

A news sheet

News for Friends of Anthroposophy and Members
of the anthroposophical mixed society*.

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How Do We Work with the Forces of Polarization?

Branko Furst, M.D.

Today, the pursuance of spiritual science is more a question of courage than of the intellect.

~Rudolf Steiner¹

One encounters polarities in every aspect of existence. They abound in nature as well as in social and political life. In fact, life would not be possible without them. When subject to rhythmical laws, polarities are the legitimate force for progress and a fulcrum of evolutionary development. For this to happen, a third element which harmonizes them and brings about the bridging or reversal of polarity is needed. A “balanced” polarity thus consists of three components which are subject to earthly and cosmic rhythms. It is inevitable that between the transitions, there will be periods when one of the forces predominates. This leads to enhanced or critical polarization. It is during such periods that we find ourselves locked into seemingly irreconcilable polarities of “positive and negative,” of “right or wrong,” or “good and evil.” Rudolf Steiner often pointed to examples of such polarities in classic literary works – for example, in Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (1667) and Klopstock’s *Messiah* (1748). The former depicts the opposing forces of heaven and hell in the form of Adam and Eve’s temptation by the adversary and their subsequent expulsion from Paradise. The latter (*Messiah*) is an epic poem (some twenty thousand verses in dactylic hexameter!) on a similar theme, with dazzling descriptions of demons in hell and their punishment and transformation brought about through the power of Christ Jesus’ death on the cross. This is contrasted by the councils of angels in the heavens, coupled with a visionary description of The Last Judgement.

These epic creations, which exerted such profound influence on the cultural development of Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, contain an element of “soul aberration,”

INHALT

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¹ Lecture of Jan. 21, 1923 (CW 220).