Text 3, "Occultism: A New Religion?"

Summary

This text explores the cultural, philosophical, and historical significance of occultism in the history of religion, and asks whether emerging forms of neo-sacralism should be regarded as a new religion or as a counterculture.

The author first categorizes paranormal phenomena (such as parapsychological telepathy and paraphysical ghost phenomena), clarifies the difference between animism (attributing phenomena to one's own soul) and spiritism (attributing them to spirits), and classifies related phenomena into Eastern, Biblical, and esoteric-occult forms of neo-sacralism.

The author then analyses the relationship between occultism and religion on the basis of the "two-world hypothesis" ("this" world versus the "other" world) and the experience of the sacred, demonstrating that occultism, religion, magic, mysticism, and ethics are closely interconnected.

Finally, the author places this movement within a philosophy-of-history perspective (Vico's corso e ricorso): in reaction to the prevailing sensualist rationalism and secularization, a shift towards a new sacred consciousness emerges, comparable to the intellectual currents of late antiquity.