into every human being. But at the beginning is always the washing of the feet—the experience that everything we have or do is due to others. It is the basis for the mood in the stations that follow. In the Last Supper, the Kyrios bows down because without the help of the Twelve he could not have accomplished his mission. God's son is filled with gratitude for them, and in this way gratitude toward others may fill the Urielite. Did someone fall? Perhaps this creates an opportunity for me to grow. Did not Creation sacrifice itself into the Fall so that we might awaken? Did not even the beings we call evil renounce their holiness so that, in battling against them, we can work our way up to the hierarchy of freedom and love? If Christ bowed down across ten hierarchies to become a human being among others, do we not wish to dedicate ourselves to helping a being within our own hierarchy? These are battles of the soul, exercises of feeling that teach us to approach the Other in Christ's name.

Since the first station of suffering is so fundamental, let us point out another of its aspects. Christ Jesus washes the feet of his disciples—Judas included. Our feet carry us into our karma. They are much wiser than our feelings, not to mention our thoughts. On the path toward fulfillment of our karma, we dirty them. They become so encrusted that they lose their sensitivity, cannot feel the path anymore. Christ Jesus does not take over the function of their feet by pointing his disciples to their karma. He washes those encrusted feet to restore their karmic function. The disciples are supposed to find their own karma and take it upon themselves. In this way, Urielites also want to "wash feet," that is, to offer the redeeming word in response to another's destiny questions when the Other can no longer answer these questions alone. Otherwise Peter cannot participate in the work of the Lord of Karma (John 13,9).

Another preparation for redemptive work needs mention here, one that can proceed from a soul experience that is likely familiar to everyone. Redemption of sin stands at the end of the Urielic path. It proceeds from our intercessions today—through grace—only on very rare occasions. Even though we want to keep the goal in sight, we must nevertheless carefully approach the beginning of the path. It starts where we meet a human being in distress and mercy is aroused. Mercy is, by definition, "compassion from the heart that motivates action." It arises immediately out of a feeling that comes over us when we see another human being (present), a feeling that then tries to spark our will to help the Other in his or her distress (future). Here we have to differentiate precisely: In the Imitation, the suffering Christ stands before us, but not as a being in distress. The Son took the path of suffering upon himself out of mercy for us. In this regard, we can call mercy an aspect of imitation. Mercy may be kindled by the suffering, Christ-gifted fellow human being, but we cannot have "mercy" for the suffering Christ. He went forth from the Father without karma and without sin. Only once in his earthly life did he experience

distress, as if to have a fully human experience of physical existence: the distress that too early a death (in the garden of Gethsemane) would endanger the fulfillment of his redemptive work and, therefore, also of the path of suffering. How, then, could we want to "free" him of his distress?

We would never undertake the *Imitatio* if we did not know what Christ's path of suffering, then and now, means for human beings, for humanity and the earth. Because so few people know of it, this path is walked very little. We can say that what lives in imagination (past) culminates in a sympathy (present) that, to differentiate it from mercy, we will call "compassion." Concrete, unsentimental, but heartfelt compassion with the Christ can become the ground on which mercy toward the Other grows. Both mercy and compassion—each with its own mission—-are marked by the force we call love.

What is here called mercy always risks falling into the realm of action, returning to the path toward compassion, that is, letting sympathy be guided through imaginations. (This may be another reason why Steiner wanted the Christian path to proceed not from imagination but from feeling.) A human being is lying in the street. Someone merciful wants to rush to help, or, should that not be possible, to at least give comfort. Our imagination immediately tries to "de-sympathize" us: "That person might have had one too many drinks, might have an infectious disease;" "I will be late for my appointment," and so on. Who has not wavered between the Samaritan and the excuses?

We get to know the other danger when we see how the cultivation of *caritas*, the good deed in the Middle Ages, became decadent and was viewed as a means of securing a place for oneself in heaven—no mercy here, no willingness to help a fellow human being in distress, simply a means to reach the goal oneself. Mercifulness is the fundamental feeling at the basis of social life, the wish to make the distress of our fellow human beings the motive for our actions. We meet it most starkly in visible distress, in situations where we are tempted by fear and check our natural tendency to action.

We also meet these dangers in the archetypal social phenomenon. As soon as we lift the distress of the Other into our consciousness, to be able to act appropriately, we must first break through a wall of fear: We must allow ourselves to be put to sleep in order to come close enough to the Other to experience his or her distress. This is the same distress that causes us to flee into imaginations. These keep us in day-consciousness and mirror to us what we find appropriate for the Other. No need to fall asleep for that.

As with the question of redemption, with regards to the phenomenon of mercy we can also ask, "Why?" Only the sick soul does not know mercy; otherwise it lives, hidden or openly, in all human beings. We perceive the reason in a key lecture by Rudolf Steiner, *The Work of the Angels in Man's Astral Body* (GA 182/1969/6): Angels weave social pictures into our astral body while we are asleep, pictures meant to bring about future social creations in three areas:

(1) "...that in future, no one shall peacefully enjoy happiness if others in in their midst are unhappy." Elsewhere, Steiner says that the foremost individuals of the sixth cultural epoch experience the distress of the Other as their own. Here mercy flows on the level of the physical distress of the fellow human being—the fruit of the activity of angels breaks out of the soul.

(2) Those pictures also stir us to see the hidden Divine in every human being. We stand before the second stage, the activity of the archetypal social phenomenon, in which we recognize the higher being of the Other and, out of it, find answers to his or her distress. We receive an inkling of a future social soul-life.

(3) Finally, the angels weave an understanding in us that through spiritual science we will reach the spirit. Without an awareness of the evil beings and of the activity of Christ, the impulse would never awaken in us to redeem our fellow human beings from sin. We are at the third level.

Thus, through the activity of the angels, we may have a presentiment of the foundation for a new social threefolding in the sixth cultural epoch wherein economic life will be mutually supportive out of human nature; wherein soul-life ("spiritual life") develops a freedom that arises out of human soul-needs; and wherein judicial life will be so transformed that those who do wrong are no longer punished, but will be redeemed of their sins. The exercise of an educating, corrective punishment can then be left to karma. Steiner also states in this lecture that the angels do this work under the guidance of the spirits of form, the Elohim again, who are themselves active under the direct guidance of Christ. And as we saw, one of these seven Elohim is Uriel.

To conclude this Urielic consideration, we will ask: What means are available to help us grasp what is prepared by the angels? Can we develop mercy?

For a long time, we have known two personifications of mercy: Sophia in the East and Mary in the West. In Mary's compassionate heart even the worst sinner is taken up; we can be sure of her intercession with the judging Christ. Even in the completely anti-Catholic *Eulenspiegel*, the epic of self-discovery that dates from the very beginning of the consciousness-soul era (*Eulen Spiegel* = your mirror), she begs for mercy for Philip II—first presented as a sadistic spawn of hell—when he appears before the heavenly judge. Even in the smallest aspects of daily life, Mary accompanies sinners in all their distress and sorrow. Comfort radiates from her into the grieving soul. One certainly need not approve of church politics and trivial distortions to understand that in Mary, we call on a very real being who, never morally demanding, always awakens within us specifically feminine soul forces. Counter to the masculine-combative side of Christianity, we find a feminine, protecting, rescuing, comforting being that graces the human soul. In this being, the historic Mary flows together with Sophia, the exalted member of the hierarchy of the Kyriotetes. Steiner calls "Sophia" the actual name of Mary. (On Sophia

see especially Sigismund von Gleich, in *Blätter für Anthroposophie*, Basel 1953, 1 and 3.)

It would have far-reaching consequences for the dawning of a culture, a cultus of the social, if in the Faustian soul geared only toward the "Helena in every woman"—not as a substitute for her, but as a complement—Mary could find a place in every human being, as was the case, for example, in the twelfth-century female cult of the Languedoc.

It would be good to develop a counterbalance to the masculine tendency to see Helena in every woman, to develop a feminine archetype: alongside the Faust within us, an inner John the Baptist as well. The active, egocentric, and therefore inconsiderate Faust uses others to achieve his goals. Mary is full of pain because she makes room in herself for the sorrow and pain of others. How little this is tied to the sexes is shown to us by the Baptist, "the greatest among all ever born of a woman" (Matt. 11,11), who lives his archetypal male being from Adam until the Baptism in the Jordan, and afterward lets it fade away, offering his being to the disciples after his death, later Lazarus-John. In his next incarnation he will be a Madonna-like man. Opposite Faust, who sees Helena in every woman, stands Raphael, who sees in every woman the Madonna.

The discovery of the Madonna in every woman is closely related to the archetypal social phenomenon. What was it that led the troubadours, the minnesingers, to choose a "ma-donna," to accomplish deeds in her honor and unconditionally respect her judgment in questions of love? What wanted to work its way up into the human soul? It is interesting that in the quest to become a woman's knight, to be accepted in one's offering of love (*Minnedienst* = service of love), everything accepted— even expected—in our time in this regard was strictly prohibited, was punished in courts presided over by women (*Cours d'Amour*). Even if one triumphantly finds exceptions (or constructs them) in which "the flesh became weak," the ideal was that the revered Lady remain a symbol of the one unnamed, unspoiled woman who, in all likelihood, we come closest to in the Madonna. Those who see only what is "missing"—as does Denis de Rougemont in his very informative work *L'Amour et l'Occident* (Paris 1939)—may call it unfulfilled love. From another perspective, however, we could say that abstaining from physical love in the *Minnedienst*—which in no way hindered matrimonial life—reveals feminine soul qualities. However hidden, these are present in every woman, as we know from the example of the sinner Magdalene. Here we find the quality that we know from the archetypal social phenomenon, the ability to take the spirit of the Other into oneself: to place Mary's mantle around a fellow soul, to fall asleep in listening, in the taking-up of the Other, and thus to inspire him or her. It is a miracle that ever and again, one may experience the Madonna as so close, so present in the meeting of You-and-I. This is the utmost expression of *agape*, where one takes up the highest in the Other. Mary is the one who knows out of compassion.

In a certain sense we may call the twelfth century, in which men began to discover the actual being of women, the hour when the conscious social

impulse was born. In the true, "unspoiled" being of women lives what is so difficult for men to apprehend: The Other is more important than I. It is not by chance that simultaneously, and in the same region, Catharism laid the first seeds of social sacramentalism. Longing for Sophia connects itself to longing for Christ. "Christ is not missing for us, we lack the Sophia of Christ" (GA 202/1970/230).

The Urielic path is a feminine one. Nothing sexist is meant by this, of course. It can be walked by any man who is willing to develop the feminine in himself. Often men prefer not to, because they consider themselves superior to their human sisters. And because to this day men have chronicled the history of Christianity, we find only few traces there of female contributions. It is time to discover the female year that parallels the male one: Mary in the course of the year. It is, after all, the woman who carries the picture of the archetypal social phenomenon in her body. She receives another being into herself, embraces it with a moon-sheath (see also GA 161/1980/2) and in this way protects its particular being with her own body. She is the first answer to its life-question, an answer arising out of her love for this being that cannot yet speak itself. If we wish to encounter the practice of "He must increase, I decrease" in daily life, here we have a primal example, where the child is more important to the mother than her own well-being, sometimes even more than her own life.

Mary in the Course of the Year

In contrast to the scarcely manageable wealth of Catholic literature, what follows is only an indication, perhaps inspiring further study.

Taking November 27 (the first possible Advent Sunday) through Mary's Presentation (February 2) as the time of Gabriel, a crystalline Mary appears at Advent, the *Virgo paritura*, becoming all crystal, losing her own being, only embracing, only protecting. (It would only distort this picture to connect the Annunciation with it. In the Oberufer Christmas play, the Annunziata is also presented outside the activity of Advent; it is a prelude. That the actual play begins only afterward shows that the Annunciation belongs to a different time—only then does the angel greet the audience.) Mother Mary, the Madonna, also belongs to the time of Gabriel. In the course of the year, however, the radiating Mother is of short duration. Already, before the forty days from November 27 to Epiphany (January 6) have passed, we commemorate the farewell conversation that occurred before Jesus was baptized. The abstinence begins.

At the end of Gabriel's ascendancy and the beginning of the time of Raphael stands Mary's Presentation. The "impure" weeks of social isolation are over, and Mary may enter the temple again—a human being again able to live her own life. The prophetic words of Simeon foreshadow that it will be a life of suffering. We commemorate this on March 25 with the Annunciation. This is the moment when we are allowed to meet the Virgin Mary. What may have been the feelings of a temple virgin, well-versed in Jewish law, when she learned of her pregnancy? It is the devotional acceptance of shame, the suffering of women, that shortly after, in the

Visitation, she lets break out in the *Magnificat*. To that Passover time also belongs the concern for the twelve-year-old Jesus, and the effect of the boy's moving words in her heart. Finally, to the time of Raphael belongs the deepest pain a woman can experience: the death of her child—and witnessing the utterly painful departure. Mary is the first human being to "co-walk" the stations of suffering, even if she was not outwardly present at all of them. Now she is the one "rich in pains," the *Mater Dolorosa of the Pietà*. But there is also comfort in this moment; while still beneath the cross, she receives a spirit-son.

We see the *Imitatio* —Mary's walking through the death of Christ—bear fruit when, at the time of Ascension, the epoch of Uriel begins. Here we stand before the archetypal fact of social life: Only through dying inwardly does the path to the redeeming word become free. May we assume that in the Ascension the being of Sophia, the Holy Spirit, incorporated itself in Mary? Many old paintings depict Mary in the circle of disciples—through her the vessel of the whole is filled; each disciple is filled with spirit and is able to speak intelligibly to everyone. The first wonder of community has become reality (see *Gemeinschaft und Gemeinsamkeit*, Stuttgart 1986). The promised Comforter has become earth-reality: Mary-Sophia. In her, Eastern and Western Christianity will be able to find each other. At the same time, in community we have the organ for every institution whose coworkers strive for spirit-devoted work.

The time of Uriel ends on August 29 with the beheading of the Baptist. Mary's death (August 15) also belongs to it. In the time of Michael, we will meet Mary as the heavenly Virgin, standing on the moon and crowned with stars. Now she is completely bound up with the cosmic battle between good and evil, not fighting but spirit-birthing, herself delivered up to the mercy of the earth. It is among the surprises of the Mary-year that Mary shows herself in two forms around Michaelmas. On almost the same day (October 1), the East celebrates the earthly aspect of Sophia, who receives human beings in her Mary-being, her mantle, Maria-Sophia, come down in response to the earthly distress of human beings. We may experience this as a celebration of mercy. (See also Sergei Prokofieff, *Die geistigen Quellen Osteuropas und die künftigen Mysterien des Heiligen Gral*, Dornach 1989, p. 92ff.)

One cannot learn mercy. As with any true feeling, it arises out of a situation. It belongs to the present, even if one can learn to hold it. In this way we can also create situations, look for experiences, visualize pictures that we know enable certain feelings to arise in us. In this sense, a life of feeling can be trained. And in this sense, experiencing the Mary-year can help us to become merciful human beings.

Is this necessary? Steiner says (in GA 182/1969/6): "...Then every human meeting will be a religious act from the start, a sacrament, and it will not be necessary for anyone to uphold the religious life through a special church with outer trappings on the physical plane."

II.

The Gestures of the Social Sacraments

Introduction

More and more often in the 90s, we saw the search for ritual. Age-old rites were resurrected, new thought-constructions presented themselves in the form of ceremony. Much of this activity aimed to connect people through a communal experience of form.[7]

We also met a counter-tendency. The secession from confessions, the emptying of the churches must be seen as a protest against the office of priest-as-shepherd. In the unfolding era of the consciousness-soul, any claim to unite people under prescribed maxims is more and more rejected. The soul distress of our time and the accompanying urge to help those in distress spark calls for a lay-priesthood, and attempts to found such are met with interest.

At first it is important to differentiate these two complementary phenomena. The rejection of leader-priests raises the question of who can—with equal authority, but without claim to leadership—-take their place. May one call modern psychologists-psychiatrists the priests of our era? Transitional roles do exist—as when, for example, in some parish, a layperson takes over the ministry. This development should depend on demand. If the appropriate priestly word for our time should be no more than one of comfort and encouragement, why shouldn't any gifted person with the will to help be able to substitute for the priest? If, on the other hand, a quality from the divine world should be added to human understanding and psychological training, then the will to help must be supplemented by those forms through which the spirit works. We arrive at the question of sacraments, of cultus.

I turn now to the priest enacting the social sacraments, whom I therefore call the social priest. As far as I know, social sacramentalism does not yet exist. The reader will not find it described in these pages. I am convinced that it wants to arrive, that it will come. Here, I am feeling my way toward the direction in which to search for it, and attempting to say something about its nature. In contrast to my other publications, here I will not lean on Steiner. I certainly could, because in his immense work one can always find useful quotes somewhere. But to do so would be misleading. Steiner expressed clearly that he did not see the founding of a church or religion as his task in this incarnation. Even where he served as advisor—-as in the founding of The Christian Community—he delineated two sides: He distanced himself from the organization of the church, that is, from the institutional modalities; and he repeatedly stood aside when it came to the priest's own path of cognition, which we will describe later. Steiner's task was to present that "path of cognition

which wants to lead the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the cosmos." All the paths of cognition he gave belong to that path, including the one he called the "Christian path." In the third Urielic consideration I showed that this path, actually a part of religious life, was interpreted in a Rosicrucian way through the stations of suffering. That said, I must state that everything I have to say on this topic is based on Steiner, whose thoughts and inspirations I have used—rightly or wrongly—to elaborate an impulse he considered inappropriate for himself and his time. I will allow myself to quote Steiner once in a while, not to support my trains of thought, but only to clarify them.

Possibly nowhere else did Steiner express himself more clearly on non-ecclesiastic sacramentalism than in GA 172/1964/214: "It is altogether superfluous to fight over whether Christ exorcised demons if we would only learn, in the right places, to exorcise demons where we are able to exorcise them presently, if we learn to imitate the miracles!

> [...] How do we exorcise them? Humanity will be convinced that they are exorcised when what today is an unholy service becomes a holy one—that is, becomes soaked with Christ-consciousness. In other words, people must embrace sacramentalism in such a way that whatever human beings do, they are conscious that Christ is always behind them; they should do nothing else in the world other than what the Christ can help them with. For should we do something different, then Christ must help us; that is, the Christ is crucified in human deeds, and then further crucified. What was once only enacted on the altar must take hold of the whole world.

What I have to say is not at all complete, because I must present some ideas whose rightness I more sense than know; I cannot yet say definitely: This is the truth. Thus the decision to publish these thoughts was not an easy one. My motive was twofold. On the one hand, one must fear that the turn of the century could sweep away institutional anthroposophical life, and with it the support-giving life of community. In this case, social sacramentalism, even in a form not yet developed into a cultus, could become an indispensable help in carrying the Christ-impulse as a daily deed into the twenty-first century. On the other hand, so much misinformation is spread today on this topic that I feel justified in overcoming my scruples.

I was strengthened in my resolve when, long after my decision, I learned of Steiner's statement,[8] reported by Herbert Hahn, that at the end of every century, important streams that would otherwise appear in succession appear simultaneously, but cannot cooperate—and in the ensuing chaos, what is new cannot develop fully. In an attempt to serve the new, I nevertheless offer these "building blocks for a social sacramentalism," with all their inadequacies, to the social will of my readers.

I want to add another personal word to this introduction: Often the wrong turns we take may reveal our meaning better than what finally appears in print.

The question of how the seven sacraments express themselves in social life first arose for me as I worked to expand my essay "Sozial und unsozial" in *Beiträge zur Dreigliederung des sozialen Organismus*, Issue 28, January 1977 into the book *Der Anthroposophische Sozialimpuls* (Schaffhausen, 1984). It remained as a play of thought around the four components of the social impulse. My attempt to derive the social sacraments from the sacraments of The Christian Community failed as well. The key—the similarity of the archetypal social phenomenon and the Act of Consecration of Man—had proceeded not from the latter, but from the fundamental social law. The only logical starting point was the question: What are the existential social acts that want to be sanctified? If we step back from the ecclesiastic sacrament to look at the fundamental sacramental gesture, we see only a basic similarity between the two. One might say that in the ecclesiastic sacrament the cosmic archetypal phenomenon is already so strongly individualized and incorporated into a certain application that it does not radiate easily through the sacramental forms anymore. We could liken it to the process of human incarnation leading to ever-stronger individualization. This process continues when the central sacrament of earth development, the Holy Communion, becomes visible in a variety of forms: as in the Roman Mass, the Protestant Communion, the Act of Consecration of Man in The Christian Community—in forms that find the groups of people who need just these forms for their further development. That I used the Act of Consecration of Man for the sake of explanation does not mean that I want to call it the only expression of the cosmic archetypal picture of transformation. It only reflects my own ignorance, because I am unfamiliar with the other ways of celebrating the sacraments.

The breakthrough in my thinking came at last not through absorption in the ecclesiastic sacraments, but through intensive occupation with the archetypal social phenomenon (see Chapter 3). When its four phases showed themselves clearly to me, I suddenly realized with deep feeling that these phases were related to the four parts of the Act of Consecration of Man. I still did not dare to use that key. Then, while presenting my first seminar on the Christian social impulse at the School of Spiritual Science of The Christian Community in Stuttgart, I talked about the archetypal social phenomenon and clarified it by drawing it on the board. Suddenly Michael Debus, sitting in the hall, called out: "Why don't you write the four parts of the Act of Consecration of Man with it?" Perhaps it belongs to the nature of the social that Another has to accompany one through the door. (In the Dutch edition of *The Anthroposophical Social Impulse*, I was able to squeeze this key into a footnote; Zeist 1985, p. 91.)

With the central sacrament as a starting point, how difficult could the path of discovery for the other six sacraments be? If only I had not once again made the mistake of speculating from the given! Finally it dawned on me: Social sacraments can appear to us only as social gestures.

These gestures, these behaviors now stand before me, and I will discuss them in the following chapter after some aphoristic remarks on the field around them.

A word of apology: One or another reader will notice that I almost completely left out other thoughts about sacramentalism that are partly or wholly based on the Urielic impulse. To consider what I've written here my last word on the subject would suggest a crystallization of my opinions that does not exist. This material is not finished—it is still in movement. For critical supplementary reading I suggest, in addition to the works mentioned in the Foreword: Wolfgang Feuerstack, *Heilende Kräfte der Gemeinschaft*, Dornach 1994, and: Harrie Salman, *Die soziale Welt als Mysterienstätte*, Raisdorf 1994.

Context and Prerequisites

The Hallmarks of Social Sacramentalism

Sacramentalism was humanity's answer to the expulsion from Paradise, that is, to the loss of immediate connection with the divine world. The priests, the able and knowing ones, the sons of Abel, tended the portal through which the spirit-world, the gods, could continue to bring their impulses of will to humanity. Additional values flowed into and through communal life, forced by worldly power, and became the public property of nations—indeed, sparked the development of nations. In this connection, the Roman Church speaks of the sacraments as a means of grace. However thin the substance may have become and however much the receptivity of churchgoers may have lessened, for the faithful, the acts at the altar remain earthly comfort and moral strengthening, the priest remains a magician. Here "faith" does not mean a "holding-as-true," but rather inner knowledge of the truth. (See also Stefan Karl, *Glaube*, Markdorf, 1994.) The need for such help in life ensures that despite "deserted altars," despite a "silent Bath-Kol" (Rudolf Steiner, *The Fifth Gospel*, GA 148), professional-priestly sacramentalism remains legitimate. And since it is one of the pillars of threefolding that no one has the right to judge another's earthly needs, this also holds true, *a fortiori*! for needs of the soul and spirit. To paraphrase Steiner, "As long as there is need for cultus, its satisfaction is justified." This is also valid if one looks at ecclesiastic, institutionalized sacramentalism as a kind of religious life in decline. Unfortunately, this needs saying because arrogance toward participants in cultus is just as rampant as is that toward people with different eating habits.

This is counterposed by the uplifting efforts of those who wish to re-establish connection with the spiritual world, not as a gift of grace from "above," but as an accomplishment of striving toward what is "above." It has to do with what Steiner called the "reversed cultus" (see also especially Friedrich Benesch, *Ideen zur Kultusfrage I and II*, Basel, 1985 and 1986).

At first only a few individuals, in recent times ever more people are going the path, changing their meditative practice so that it not only

becomes receptive for what the spirit wants to give as gifts, but the connection with one's own spirit-seed comes about, making conscious research in the spiritual world possible. Steiner indicated several paths to be taken, according to one's disposition and area of research. I only suggest—because the activity of great initiates cannot be restricted—that one could identify two main directions as the Rosicrucian-Raphaelic and the Steiner-Michaelic streams or paths. In the reality of life, each needs the other to remain in balance, and the leaders of humankind also support one another.

Could it be that alongside the path leading from above to below—ecclesiastic sacramentalism—and the way from below to above—the Faustian way—there exists a third? Or does the social sacramentalism meant here only represent a renewal of the dying ecclesiastic sacramentalism? The answer is already given, like a signpost. See Chapter 3 (see p. 49) for a "map."

Social sacramentalism rests on the archetypal social phenomenon, that is, on the premise that the Other—if I am willing to let myself be put to sleep—speaks within me, and I can retrieve his or her intention from the realm of sleep into waking consciousness. Though elements of ecclesiastic sacramentalism live in the sacrifice of consciousness (falling asleep), and Faustian elements in the retrieval of content from sleep (path to continuity of consciousness), the actual act is an autonomous experience of spirit. Since the Other is a spirit-being (as am I), he or she reveals to me in my sacrificial sleep something of the content of his or her spirit. "In the new social forms one consecrates the other, helps the other to perceive the spiritual world" (Harrie Salman, ibid.).

In the fourth Urielic consideration, I already indicated that what occurs here is not a path of cognition as such. My own research does not determine what comes to me: I must await what the Other brings me. *Religio*, connection with the spiritual world, comes neither through the grace mediated by a priest from above to below, nor through a Faustian storming of the heavenly world from below to above—but in a horizontal gesture. It brings an archetypal social motif to expression: One can do nothing for oneself—we receive everything from Others. This is not about what I may experience—that is at most a "by-product." At best, my experience enables me to really help the Other. Through suffering the distress of the Other in one's own being—as an individual, as part of a group, as a member of humanity—the social gestures grow, leading to the social sacraments.

Preliminary Steps Toward Social Sacraments

Social sacramentalism does not yet exist today; a look at history can help us to understand this. Let me mention that I am grateful to Stefan Karl for the first section.

Although, or perhaps especially because social sacramentalism is a Christian phenomenon, we find its origins in Jewish—not Hebrew!—history. In Genesis, Abel and Cain oppose each other; Aaron and Moses clash in the flight from Egypt; and later Solomon and Hieram vie with

one another. These conflicts represent those between the ecclesiastic priesthood and its adepts. At the time of Christ this appears again historically in the opposition of the priest-caste of Saduccees, who completely lived in outer forms, and the Essenes ("Gnosis"), who were dedicated to individual development/redemption. The third stream begins only after the Babylonian imprisonment, with the creation of Judaism and with Ezra, and ends in Pharisaism. Then, in the beginning of the last pre-Christian era of Michael, those seeds can arise that fundamentally place every person before the question of whether they will be responsible for creating their life in such a way that it is in harmony with the divine world-order. Jahwe is no longer pushed to the side, accessible only to the sons of Levi, but becomes accessible to human beings as an inner voice, particularly in social life. It is the time of the birth of conscience. Thus, the Torah is now interpreted as a revelation to be continued by humanity. Alongside the temple now stood the synagogues—schools without cultus as such, without privileges for position or class. The hallmarks of the synagogue were Torah, and later Talmud, which together provided the earthly frame to create a way of life in accord with divine justice, on the one hand, and on the other, the completely personal interpretation (within the context)—and responsibility!—that alone could make Israel into God's nation. Relationships to fellow human beings—strangers included!—burst cultic forms without considering personal striving for redemption, which was thought to be misguided.

Into this world-picture then appears, beside the priest, the rabbi, who is not called or chosen, but assumes office out of spiritual authority. We may wonder why the word "Pharisee" became a curse when that sect became decadent in the time of Christ, even though the no-less decadent Saduccees and Essenes were not derided. Their disrepute should not blind us to the Pharisees' unique contribution to religious development. They fulfilled the task of Judaism: not to see God in myth but to experience God in the soul—also in the soul of the Other. If God lived in an individual's soul, then he also lived in the soul of strangers. In the eighteenth century this rabbinical stream appears again in Chasidism. In the consecration of everyday life we find the beginnings of that social impulse that culminates in the present with figures like Emmanuel Lévinas, Martin Buber, Friedrich Weinreb, and others. With them sounds the archetypal Christian social motif: "What you have done to the least of my fellows, you have done to me" (Matthew 25,40).

We should also mention a parallel to the above-noted preliminary stage of Christian social sacramentalism: Manichaeanism. It shares the fate of being hated by the Christian confessions, along with the Pharisees. The starting point of Mani is not justice; justice appears in Manichaeanism much farther on. Its starting point is humanity's involvement in the battle between good and evil—experienced as real, substantial forces. Its teaching is one of redemption—not only of the soul, but especially, also, of evil. The essential mythos is thus: "The dragon became jealous of the sun. He devoured it, and the cosmos became dark. But lo, after some time a radiance came into the world; it arose from inside the dragon." A teaching

like this had an influence on interpersonal relations. Usually evil (or what we experience as evil in the Other) is what stimulates us to judgment and condemnation. Evil thereby catches two or more flies: Not only does the person judged become evil through being so accused—those moved by evil to condemn also allow evil to take hold within themselves. For example, if someone calls me a liar and I manage to receive it without emotion, without protest, without defense, we might call this process letting-oneself-be-eaten-up. This "food" at some point will light up the actual being of the Other. (See also the fourth Urielic consideration, as well as Chapter 4.)

Even though today the Manichaean influence on Catharism is disputed, a connection may be drawn—first of all, because we can also find this attitude toward evil (in various aspects of its activity, and to different degrees) among the Cathars, and secondly because these were confronted, except Mani, with ecclesiastic sacramentalism. I tend to share today's opinion that the Cathars refused any sacrament. They observed sacrament-like acts, and every Cathar was allowed to enact them: *ordinamentum* (laying-on of hands = spirit baptism); *consolamentum* (comforting); *endura* (utmost mortification)—description by René Nelli, *Ecritures Cathares*, Paris, 1959.

I consider this an argument for my preliminary hypothesis that the Cathars considered it their task to prepare a new, social sacramentalism. What they experienced at that time in the Roman Catholic Church is probably comparable to the temple-service of the Sadducees: hollow forms into which, as into any hollow form, power demons crept. Because they lacked an initiate able to bring down the complete sacraments from the spiritual world, they had to make do with the gestures of the sacraments. Their Manichaean destiny, to be devoured in the Albigensian wars during the Inquisition, brought an end to this impulse.

Finally, among the precursors of social sacramentalism I wish to mention possibly the greatest one—Geert (de) Groote. His impulse falls in the second half of the fourteenth century and is known as "modern devotion." Groote stands with only one leg in the mysticism of the late Middle Ages; it is more a stepping-stone for him, even if it is the realm in which he is best known (the first three books of the *Imitatio Christi* go back to him). He crosses the boundary of inner-ecclesiastic devotion, thanks to the prohibition against prayer imposed on him by his bishop. As he had refused to be consecrated as a priest before, now he refuses—in a formal sense—the life of the cloister. What moved him was not compatible with ecclesiastic authority, although he nevertheless tried to avoid any conflict with that authority. So, as a lay person he founded—with twelve followers—a cloister-like commune, the "Brothers of Communal Life." The cohabiting brothers derived their income from what we today would call economic life; the income of all went into the common treasury. It was up to each individual to work "overtime" or to curb consumption so that enough was left over to care for the poor. Anyone was free to leave the brotherhood at any time. There were no vows. The enactment of

sacraments was not open to them as laymen, but we can easily find social gestures in the descriptions of their life. The last reported deed of Geert Groote even shows the taking up of another's karma: he visited a plague-ridden friend. At his friend's bedside, he asked fervently for his health—and felt how the illness moved into himself. The friend recovered, Groote died of the plague. The impulse of lay-brotherhoods, not subordinate to any ecclesiastic power, spread quickly over large areas of Europe. I do not know whether a historic-causal connection exists with the Mähric/Bohemian Brothers (c.1420), but the impulse is the same, only in the Protestant world. After their expulsion they lived on as Herrnhuter under the patronage of Zinzendorf (c.1722); we meet this branch in Camphill in the twentieth century. And there, I found the basis for my search for social sacramentalism.

The Social Sacraments Cannot Yet Exist Today

According to Steiner, sacraments are an exact earthly expression of the forces active in the spiritual world. Any change, any omission, influences their effect. This is why I wrote ("Die Hierarchie in der Christengemeinschaft," in: *Info3,* Frankfurt, November 1985) that the hierarchy of priests in The Christian Community is responsible for guaranteeing the enactment of the sacraments in the form Steiner gave. This includes not only the words, but also the gestures, the garments, the colors, the substances, and so on. In this regard, the cultus has a similarity to white magic: Those who do not know the exact verse cannot (as Goethe's sorcerer's apprentice) return the broom to its corner.

Steiner added that because of this necessary exactness the cultus can be enacted only by someone who has been consecrated. Anticipating what will be clarified in Chapter 3 (on the consecration of priests), I want to remark here that this is why a sacrament can be enacted only by a consecrated priest, for the enactment is a new creation effected by grace.

In this sense, we can understand why what is presented in this book is not, nor can be, a social sacramentalism. Whether the initiate who will bring the gift of the social sacraments to us appears tomorrow or in a thousand years is not a question here. Such a one comes when the spiritual world deems the time ripe for it. But this does not mean that we have to wait passively. We can prepare the way for social sacramentalism because one of the conditions for its inauguration is that enough people want it. If we are fortunate, we will hasten this moment. "We are not mature enough for the enactment of the sacraments," says a personality from the circle mentioned in the epilogue, "but we encounter situations where we must act sacramentally anyway."

The preparation for social sacramentalism has many aspects. Looking at the actual sacraments, I want to speak, from my experience with this work, of three stages—different interpretations are certainly possible. The first stage takes place on the intellectual level. The premonition that there are social sacraments, and the urgent wish to find evidence of them, leads to ephemeral trains of thought. These are an important part of the process, as they bring the topic into focus from various aspects and thus

create a heightened attention and receptivity for the fundamentals of social activity. At this stage in my own work, for example, I tried to experience many cultic enactments of The Christian Community in order to grasp something of their moods and gestures.

The point came where one or another social sacrament placed itself before me with such vehemence and clarity in its social gesture that doubts were no longer possible. Only when they were present for me like this did I realize how different they were from what I had imagined and how their nature is related to the ecclesiastic sacraments. This is the second stage, the result of which is here described.

The third stage, carrying spiritual content down into a cultic act, is, of course taboo, but the second task is enough to occupy a lifetime. One wishes that many might dare attempt to live the seven gestures—even some of them—for these open thrilling perspectives for humanity, despite constant failures.

What Social Sacramentalism Is Not

To indicate what one does not mean usually involves applying a negative label. But here I merely wish to define the boundaries of my topic. From our discussion so far, it should be clear that I am not elaborating steps toward a social priesthood, since this does not yet exist. I am concerned here with the question of what impetus belongs to the social impulse in a strictly religious sense, and what is at work where other goals are striven for—without excluding what lies between the two.

The boundaries of official priesthood are complicated—and thus it is especially important to avoid misunderstandings. In most confessions, these boundaries have a double character: enactment of the sacrament on the one hand, ministry on the other. Priesthood has both in common with social sacramentalism. It is relatively easy to differentiate ecclesiastic and social sacramentalism in the cultus, of course—with respect to cultus apprehended through supersensible perception, and also in the way the authority for the enactment of the sacraments is achieved. As we saw, these are not only formal differences; they involve the principles of vertical versus horizontal revelation, which have consequences for the consecration of priests. While cultus and ministry are to be differentiated in ecclesiastic priestly activities, ministry is social cultus. Not only are lay ministers active in many churches and communities, but rarely is a powerful celebrant also a good minister—and vice versa—pointing to qualities peculiar to different spiritual streams. Thus, it seems obvious that in ministry, both activities overlap—this belongs not only to the future, but to our present time of preparation for the sacramental social gestures. The boundaries of ministry/priesthood are to be found less in fundamentals than in the personal and institutional realms. The personal comes into play because not every church priest will succeed in ministry—in meeting the Other as an equal and submitting to his or her distress out of social sensing. It is a test of strength to stand aside from the revelations of one's conscience in order to follow the higher being of the Other. Only ordained

priests themselves can answer the question whether they wish, and are able, to do this. One could not be a social priest, on the other hand, without the ability to succeed in this. When we look at the church as an institution, we face the question whether priests bound by ecclesiastical strictures are allowed to affirm and strengthen the will of fellow human beings even if they offend against the moral teaching or interests of the church. We stand here before a problem that runs through the whole of church history like a red thread: a priest's distress of conscience. Every institution needs functionaries. In all communities of faith that I know of, the priests are functionaries of the church in the material sense, and therefore bound to regulations. The role of functionary, however, clouds interpersonal relations. This is probably why the boundaries of social sacramentalism must be looked for exactly here. By its very nature, it cannot be institutionalized.

Here we have the key for differentiating social sacramentalism from other movements that seem at first glance to have some semblance of social priesthood—those communities of faith that consider all of their members priests. Among the groups I am aware of—Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses—this priesthood includes the apostolic task. But seeking religious converts is the opposite of social sacramentalism. I am not saying that such a goal is wrong, but it is different.

The majority of people active in the various branches of psychology believe that they work out of the social impulse. Even in the rare instances where they see their profession as "priestly," I cannot call their impulse social. In almost all cases it involves a Raphaelic activity: psychotherapy. Generally—of course, there are exceptions—when a therapist acts on a client's soul, the will to change it is also at work (see also GA 317/1952/26). Urielic—and, therefore, priestly—activity accepts people seeking help as they are and does not wish to change them, but rather seeks to clarify their situation so that they can draw their own conclusions. Here, spirit does not speak to soul, at least not intentionally—spirit speaks to spirit. That many people need to speak about their soul problems does not make whoever listens a priest; the listener's activity is legitimized only because it is needed. The influence of one's I upon Another would be justified only out of the spirit-self, because it includes the Other, and because in and through it works the Christ. But who has come this far today?

Finally, I cannot avoid pointing to the phenomenon that more and more people today are searching for a sacramentalism that does not require the consecration of priests. I refer here to the services Steiner gave to the religion teachers of the first Waldorf school, to the death ritual given to the old-Catholic pastor Hugo Schuster, and to the baptism and marriage rituals given to the pastors Wilhelm Ruhtenberg and Johannes Geyer—clergymen, by the way, who had been consecrated and ordained specifically for these acts. What occurs in these instances—I would describe this as a tragedy rather than progress—lies outside of what I call social sacramentalism. I am not qualified to judge whether those not ordained in The Christian Community are legitimized by a different

consecration. Even if one assumes the latter, sacramentalism is not qualitatively widened, because it remains in the cultus given by Steiner, being identical for the most part with that of The Christian Community. Simply creating new criteria for the selection of priests and abolishing the hierarchy does not constitute the founding of a new cultus. In the event that a new sacramentalism is founded, the recognition of those who should enact it will come from somewhere other than Dornach.

III.

The Social Sacraments

To be precise, the above title is incorrect. The gestures of the social sacraments will be described here. For the sake of simplicity, I refer to the social sacraments in this chapter, but I mean their gestures.

Even though a systematic discussion of the social sacraments should begin with the consecration of priests, I will speak first about the Eucharist—the sacrament that in the social realm is pendant to the Mass, to the Act of Consecration of Man. I will begin here because the Eucharist is central in ecclesiastic-cultic as well as in social-cultic life, and in a certain sense already contains the other six sacraments. Discussing the Eucharist also enables us to consider the essential concepts of the social realm, giving them more precise content.

We need to be more precise both about the term "social" as I use it and about the "archetypal social phenomenon" described by Steiner. Both are extensively treated in my book, *The Anthroposophical Social Impulse*, which also shows the way leading to the social sacraments. I will not repeat what was said there, but simply summarize.

The term "social" describes two concepts, leading to utter confusion when these are not kept separate. On the one hand it points very generally to societal phenomena, as one speaks, for example, about the social conditions in Germany, the social position of those seeking asylum, or about the fundamental social laws. It usually stands as a synonym for "societal," and therefore allows us to speak of "social" circumstances if we want to describe the social or unsocial conditions in a state or an institution. Next to these meso- and macro-social concepts we have the micro-social, bringing an individual-human realm to expression: to make the distress of fellow human beings the motive for one's actions. We certainly do not do this in order to abuse them, but to help them. (These concepts are elaborated in Chapter 1 of *The Anthroposophical Social Impulse*, *Social and Unsocial*.) Let me point out that the micro-social concept has nothing to do with one's occupation. Of two caregivers, one can work in order to make money, the other to look after a person's distress.

Steiner described the archetypal social phenomenon in several lectures using almost the exact same wording. I choose the lecture from December 12, 1918 (GA 186/1963/VII):

> People are afraid, put blindfolds over their eyes, put their head into the sand like ostriches before such important, and certainly very real, things as this: that when one human being faces another, one always tries to put the other to sleep and the other wants to remain awake. This is, to speak in the Goethean sense, the archetypal phenomenon of social science.

Steiner's further words here, and in the parallel lecture of December 6, 1918 (GA 186/1963/IV), clearly reveal that in this situation a true falling asleep occurs unconsciously, and that only in this state of sleep is communication between people possible. This sleep is necessary because only in the state of sleep—and in what is retrieved from it upon waking—are we social. In sleep, we are filled with the Other's being because then we are together in the world-spirituality. As we awaken, our I takes hold of our sheaths again and expels the Other in order to reassert itself. In this, humans are unsocial beings. For connections with other statements Steiner made in this regard, refer to Chapter 5 of *The Anthroposophical Social Impulse*; we are dealing here with the process of the social sacraments, which I will discuss in Chapter 3.

The process we are describing, the "archetypal social phenomenon in the Goethean sense," can only mean that in the earthly realm, only that may be called social, in the second sense above, which has this process as its basis. We find here the quintessence, the "spiritual thread" that connects the most varied social or unsocial deeds. As the archetypal plant appears in the most varied plant forms through the influence of environment, so the manifoldness of social forms arises out of the human being under the influence of the sheath-being—always within the "You and I." Whether I can prolong the social sleep or want to shorten it; whether I retrieve much or little into waking life of what I was allowed to learn from the Other in sleep; whether I use it in the spirit in which it was entrusted to me; whether I, when putting someone else to sleep, soon give them the opportunity to awaken again or perhaps mesmerize them—these questions only touch on all the areas a social science, understanding itself, would have to study as an outpouring of the archetypal social phenomenon. That its meaning goes even further will be evident if it now appears as the starting point for social sacramentalism.

The Social Meal of Love

What does the archetypal social phenomenon actually show us? Let us look at it closely from the viewpoint of someone who wants to be social, and lets herself be put to sleep. Let us say the one in distress (O) turns to the social one (S). As always in spiritual science, we will now have to differentiate between three phases of sleep: falling asleep, the sleep-state, and awakening. We may even—since we know that sleep is the sibling of death—speak of a post-death ascent through the planetary spheres, an outflowing into the realm of the fixed stars (midnight-hour of existence), and a descent in contraction to the portal of birth, comparatively. Presented schematically, we then come to the following:
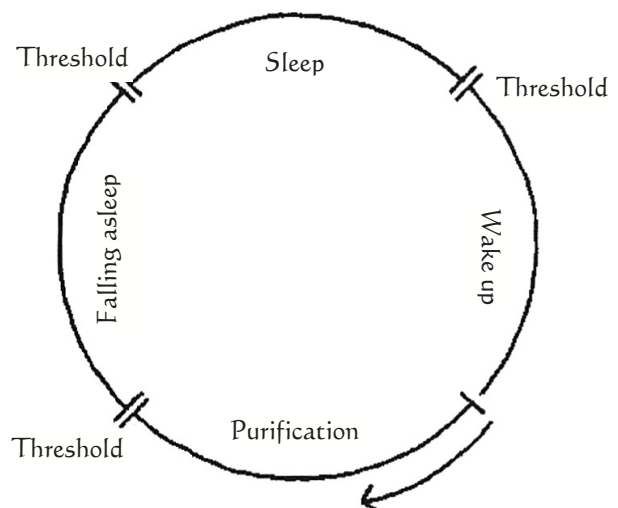
It should not disturb us here that the tiny moment in conversation between being put to sleep and awakening can again be divided into three phases. Other qualities of time are valid for what takes place in (almost) complete unconsciousness. We may think of the dynamics of a dream, where a whole drama can be enacted within a second which, despite its brevity, we can experience in its true-life duration.

We will assume that (O) explains his distress, his problem to (S), and that she is willing to listen, that is, she is social in such a way that she is willing to go to sleep. This is not at all a given; it is quite possible to "tune out," to chime in with one's own problems before the Other finishes speaking, and so on.

More is necessary. The associations announcing themselves in (S)'s soul, the similar picture arising in (S)'s soul based on her own experiences—in short, her own emotional life—binds her soul to waking consciousness. These take up the room necessary for (O) to reveal his distress to (S). In this way, most archetypal social phenomena fail, even with the best of intentions, before they have really begun: Communication does not take place.

If the seed is to sprout, grow, and bear fruit, it must fall on well-prepared soil, say the Gospels (Matthew 13 among others); the same is true for the word of the Other. The actual archetypal social phenomenon as an occult process of human communication therefore needs a preliminary step. It is certainly not by chance that Steiner mentions this in the same lectures where he talks about the archetypal social phenomenon. All emotions must be removed from our soul life, both antipathy and sympathy. The nature of the Other can pour itself only onto emptiness of soul. This emptiness, this stillness of soul has to be in (S) for the conversation to become a social one, that is, one in which someone comes toward the distress of another. We may call this preliminary step purification. The word points to a picture: When we expect a dear visitor, we naturally feel a need to clean our house. Choosing to clean in preparation is a kind of crossing or threshold, one that exists completely in our waking consciousness. "(O) should take me as I am," the double of (S) whispers to her.

Even when we are well prepared, well "cleaned," the phase of falling asleep involves an inner battle—one we struggle with even more when falling asleep at night. Steiner explains that we do not want to sleep because we are tired, but rather we become tired because the need arises to become social after having been awake unsocially, and therefore we want to go to sleep. In the fight between the resonating egocentric emotions of the day and the need for sleep—in the difficulty of falling asleep in the archetypal social phenomenon—lives the question: When will I finally succeed in sacrificing day-consciousness? Will I not then lose the fruits of bright day-consciousness wrought for eons? As at every threshold, so here, too, an evil fellow lurks. Ahriman fills us with fear: Do not throw away what you have—you don't know what to expect beyond the threshold—stay on the safe side. Something similar to the fear of death threatens us at the threshold and wants to prevent us from being

social. Since the whole process occurs in unconsciousness, we do not know the reason for our social—or "nightly"—sleeplessness; and thus it works all the more strongly.

When we fall asleep we lose object-consciousness, and can no longer differentiate ourselves from other beings. Human beings, incorporated or not, sleeping or waking, weave through one another even if, when awake, we are not aware of this. This means that (O)'s distress appears in the spirit-soul being of (S) as it lives in its higher nature; his lower I and his soul are not excarnated, (O) "is awake." In this way (O)'s affair becomes the affair of (S).

We meet a different kind of being on the threshold of deep sleep: the splinterer. His countenance informs us that we are about to enter a kingdom where we lose our reality. That is what happens when we cannot differentiate ourselves from others. To reveal oneself as Being—is this not the greatest danger that can threaten us? What can protect us here? Is it not all too understandable that many a conversation, many an archetypal social phenomenon gets stuck on the border of falling asleep because the person who wants to be social shrinks from this danger? The half-sleep phase of falling asleep does not yet lead to unity out of which we can grasp the distress of the Other.

Questions appear here:

- Is the archetypal social phenomenon not described as a very ordinary process that occurs in every human meeting?

- If one takes the concept of sleep (as people did in the past) literally, why is social sleep different from nightly sleep?

The two questions are connected. It belongs to the lawfulness of human development that the spiritual hierarchies protect us from dangers we are not yet prepared to face. When we are falling asleep and our I and astral-body retreat out of our head, their place is taken by beings of the higher hierarchies to prevent demons from being able to nestle into the emptiness. This is why we generally awaken whole from sleep. Therefore something catastrophic "happens" only in rare, exceptional cases during normal meetings that occur on the level of our current human consciousness. Otherwise, very little happens. The experience of the Other's distress does not penetrate us deeply, or is translated, upon awakening, into trivialities or popular-scientific anecdotes. As for night sleep, anthroposophical physicians verify that the suffering of many patients is caused by their not advancing far enough into the cosmos during sleep. Expressed in our terms: They do not reach the goal of becoming tired, of becoming social, and therefore remain tired in the waking state. These are signs that what was a natural and healthy process even up into our century is coming to an end because the time is ripe for a transition: The world of sleep will no longer be a gift we receive, but something to be consciously worked with.

Thus we have come to a second developmental law. If we take the guidance we formerly received from the spiritual world into our own hands, the protection of the hierarchies is withdrawn; from then on we will have to oppose the antagonistic forces out of our own strength, out of our own preparation.

Those who choose not to live through the phases of the archetypal social phenomenon unconsciously, who wish to strengthen them out of free will, to intensify them, will also have to find ways to face the meeting with evil. That is already valid for the natural resistance to being put to sleep, even more so on crossing the threshold to deep sleep.

It is just here that the sacramental character of the archetypal social phenomenon reveals itself. The social path does not lead first of all to the Lesser Guardian, barring the way for us as long as we are not prepared for the dangers of evil that arise in much greater force upon entry into the spiritual world. It leads first to the Greater Guardian. Christ does not bar the entrance to us but demands: "Take your fellow human beings with you!" Those who meet Christ in this attitude—and this is the case if his distress is what moves us to seek him in the archetypal social phenomenon— meet their fellow human beings in his name. This means that Christ is with us (Matthew 18). And as Christ leads the soul that looked for him after death as its guide through the planetary spheres, as he protects human beings that have become pure spirit from losing themselves in the midnight-hour of existence, so also he carries those who wish to help with the archetypal social phenomenon through the storms of soul when falling asleep; he holds together those who are threatened with losing their spirit in the nature of the Other in the midnight-hour of social sleep: *In Christo morimur*.

The fruit arises in awakening. It must be said again: The social path is not a path of cognition, meant to lead to the achievement of continued consciousness. What is retrieved from social sleep into waking consciousness is as fragmented or absent as what remains from night sleep. One can say of both that the experiences indeed occurred, but largely or completely remain in a condition of consciousness elusive to our bright day-consciousness. This again does not mean that they are meaningless. If this were so, then communication between people would be impossible. Basically, we communicate somewhat, but do not really know how.

Although in the long run, repeated efforts to make room for the Other in our inner being increase our permeability for what wants to be communicated out of the world of sleep, what appears existentially is after all grace, like a symbol for everything sacramental.

In all modesty, I can say that in situations where I was able to utter a helpful word to another human being, I experienced it as a gift from the shore beyond. Anyone who has ever received this blessing will never confuse it with a sudden helpful idea. Unlike the latter, these inspired gifts almost never have any connection with our knowledge of the Other, or with anything we have ever thought during our interactions with them.

What wells up in such an awakening does not come from me; it is a revelation of the higher I of the One who is in distress. Their higher being itself utters the healing word in the situation, and the listener, who receives the words of the higher self through his or her sheath-being, must know how to clothe it in human language. As surprising as the helping word may be for the listener, it is immediately clear. This confirms that the most important things in life are said to one by Others. We can even see this outside the context of the archetypal social phenomenon used for giving help. Perhaps someone relates something trivial, even boring—and along with it says something that, unbeknownst to them, is very important for the person who hears it. Hearing it is a lightning-like revelation: That is what I need!

Such occurrences underscore Steiner's statement that we cannot do anything for ourselves. Let me add a personal illustration. In a conversation at table, a guest spoke of his experiences. Suddenly I heard him say something that placed the long-sought gesture of one of the social sacraments before my soul. Moved, I uttered thanks; he did not hear, but simply continued with his story. He became the coauthor of this work.

Insofar as it was possible to retrieve something from sleep into this phase of awakening, the awakening one—(S), in our case—knows more about (O) than (O) does. (O)'s higher self spoke to (S), the higher self that is incomprehensible to (O) as he walks upon the earth. A new opponent enters the arena. Any knowledge beyond what others know gives power. What will (S) do with her power? Will she be able to resist Lucifer's temptation to lead (O) "to what is best for him?" Or using it to her own advantage? Even if (S) were to remark that her advice to (O) comes from his own higher I, this would interfere with his freedom, tainting the occult activity with the onus of gray magic. What (S) has to say should be presented as her opinion, as information with which (O) can do as he wishes. Only then is the fundamental premise, that Christ stands "right among them," preserved.

The processes of the archetypal phenomenon and the meeting with the three evils are the same in principle, whether we are facing a trivial distress or an existential question. But the circumstances are very different depending upon whether we want to help someone get over an awkwardness, a hurdle, or want to achieve a real deed of redemption. The Lord of Karma must lead us to an answer. If we are facing an existential question, such as a request to be redeemed from a heavy debt, the Christ leads the whole process. As was stated before in a different regard, it is certainly not something to be undertaken superficially. Just as initiates on the individual path of cognition become responsible for their pupils, so on the social path those co-redeeming take on the function of an initiate, which they can feel capable of only if they can regularly practice the experience "I am with you to the end of days."

Let us now review the whole process! There is a person in distress, looking to another for help. Will the helper accept in the seeker "the Christ being that stands behind every person on earth" (GA 172/1964/205-206)?

Will the helper meet the seeker as a Christ-bearer, that is, as a spirit-gifted being whose higher I is part of the Christ—and therefore, like him, not simply an object? Will the helper act in consciousness of Christ's word: "What you have done to the least of these my brothers, you have done to me" (Matthew 25)? If so, the helper clearly realizes that, in this interchange, we enter a holy realm.

- The helper will purify him- or herself in order to be worthy of receiving the Christ-bearer.

But we can assist another only if we can learn what his or her distress truly is, not simply what we imagine it is in our sheath-being. To truly know another's distress, we must take him or her up into ourselves, we must fall asleep. We must sacrifice something that belongs to our true humanity, the only thing we can take with us beyond the threshold of death—something of our consciousness.

- The helper sacrifices her day-consciousness, trusting in Christ's help to face the demons that are attracted by the arising emptiness. The helper then enters sleep, losing the self and becoming one with the higher being of the Other—hoping to be led back to the self again by the Christ.

- The helper's higher being, which departed in sleep, transforms itself into the higher being of the Other. Out of the perception gained from this, the helper can now

- Offer the food that the Other needs.

In this process, taken from the archetypal social phenomenon, the Act of Consecration of Man suddenly stands before us in its four parts:

In the "prelude," the annunciation of the Gospels and the Creed, the priest purifies him- or herself and testifies that he or she approaches the community in Christ's name. Five times the word "pure" sounds in this short section.

In the "offering," the altar and the activities there are protected through the censing against disturbances that encroach from the outside and from the priest. "May a wall prevent my error from streaming "round me" so that the souls of the altar-community can sacrifice themselves for the indwelling of Christ.

In the "transformation" or "transubstantiation," Christ enters into bread and wine to lead earthly substance back to its divine origin. How particularly close the transubstantiation comes to the deep sleep of the archetypal social phenomenon becomes clear when Steiner describes (GA 344/1994/135) what happens in the altar-community during Mass.

Finally, in the "communion," the altar-community eats the substance that has become divine. It is shattering to realize that in each true human meeting is enacted a complete Consecration of Man.

Is it also possible to say that each Consecration of Man is a very special archetypal social phenomenon? This may certainly be stated from a particular viewpoint, but we need to be careful about wanting to see them as the same thing. In the other sacraments we can sometimes see an opposite composition. The archetypal social phenomenon always occurs between two people (GA 186/1963/90), even where one wants to raise it to consciousness in groups. For example, at a bible-evening as cultivated in Camphill, the gesture of the archetypal social phenomenon is more important than the content presented (see also Marjorie Spock, *Das meditative Gespräch* [*The Art of Goethean Conversation*], Kiel 1985). Each participant takes up the speaker's words in his own way so that what is addressed to all breaks into many "inter-conversations." If this were otherwise, one would have to speak of suggestion. The Act of Consecration of Man, on the other hand, is not a sacrament if the altar-community consists of only one person. Not only does the text address a plurality—this truly exists because the deceased (GA 344/1994/68) and the unborn also belong to it. A plurality is indispensable because the sacramental experience can never be evoked through the relation of the Holy Act to only one person, but only by the altar-community forming a vessel with each individual as part of it. This is almost tangible in the sevenfold "Christ in you"—"And may he fill thy spirit." The priest can speak the first out of his or her Christ-filled soul; the response of the altar-community, expressed through the server representing them, presupposes that those present have themselves formed a vessel that is being filled with the Holy Spirit. Out of this vessel the Spirit-self now speaks to the priest's "I." In contrast, even though the answer to someone's distress in the social sacrament comes out of that person's higher nature, out of their spirit-nature, and therefore also out of their spirit-self, it nevertheless expends itself in a process of two individual personalities, with Christ in their midst.

One could still point out many more differences and similarities between the Act of Consecration of Man and the archetypal social phenomenon; both have much in common because at the heart of each is Christ. But to overlook their differences would be to misunderstand them. Each takes place in a different dimension, strives toward a different goal; even if both find themselves in ministry, they each have their own sphere of activity.

Limiting myself now to the social sacrament, I will attempt to place the Urielic impulse within the cosmos. It is not difficult to recognize the Gabrielic impulse in the purification, in the duality of compassion and mercy. We see it in the Marianic component, on the one hand, and on the other, the will to clean the house the one in need will enter—not for oneself, but for the sake of the Other—what I would call *social hygiene.* The strictness of the form encounters humanity in a loving manner. One need only think of the *Oberufer Paradise Play* where the sternness of "I received a law" immediately transforms itself into mildness when Gabriel turns toward Eva, who is concerned not with her own fate, but with that of the women who will follow her. This leads us to the social sphere of

Gabriel, judicial life. The whole of social threefolding is nothing but social hygiene, and in the observance of the boundaries of the three social areas, under the charge to fill them with one's own impulses, this member of the Elohim gives us the freedom to unfold ourselves—just as the soul purified of emotions creates room for the Other.

Further away, but clearly recognizable, Raphael is responsible for the time of falling asleep. In the storms of soul that keep us "away from sleep," he appears as physician. In the goodness of his being we may be comforted to know that no development can be achieved without sacrifice. He appears clearly in the social realm in the main social law. In the sacrifice of one's own work for the sake of the needs of Others, in the trust that their will to sacrifice will also sustain me, lives the same quality that helps us tolerate loss of consciousness for the sake of the health of the Other. In his *Karma des Berufes*, Steiner found moving words to describe the mission of work (especially in the lectures from November 6 and 12, 1916; GA 172/1974).

In the realm of sleep we meet Uriel. Because sleep is the seed of the archetypal social phenomenon, he stands before us as the representative of the whole. In this sphere, turned toward eternity, only moral substance earns his guardianship. It pours out of the Christ-filled higher I into the social helper to make possible the just act: pronouncing the will of the Father. It is the same substance that the Urielite wants to let stream out of the archetypal social phenomenon into the three societal vessels.

In awakening, finally, in the return to day-consciousness, Michael fights the dragon that sees opportunities for itself in the unpurified soul life as it returns to the etheric and physical bodies. Only absolute love of truth in one's own motives, only the sword of Michael can see to it that the fruit of the sacrifice reaches its destination. We see a similar process in society when, in spiritual life, the battle is fought between truth and lies (not the least of which is the battle of truth against aspersions cast on itself). The cloak of love may envelop the failing personality, even if not their deeds. Michael sacrificed cosmic intelligence for the sake of our freedom, unworthy though we may be. True spiritual life wants to return it to him, and to our own development.

Out of what could only be said aphoristically about the archetypal social phenomenon, we can sense that here a principle is active in humanity through which the circle of Elohim under their leader, the Kyrios, carries the Christ-forces into it. This is why that phenomenon can be the fount of religious as well as social life. In sacramentalism, humanity announces its willingness to cooperate.

The title of this chapter refers to the Eucharist as the "Meal of Love." This is not an unusual name for this sacrament. What imaginations does it stir in us? Karl Friedrich Althoff pointed out to me that the Greek language has four designations for "Love": *eros, storgae, philia,* and *agape*. The last word, created for the Septuaginta, denotes "love that takes the highest of the Other into itself." Is this not the goal in the archetypal social phenomenon?

The Sacrament of Consecration of the Priest

The Sacrament of Consecration of the Priest is as simple as the form of the archetypal social phenomenon is complicated. It can be described in a few words.

As we already saw, the enactment of a sacred rite requires a consecrated priest. A human being must act out of authority, and this authority must be bestowed. In most churches this happens through succession (the consecrated priest is authorized to consecrate), or through membership in a certain group (the Levites in the Jewish faith). Within our understanding of what is social, these modes are inappropriate. The tribe as carrier of the abilities of priesthood has lost its validity since Golgotha, and succession is the expression of a group perpetuating itself, which is not social.

We as human beings cannot answer the question of authority for social cultus. The answer goes back to the word of Christ: "Where two or more are gathered in my name, I am among them." We met it in the archetypal social phenomenon; we meet it again in the consecration of the priest. When am I with another human being in Christ's name? In the moment when agape takes hold of me—where in the sphere of sleep the spirit-being of the Other fills me. If I meet someone in such a way that I am willing to temporarily sacrifice my consciousness for them, that their unfolding is more important to me than my own, I enact—by dying for them—the Imitation of Christ in a certain sense. Then I approach the Other in Christ's name. In that moment I am consecrated as a priest by Christ himself: His presence is consecration, in and for this moment. In contrast to the official priest, consecrated for his entire life (and thus, ideally, withdrawn from the social arena), the consecration of the social priest is valid only for the span of time in which we meet a fellow human being with agape. Each new meeting is a new test: How are you with the Other?

This is an inner, a mystic, experience. No circle of priests surrounds one, no right to consecration can be achieved: No successful sacred act authorizes another one, however much one can make it a profession to meet every human being in Christ's name. Only what happens in our meeting with the Other answers the question whether a priest has celebrated here.

Conceivably, this act can occur in the utmost loneliness. The Other, the Others, are only the trigger. The social consecration of the priest is a sacrament enacted by the Christ under four eyes, in a figurative sense. Not even the Other, the person in need, has to recognize that the consecration of the priest has been enacted with his partner—unless the Other not only experiences the helping force of the sacrament, but also perceives it.

The Sacrament of Confession

Of the six Christian ecclessiastic sacraments, this one lies closest to the central sacrament of the archetypal social phenomenon. In both cases the priest—if I may now use this term—stands before a person in

need. But it would be too nearsighted to see in confession only a special instance of the archetypal social phenomenon. It is a prerequisite, but has its own sphere of activity.

One could possibly call the archetypal social phenomenon the healing of everyday life. In itself it contains the two paths to Christ (GA 193/1973/57ff): accompanying another's thoughts by giving the other person room and, out of a kind of "earned" idealism, selflessly using the perception we have received through our "transformation" into priest. This sacrament is in no way valid only for the big problems in life. In the small hardships, too, human beings need the mediation of their higher being. Maybe we are concerned about a sick child, financial difficulties, problems with colleagues, and so on. In confession, on the other hand, we have to do with someone's having sinned—toward other people, divinity, toward themselves—I do not want to say in karmic regards, because this can also be the case in everyday problems. Here we have an offense against karma, but not only that. How did I use my inherited talents? Did I harm a sister soul? Did I miss an opportunity to help my brother? How can I live with my sins and omissions? Often the confessional conversation ranges from the adversities of everyday life to these kinds of questions. In confession, we try to see our activities in the light of Christ; then we cannot experience ourselves other than as sinners.

Certainty this ideal inspires the priest, who representing the Christ, confronts the one feeling sinful with an attitude of modesty and thoughtfulness. This opens him so that a faint glimmer of Christ can shine through. This modesty is also present if the priest wishes to see his or her activity in the light of the archetypal image of confessional conversation: Christ and the "good" criminal at the cross. In a certain sense one can speak of a reversal of the archetypal social phenomenon, since there the priest receives the Other as Christ-bearer.

In confession, the social priest appears as judge. This word could cause terrible misunderstandings, so I will not use it without explanation. Christ also appears as judge in the Apocalypse,[9] and appears to us after death as a karmic judge (GA 131/1958/80). What, then, is a judge in the Christian sense? Someone restoring the justice of the Father. Even in the most trivial earthly situations—as many legends and stories tell—a judge is only a good judge if he or she can say of even the worst crime (and is willing to say, even if only inwardly): I could have done that myself. This bespeaks a living archetypal social phenomenon, because only when we can think like this does the Other really dwell in us.

The role of the social judge can never be to reprimand the person who is confessing, not even to judge them personally in any way. We are concerned here with the deed, and nothing but the deed. It has consequences in world karma. Somehow these will have to be ordered into world harmony—by the perpetrator in their karmic aspect, and in their cosmic aspect by the Christ who, as "Lamb of God," carries the sins of the world. Thus we can understand why Steiner considered it wrong to take mitigating or aggravating circumstances into account in meting

out punishment. Such circumstances can be acknowledged through a pardon, which was once the right of kings by God's grace. True kings could pardon in the name of the angel of a nation.

It is especially important in the social confessional conversation not to limit oneself to the consequences of a transgression for the perpetrator. A sin is never a private affair, not even the sin of omission regarding one's own task on earth; our sins rob humanity of the contribution meant for it in world karma. This is why, as Sergei Prokofieff writes (in *Wege zur Christus-Erfahrung*, Dornach 1991, p. 36), "karma is no longer a personal affair." Athys Floride states in the same book that the ordering of one's own karma does not merely concern the deliverance of one's own soul, because unordered karma opens an abyss between people. In a social-sacramental confession the concern should never only be my own distress of soul, but also its meaning for humanity.

The role of the social priest is not to judge or condemn, nor to pardon the person confessing. Although the impulse usually lives in us, as social priests we should not even inquire into the psychic background and motive of a transgression. For that we have psychologists and biographical advisors. It is not important for our task why this woman chose an abortion, why that physician performed euthanasia. The facts alone are sufficient, and it is our task to objectively present their karmic and cosmic consequences—as far as these are accessible to us. Only this enables the person confessing to make decisions for the future in freedom.[10]

But the social priest must also present the positive side of any sin. Just as humanity will be able to ascend to the hierarchy of freedom and love only through the unmerited Fall, so does every sin carry the possibility of one's own or another's progress within it as something positive. The resistance called up through sin can remain unused, and then end in a cesspool of sin. It can also be used to strengthen oneself. This has yet another side. The deeper a human being has sunk, the higher the forces he calls forth from his fellow human beings to lead hm back to divinity. Someone who has healed from the sickness of sin is particularly suited to help those still tied to it. Do we not experience that former alcoholics are the most successful helpers of those dependent on alcohol, that former drug-addicts are most helpful to those addicted to drugs? Steiner said that, in retrospect, everything is right in the course of life. Each fall carries a potential ascent within it, just as, again according to Steiner, one grasps a truth fully only after having thought it wrongly. The Urielic character of the social sacraments, their respect for the dignity of the fellow human being, even the criminal, also demands that the priest never abuse the presentation of the positive side of a sin. Any recommendation as to how the person confessing can make up for the burdensome transgression is completely inappropriate—it negates the sacred character of confession. Morality always becomes sour when one knows what Others need to do. The priestly task is fulfilled once the consequences are clearly presented.

A third task—and the most important—must be added, one that belongs exclusively to the inner being of the priest. I can be brief here because

I have described this task in the first Urielic consideration. Confession would not go beyond the boundaries of the archetypal social phenomenon if the priest were not to take on at least a very small part of the karma that was caused by a transgression. Each sacrament has a sacrifice as its prerequisite; this is what is specific to the social confession. Only then can the honest prayer arise at the end of a confessional conversation that Christ carry the cosmic part of our sin.

The Sacrament of Work (Baptism)

By far the majority of people work, full- or part-time, in some kind of association—in a factory, an office, a school, and so on. People work, and even live, in institutions where they have to subordinate themselves to certain goals. I call all the coworkers in an association a "community" (see also *Gemeinschaft und Gemeinsamkeit*, Stuttgart, 1986). Often new coworkers join such a community with great expectations, especially if the goal of the association is tied to an ideal: Waldorf pedagogy, environmentally friendly cleaning materials, a Green Party. To feel human warmth among the like-minded—is that not the wish of many in this atomized world?

These are illusions, for anywhere different people's will forces work toward a single aim, there is constant friction. Because this hinders the achievement of the goal, human interactions in the association come to be based on productivity; thus strife is prevented, but people do not feel "at home" at work. As in nations there are only two choices: between bolshevism (today especially in its American-technocratic form) and social threefolding. So in the institutional sphere we must choose between ordered structure and partial threefolding.

In the latter case, the treatment of people as objects and disregard for human dignity would—I use the subjunctive, because such associations are rare!—fall away, but subordination to a goal and involuntary dependency on one another would still remain. This is simply a consequence of the fact that most institutions also stand in economic life, even if they otherwise belong to spiritual life. Wherever people work toward a goal, not as a game but because a need must be satisfied, economy comes into play, because the given goal must be accomplished efficiently and economically.

Steiner very convincingly described that today and in the future, it will be possible to find joy and satisfaction in work, as such, only in exceptional cases, such as in the achievement of a beautiful product (see *Karma des Berufes* GA 172/1974/84ff]. "Mission" can be a substitute for this joy (Rudolf Steiner, *Geisteswissenschaft und soziale Frage*, in GA 34). Today this sounds stranger than it did in 1906. Who can make a "mission" out of the production of parts, a warehouse for building materials, or the compilation of business documents? But this can only mean the acceptance of other people's needs—to work with this aim, even if my contribution is only the installation of a bolt that I "produce" day in and day out; even if I despise the consumption of the end-product (tobacco or alcohol, for example). Here we stand before the quintessence of the

social. We generally characterize this as "making the distress of fellow human beings the motive for one's own actions: In regard to economic life, it is: "making the needs of fellow human beings the motive for my work."

We imagine that this is different in spiritual institutions, that the purpose of work there is still intrinsic; it does not seem difficult there to be motivated by the needs of the (generally visible) consumer—for example, if one works as a caregiver for the ill, or as a teacher with students. When I look around me this seems like ideology, even in anthroposophical institutions. There are certainly exceptions, even in economic life—the pure crafts, for example (which can still exist only because industrial production is creating purchasing power). Our educational initiatives, our hospitals, our homes for specially challenged people—places where one wants to involve people who are motivated by the work itself—have fallen prey to the temptations of creeping officialdom, making the joy in one's work dependent on income, time off, and pensions.

There is no way back. Just as we have the choice between partial threefolding and ordered structure, so we must choose between fulfilling our task while living for "freedom," time off, and luxury, or truly letting our work be motivated by others' needs. It will hardly be difficult to experience a cultic relationship to work in the latter, infusing a spiritual element into our products (see also: Rudolf Steiner, *Karma des Berufes*, ibid., p. 93).

The loss of the so-called work ethic has many reasons behind it, and many more aspects. I want to restrict myself to those that cry out for sacramental help. If work in and of itself does not provide joy anymore, if one cannot bring visible joy to those who consume the products of our work because in most cases they are anonymous—what is left besides the escape from work? But even where the consumer stands before me—the child in school, the patient in the healing center, the challenged person in the care home—this joy is socially suspect. Do I rejoice in the blessedness of the consumer? In his or her progress? Or do I rejoice because my work was successful? The answer is apparent in the dearth of those willing to care for the elderly, where there is no progress. If one cannot perceive the joy of the consumer nor the joy of one's own accomplishment, then what should one work for? Should one still endure quarrels with colleagues, which—as if to take away the little bit of additional joy inherent when one knows the customer—have become a social epidemic particularly in spiritual institutions?

Only one thing can help here: to jump over one's own shadow. To work for the anonymous human being in acceptance of our current situation, not with aversion or because we are being forced to existentially, but because we make it our task to enter into the needs of the anonymous Other—into their distresses. We seek to cultivate a steeled idealism. One can attempt this as a lone individual, but it is doubly difficult if one is then exposed to the scorn of colleagues—worse still if one is labeled chaotic, possibly a "troublemaker," and even loses one's job.

Because it is so difficult, we need help. This can come from within the institution. If an awareness of the difficulties lives within an organization,

three measures can be taken that will create space for unfolding the altruistic caring for our fellow human beings that belongs to economic life. I emphasize "can be taken," because a deed loses its social character if it is forced.

- The institution can foster an awareness among workers of the fruits of their labors: Which end products will utilize the components they have made, and what kinds of customer will use them—what are their lives and needs? Respect can grow for commodities that arrive for our further processing if we know the circumstances of their production, and hear something about the people who have produced them.

- Only when the separation of work and income is achieved will it be possible to work out of one's heart for fellow human beings, to become social. According to Steiner, this division does not require social people, but people start to become social if work and income are not linked.

- Finally, the sense of human dignity that in times past was strongly tied to the quality of individual products—the pride of craftspeople—will resurge when a threefold structure defines those boundaries within which all coworkers can freely unfold themselves, protected from "collegial" vexations. Within this context, no coworker must be forced to adopt a social attitude toward his work.

The path toward forming work life socially is new and difficult. That is why, in addition to the openness of institutions to foster this in the ways mentioned, spiritual assistance is also desirable. Now we approach the sacrament. Work in itself, to benefit the anonymous Other, seeks to become a sacrament. An inner foundation for this is the sacrifice of subordinating oneself to the needs of unknown people. The anonymous consumer stands for all humanity, and all humanity receives help from the commodities produced in this way. Here lies the social gesture of this social sacrament—therefore, I call it the sacrament of work. In retrospect, one can also call it the baptism in the social gesture.

When a being prepares for birth, "sent down from the spiritual to the earth-community," it arrives in a world different in every respect from the world it left. It becomes homeless. Only the mother, insofar as she can be the Madonna, and the father, insofar as he knows himself to represent the Father in heaven, are threads to the home left behind. But then, the child comes to a community of baptism, where two godparents stand beside the parents and a priest appears, lending a divine glow to the earthly substances. All of them together, with those parts of the heavenly world they have preserved or create anew, sound a welcome to the one being baptized. In all the difficulties that lie ahead, if only because it is necessary to learn the lawfulness of the earthly world, the child may know

him- or herself to be accompanied by the heavenly stream of light brought to earth by the Kyrios when he became master of the earth.

When children play, they are completely free to unfold as their higher "I"—still very near—directs them. This guidance from the I persists in spiritual life; it changes very little as children go on to school. If wrong upbringing has not harmed them, their youthful idealism lives on into puberty, and into the twenties. At a certain point, however, the leap must be taken, the jump into professional life—the human being is sent out of the world of soul into the world of work. Will young people then withstand the hectic battle for existence, the cold thinking of usefulness? Will they perceive as common, but not as normal, what they become aware of around them? Will their youthful idealism become seasoned and lead them on the path toward the Christ? Can young people resist being blinded, and perceive behind, for example, someone ugly, a human soul looking for help? What helps people take this leap?

It is grace if someone can enter the working world in an institution whose structure provides room for tempered idealism—that opens the social sphere of the you-and-I for his or her own experience. Workers in the nineteenth century became homeless; those who robbed them of any glimmer of spiritual life in the earthly realm called them fatherless. Without a new social environment, workers will remain outcasts in their spiritual home, despite "social" products.

Where this is understood, I can imagine the sacrament of work being such that the staff welcomes new coworkers as co-fighters for fellow-feeling in the world, asking them to work out of love for distant Others. Who is consecrated as priest in this moment? It can be anyone who takes the further life path of the newcomer into his or her heart.

And if destiny lets one join a no-nonsense enterprise? Well, many children have to manage the leap into earthly life without baptism. Perhaps in such a place, where healthy feelings tell the novice worker he or she has arrived in hell, they find an ambassador. I will speak of this further in Chapter 3.

The Sacrament of Admittance into Community ("Marriage")

Certainly, among the seven ecclesiastic sacraments marriage is the most social, so for a long time I wondered whether it is not the social one. It is the only sacrament enacted with the partners' mutual consent. The priest then blesses the marriage. The sacrament creates a twosome, calling for the highest social forces. This is not a private matter, it stands fully and completely within society—as a healing fount of strength for those in a couple's community if it succeeds, as an abyss drawing the community into disaster if it fails.

There are boundaries, though. Especially because marriage is an institution that encompasses the entire social sphere, involving spiritual, judicial, and economic life, we may call it the most difficult and futuristic social relationship. Marriage has only one complement in the social cultus from among the three earthly spheres of life—spiritual life. As far as this

goes, it is both easier and more limited. On the other hand, in marriage we have to do not only with two people—which one could call a borderline case at most—but with several, a communality. It is interesting that in considering the sacred path of Parcival-Anfortas ("Anfortas," part 3 of the *Parcival* trilogy, Dürnau, 1988), Bernd Lampe feels compelled to extend the concept of marriage beyond couples that participate in the sacrament of marriage. This raises some questions and problems, which demand a different social sacramental gesture.

I defined what I refer to as a communality in *Gemeinschaft und Gemeinsamkeit*, and will here only briefly repeat: "Here we are dealing with the opposite of cooperation. People with a common impulse find each other. The impulse is a concrete spiritual force that took hold of them as a real ideal, and they wish to dedicate their life to it. Each recognized this impulse in the other, and they join together in a vow to be faithful to this force that they experience as something higher, as something more complete in the relation to people, and to support one another in their striving. In this way they build a vessel, collecting the living activity of this force—form lends power to the spiritual. Contrast this with community life, where the members stand with their backs to one another: Each stands in his or her own sphere of work. One need meet the other only rarely. But in every step of life one feels the spiritual presence of all others, reprimanding or helping us to master situations in the sense of the common impulse."
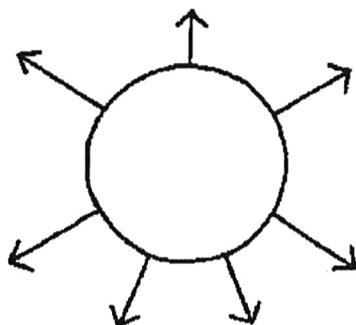

Diagram of Communality/Community

When we do not meet through working together, we also avoid meeting the double of the Other, which means that the cramping-into-each-other of the sheath-being does not happen. On the other hand, preserving the vessel through which the spirit nourishes the partners in communality demands that we vow to ourselves and our fellows not to take any step in life unless we are convinced that all the other members of our circle can co-experience these steps—in spirit!—as well.

This means a renunciation of any claim for personal development, because it is certainly not a given that—even if the circle is small— everyone can co-experience the steps of everyone else. In our own being we thus experience the fundamental social fact that humanity is not a heap of grains of sand—a beehive in the figurative sense—but an

organism. Each individual is not only responsible for him or herself, we are all responsible for one another. The process of individualization since Cain's "Am I my brother's keeper?" is approaching its end, and in the small context of a communality one can experience what that means. This responsibility in no way means that someone should feel called upon to keep members on the right track or to lead them back to it; it means that we must all moderate ourselves for the sake of the whole. Remember, everyone storming toward heaven has his or her own path within his or her own stream.

This important sacrifice is only a prerequisite. What is really essential is that the vessel opened to the spirit-self, to Sophia, create something greater than the sum of personal possibilities—and that "something" may, as social ability in individuals, flow into all kinds of human relationships. Just as, in the archetypal social phenomenon, an individual can progress through unity with his higher being, so social abilities from the spirit-self that still hover above him may flow into all members of a community. Here one has an opportunity to advance in a time when hardly anyone still has his transformed (into spirit-self) astral body available.

"Spirit without form is without deed." Guarding the form, maintaining the vessel, is another prerequisite. This of course begins with how the circle is formed. If only one person is wrong for the group—this is not judgmental; that person may, for instance, belong to a different stream— the community fails. It is also important to recognize that this should not be about people's karmic connections, as is common with initiatives. In a certain sense this would even be harmful. When we experience a clear and immediate connection with someone even in the first meeting, this signifies old karma, according to Steiner. This surely occasions great joy, indeed jubilation: There you are! But this usually does not last long. This is the source of the infamous squabbles among founders of institutions. It is my experience with old karma—and certainly not without exception—that everything remains fine only so long as one moves in the soul realm. To unite as spirit-vessel creates new karma, and so creating communalities with people who do not yet have common earth-destinies behind them, who possibly do not bring any karmic burdens with them—with people who "merely" belong to the same cosmic stream—should be favorable.

What if someone leaves the communality? If discord is the reason, the vessel is shattered; the communality should be dissolved. The world needs no more mummies. There are too many already: institutions that have actually died, and for some practical or sentimental reason are being kept alive. If someone leaves because destiny moves them elsewhere, or because they die, the remaining members of the circle face the question of how to fill their place. Here again something impossible is asked for: Someone newly entering is supposed to bring to the communality what the member who left or has died once contributed. Today this is still an ideal, for who dares to take on such a task!

I only touch on these problems to indicate that communalities—and they have this in common with marriage—reach beyond our abilities today.

To say they are a form for the future does not mean we cannot attempt them today. What wants to be a matter of course in the sixth cultural epoch must be prepared today, with struggle.

As new as this form is, there have been many attempts at it. I think first of monasteries and of the religious and worldly orders. They are essentially different from what is meant here because in those times discipline still lay in the hands of a hierarchy: abbots, masters, and their superiors. The communities of brothers mentioned on page 37 were more clearly the forerunners of the communalities I have in mind. In today's social climate, communalities of more than fifteen to twenty people seem almost unthinkable.

In this chapter's title, "Marriage" is set in quotation marks. Of course, a communality is not a marriage in the conventional sense, but we can say that those entering a communality live with it and with all its members as in a marriage. Thus we can compare communality to marriage. Now I must state something that will trigger protest from all modernists: Marriage, like a communality, can reach its goals, can only survive the storms, only when neither partner takes any step that the other cannot experience as well. Should we live to witness the striking of civil marriage from the law codes, perhaps the distinction between partnership/camaraderie and conjugality for life may finally become clear. Only the latter is founded on agape.

Let us return to the sacrament of admittance to communality. Since this is something that is still scarcely practiced even in its beginnings, it is difficult even to describe its outlines. Obviously, whoever founds a communality is the one to enroll the individual members ritually—as a priest, therefore. The same is valid for members who join later, and for those replacing former members who have died. I tend to think of the picture of the washing of feet: the priest washing the feet of those entering a communality, and thereby announcing that there is no rank there, because everyone serves everyone else, and therefore the Holy Spirit. In a communality, then, it is completely open in which member the spirit reveals itself—it can be the least among Christ's kindred. On the other hand, the vow of those who enter is likely to want to condense itself into the sacramental act as a decision of will, with Christ as witness. This is not a promise or a contract—it is an inner revelation, and no one can derive from it the right to challenge another.

The Sacrament of Sending Forth (Confirmation)

Members of a communality will also devote themselves to other activities, be it only to gain a scanty living. This is common in work communities (see Chapter 3). They will also belong to other groups: the family, a church, various philosophical societies, and so on. The impulse to help alleviate distresses near or far may prompt members to work within associations and foundations. What does it mean to join such groups and bring with us what we have achieved in the communality?

At first this is something private. The other groups we are part of do not need to and should not know about our involvement the communality—

simply because then we would need to explain things to our coworkers without having been asked. This isn't so easy. What we receive through grace in the communality—and also what we gain through our work there—does not exist for the pleasure of the members. It wants to flow into society as healing, not as pearls of wisdom but as practical deeds. These gifts are evident in the way members of a communality stand in the midst of other groups and group members. I described in *Gemeinschaft und Gemeinsamkeit* how, when faced with social problems, we turn to another person without knowing the source of their abilities—we hardly ask someone good at singing, for example, where they learned it. If the young person described at the end of Chapter 3 is lucky, he or she will meet "someone like that." It can also be that someone like that feels moved to found a communality geared to the existing conditions within their workplace. An example of this is described in Chapter 4 of my book *The Waldorf School and the Threefold Structure* (AWSNA Publications, 2002). And something very different may yet appear.

Something akin to an enactment of the Grail may occur. From the spiritual stream flowing through the human vessel, a task—not a name—may sound for a person: Social help is necessary in this or that group of people. Then the communality must come together to discuss whether it is possible to experience this distress together. If so, do one or several of the members want to make themselves available for this task? In this case the whole of the communality takes on a responsibility. It sends envoys from its midst and obliges itself not only to imitate the work of its spiritual representatives—that is the reason for its existence—but to accompany them further with their prayers and meditations.

The sending-forth has an archetypal biblical picture. Christ sends forth the seventy, two by two, to prepare his activity. When they return, it is revealed that he accompanied them on their way (Luke 10). The vessel, the harmony of the members, may in this way stand behind and beside those who are sent out, to support their mission. Then they can be "lambs among wolves."

A sending-forth like the one meant here always rests on a spiritual authority to bring a moral tendency into life. In its cosmic structure of teaching, gnosis speaks of the various ambassadors the good God sends forth into the darkness; Christ legitimizes himself as the ambassador of his Father, and John, the patron saint of the social, is sent before him to prepare his coming. Spiritual authority also justifies John's accusing Herod of an immoral marriage. I will also mention an example of a very different kind because I think it is related to the sending-forth from the communality.

When the Roman Empire came to its end and the legions that had been responsible for peace and order in much of Europe flooded back home or dispersed into bands of robbers, sometimes under local potentates, the power of the strongest ruled, and moral disintegration was common. In the sixth and seventh centuries, a stream of Irish monks flowed into this vacuum. Place names with the ending *-zell* still remind us today of

their former presence. Two or more of them lived in secluded cells; their holy life and purity soon caused the local people to turn to them with their moral and practical questions. This resulted in the actual Christianization of large parts of Europe, with the Romans supplying peace and order, but at the price of a social form still founded on the old mysteries. The authority won only by the monks' example and, not supported by any power, extended so far that they were able to reproach the French king for his wild and unethical life in a situation parallel to that of St. John's with Herod.

These holy men were also ambassadors—I do not want to say of the Irish church (because such an institution seems very unlikely to me in the sixth century)—of those communities of monasteries (and I don't think that at that time these were communalities) whose ruins inspire awe in those who visit Ireland today. Nowhere is it documented that a decision to send forth was made in the outer sense—less so, whether it proceeded from definite personalities. Only the effect of their activity can be verified, and that Ireland sacrificed its own existence for it. Expressed spiritually, the sacrifice made by the Irish people was that its folk-spirit withdrew. The folk mission was fulfilled with the sending-forth, and streamed into other nations through the monks. The original Irish nation was nearly extinct after that.

Today, we experience a condition like that following the decline of Rome. Humanity is truly abandoned by all good spirits. Murder and manslaughter are daily occurrences not only in local wars, but on city streets. The phenomenon of "civil war" asserts itself more and more (as described by Rolf Heinrich in his excellent essay "Im Zeitalter des Weltbürgerkrieges" in *Info3*, Frankfurt, July–August 1994), a new variation of "might makes right," the ultimate consequence of a complete moral breakdown, physical slaughter as a consequence of the slaughter of souls. We need a new "Irish" mission, not of holy men building cells in the solitude of forests, but of "lambs" going "among wolves." By themselves, however, their activity can hardly bear fruit. Communalities are necessary, with the spiritual authority to send forth their members and accompany and protect them. These face the same danger as in medieval Ireland, that the communality will bleed to death through the withdrawal of its being. The sacrament of sending forth cannot be enacted without sacrifice.

Against such a background, we can understand that the sending-forth becomes a sacrament. More is given to the ambassador and, for the sake of justice, less is left for the communality. In the social realm we must forego the comforting thought that good deeds will be rewarded.

It seems odd to even imagine the form of sending forth. We can only sense dimly that the priestly task, falling to the circle who enter into a communality, should lie with whoever is sent forth.

How is this connected with confirmation? Although the consecration of youth may seem very distant from what was presented in this chapter, the gesture is the same. With confirmation the youth are sent out from the church that has thus far protected them, just as those sent out socially

leave the moon-vessel of the communality to ray as sun themselves from now on (see Eduard Lenz, *Matthäusevangelium*, Stuttgart, 1990, p. 109f). The soul of the youth now wanting to develop independently is like a lamb among wolves. There are few more frightening experiences than having to see young people attacked by soul-killing techniques. I do not need to name these. In the sacrament of the Consecration of Youths, those entering the world are given the certainty that the altar community will accompany their steps with their prayers. The sending-forth is based on the same.

The Sacrament of the Consecration of Death

It is difficult for me to speak about this. I can experience the gesture of the sacrament, but not yet describe it. The meeting, the perception of the phenomenon, is missing for me. More so than in the discussions of the other sacraments, the reader may consider each of the following statements as an attempt in need of improvement. It will be clear in Chapter 4 why I wish to round out the social sacraments nevertheless.

History sometimes tells of people who were suddenly taken hold of by the spirit and instantly became "a different human being." I refer here not only to those cases Steiner spoke of where a well-prepared person disappears for a few years, experiences an initiation and returns changed—born again in the spirit. Such life-changes may occur in other ways. For example, I think of a Jew who had to witness the brutal murder of his wife and children, and himself survived six years in a concentration camp, where he became the comfort, help, and light of his fellow prisoners, and revealed a glowing being (see Sergei Prokofieff, *The Occult Meaning of Forgiveness* [*Die okkulte Bedeutung des Verzeihens*], Stuttgart, 2nd edition, 1992, p. 33f). When, after his release, he was asked where he gained such forces, he pointed to this horrible moment in his life. At that moment it intuitively stood before him: You either break under your fate, or your love streams toward all people. Two things came together here: a shattering experience and a resounding inner voice.

I want to describe another example more thoroughly because in it a whole life lies before us, and what this life teaches us expresses the theme of this chapter. Johann Georg Gichtel (1638–1710), a mystic, is as good as unknown to us; the facts of his life are taken from a book by Walter Nigg, *Heimliche Weisheit* (Zürich, 1959). Gichtel grew up as a thoroughly religious person. It disturbed him deeply that Lutheranism in the second half of the seventeenth century had already been corrupted into externals, world idolatry, into inhumanity that in no way lagged behind that of Catholicism, which had needed reform for just such reasons. He hoped fervently for a breakthrough of God's light in the laypeople. He approached the Lutheran clergy with a proposal to "better Christianity." As a result, the not-yet thirty-year-old was thrown into a dungeon—his belongings were confiscated, and he was decreed a prohibition of profession. Hopelessness drove him to despair, and if the nail in his cell had held, his life would have then ended in suicide. The eye of his soul

then opened, and he experienced the indwelling of Christ, experienced that Christ betrothed Himself to his soul. When, ragged and without means, he was chased out of town through snowy streets, the miracle occurred that was also a decision. Gichtel felt: Do not worry, God will take care of you! In pubs and farms along his way, he shook people awake with words that came from a christened heart. Without ever begging, he was clothed and fed. When, a few years later, he found a place in Amsterdam, he received a second gift. The Virgin Sophia not only appeared to him, but united with him—never to leave for the rest of his life. He experienced her as an emanation of Christ. In this way, Gichtel became one of the very few people in western Europe enlightened by Sophia. He ceased preaching and wrote hardly more than letters. He did not accept large sums of money, just enough for necessities—he viewed Lady Poverty as an esteemed visitor who gave him good gifts. He dismissed his housekeeper in order to make his life more difficult. Without founding any institution, he finally came to live with some like-minded fellows, called the "angel-brothers." With these people he needed to experience how difficult it is to be a brother. Nigg summarizes Gichtel's secret in one sentence: "He did not want pleasure, he longed to be moved and shattered, for thus were insights of the highest rarity opened to him. The most peculiar enlightenment arises in the Melchisedekian office of priest, associated with the hidden secret of the divine Sophia that Gichtel had received from God himself, and not from any human being" (ibid., p. 215).

The determining event in such biographies is not the enlightenment that brings further possibilities of perception. What manifests here is an intervention from without. The circumstances of such interventions can be very different, but the consequences are the same: a radical and lasting change that cannot be explained from a person's previous course of life. It can hardly be grasped other than as a loosening, an appearance out of the whole sheath-being—including the organization of the "I" (I-shadow)—whereby the higher "I" has authority over one's "own" sheaths in the same way that we have it over the outer world. We can speak of a final abstinence as otherwise appears only in and after death. What then still lives on earth we may rightly indicate with the oft-misused term "rebirth." Since the higher I, now coming to expression in its pure greatness, is a part of Christ, we can say with Paul: "I live, but not I—the Christ in me." Or, with two lines from an intercession by Steiner:

Raying love of humans, warming sun glow,
you children of Christ in the human temple of the Father.

Such an event can occur in any life; one need not be a "good" person, or even wish to become one. Saul was a Christian-hating fanatic, Francis was flighty. When we observe the lives of those so changed, they seem to belong to the most varied streams. This is why I chose Gichtel rather than Paul as an example, sensing that the former belongs to the Urielic stream. If such people's "rebirth" activity prior to rebirth (in this or a

previous incarnation) already leads to the forming of higher members of being, the stream will manifest again in a new life. Thus we can see in Gichtel how a deep concern for the degeneration of ecclesiastic Christianity—which was compromising the experience of the living Christ in the inner life, leading to the death of the soul—determined the course of his life after his experience in the dungeon. From then on, it was wholly devoted to his fellow human beings with Sophia as their patron. This high being accompanied Gichtel—indeed, he said they were joined in spiritual marriage.

One's previous history, and also certain peculiarities after rebirth are marked by the stream in which one stands, but the social is the element common to all who are born anew, simply because the activity out of the higher I originates in the periphery and therefore out of the higher being of our fellow human beings. Doesn't this occur in the same way in which the social wants to be the communal foundation in society for any specific earthly striving? (See the diagram in: *The Waldorf School and the Threefold Structur*e.) From this viewpoint I cast aside my doubts whether the sacrament meant here is a social one. Nevertheless, I can scarcely even clothe the gesture of this sacrament in words; I must let some aphorisms suffice.

The consecration of death differs from the consecration of the priest in the rebirth, which one could also call the death of the old Adam. It is neither the consecration of the priest for this moment nor the partial ecclesiastic one, but a consecration for all deeds and omissions in the remaining life. The consecration of death is without prerequisites; it can occur under the most varied circumstances. Personal karma is not at work here, but the karma of humanity is potentially active, looking for a bearer. The rebirth connects itself to this task.

The ideal of those standing in the Urielic stream is not the initiate but the saint. Sacrament means "the holy" or "a holy act." The newborn has become a saint; his or her acts therefore become holy acts; the goal seems to have been reached. With such haughtiness, saints will immediately fall from their holiness—it will not even take hold of them in thoughts. The goal is reached only when the holiness that has already been given the saints becomes the fragrance reaching them from all their fellow souls. To work toward this for the redemption from evil, for the redemption of evil, the help of Christ accompanies them in the consecration of death.

In this sacrament, human beings stand before the Christ in solitude. Through the sacrament Christ connects us to the whole of humanity. I cannot help but sense in the meeting with the Christ that Steiner described with utmost discretion in *The Course of My Life* [*Mein Lebensgang*] (GA 28/XXVI) just this consecration of death. Through it the initiate also became a saint.

The consecration of death "splinters" human beings into the periphery. It is the opposite of what the great splinterer intends. The human "I" does not vanish into nothingness, it lives in Christ, and therefore eternally. Steiner named Ascension as the last step of the Christian path of

initiation, but he did this without describing it: What happens can only be understood by those who have lived through it. In the historical Ascension, Christ became part of every human being and the whole earth. He lived the splintering in a way that human understanding cannot encompass. Is not the dissolution into each human being through the consecration of death already the starting point, the seed that lives in the archetypal social phenomenon?

Finally let me present what I regard as the archetypal picture of the consecration of death. A human being wanders through the areas of the Near East in search of what can still unite the human soul with the divine. But the last voice still able to reach the Jewish people is silent. The priests have abandoned the heathen altars, and demons have replaced the gods. Those who still keep themselves pure only push the adversaries more strongly toward the others. Deep despair takes hold of these people to the point where their "I"—the Zarathustra-"I"—begins to loosen itself. The Baptism in the Jordan enables the "I" to withdraw. This human being is Jesus of Nazareth (see Rudolf Steiner, *The Fifth Gospel*, GA 148). But this despair is not for his death. Into the sheaths left by the "I" sinks the "I" of humanity, the Logos, the Son. And even before his path on earth is fulfilled with Ascension, before he is present in all human beings, he speaks out of his disciples. He speaks Christ-words in twelvefold, therefore all-embracing, coloring. He speaks through the disciples in such a way that only they themselves—and no one from outside their circle—know who the thirteenth is.
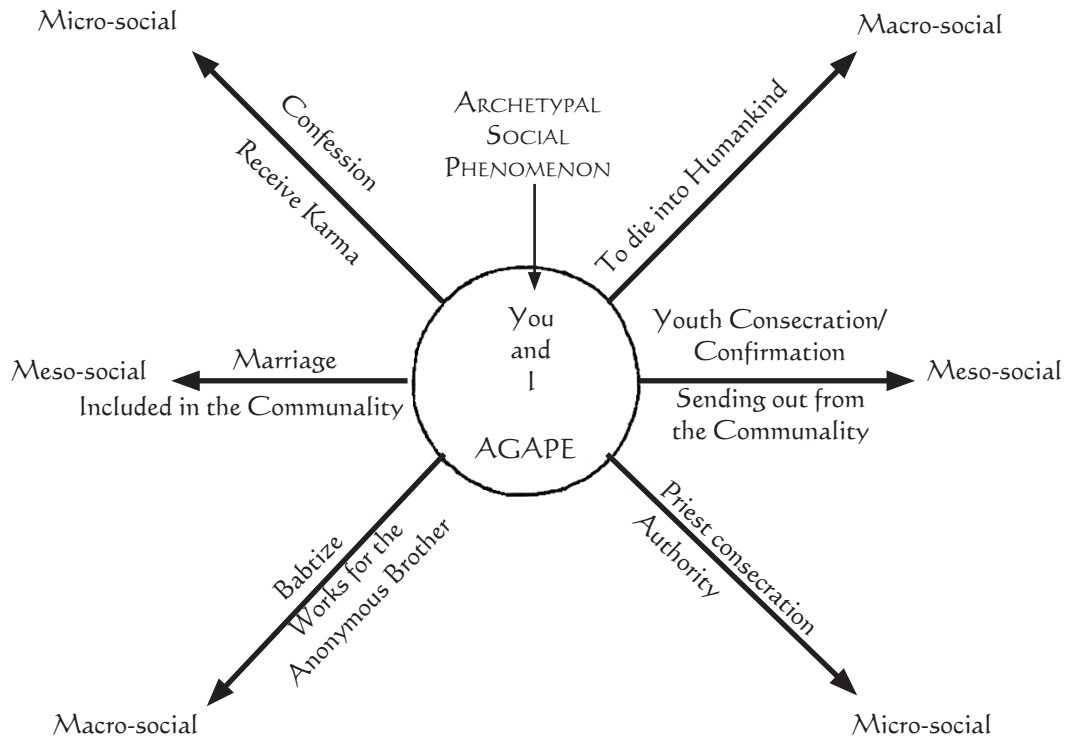
Out of the consecration of death enacted by the Christ, Christ-bearers are born. Thus it is not surprising that in this context, Steiner points to the Imitatio of Jesus.

IV.

In Summary

Summary of the Seven Social Sacraments

In summarizing the seven social sacraments the following picture arises:

Micro-social

Macro-social

ARCHETYPAL
SOCIAL
PHENOMENON

Confession
Receive Karma

To die into Humankind

You
and
I

AGAPE

Youth Consecration/
Confirmation

Meso-social
Marriage
Included in the Communality

Meso-social
Sending out from
the Communality

Babtize
Works for the
Anonymous Brother

Priest consecration
Authority

Macro-social

Micro-social

This illustrates how, out of the social sacrament of the archetypal social phenomenon, six specific ways of being flow toward our fellow human beings. Two each relate to the micro-social (personal), meso-social (societal) and macro-social (cosmic) realms. The authority to enact a sacrament (consecration of the priest) has as its complement the call to carry karma (confession); the admittance into a communality (marriage) stands facing the sending-out from it (confirmation); the loving care for the earthly needs of anonymous fellow human beings (baptism) finds its counterpart where fellow human beings begin to live with all their distresses and worries in what is newly born (consecration of death).

One might have expected that membership in a communality would have stood facing membership in a community. That's what my first notes indicate. Symmetry satisfies the need for harmony but it can be dangerous in its tidiness, which does not in itself prove a point. In an exaggerated way one might say: Where symmetry is used to prove truth, it almost

becomes a lie. Yet symmetry can be a valuable tool leading to truth; this is how I understand the many symmetries in the work of Steiner. The cooperation of a group toward a common goal, the community, cannot be a social sacrament. Usually it estranges. To look for collegial warmth has become an egoistic illusion with the soundless disappearance of the holiness of the guilds. Reaching a goal does require cooperation, but because the goal exists outside the community, the latter dissolves itself, in a social sense, into the relations of individuals with (usually) anonymous consumers.

In the diagram above the attentive reader will have discovered that the symmetry in the form of the polarities of the corresponding pairs also does not quite fit. The one on the macrosocial level will need some help if it is to reach its goal of leading toward truth. The consecration of death as described in this summary is not wrong, but incomplete. The polarity with baptism—and therefore the symmetry of the whole—exceeds the level of the other sacraments with the consecration of death; expressed paradoxically, it reaches into another eternity. I could have avoided this if I had described baptism as the beginning of the social path (to care for the fellow human being out of oneself), and the rebirth as its distant goal (social humanity). Then I would have compared two incomparables; then I would have brought time into the game with this uneven pair.

I refrained from elaborating these groupings into other groups of seven, even though such elaborations run parallel to those presented here. They proved—with the means at my disposal!—ever and again speculative. In my conversations with priests about the ecclesiastic sacraments, it became clear to me that an ordering into stages depends exclusively on one's point of view. I believe, however, that research showing whether there is an intimate connection between the social sacraments and the regents and demons of the planets would be very fruitful.

Instead, I will indicate from a different perspective another connection to the ecclesiastic sacraments—that is, how these are described by Steiner in GA 343/1933/XIII. Fortunately, I only found the lecture after I had envisioned the social gestures.

The sacrament of Baptism adds to the natural act of birth a healing of the act of death, which is its complement: Coming out of the divine world, we enter what is fallen. To "through the sacrament" should be added "what can proceed from the Christ-impulse." The social sacrament seeks to accompany the dying into the work for anonymous fellow human beings out of the social realm that envelops the years of youth.

The sacrament of the Consecration of Youth/Confirmation strengthens the connection of the soul-spiritual aspect of the human being with the physical body as it manifests in puberty. The social sacrament of sending-forth seeks to accompany the leaving of the communality that is completely devoted to the spiritual in order to fulfill a real social task.

The sacrament of the Eucharist seeks to support the rhythm between submersion into nourishment and releasing the physical. The social sacrament of the Meal of Love is about the harmonious rhythm of falling asleep and awakening between two people.

The sacrament of Confession/Penitence christens the representation of the past through confession, emphasizing the social-moral component of the partial takeover of remembrance so that one identifies with the consequences of one's deeds; remembrance is "lifted into the moral sphere." In the social sacrament this process occurs as well, but the emphasis lies on the social-moral component of the partial assumption of karma.

The sacrament of the Consecration of Death/Anointment, "concluding the life of the individual human being," seeks to inspire the soul-spiritual life when physical life disappears. In this way the human being also leaves earthly society through the social consecration of death in order to act out of the spirit world.

The sacrament of the Consecration of the Priest accompanies its mirror-image of baptism, the reunion with the spiritual-psychic, no longer individually, but out of the heavenly world. In the social sacrament, the heavenly world speaks through the priest in sacred moments.

The sacrament of Marriage brings balance between the too-earthly male and the too-little-earthly female human qualities. In the social realm the sacrament of admittance into a communality seeks to create through feminine modesty a balance for dominating masculine individualism in the era of the consciousness-soul.

On the Path of Imitatio

We have often stated here that the social sacraments rest upon grace. This is partly because we have not yet ourselves acquired a spirit-self out of which we could act from immediate spirit-authority. But even when we have acquired the spirit-self—and also when, by forming a spirit-vessel, we eliminate the role of a personal spirit-self—we must realize that with sacraments it will always be a matter of what is given as "more" from the spiritual world, and that is grace. This certainly does not mean, however, that we must passively wait to see whether the spirit will throw something into our lap. Quite the contrary. In the fifth Urielic consideration we saw how we can make ourselves worthy of grace. There we specifically point to the seven stations of suffering, not as Steiner presents them as a "Christian path of development," as a path of feeling into the spiritual world, but rather as we can experience them today. Since anthroposophists will not fail to note that Steiner—at least, it seems, initially—spoke quite negatively about the Imitatio in the second course for theologians (GA 343/1994), I would like to discuss his thoughts here.

The person posing a question in GA 343, p. 448, is obviously looking for a word that lies between "imitation" and "emulation." Steiner interprets this in his response as "Imitation of Jesus." This creates problems in connection with the further answer.

This term also has two other specific meanings that can both be derived from *Imitatio Christi*. According to the *Brockhaus* dictionary in wide use at the time of the theological course (1922), *Imitatio Christi* means "god-devoted, living Christianity." It is exactly this that we find in

the Imitatio Christi published by Thomas á Kempis, which for centuries served devout Christians seeking mysticism. The stations of suffering are not contained in it, however, unless we count the carrying of one's own cross. *Imitatio Christi* also has the precise meaning of a path through the stations of Christ's suffering. These are the steps that Steiner gives in his description of the Christian path of development, only here they are not the starting point as they are in the third Urielic consideration, but rather the results of soul-exercises. When we consider that Steiner differentiates between Imitatio Christi and Imitatio Jesus, we can then calculate the permutations.

While we grapple in the dark with the question of what is meant by "imitation" and "emulation," something peculiar appears with Steiner's answer. He interpreted the questioner as having meant Imitatio Jesus. So far we can understand this, since almost all those present were Lutherans, using the name Jesus to signify both Jesus and Christ. The Protestant religion does not differentiate between Jesus and Christ (with clear preference for the term Jesus), and in all likelihood, Protestant mystic and pietistic striving (reaching up to the Bigots) was meant. But Steiner then speaks about the saints, about Catholic mysticism, and radically refutes—even if it found a "beautiful expression" in Francis—the Imitatio as error, indeed, as terrible arrogance, presumption. One may not, according to Steiner, understand Christ as a model, but as a helper. But especially in the lives of saints, the Imitatio as imitation of the stations of suffering plays a large role.

One cannot be thankful enough that Constantin Neuhaus challenged Steiner, in criticism veiled as a question, pointing out that the Christ-word itself calls for imitation. He goes back to the concept of "imitation," which he uses according to the common meaning of the Latin word *Imitatio*. In the *Imitatio Christi* the life of Christ is not taken as a model, but one's inner life is supposed to become similar to the life of Christ; this is not impossible, but he would rather speak of an *Imitatio Jesu*. De facto, we are back at the first question, because the first questioner used the terms "imitation" and "Jesus."

I do not think there was ever an earnest Christian striving to become like the Christ. The deep modesty of those entering the Imitatio supports this. I do believe, however, that what Steiner states as the condition for becoming similar to Christ—namely, that one must achieve the Pauline "Christ in me"— was medieval practice. What did Steiner hope to achieve with his answer? I cannot help thinking that he wanted to keep those particular people in that particular moment away from the *Imitatio*.

Another problem remains. In his reply, Steiner says that the "becoming similar" ceases when the last acts of the Mystery of Golgotha begin. Here we stand before riddles, since the Imitatio is especially concerned with the Mystery of Golgotha, from the washing of the feet to the Ascension. Does Steiner only mean the imitation in the sense of "god-devoted, living Christianity" after all? One can indeed say that "becoming similar" is not appropriate regarding the stations of suffering. But again this term is

Steiner's translation of the Imitatio, not of those who have gone through the stations of suffering. For indeed it would be presumptuous, even blasphemous, to want to be similar to the Christ in going through the Mystery of Golgotha. When we imitate the stations of suffering in our feelings, we do not become similar to the Christ; we set out on a long path upon which humanity grasps our social tasks and develops toward a religion of gods.

In the same answer, Steiner says human beings should not take up Christ's cross, but their own. Again, we are pointed strongly to our own development, to acceptance of the life plan we designed before birth with the Lord of Karma. Those conscious of this will carry their fate without grumbling. As we saw, true social life demands more: to carry the karma of the Other. If we now hear the word of the Gospel that Neuhaus refers to, it points beyond one's own cross: "And whoever does not bear their cross and come after me cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:27).

Somehow, Steiner's answers are not conclusive. Therefore, I will try to bring together what seems contradictory, especially with the use of the above-mentioned words of Christ. We human beings cannot heal the blind, cannot resurrect the dead. But if we meet someone, and are permitted to restore to life just a tiny part of their soul that has been dead, then we walk the paths of Christ. Then we become (a very tiny bit) similar to him. I cannot carry his cross; he entered the earth without a cross because he proceeded from the Father without sin. But as the Lamb of God he carries our sins: That is his cross. I carry my cross, but if I am so blessed, I also carry a small part of the sin of a fellow human being. Then I stand—separated by whatever eternity—in imitation of Christ.[11] Seen thus, there can be no better help for "living into" the gestures of the social sacraments than absorption in the stations of suffering: than modern humanity becoming conscious of Christ's suffering as a foundation, on the one hand, and on the other, that this consciousness spark social deeds through what fills us at the sight of suffering kindred souls.

Uriel and His Work with the Other Three Elohim
There are many branches of knowledge in which one can progress cognitively through study, can accomplish valuable work—without ever putting ideas into practice. Think of the seven liberal arts. This is not really possible in the social realm. It was this that upset Gichtel particularly, that the theological lords and ministers occupied themselves with biblical exegesis, church regulations, and setting dogmas without connecting these with the heart's need to accomplish a Christian deed. "Theology need not have anything to do with religion," we read in GA 344/1994/28. This is why social theorizing becomes meaningful only if it takes place in the light of social experiences. In both areas, Uriel shows his Saturn nature. Since time ends with Saturn, deeds arise from "space," out of situations: Here we act out of intuition and in retrospect grasp the act consciously. I had to "suffer" some of this in conceiving the chapter on the consecration of death. Since I had no immediate personal experience of death, the content living in me was resistant to the last.

Something Urielic also lives where Old Saturn persists in social lawfulness, especially in the laws of karma (see also GA 161/1980/II). These are, as we saw, unrelenting; they have the "character of eternity," but through the social impulse, through the activity of Uriel, they need not become fate.

Especially in the social realm, we are in an unfortunate situation because the wider society does not provide the ground for practice, and in institutional life the social is vehemently refused, so that "Urielites" are thrown back to the personal level. In retrospect, this may prove lucky in a seemingly unfortunate situation. Maybe in this way the social impulse is being carried over the threshold of the turn of the century.

One can also recognize Urielites in that they allow the Christian, the social, to become deed; if that is not possible in governmental and institutional spheres, perhaps it is possible in our daily interactions with our fellow human beings, in the so-called Consecration of Everyday Life. Out of it something occult develops—occult, for we hardly know one another when our work occurs on the small, interpersonal level; we are surprised with each new meeting how the circle of friends here and there is always the same. One usually also meets outside the circles that have made the "social" the object of their thinking or even their profession. "What is necessary first of all," Ernst Lehrs says (in: GA 259/1991/409), "is that people stop shying away from the moral consequences of their intellectual concepts."

In the *Archangel Imaginations* (GA 229), Steiner presented the activity of Uriel (in the fourth and fifth lectures) for the first and only time. He discussed the activities of the four archangels in the course of the year individually and in their co-working. The point of view is cosmic. In this last chapter I want to try to indicate this co-working in the social realm.

The close connection of Uriel and Gabriel is evident in that they alternately influence earth activity in summer and winter from "above" (directly out of the cosmos) and from "below" (through the earth). In the social realm, this is expressed in what Uriel makes visible to human beings as the light of the Father in the soul condition of the Baptist—"He must increase, I diminish"—and becomes fruitful for social activity in the forms given by Gabriel. (Compare the quote from GA 93 on pp. 73–74.) Michael and Raphael are connected in the same reciprocal relationship. But they also aid the Gabrielic and Urielic striving. How could we lessen the distress of the Other if we would not grasp his or her natural being? Raphael presents it to us. And how could we connect ourselves to the Other in the archetypal social phenomenon if we would not grasp him or her as an entelechy? Michael makes this clear for us. In the experience of this cosmic co-working we may hope that what separates humanity (for its development) into four mighty streams also experiences an earthly harmony through the Christ—who leads the Elohim and creates their divine harmony—in us.

In the same way, Uriel and Gabriel obviously support the other two archangels in the cosmos—which on earth is expressed by the will to heal and the enlightenment of the individualized will for cognition by

social lawfulness and the provision of social forms. One hopes that their meaning will be understood more and more. Christ reigns as heart in the midst of the four. His retreat for the sake of human freedom leaves it to our will whether we want to join the cosmic co-working.

Mani

I would like, with some hesitation, to briefly discuss Mani or Manes. His picture, mainly presented by Irenaeus, has been "cleaned up" as a result of surprising findings and is today in danger of being "beautified."

Mani is intimately connected with the Urielic impulse in its religious as well as its social aspect: Do not resist evil, redeem him (see Matthew 5,39: "Do not oppose the evil one!"). But we should not identify him with Manu, who was a god "walking" on the earth—that is, he led people out of his divine power as long as this was still timely, in the Atlantean era and a little beyond (GA 93/1979/72). He will, according to Steiner, return in the sixth cultural epoch. He was connected with the sun-oracle in Atlantis and when the flood came, he led the most advanced people into the Gobi Desert as a "seed" for the post-Atlantean epoch.

Mani, on the other hand, although a human initiate, is one of the highest. He was consecrated twice by a Kyrios; as youth of Sais by Sophia, as youth of Nain by Christ. The spirits of wisdom (Kyriotetes) descended from their unimaginable heights because as the second hierarchy, they are active with a "hidden countenance," that is, imperceptible. The Exusiai also, as we saw, have to clothe themselves as archangels to be experienced. I want to mention that Mani may have been initiated by Manu in one of his incarnations, possibly in connection with the Kyriotetes, although I cannot substantiate this. We know from GA 262/1967/15 that Mani initiated Christian Rosenkreutz; on this level, leaders of different streams represent one another. In the council of the highest initiates convened in the fourth century to determine the future, Mani allotted the tasks (GA 113/1942/224). In his life as a youth of Nain we also see in him the first person initiated by Christ (GA 264/1984/228). As Parcival, he goes a path not exactly typical for a high initiate, through mistakes and sins, and thus experiences not only the mystery of death and resurrection, but also that of elevation through fall (compare here: Valentin Tomberg, *Das Leiden in osteuropäischer Auffassung*, Stuttgart, 1931/15).[12] Then, it seems to me, he takes the social impulse into his activity (even though in Wolfram von Eschenbach the actual social path is gone by Gawain): The purified sinner Parcival can help the sinner, Anfortas.

This comes impressively to expression in what Steiner reports on the future activity of Mani. In future, all Christendom will be Manichaean. Looking to the social realm, Mani will stand by human beings to help them master daily life in the sense of fellowship—Consecration of Everyday Life. The following extensive quotation from Steiner is most important (GA 93/1979/76f):

> This stream of Mani strives into the sixth root-race, which has been prepared since the founding of Christianity.... Those searching

for Christian life will always find it. It creates and shatters forms in the different religious systems. It is not important to search everywhere for equality in the outer forms of expression, but to sense the inner stream of life that is always present under the surface. What must still be created, though, is a form for the life of the sixth root-race. It must be created in advance, because it must be there for true Christian life to be able to flow into it. This form must be prepared by human beings who will create an organization, a form, that will permit true Christian life to take place in it. This outer social form must arise out of the Mani-intention, out of the small group that Mani prepares. That has to be the outer organizational form, the community, in which the first Christian spark can properly light up.... This is less about the cultivation of the inner life—life will also flow on in different ways—but about the cultivation of life's outer form.

In the second of the two lectures in which Steiner unveils the Uriel mystery (GA 229/1955/IV and V), he speaks of the co-working of the four archangels in the course of the year, differentiating the activity out of the cosmos from the activity arising from the earth. In winter, Uriel lets his impulse stream through Gabriel's world of form. In this way, we may also differentiate between the "summery" activity in the archetypal social phenomenon, and the "wintery" activity in the social structure of threefolding. [An exact synonym for threefolding would be *Umfriedung: Friede durch Abgrenzung* (*Um* = "and," ending in *ung* = "circumference;" *friede* = "peace," therefore: "peace by demarcation." -Tr.] Work on the Gabrielic vessel is work to receive the light of God. It is certainly good that there are people working more to cultivate the social relationship as it lives among individuals in the archetypal phenomenon, and others who are working more on form, structure, and organizations. The first obviously pertains to the individual human being, the latter concerns groups. That the forming has priority for Steiner (and for Mani's activity) may surprise some. But it is quite consistent with his statement that human beings become social only through structural means. The circle is then closed when we learn that Steiner asked the priests at the beginning of the first theological course (GA 342) to realize threefolding.

Is it surprising then, that when I think of the initiate who will give us the content and form of the social sacraments, I turn to Mani? Steiner offered me all the documents that made it possible even to be able to write about the gestures of the social sacraments; I owe Mani the hope out of which I wrote—that humanity will someday become the soul-body of Christ.

Below the Line

There lies something that does not belong on the balance sheet, but something readers of the balance should know. I want to apologize for having made this work public—it wanted to be written, it was meant to be written, and in freedom I said yes to it. Therefore, an apology would be contradictory.

But I have a request. When a person in the age of the patriarchs allows a book with a pretentious title to be published, there is a risk that it will be spoken of as a "testament." I ask urgently that this book not be spoken of in that way. Any testament, every "last will," is an attempt to reign beyond death. After having fought for more than half a century against power claims of every kind, I would find it worse than the most degrading criticism of this book's content to have such pretensions attributed to me posthumously, or while I am still alive.

Endnotes

1. Herdwangen-Schönach 1983. It is not true that these lectures are based on an unpublished esoteric lesson given by Rudolf Steiner. An inquiry to the Rudolf Steiner Nachlaßverwaltung brought to light the origin of this legend.

2. Of the cosmic streams within humanity, I believe only these four can be perceived; they are the ones that have arisen out of the four incarnations of the earth. One may presume that Zachael, Anael, and the Vulcan-genius still await their tasks. (We may omit the task of Samael in this connection.) Compare also the lectures by Rudolf Steiner from July 4, 1904, and December 5, 1907, both in: *Beiträge zur Rudolf Steiner Gesamtausgabe*, Nr. 67/68, Dornach, 1979.

3. I quote Rudolf Steiner from the collected works (here number 172), the year of publication of the edition I used (here 1964), and either the page (here 165), or the lecture number in Roman numerals.

4. In GA 344/1994/179 we read: "Only when you [the circle of founders of The Christian Community] allow all that you draw out of the Act of Consecration of Man, all that you suffuse your teaching with, all that lives in your own hearts to culminate in the healing of sin, does your office become an actual priestly one." Healing of sin is not identical with redemption from sin but, as still remains to be shown, redemption is not an affair of human beings. In this volume, healing is described in such a way that the human being is not redeemed from sin—which would then poison the earth—but rather sin is carried into the next life for a harmonious balance. This balance contributes to the redemption of evil. Christ carries the sin as the Lord of Karma, that is, he assumes sin's cosmic dimension. Who finally looks after the karmic balance remains open.

5. One cannot approach the topic of forgiveness without pointing to Sergej Prokofieff's book: *Die okkulte Bedeutung des Verzeihens*, [*The Occult Significance of Forgiveness*], Stuttgart, 1992, which I consider to be one of the most important works on the social question.

6. The habit of referring to "from evil" in the neuter case in the last petition of the Lord's Prayer seems to go back to Augustine, who in his anti-Manichaean viewpoint did not recognize the Evil One as a force in itself, but wanted only to know of the absence of the good. According to Karl Friedrich Althoff (*Das Vaterunser*, Stuttgart, 1978), in the original Greek "the evil one" is in the dative. In the variations by Rudolf Steiner that I am familiar with, he proceeds from a male form of evil, thus identifying it as something of a being.

7. See also GA 345/1994/15. In GA 318/1984/16–17 Steiner says of the concept of cultus: "Cultus [ritual] comprises sacramentalism in itself." This imbues the physical-biological with the spiritual in a sense-perceptible way. "What is enacted before the faithful is first of all enacted before consciousness, and it may not be enacted in any other way than before consciousness. Otherwise it is not cultus, not sacrament, but suggestion.... It happens in the presence of consciousness, but takes effect in life."

8. In *Lehrer-Rundbrief*, Stuttgart, March 1994. Unfortunately, with no information regarding to whom, under what circumstances, and when these words were spoken.

9. Here may be indicated the very important lecture on falling asleep and awakening, GA 214/1980/XI. Steiner speaks there of three spheres we go through in the cycle of sleep, perceiving with our "heart's eye," our "sun-eye," and our "human eye." In the second sphere, in the experience of the zodiac, Christ becomes the leader. We experience our karma here and our connection with the rest of humanity.

10. Even if from a very different perspective. In confession, repentance is a given. When Christ judges at the end of time, he confirms the will of the "lambs" and the "rams," that is, he respects their freedom. The rams chose to be as they are; they just don't want the consequences.

11. When one meets an advisory priestly task in the treatment of confession in GA 344, the impression arises that the ecclesiastic sacrament demands different behavior from the priest. As for "anthroposophy as teaching and cognition," we may "not to any degree go into what is individual in a single human being." Does Steiner here suggest that the priest must overstep this boundary? Then social confession stands on the side of anthroposophy in this altogether existential point.

12. It should still be pointed out that Valentin Tomberg describes Steiner's life as a path through the seven stations of suffering in the last of his *Sieben Vorträge* (Schönach, 1993).