

SUMMING UP ONE'S LIFE

When one intends to write down the contemplations of this kind, one should do it at the very end of one's life when one doesn't expect any new significant experiences coming into it. At the same time one doesn't wish to leave it for too late when no contemplations become possible. I'm grateful to my destiny for giving me the possibility to fulfil my intention.

We know from anthroposophy that after man ends his earthly life he takes with him its spiritual essence into the world of spirit where, during his sojourn there, he works on it, together with higher spiritual beings, in preparation for his next incarnation on the Earth. In our present state of consciousness we know nothing of this essence while on Earth. But we can do something else instead, in full consciousness. We can, by the end of our active life, summarise it and analyse its results in terms of what we consider was important in it, be it our experiences, encounters, events, thoughts, deeds, problems, challenges, achievements, failures, and also riddles and impasses.

But what would be the purpose of such a serious undertaking? And would not what was really spiritually important in all this, be anyway incorporated into the above spiritual essence? For me, personally, it is not the same thing. I am not challenging of course the wise spiritual-physical arrangements of our existence by the Higher Powers. I add to them something which has been born as a personal need. Some might consider such an endeavour naïve or even altogether useless, but for me it is a valuable exercise.

My intention, broadly speaking, is to subject some of my conscious earthly experiences to the spiritual scrutiny of the supersensible existence. To put it simply, the intention is to bring to the spiritual world some of my experiences, thoughts and deeds to find out whether I went wrong with any of them or missed something important. As we know, we are born in a particular epoch and in a particular environment in order to have some particular experiences which we can have at no other time and place. Have I failed in my task? I wanted to know it, if at all possible, in addition to the great karma design of the Higher Powers, through my own human efforts by posing this question while I am still on Earth.

One can start with simplest things – with those numerous situations into which one was placed by karma: family, social, cultural, human, geographical, national, racial, political, etc. Let me take some of them. I was born as a Jew in Russia. I experienced my Jewishness most profoundly and this inner experience is inseparable for me from such two different phenomena as anti-Semitism and the State of Israel. My experiences of Russian culture, of the Russian language and of Russianness itself have also been conscious and active. As to my Englishness, into which I have been immersed for the last fifty years, I am more cautious in my assertions, but feel profoundly grateful for this unique experience.

To experience two such different cultures, societies and mentalities as Russia and England (or the West if taken wider) is a real blessing, which I have always regarded as such and as invaluable source of cognising the wider issues of our Time. Inseparable from this is my experience of Evil which I write here with a capital E. I do this not because of my personal pain and suffering as a result of my encounter with it. It would have been sacrilege even to mention anything personal here in view of what has happened to millions and millions of my ill-fated contemporaries. But I dare say that my life and experience allowed me to see Evil face-to-face, to understand its nature and to recognise it in its various manifestations. The main of these, which is its ultimate objective and mankind's ultimate tragedy, is its division into two races, human and inhuman, which has already started and which becomes ever more evident and daunting. One only has to note how much hate there is in the world – and how little love. Or, to be more precise and even more alarming, how much *perceptible* hate there is in the world – and how little *perceptible* love.

On the opposite pole of experience, in the sphere of the universally human, my discovery, or recognition, of anthroposophy I can only regard as one event which was worth to be born and live for. Whether I myself was worth it, this should be left exclusively to the judgements of the Higher Powers. But what worries me here most is not so much the severity of the higher appraisal, which after all can only be beneficial, but the inability to make a better use of this divine treasure, especially when a conscious effort is made to do just that. Apropos this treasure I had two very different experiences, which, paradoxically, seemed to belong together. On the one hand I clearly saw the impasse that mankind was in by depriving itself of the knowledge and understanding of life provided by this treasure. On the other, it became evident to me again and again that anthroposophical awareness of what is taking place in the world does not necessarily provide an anthroposophical solution to the exposed problems, tempting instead to resort to a conventional one.

My own difficulties concerned the situations for which I actively sought both conventional and anthroposophical understanding and solutions. While I understood or even knew the general direction into which the situation should develop, I could not find or recognise either the specific forces which suppose to facilitate this, or seeds or bearers of the desired development. I wish to refer here not to some local situations of a limited implication, but to the social-cultural-political events of global significance.

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When as a young man in the Soviet Union I came to realise the pernicious nature of communism, both as an ideology and as a practical social/state system, I, like some around me with similar views (they were very few in numbers indeed!), tried to think of how it could be overcome or got rid of. I personally came to the conclusion that this phenomenon in both of its manifestations could not be defeated from the outside, but only from within. How – I had no idea, and it was only many years later, with the benefit of hindsight and after the event itself, that I was able to see not only that the end of communism (at least in the Soviet Union) did indeed happen that way, but also how it happened, stage by stage.

To put it succinctly, Soviet communism has been destroyed by its three outstanding leaders: Stalin killed its spirit, Khrushchev killed its soul and Gorbachev killed its body. But before it all happened, those for whom the demise of communism was evident and its end inevitable, tried to look beyond it. I was one of them, but however hard I tried, I could not see what better could come to replace it and how it could come about. The evils and ills of communism were so obvious that it seemed enough to remove them for the good to immediately fill up the vacuum. But when I tried to see some specific features of this future good in the concrete reality of life, I could not perceive any.

Not only that. I could not perceive any builders of a better future, even among those few gallant souls who openly condemned the existing system subjecting themselves and their families to enormous risk. At best they risked losing their jobs and their careers destroyed and at worst there was the danger of prison, or a labour camp, or a psychiatric asylum or even loss of life. And what did they hope to achieve? Absolutely nothing because these few isolated individuals had no impact on the totalitarian regime and its submissive society where even their voices could not be heard. They knew it perfectly well which was humorously reflected in the toast they would pronounce on occasional social gatherings: "Let's drink to our hopeless cause!"

So why did they do this? Because for them it was a moral imperative; without following it their life would lose its meaning for them. And it was not the only beautiful human quality many of them had. But I could not perceive in them the consciousness and thinking which alone are capable of protecting human beings from becoming

victims of various ideologies and be guided exclusively by the higher spirit which lives in every one of us.

When some years later the Soviet regime collapsed, the country and its people experienced the excitement of the new existence, of the new unfamiliar freedom and the sense of unlimited possibilities. Among them – a real possibility for an individual to find, and be, their true self and discover new imperishable values on which to build the life, their own and around them. But none of this happened. Habitual consciousness and thinking ruled the day with all the consequences that followed and that we have today. At the time I watched it from far away, from England. It had been twenty years since I left the country, and now not only could I no longer perceive the subtleties of life and of people's behaviour there – I felt I could not understand what was going on in the country.

But the evolutionary reality marched on. The reality and atmosphere of *perestroika*, of a renewal went beyond the borders of the Soviet Union when in 1989 the Soviet Bloc of East European countries started to disintegrate with a new sense of freedom felt by millions of people. For them, and for many others in Europe and all over the world, it was the time of genuine enthusiasm and hopes. The hopes for peace and stability, for life without fear and hostility, for international relations based on cooperation and trust.

At that time I was invited to Emerson Collage in Forest Row, England, where I lived, to address the graduates of Waldorf schools in the country at their traditional annual gathering. I told them, among other things, the following: Your personal entering into a new life, a new world full of unknown, unexpected, excitement, hopes and possibilities, coincided with a historical event when many millions of people in different countries also enter a new stage in their lives. You happen to be part of this event and the process that has been started by it. Please be conscious of this and in pursuing your personal path in life don't lose sight of that historic process. Your own destiny might even make you part of it, but in any case follow it consciously and try to understand why and how it took this or that turn or direction and follow its consequences as they show themselves even in ten, or twenty or more years.

Well, however we regard those consequences today, one result is apparent and indisputable – a political one: those East European countries became part of Europe, part of the European Union, part of the Western world. And this brings me to what I wish to say here, in the context of this 'summing up', of my personal experiences of this world as they have been awarded to me.

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The irony of the situation, if one can call it that, is that my intentions and reasons for leaving the Soviet Union were to live in Israel and not anywhere else in the Western world. But destiny had it otherwise, and writing this piece now coincided with the family jubilee – our arrival in Great Britain from the USSR fifty years ago. So I lived in my new abode longer than in the country of my birth – by fifteen years. Did it make my new experiences deeper and wiser and more 'reliable'? We can talk about this only in the sense of personal development, but not in terms of duration. But in terms of culture, history, language, tradition and some other such categories, I have never felt to be an Englishman and never presumed my Englishness to be on a par with one.

This is apparent to me, for instance, with regard to such an intrinsically British phenomenon as the Royal Family, a special British institution, which I took for granted as part of British life when I came to this country. I was surprised when I first encountered strong negative feelings towards it and even could clearly see the concerted efforts to destroy it or at least to change its place and role. It was clear to me that there was something in this issue which I did not know or did not understand. In time I acquired more knowledge and understanding and developed my own

attitude towards the Royal Family, but the point for me is this: had there been a referendum whether to abolish or retain the Royal Family, I would not have felt 'qualified' enough, English-wise, to take part in it.

Speaking of my personal life experiences for the last fifty years, it would be more correct to refer to them as those **in** rather than **of** the Western world. Not only because of their limited scope, but also because they include and reflect my life interests irrespective of geography – Jews and Israel and anthroposophists and anthroposophy. I shall speak of them later, but first it should be the turn of those which have been determined by geography – by the place of my abode.

It is not unusual for people who have hopes, expectations, aspirations or even dreams regarding their new life, to become somewhat or much disappointed on encountering the reality. If anything, in my case the opposite was true. To begin with, I did not have any of those anticipatory sentiments, but when, quite unexpectedly, found myself living in England, I was delighted practically with every aspect of life, particularly in comparison with the Soviet Union. But some events – I do not wish to generalise by calling them aspects or phenomena – did surprise me by being contrary to my expectations.

When I became a university lecturer, it was thanks to my students that I witnessed, for the first time in the West, some political actions. One was a certain public event which they organised and appealed to their peers to take part in. I do not remember now the details, but I do remember the main message of the leaflet which they handed out. Don't be afraid of police – they won't be able to do anything to us or arrest us because of our numbers. The 'courage' of their convictions would have been amusing had it not been so pathetic, especially in comparison with their contemporaries behind the Iron Curtain who dared to express their views publicly.

Another event that I attended myself, because for me it was the first opportunity in my life to hear an invited speaker expressing his views publicly, before a mixed audience with different views. However, when he started to speak, a group of students – my students! – started to shout, boo and do other things which made it impossible for the speaker to utter a single word. He made several attempts to speak, with the help of those who invited him, but to no avail. He had to leave the venue and the meeting ended. When I asked the students why they had done that, they replied that they knew the speaker's views, did not like and did not wish to hear them. But when I noted that there were others (including myself!) who wanted to hear him, this had no effect on them. But would it not be better, I insisted, in letting him express his views and then expose them publicly, there and then, effectively and in a civilised manner? They were not interested in this either. They had power – physical power! – to stop the speaker, and to use this power with impunity was the most important thing for them.

I was amazed by the parallels of the two systems – the Soviet dictatorship and Western democracy – that this event demonstrated: the possibility to suppress de facto free speech and the use of force to achieve it. Those were young people just entering life and still in the process of formal education. Where and how did they learn their assertive political ropes and the confidence which came with them? But I discovered later that this type of attitude, of way of thinking and of behaviour, which is for me the most 'un-English', i.e. imposing by force your will on others, was an established pattern and part of public life exercised in various spheres. I spoke of its particular manifestation as an industrial strike in my article **Conformist, Dissident, Terrorist – the Individual in Modern Society**. But as a general principle, this mode of behaviour seems quite fit to be used by even most enlightened people for most elevated social and cultural causes provided it serves the purposes of their protagonists.

That "the end justifies the means", one of the most cruel and inhuman principal of Soviet life, is widely applicable in Great Britain in various strata of society, beggars belief. Nevertheless it is a fact. What does it tell us? I know what it tells me,

together with other similar facts. Over the years I have witnessed an ever increasing number of examples where I would not be able to distinguish between people's thinking, attitude and behaviour in the Soviet Union and in this country.

But the citizens of the latter do not need the experiences of these two different worlds and examples of their astonishing similarities to see the inadequacies of the thinking and the system that governs their country. Pandemic apart, let us take some latest and most famous events – the Brexit referendum and its implementation by the Parliament. What could be more appropriate to go under the name 'democratic' than people's forum – and what could be less suitable for applying it to such a many-faceted and complicated issue as joining or leaving the European Union? Ordinary citizens can only be guided by their gut feelings and so called experts by their specialised and limited knowledge – and all of them by their ideological prejudices. The members of the Parliament who had been elected to lead the country, found themselves in a still worse situation where their personal interests and views clashed with their public duties. While inadequate, in this case, Parliamentary procedures forced some of them to do wrong things for right reasons and some – to do right things for wrong reasons. This whole process was accompanied by the vociferous and so familiar attempt to impose on the others one's own will expressed now as a new demand – to re-referendum the referendum, again and again if necessary, until **WE** got what **WE** wanted.

In their totality, all these and other similar examples tell us two major things. First, that this country does not follow any longer the very principles which formed the basis of its democratic beliefs and institutions. And second, that those principles which the country managed to retain and which are still commendable and valid, are not enough, on their own, to cope with the complexities of modern life. (Please note that I do not speak here about the everyday level of life with its deterioration in every aspect – values, manners, services, etc.). This is not limited of course to Great Britain but encompasses the entire Western world, and it amounts to its gradual disintegration. It is the second societal disintegration that I witness in my life, and here, as well as in the Soviet Union many years ago, I cannot see or discern those forces (or their potential bearers, save some individuals) that are capable not of stopping or reversing the process of disintegration – this is impossible, – but of renewal, of rejuvenation, of regeneration. Of creating something new and socially healthy – a total renewal of culture.

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So far I spoke of my experiences, difficulties and problems which have been determined by the two worlds in which I happened to live as a citizen and a conscious individual. But there are two other worlds which all this time, conversely, *lived in me*, also as in a conscious individual. As such I lived in them as well though this life is difficult to define. I mentioned them earlier – they are the Jewish and anthroposophical worlds. And now I wish to speak of the experiences, difficulties and problems I had in connection with them. These are much more personal, individual and subjective than the others, though the issues that prompted them concern not only most of their inhabitants, Jews and anthroposophists, but go far beyond these two worlds.

Unlike my new geographical abode regarding which I had no prior prejudices either way, regarding the other two I had something more precarious – I had ideals. As is well known, ideals are notoriously difficult to match with reality especially if they appeared before the encounter with reality to which they are intended to be applied. Whether my ideals were viable and my expectations regarding them justifiable, I can only say that now, after so many years, I still retain most of them. Anyway, the point is, that when, upon the actual encounter, I did not find what I expected to be there, I was very disappointed and in some cases deeply pained. Though my encounter with

the manifestations of both worlds in the West took place virtually simultaneously, I shall start with the Jewish world.

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The period of a few years following the Six Day War was perhaps the only one in the long history of the Jewish people when they were 'in favour' with the world – not the whole world, not perhaps the major part of it, not even a very big part – but they were widely appreciated and supported, both in public and privately. It was during this period that I left the Soviet Union and could personally experience this 'abnormality' on my arrival to the West.

Now for the reader to understand some of the sentiments of this encounter of mine, some explanations are needed. I arrived from the Soviet Union to the West – first to the UK and then two months later joining my family in Israel – not as an immigrant to enjoy a new and better life. This stay in the UK en route to Israel was intentional and had a 'working agenda'. In the Soviet Union I was actively involved in the fight for the rights of Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel and in some other human rights activities. So various groups and individuals, my 'comrades-in-arms', asked me to go to the UK first to meet with those there who were concerned with the issue of human rights in the Soviet Union and were actively helping the victims of this abuse.

In fulfilling this I met many people – ordinary and prominent, public figures and officials, members of Parliament and of non-governmental organisations. Those were public and private meetings at which both a general situation and some specific issues were discussed. The latter were of a particular importance, because they concerned both some individuals in the Soviet Union who urgently needed help and some concrete actions on the part of the sympathizers and officials in the West. On my part, in most cases it was pleas and requests, but in some cases I had to be more assertive. How did it come about?

These cases concerned only Soviet Jews, where my role often was that of a consultant or even of a messenger, emissary or envoy. This often necessitated my message to be specific and firm: "If you really wish to help people over there, then what you do at the moment should be done better and in a different way" – and then followed a detailed advice for a particular case or situation. The same applied to active Jews and officials in other countries and primarily, when I was there, in Israel.

But in Israel the scope of my activities widened – it also concerned now the Soviet Jews who were already in the country, i.e. their absorption. Thanks to my English I became involved, as an interpreter, negotiator and advisor, in many cases when the new immigrants were helpless and the administration of the absorption centres or other organisations inapt to help them. Eventually it became clear to me that, paradoxically, in two vital areas, in helping the Soviet Jews in their fight to go to Israel and then to settle as smoothly as possible in the country (the uncomfortable 'roughness' of the process had been also experienced by immigrants from affluent Western countries, as I learned soon enough!), the efforts of the Israeli authorities had been inadequate. (This is no place to go into the reasons or the whole scope of these issues.)

Another very important area of my concern at the time was the Israeli leadership itself, their role and conduct not only in the above issues, but in a general and long-term guidance of the country, their vision of its future and of our people as a nation, and most importantly – how all these factors translated themselves into concrete daily actions. I knew of course that the Israeli government had a mammoth task of running the country in the most difficult conditions – perhaps the most complicated than all other governments faced. But at the same time I had the above mentioned 'ideals' according to which the Israeli government could not be like any other. It also should have 'ideals' or at least 'principles' which should be incorporated into the way it ran the country. They should include spiritual and moral values to the

extent that the phrase 'moral politics': should cease to be considered a notorious contradiction in terms in this case.

This issue also cannot be discussed in greater detail in these pages. Like the others so far, it has been mentioned here as part of my experience at the time. Not the happiest, perhaps, and in later years it was overwhelmed by other experiences, concerns, considerations and questions regarding Israel and the Jewish people. More specifically, they can be expressed as three issues: the destiny of the Jewish people, the present and future of the State of Israel and anti-Semitism. Again, none of these issues is going to be discussed here, especially as the first two have been addressed in my article **The Threefold Social Order**. Its title denotes the scheme whereby the current social/political/economic problems, not only in Israel but also in Russia and in the West, can be solved. But this potential solution has been with us for over a century, and so far mankind has been unreceptive to it.

As to the third one, anti-Semitism, as a phenomenon it has been plaguing the world for so long and has been dealt with by so many authors and in so many different ways, that it seems simply impossible to add a syllable to the subject that would be new. However, it has this mysterious eternal quality to be born anew, again and again, both as a manifestation and as a reaction to it. So in this sense anti-Semitism is always new to every individual at any time. Of my own experience of it in the Soviet Union I spoke enough in my article **From Russia to Israel: a Personal Case-History**. To say here what I think about it now won't be possible like with the other issues. The only thing I can do in this case is to mention those aspects of the issue which I consider important and would have elaborated upon in a full-scale article.

As I mentioned earlier, my arrival in the West coincided with the favourable attitude to Jews and Israel which I personally witnessed as a public phenomenon and in personal encounters. The wane of anti-Semitism was part of this experience. I remember it so well not only because of its significance for me, but also because I discussed it at the time with some of my friends who were much less optimistic than I was. I presented to them my arguments supported by the concrete evidence which I found in mass media and in other sources. One example was both surprising and symbolic for me. In a chance conversation with one of my students I discovered that she had never heard the word 'anti-Semitism'. Even upon being explained she could not grasp its meaning. Of course she knew about Jews and even had Jewish friends, but this did not make her any wiser in this respect – how can one hate or just have negative feeling towards people because they are different to you? Having got to know her closer, I attributed this rare quality of hers to the purity of soul, but then I saw in it also something else. Isn't it natural, that when a particular phenomenon disappears from mankind's life, its name should also evaporate from mankind's vocabulary and memory?

Unfortunately, on my part it was just wishful thinking though it was based on real facts and did not last very long. But even if my perception was correct for that period of time, soon enough mankind 'came to its senses' and to its millennia old ways and attitudes towards Jews which posed, in the umpteenth time, the same old question about anti-Semitism which is not 'Why is it there?', but 'What is it?'

There are many definitions of anti-Semitism, including the so called 'working' one accepted now internationally by various countries and organisations including Jewish. My basic dissatisfaction with most of them is that by and large they are definitions not so much of anti-Semitism as such, but of its manifestations. So my intention was to arrive at the definition of anti-Semitism through *observation* of its manifestations, analysing them and trying to find that common and fundamental, but not necessarily conspicuous, element that was responsible to all those manifestations. I shall mention some of them here.

I have to say from the outset that I personally experienced or witnessed very little of physical manifestation of anti-Semitism, in any case nothing comparable to

what one can read as a documentary evidence of the phenomenon, the Holocaust being of course its culmination. But I consider my verbal experience wide enough to allow me to generalise and summarise it as a one phenomenon with one source. By its variety I do not mean the vocabulary which was used to express anti-Semitism. In some cases hardly any words were used at all. Or in one case only one word was used and even it was hardly audible. It was like an epileptic fit when the person seemed to be in unconscious and unstoppable convulsions uttering with an uncontrollable frequency and doggedness the same: "I hate! I hate!! I hate!!!"

But other outright haters of Jews whom I met, have been more in control of their emotions without denying themselves the pleasure of expressing them fully, at length and in a variety of ways afforded by their intellect. At the other end of the scale there seem to be no emotions at all, sometimes also very few words, but one word is of a paramount importance – Jew. It is always there, in the subconscious, even if it is not the subject of the conversation. I once met in Paris a Russian émigré from the post-Revolutionary time. It was a one-off meeting during which we touched casually on various subjects. Whenever in the course of our conversation I mentioned someone, it would be immediately followed by his question: "Is he/she a Jew?" He never reacted to my replies whatever they were; he even did not seem to listen to or be interested in them, but the need to identify every human being as a Jew or not became, apparently, at one point of his life so strong, that it went very deeply into his psyche and lay there as a dead weight, unusable and even unnoticed.

This was of course an exception, but only in its manifestation and not in its essence. The essence was, and is in cases like this, – the awareness and concern about the presence of Jews in the world. This does not necessarily express itself in the outward negative attitude to them. Outwardly it might take quite innocent, even humorous forms. I was once in a position to observe for a time someone who, like my Paris acquaintance, was quite preoccupied with the issue of Jews, but in a more persistent way, without losing a single opportunity to mention it, however farfetched it was. Here is an example. In every culture there are sayings which refer to their nationals collectively using some common names. Like, for instance, "every Tom, Dick and Harry" in this country. The same we have in Russia, the three most common Russian surnames: Ivanov, Petrov, Sidorov. Now when once they were mentioned in a common conversation, in which that person took part, his reaction was immediate: "Why always these thee names? Why never Abramovich, Rabinovich, Haimovich?" So what makes those people so much obsessed with the issue of Jews that they can never leave it alone?

In England I had only one personal anti-Semitic incident, rather unusual. I had a problem with my double glazing and telephoned the company which had originally installed it. I explained to their member of staff the nature of the problem and he said they could fix it and gave me the cost. Then, in the same breath, without even waiting for my reply, he said: "Judging by your accent, you are a Jew, and Jews don't like to spend money." To say that I was shocked and taken aback would be an understatement. Unless it was intended as a deliberate insult, such a diatribe directed at a complete stranger was, in my experience, the last thing one could encounter in this country. Let alone coming from a company official to their customer.

The most amazing thing was that the official himself did not think he was saying anything untoward or unusual. He seemed to be so matter-of-fact and casual as if he was talking about some insignificant and well-known fact, like the weather. Without knowing the individual personally, it is difficult to know how he acquired one of those standard anti-Semitic notions – "Jews are stingy, they stink, etc.", and how deeply it went into his psyche. But amazingly he seemed to be oblivious of the fact, that he was insulting his fellow human being who was also his client whom he might lose together with his business; and, finally, that what he was saying was punishable by law for which he could be sued and sacked from his job. Did he know at all what

anti-Semitism was? Had he heard the word? He seemed to be as anti-Semitically naïve as that student of mine, only on the opposite pole.

I can mention some other instances of manifested anti-Semitism, but the main thing for me was that I did find that common and core element that gave birth to all of them. I discovered it to be of a soul quality, but an unhealthy one – a disease, a soul disease, a pathological condition of soul. Like any disease, it affects people differently, and this disease is for me the true nature of anti-Semitism.

As to the origin of anti-Semitism as a social phenomenon, it is not my concern here. I am quite satisfied with its proverbial origin: 'anti-Semitism appeared before Jews'. My concern is its individual embodiment. In this respect it does not matter how or when it affected the person – whether one was born with the disposition to anti-Semitism or acquired it after birth. The first symptom of it is the moment when an individual becomes conscious of the word 'Jew' and reacts to it in a negative way. This negativity could be very mild, like discomfort, unease or irritation, or it can take very severe forms which are well known to everyone.

Now the emergence of various definitions of anti-Semitism reflected the change towards it in the world – its public manifestations cannot be tolerated any longer. Unfortunately it is not a full-hearted change of public conscience but only a considered change of public opinion. Nevertheless, as a result, the external expression of anti-Semitism, by word or action, is considered in many countries (but not in all!) a crime punishable by law. Therefore, it has to have a 'working' definition. However, even most of those who are genuinely concerned about anti-Semitism are satisfied with its containment and don't aspire for its eradication. In any case, the latter, totally unrealistic at present, would require, in the first place, a general acknowledgement of the true nature of anti-Semitism which is unlikely to happen. Most people prefer to attribute it to either ignorance or to some adverse external conditions or influences – exactly like in the cases of other social evils. And, consequently, the same conventional remedies should be applied, notably, education. While in the meantime legal measures, law, should be used against outward manifestations of anti-Semitism.

As to the diehard anti-Semites of the West (I don't know, in this respect, the other parts of the world), the above changes considerably restricted their abilities and wishes to harm Jews. But to be able to do it in 'legitimate' ways, they were amply compensated by the appearance of the State of Israel as a substitute for Jews. They use every reason and pretext to attack, harm, accuse, abuse and smear the Jewish State in a way and using the language unprecedented and unparalleled with regard to any other country in the world. And they fight tooth and nail for their right to do this under the disguise of free speech and open political discussion. But some of them – not only individuals, but also organisations and even states, members of the UN! – go still further: they call for the destruction of the Jewish nation and the Jewish state, call for physical attacks of individual Jews and carry them out. The impunity with which they do this makes one sometimes wonder: has there really been the Holocaust?

Paradoxically, in many cases they found their supporters among those who are supposed to be their victims – the Jews, who share with them the targets of their attacks: the State of Israel, or its government, or its policy. All these are legitimate objects of criticism by anyone and anywhere, within or outside Israel. But why does the wish or need to criticise them become permeated by hatred and adopt the methods inspired by it? Even given all the faults, imperfections and inadequacies, why some Jews and native Israelis hate the Jewish nation and Israel to the extent that they join forces with the arch anti-Semites to publicly condemn their own nation and homeland in the most despicable way?

Here again I speak from personal experience. For many years I had an Israeli friend who lived in England where we met and became friendly. As it happened, we never spoke about the reasons why we did not live in Israel. There was nothing

unusual about this, with many thousands Israelis living abroad. Nor did we speak much about the situation there – there were many other topics and issues for us to discuss. Only in later years he started to mention Israel, always in condemning terms and referring me to various authors and materials which he urged me to read. I was familiar with the issues he was referring to, but was surprised and even amazed by the way he spoke of the country and its people. I could call it nothing but hatred. He was born, brought up, educated and lived for many years in Israel where he had a big family with whom he was still in touch. He also served in the army defending his country.

I always knew him as an honest and upright person, but with regard to what he criticised in Israel he showed every sign of bias and intolerance. Even when he was right of being critical or even angry about whatever happened in Israel, it was amazing to see the pleasure he seemed to derive from every opportunity to accuse and abuse Israel. But then he amazed me even more. I always wanted to understand the Palestinians, whose champion he now was, and once bought a book "Mornings in Jenin", written by a Palestinian woman about the experiences of living under Israeli occupation. The book, in my opinion, was very prejudiced against Israelis and some episodes, especially about the Israeli Army, were just unbelievable. I decided to send the book to my Israeli friend with a number of specific questions regarding those episodes which he was in an excellent position to answer. His reply came almost by return. The book delighted him and he immediately recommended it to his friends. As to my questions – not a single one of them was answered, even after my repeated reminders.

I had been familiar with Jewish anti-Semites and anti-Israeli Israelis before, but this Israeli friend of mine epitomised for me those numerous Jews all over the world who, having found faults with their nation and country, feel no pain and desire to improve and help them, but rather feel pleasure in publicly condemning them.

I wish to conclude the summary of my Jewish world with more questions addressed directly to God. Please give us some hint why we, the Jews, Thine people, are still here. After having fulfilled our mission or even missions thousands years ago, why didn't Thou let us go from the world history as Thou did in such cases with other peoples? Why have Thou kept us for so long in such terrible conditions as if Thou wanted to teach us something? What was or is it? Why, at the end of it, we had to experience – what was it: a trial, a punishment, another lesson? – what we called Holocaust, the worst thing one human being can do to another? What was it supposed to teach us or we are supposed to learn from it? Or the others perhaps should? Now, after all this, Thou gave us home – part of the one Thou originally had given us. But why did Thou give it in such a way that the world, which persecuted us for so long, would not allow us to call it fully our own, that our neighbours hate us and we have to live in a constant state of war? Why do Thou allow such an orgy of anti-Semitism – now, throughout the world? And if we don't have sense – or wisdom – to understand all this, how can we accomplish what Thou still expect from us?

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Finally, my anthroposophical world. The content of this section, like those for the other three worlds, is basically the same: unresolved problems and unanswered questions as I experienced them. They were of course part of the content of my other anthroposophical works, but here they are brought together as a whole.

The anthroposophical world is not only the youngest of my four, but it is very young in itself. Its spiritual history goes back millennia, but its physical history is too short to allow it to develop, to go through various stages, to have the ebbs and flows and its own tendencies, to reveal its setbacks and achievements and to show its clear historic direction. In the short-term it all can be found even in those few years of its existence. But basically every anthroposophist of every generation is a developer

and bearer of all these things, and therefore it is difficult for him or her to step back, look at what is going on objectively and make of it a historic sense. At least not in the same way in which it can be done with regard to the other three worlds. Therefore not to be lost in the uncertain current of anthroposophical events, one should resort to the panoramic picture given by Steiner.

But I would start with my personal 'problems and questions'. The first of them is to be my non-membership of the Anthroposophical Society. Why did I decide not to join it from the very beginning, without even encountering it properly and knowing anything about it? Yet I considered it at the time the centre of anthroposophy, and it was many years before I discovered the spiritual lie that penetrated it after Steiner's death. What was more, I returned to my original decision of non-membership several times over the years doubting and questioning and yet confirming it every time. I go back in my memory all these years and can find only one episode – I can't even call it an event – which might have been my original reason. But could it be so powerful as to become a decisive factor in my destiny? Here it is.

It can be said that after leaving the Soviet Union I met anthroposophists, as individuals and as a group, twice, within the span of a few months – in Israel and in the UK. How different these encounters were! The first was welcoming, personal, warm, with open arms. In England I also had some individual encounters, at the beginning and in later years, which became friendships for many years to come. But I also had one 'collective' encounter – the 'episode'. Soon upon my arrival in this country I received a letter saying that they would like to invite me to the Council of the Anthroposophical Society in GB to hear what I had to say 'about Solzhenitsyn'!

I wish to remind the reader that the year was 1971 when mass media in the West daily reported of the struggle of the Soviet Jews and other dissidents for human rights, when politicians and public figures in many countries raised their voices in their defence and many organisations, existing or specially formed, publicised and supported their cause mobilising people in the West to help it. At the time I had been the only former Soviet Jew and dissident who was allowed to come to England. Of course all this might have meant nothing for British anthroposophists who were 'beyond politics'. But I was also the only Soviet anthroposophist outside the Iron Curtain, living now in their own country and city, and yet as a human being and individual, in whatever capacity, I was of no interest to the leaders of the Anthroposophical Society. Even as busy as my life was with new impressions, events, encounters and thoughts, this 'episode' stood out at the time as something negative and unwelcoming. But my question now concerns exclusively myself: has my decision not to join the Anthroposophical Society been karmically correct?

My next personal question can be put like this: where is my spiritual stream with its fellow travellers to whom I can relate? It does not refer of course to anthroposophy, the stream, content and direction of my whole life within which I am surrounded by many brothers and sisters in spirit. Nor do I mean the two main streams within the Anthroposophical Movement indicated by Steiner: Aristotelian and Platonic. By his description of them one might surmise one's belonging therein if one finds it helpful in one's strivings. In any case, they are not the focus of my question. What I am looking for might not even exist apart from in my imagination. And if it does exist, it might be not within the Anthroposophical Movement or as part of anything, but as an independent phenomenon.

My question was born out of desperation, out of loneliness, out of finding myself being misunderstood or not understood at all by my fellow anthroposophists or human beings. I could clearly see how these or those people around me 'belong to the same stream', i.e. immediately understand each other and are thinking in the same way. This really is the key: not so much similarity of views, ideas or thoughts, but a shared or similar *way of thinking*. Of course a different way of thinking leads to a different understanding and ultimately to different thoughts, but in this chain thinking always is a starting point for me.

I find it difficult to define it; it has to be experienced. There is no 'better' or 'higher' way of thinking; they are all different, but not to the extent that they are unique or peculiar to one person only. I always believed in the variety of the streams within the mankind's spiritual life. But I could not find my own stream, i.e. people belonging to it. There was only one person who came closest to it, but despite a decade of our closest relationship I can't still verify it. There are two reasons for this. He was the one who introduced me to anthroposophy, and due to my immaturity at the time an anthroposophical gap existed between us during our relationship. On the other hand, our relationship was humanly and spiritually so close that it was virtually impossible to find anything that separated us.

In finding people belonging to 'my stream' I relied on a very important factor in human relations which I call 'recognition'. It is when meeting a stranger, personally or via his writing, you recognise in his words something so important, relevant and congenial, that you immediately wish to contact him. I have had in my life several such 'recognitions', both ways, but they all related to other than 'my stream' aspects of life. Therefore my question remains as acute to me still today: is it a figment of my imagination or the reality which has not been given to me to experience in this life?

My third personal point I can't even call a question or a problem because it is neither. It has not even been originally a part of this piece, but external circumstances prompted me to include it herewith. I can characterise it as some inner dichotomy, of which I am aware and experience from time to time, but which doesn't bother me. Nevertheless I would like to know why it is there and what I can learn from it. In general terms I can call it 'thinking vs. doing', but not in the sense that some people tend to do things first and think about the purpose of their actions afterwards. Or they just 'don't think', but 'do things'.

The field of anthroposophy would be the easiest for me to use for an explanation. It exists, in the first instance, as a body of knowledge, and once entered and experienced, one can stay within it for the rest of one's life. But however fascinating and captivating this knowledge is, for me it never defined my objective for studying it. For me, its practical application to life, i.e. 'doing things', has always been a priority. And my thinking and thoughts went into that direction rather than into a further expansion of 'theoretical knowledge', however indispensable it is for spiritual development. The exception in this respect was Steiner's *Philosophy of Freedom*, the basis for understanding thinking, and the best tool to develop and exercise it and attain pure thinking. I wanted, as it were, to get to the bottom of it using various English and Russian translations and the German original, with someone's help (the same I had to do with regard to some passages in Steiner's autobiography). Trying to study it collectively, in a group, didn't help me much. But leading three completely different study groups, with the refreshing intervals of a decade between them, contributed tremendously to my understanding of thinking and ability to use it. So, studying *The Philosophy of Freedom* had also 'doing things' as its objective.

Thus within anthroposophy I established for myself some 'modus operandi' whereby I read and studied material not out of 'curiosity' or even as a general quest for knowledge, but because my life brought me to it – I wanted to understand or know something specific. With regard to other knowledge in the world, I had, to continue with Latin, 'modus vivendi', exactly as most other people – you read or study what is within the range of your interest and ability. And here it is where my inner dichotomy shows itself. For example, I would read a book the philosophical content of which I find very interesting and challenging, just 'up my street'. I consider exploring the theme or the author further and deeper and then I ask myself a question: "To what end?" I know it is a stupid question for anyone with a genuine quest for knowledge, but for me this knowledge has to be somehow 'anchored' to something specific *outside* me. [Even for discussing or exploring it with a group of individuals is a good enough 'anchor' for me. But as I have explained above, not being able to find people belonging to 'my stream', made it equally difficult to find such an 'anchor'. This](#)

applied both to anthroposophical and general studies. Such studies led to new thoughts and insights which, whatever their worth, I was eager to share with others, but could not find willing and understanding ears. To undertake such studies just for myself? It would not motivate me strongly enough, it would not constitute 'doing things' for me.

A friend of mine who all his life, among other things, studied philosophy and gave talks on the subject and on various philosophers, told me the other day that he was about to publish a book based on his talks and covering all major world philosophers, from Plato to Martin Buber. I was absolutely delighted – for him and for his potential readers, including myself. I know that it would be fascinating reading for me, as it would have been a fascinating study of those philosophers so many years ago when I encountered some of them. But I did not do so at the time: something else attracted my attention and efforts. Perhaps it was not as elevated and worthy, but I did what I did due to what I call now my 'inner dichotomy'. And now I also wish to understand its true nature and whether it contains something adverse for me. If so, did I bring it from my previous life with the intention to resolve it in this one, or is it a new unfortunate acquisition to be overcome in my next life?

My final problem and question concerning my anthroposophical world goes to the very core of it, to the place of anthroposophy in the world. Though this should really be of a permanent concern to every anthroposophist, in the particular context the issue emerged for me due, partly, to the shortness of the history of the Anthroposophical Movement and, partly, to the fact that its actual events were augmented by Steiner's words. As a result a discrepancy took place between what was actually there and what should have been. This discrepancy is of a particular importance for those who lived and were active as anthroposophists in the last three quarters of the 20th century, after Steiner's death. According to him, two momentous events were to take place during this period: starting with the mid-thirties onwards there would be a possibility – and necessity! – of the increasing number of individuals to come into a conscious contact with Christ on a spiritual level; and by the end of the century the two anthroposophical streams, Aristotelian and Platonic, would come together to Earth, with Steiner, to facilitate, widen and deepen the anthroposophical work in all spheres of life. None of these events took place, at least not in the way Steiner said they would; nor were they consciously experienced by their contemporaries. Where did it leave the anthroposophists concerned?

On the other hand one might object that such a discrepancy is in the nature of things especially when the spiritual dimension is involved which is inaccessible to us, ordinary mortals. Therefore you should take things as they are and as you understand them – and act accordingly.

This was the stance I adopted myself being even originally unaware of any discrepancy. But then I discovered another discrepancy, which was man/anthroposophist-made, and which had to be resolved, accordingly, by man/anthroposophist. This discrepancy took place after Steiner's death, or as a result of it, to be precise, and it persists to this day. It consists in the difference between what the Anthroposophical Society factually became after Steiner's departure and what anthroposophists falsely claim it to be and what they present to the world as a reality.

Had there been no first discrepancy, i.e. had the two events taken place, the second discrepancy and other shortcomings, faults and failures of the Anthroposophical Society would have been taken care of and rectified. But now they are all there and without being addressed, are inevitably piling up. This is how I see the present situation of which I spoke enough in my work **Concerning the History of the Anthroposophical Movement**. But is this situation true or false? – this is my final question.