

COURSE SYNTHESIS NO. 43

PSYCHOANTHROPOLOGY AND ITS ROLE IN THE WORLD

Psychoanthropology is a psychology of becoming and a science of man and the universe. Nature has left man at an incomplete level of evolution, but if he decides to acquire a certain knowledge and make certain efforts, he is capable of evolving further. The goal of Psychoanthropology is to transmit knowledge and practical techniques originating in the higher Spirit, in order to lead man to his true essence.

In the face of famines, unemployment, and the existential anxiety of an increasing number of people, the religions, political parties, and social organisations are obliged to admit that they have failed; they are incapable of resolving these problems, and have even contributed to their aggravation by economically exploiting the third-world countries. The answer offered by science carries with it the risk of the destruction of the entire planet. Many people in our day fall prey to social or scientific propaganda. Only a minority who attempt to think for themselves are aware of the necessity of change.

The solution cannot be found by the intellect (incarnated by science), nor by religion, nor in a return to primordial nature. Psychoanthropology proposes a different solution, introducing a new impulse that is not opposed to what is beautiful, just, or true in the activities of political, social, and religious organisations. But this solution is not to be found at the level of institutions or organisations.

The only people capable of providing hope for the future are individuals who have become personally aware of the necessity of change. Humanity can no longer content itself with the teachings of religions, which are based on belief, as people in our day are seeking to understand. Nor is Science the answer, since science without conscience is not only the ruin of the soul, but of the body and the entire earth as well.

Books are written in a given time and place; attaching oneself to a teaching from a book actually hinders the process of evolution. The validity of a book teaching does not last for more than a few decades. In the greatest sacred writings, however, an initiate is almost always capable of finding all the knowledge that is to come. Writing, however, is on the whole Ahrimanic and rigidifying in nature.

Psychoanthropology is addressed to both believers and atheists; it adds an understanding of the meaning of life and earthly destiny to the faith of the believer, and it permits the atheist to perceive the spiritual dimension within himself and, with time, outside of himself as well.

One of the great principles explains that we need to create peace within ourselves in order for there to be peace in the world, since the world is the mirror of what exists inside us. The failure of reforms, for example, is due to the imperfection of the people who advocate them.

In addition to its psychological dimension, Psychoanthropology also has a philosophical and spiritual dimension, enabling us to know the human soul and man as a whole. It is a philosophy of life and a spirituality that leads the spirit in man toward the spirit that exists in higher worlds.

Man is limited, and he must make efforts in order to overcome his state of incompleteness. Man's ordinary states of consciousness are unconsciousness and so-called waking consciousness. Psychoanthropology teaches us that there also exist other states of consciousness, the next being "self-consciousness,"

consciousness of both oneself and the external world at the same time. And it is possible to one day attain another level of consciousness, objective consciousness, in which we are awakened to other dimensions and to the perception of other beings who are not incarnated in a physical body.

Study – and not solely at the intellectual level – is necessary, as are certain efforts; man may then become connected once again to the spiritual world. Study and efforts permit him to understand how he functions; this corresponds to the “know thyself” of the ancient mystery schools.

Man generally functions mechanically, but he harbors within himself potentialities that go beyond this state of incompleteness.

Man’s three centers of functioning are his physical center, emotional center, and intellectual center. He is conditioned and accordingly not free in any of these centers. His centers function disharmoniously; one center after another usurps the dominant role, and this precludes any measure of inner peace. This inner disharmony is the source of humanity’s woes.

To progress toward harmony, we first need to have become aware of the fact that we are not free, and we need to observe the conditioning that permeates our everyday life, accepting this conditioning and subsequently making efforts to overcome it. And in order to overcome our conditioning, the essential technique is self-observation. The effect of self-observation is to develop in us a new center of gravity, what is called the magnetic center. With time, this magnetic center is gradually able to govern the other parts of us, to the extent that this is possible. We then free ourselves of the entanglements of our lower nature and progress toward self-consciousness and, beyond this, toward objective consciousness, in which one is capable of entering into relation with the supersensible world.

The teaching of Psychoanthropology is essentially practical; there are people who have integrated and realised this teaching and who are capable of transmitting it to others, and there are places where this knowledge is transmitted, specifically in Schools such as this one.

When we apply the principles of Psychoanthropology and understand them, it is impossible to be against anyone, since when we are against an enemy who is hostile to us, we become exactly like him.

One of the roles of teachings such as this one is to permit good to grow in the world and to help evil to improve, to be redeemed.

And perhaps most importantly of all, the knowledge of Psychoanthropology is not merely intellectual, but eminently concrete and practical.