

CHAPTER VI – THE SEED AND THE TREE

^(1st) We have already talked about how verbal language leads us to see because it is built on the language of sight. Now we are going to talk about idolatries and some other reasons why we become psychologically blind. “The Seed and the Tree” is an ideal metaphor for this theme because it symbolizes the course of our lives.

^(2nd) One of my main ideas is that we are more natural during childhood and old age, and that we lose our balance when we reach adulthood. We become corrupted by our own vitality and by the society we live in. Our energy pushes us toward passion and idolization, and society does the same. But society also “prunes” us.

^(3rd) Old age is often called a second childhood, and ideally it truly should be — in a positive sense. The younger children are, the more connected they seem to all the living beings around them, showing their natural kindness. Sometimes they do get genuinely upset about something. But soon they let it go and become friends again with the same children they just argued with. This shows that they judge lightly: they may feel anger, but they do not hold grudges, so they forgive easily. And we know that someone has aged well when they show these same qualities¹⁹⁵.

^(4th) We are shaped by what we love. But as we grow into adulthood, we drift away from that because of the roles society pushes onto us — roles that teach us to ignore what we see and hear, stay silent, and keep our heads down. Over time, we start mistaking those roles for our real identity instead of seeing ourselves as free and natural human beings. That is why so many people rely on others to tell them who they are, because deep down, they are not even sure themselves.

^(5th) So, even though human beings leave records of who they are in an attempt to identify themselves, they still do not truly know who they are. One of the goals of this book is to offer new ways of observing so people can better understand themselves.

^(6th) For example, many people believe that human nature is evil, while I argue that it is good. First, because we are made in the image and likeness of God, who is pure love and goodness. And second, because goodness is exactly what defines us as human beings. To have humanity is to have goodness.

^(7th) Childhood is the best time for us to create an ideal of perfection for our lives, and this can truly help us. Old age is equally important because it allows us to look back and see who we were and what we planned for ourselves. The seed is the project; the tree is its fulfillment.

^(8th) This would be the ideal path toward self-improvement, since even our idea of perfection could change over time. But from childhood on, we are surrounded by misleading stories that society imposes on us encouraged by our parents as a way of developing our imagination. This is true of Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, and perhaps, long ago, even Adam and Eve. These stories train us to accept commands and facts without explanations, until we lose the desire to act because everything starts to feel dishonest.

¹⁹⁵ BIBLE, *Matthew* 18:3 — And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

(9th) If it were not for the conspiracy of this system, which uses television, the internet, and audiovisual media in general to confuse us, we would all have every opportunity to grow and develop. These media should help us reach our full potential, but instead they hold us back, creating a state of dehumanization that goes against our natural path of evolution — which is our greatest truth. And truth is unavoidable; a lie does not become true no matter how many times it is repeated.

(10th) Truth is an abstract force that stands on its own. Every path eventually leads back to truth because everything moves in cycles. If all paths come from truth — including words, which shape the way we think — then they naturally return to it in the end. Truth lives within us. It is something greater than ourselves, something through which we come to understand who we are.

(11th) When facts are distorted, we lose the ability to understand ourselves, and that makes us weaker. But no matter how many lies support another lie, they can never be stronger than the truth, because truth represents perfection.

(12th) The lack of logic in lies is what harms us and prunes us. That is why we must constantly rebuild ourselves, like new growth after pruning. The song *Primavera nos Dentes* suggests this idea of “human pruning” and renewal through the exclamation “Wow!”

Spring in the Teeth
(João Ricardo/ João Apolinário, 1973)¹⁹⁶

Who has the awareness to have courage,
Who has the strength to know they exist,
And at the heart of their own machine
Creates the counter-spring that resists.

Who doesn't falter even in defeat,
Who, though lost, never despairs,
And, cut down in the storm's fierce heat,
Holds spring between their teeth—
Wow!

(13th) In the 1970s, audiovisual media still did not fully reach the entire population. Because of that, the decade provides a simpler example of how the system acted against both our social identity and our individual identity, which is why it is mentioned so often here. For example, the song mentioned earlier suggests that Brazil once had a fearless sense of resistance. In response to that strong social identity, the British TV series *The Tomorrow People* was released in the same year as the song (1973). The show used hypnotic themes to shift attention away from material reality as a way of weakening our sense of identity.

(14th) *The Tomorrow People* encouraged unrealistic beliefs about mental powers, leading people to idolize the mind and knowledge itself, while at the same time suggesting defeat. In other words, it created a double effect — filling young people with vanity while draining their confidence, defeating them psychologically.

(15th) In the series, “normal” adults were portrayed as weak-minded people, suggesting that having a strong personality was the special trait being targeted and suppressed. It became a way of discouraging people from expressing their individuality on a massive scale, as though the unconscious mind were being conditioned to surrender.

¹⁹⁶ band *Secos e Molhados*. — This 1970s music group, whose members were João Ricardo, Ney Matogrosso, Gérson Conrad, and Daniel Iasbeck, brought an innovative and forward-thinking style for its time, one that is still critically acclaimed today.

^(16th) I believe hypnosis was used as a strategic tool. The children of that era would reach adulthood around the time Vale do Rio Doce (now Vale) was privatized. The company had been created in 1942 with the expectation that it would eventually be negotiated roughly fifty years later¹⁹⁷. Because of this, imperialist interests had enough time to weaken our resistance, preparing young people to become passive toward authority and unwilling to react when the country's mineral wealth was taken through privatization.

^(17th) At the same time, social spectacle took on a more conservative tone, drawing attention to ceremonies centered around uniforms, formal gowns, and ceremonial robes. These rituals, rooted in the past, helped reinforce the authority of the ruling classes. In fact, stories built around fantasies of mental powers combined with elite rituals are nothing new — the Greco-Roman gods reflected the same pattern.

^(18th) Meanwhile, the real spiritual medium, Chico Xavier, was largely ignored, and his ideas were attacked indirectly so the public would overlook his work. Uri Geller, in 1976, emphasized mental powers rather than spiritual intelligence — which, according to this view, is what truly gives the mind its strength. He performed acts such as telepathy, bending spoons, and moving objects. At the same time, doubt about mental powers was encouraged by the Brazilian TV drama *O Astro*¹⁹⁸ (1977), in which one of the characters pretended to have psychic abilities.

^(19th) In this way, spiritual truths were pushed aside. One example was the encouragement of fear surrounding mediumship — something connected to the idea of spiritual intelligence — through the dramatic phrase often repeated in cartoons: “Boo! Ghost!”

^(20th) During the 1970s, new ideas began to be used to confuse people. Spiritual darkness — understood here as a psychological condition that clouds understanding through lies and distorted ways of thinking — was being encouraged. Certain names became almost unspeakable, while fanaticism and idol worship were increasingly promoted.

^(21st) However, this process would not have succeeded if it had happened only in Brazil, because people would still have heard outside perspectives about it. For that reason, our social spectacle was only one part of a much larger global scene that was taking shape. The same stories were repeated around the world, guiding society toward a stronger form of domination — a process seemingly aimed at all humanity.

^(22nd) Behind the worship of the mind was anthropocentrism, which seemed attractive because it appeared to defend human identity and the human soul. But according to this view, that is not what really happens. In situations like these, the importance of the first commandment becomes clear: “Love God above all things.” God represents ultimate truth, while human beings do not reach that level of perfection, and for that reason we should not idolize ourselves. Any form of worship that is not directed toward perfect truth becomes a psychological process that clouds the mind and leads to mental stagnation, because someone who believes they are already perfect no longer feels the need to grow or evolve.

^(23rd) This process encouraged a shift away from spiritual intelligence toward analytical intelligence, based mainly on calculation and logic. From there, it moved even further down toward instinct-driven thinking — a lower level focused only on material survival. The

¹⁹⁷ Brazilian Decree-Law 4352/42, Title – PROPOSED STATUTES OF THE VALE DO RIO DOCE COMPANY, Chapter I, Article 4 — “The duration of the Company shall be 50 (fifty) years, counting from the date of its Constituent Assembly. However, the General Assembly reserves the right to decide at any time on extending this period or on dissolving the Company before the fixed term.” Source: Câmara Legislativa (Legislative Chamber) Available at: <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/declei/1940-1949/decreto-lei-4352-1-junho-1942-414669-republicacao-68227-pe.html>.

¹⁹⁸ A Brazilian soap opera written by Janete Clair, aired by the network Rede Globo from December 6, 1977, to July 8, 1978.

difference is important: through analytical and material thinking, people believe in accumulating more for themselves; through spiritual intelligence, people believe in sharing so that everyone can have more.

^(24th) If each of us carries an inner altar within the mind devoted to some kind of god, then we must be careful about what we place there so we do not end up worshipping the wrong thing. The right God clears the mind; the wrong one traps it.

^(25th) From a broad point of view, Catholics may idolize images, Evangelicals may idolize the Bible, Spiritists may idolize spirits, and people who place excessive faith in technical knowledge may idolize human knowledge. Idol worship can exist in any religion, but it is not limited to religion alone — it can be directed toward many things, including sex, for example. Idolatry weakens human beings, and the most common form of it is the worship of money.

The idols of the nations are silver and gold, made by human hands. They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see. They have ears, but cannot hear, nor is there breath in their mouths. Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them. (BIBLE, Psalm 135:15-18)

^(26th) During the 1970s, society was being pushed away from becoming the strong and healthy tree it had the potential to become. Fear was encouraged in every area of life, including health, as a way to reduce people's ability to act. This was nothing new. History has always been marked by diseases that terrified populations, such as leprosy during the time of Jesus Christ and tuberculosis during the Romantic era. Fear of unknown diseases — especially deadly ones — can blind people and make them more obedient to whatever they are told, while also increasing attachment to physical survival.

^(27th) During that time, cancer cases rose dramatically, creating widespread fear to the point that many people referred to the disease only as “C.A.” In many cases, even doctors were frightened by the diagnosis because cancer was seen as fatal, rare, and incurable. As a result, patients were often kept in the dark about their real condition.

^(28th) Today, cancer rates are even higher, increasing almost as though the environment had been contaminated by radioactive substances. I strongly believe cannabis may help in treatment because some cannabinoids have antitumor properties. I also believe in immunotherapy¹⁹⁹ because it works in a more natural way with the body. Proper nutrition and avoiding carcinogenic substances may also help prevent cancer and support recovery. Physical detoxification works in the opposite direction of the processes associated with cancer, which can be understood as a form of poisoning.

^(29th) The AIDS epidemic began around 1981, and because it was often fatal, it created widespread fear. It also brought prejudice and shame because it was sexually transmitted, something the system used to justify attacks on sexuality. In the city of Rio de Janeiro, some parents taught their children to scare away thieves by claiming they had AIDS, while some thieves took advantage of the same fear by robbing people without weapons, simply by making the same claim. Some people believe that large institutions may have exploited the situation by developing the virus in laboratories for profit.

^(30th) People often avoided saying the names of these diseases out loud because of fear, almost as if they were worshipping death through excessive respect. Many people believe that speaking about evil attracts it, which is why some refer to the devil as “the Evil Thing,” for example. But avoiding the subject does not solve the problem — it usually makes it worse.

¹⁹⁹ *Immunotherapy* — This type of therapy uses the body's own immune system to fight cancer cells, helping strengthen the body's natural response against cancer.

(31st) People place enormous importance on a single moment — death — while failing to notice the full length and meaning of life itself. It is like living only one frame of an entire movie. In general, people spend large amounts of money on whatever they worship, especially on deadly diseases, which encourages systems of profit built around fear, idol worship, and illness.

(32nd) Many people also believe that money can solve any health problem because they idolize it. Those who worship money often humble themselves before the rich and powerful while looking down on the poor as if they were made from something lesser. Yet people should notice how many wealthy individuals die young despite spending fortunes on medical treatments, while many poor people reach old age in good health with very little money.

(33rd) The form of idolatry most readily recognized by people is the worship of “saints” — a term I place in quotation marks because words like “redeemed” or “liberated” may be more accurate. These are human beings who set positive examples by showing a path toward spiritual intelligence and teaching people to face reality in service of truth.

(34th) “Saints” are not superhuman beings. They are human beings — heroes and victims of a struggle against the system carried out through peace. They are prophets and messengers of Jesus Christ and of God. However, the system distorts their image in order to hide the true history of Christianity, turning them into talismans connected to the supposed power of the mind: “saint of the eyes,” “protector saint of drivers,” “matchmaking saint.” Some people even mistreat statues of “saints” in attempts to force them to grant favors, almost as if the statues were objects of voodoo²⁰⁰.

(35th) Statues of “bleeding saints” are, in reality, symbols of death. For that reason, it is troubling when people treat them as lucky charms, since their supposed power is historically linked to human sacrifices made to Roman gods.

(36th) Thousands of people, especially Christians, were killed by the Romans before white plaster statues that became stained red with blood. Some were thrown to lions, others were struck with poisoned arrows, and others were burned alive as human torches to light circus arenas while crowds watched in a state of frenzy.

(37th) These executioners became numb to the horror they caused because they believed they were punishing people on behalf of their gods, who they thought had been offended by Christians worshiping without images. As a result, they took pleasure in killing them and turned executions into public spectacles and sporting celebrations. The killings were often accompanied by military marches that symbolized Rome’s victory over its enemies. The martyrs of Christianity became victims of fanaticism surrounding images and idol worship — and later, through that same mentality, they were renamed “saints.”

(38th) During the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church also adopted violent practices, punishing people who refused to honor its beliefs. Acts of aggression became public spectacles, and many took pleasure in them. According to this view, that attraction to primitive spectacles still exists today in blood sports, graphic video games, and news programs. focused almost entirely on brutal deaths — while audiences continue to be fascinated by them.

(39th) Some religions seem outdated to me mainly in the ways they idolize images and make offerings such as drinks, food, cigarettes, and animal sacrifices in exchange for favors. I present this as a personal evaluation, not as an attack on any religion. In fact, I agree with some practices involving herbal practices, aromatherapy, respect for nature, and respect for

²⁰⁰ *Voodoo* — refers to a religion with African roots, but it is widely known for the popular belief in voodoo dolls, which are said to be used for rituals aimed at controlling or influencing people they are focused on.

other people. I also feel a strong connection with Umbanda, for example, since I practiced many of its rituals intuitively even before I came to understand it better.

^(40th) At the same time, within this primitive mindset, the killing of Jesus is often portrayed as an act that honored Him — and in one sense, it was. But it should also be recognized as a terrible human act, something that often goes unnoticed because of an unconscious fascination with death.

^(41st) It is important to say that I strongly identify with Christian Spiritism rooted in the Gospel tradition because it places spiritual growth at the center of its teachings while following the Gospel of Jesus Christ. At the same time, I also find many points of agreement with Evangelical, Catholic, and Buddhist beliefs. I can even find valuable teachings in the Quran and the Torah, although I cannot speak deeply about every religious tradition because I do not know them all. Still, I see common ideas shared among them.

^(42nd) In my belief, Jesus Christ comes directly from God the Father, shares the same divine essence, and has always been perfect. He is the perfect human being, the first soul, and the creator of the world we know. Just as many people believe in the Big Bang, I believe that Jesus truly possessed immense power and that God gave Him the authority to create. None of His actions happen without the Father's participation and approval²⁰¹, but because the Father loves Him completely, He entrusted Him with the power to shape a world of love according to His will.

^(43rd) Images themselves would not create idolatry if it were not for the ideas behind them. Idol worship often begins with attachment to ideologies that are represented through images. Human images can also affect people psychologically, depending on facial expressions and the emotional meanings attached to them.

^(44th) For that reason, I believe the true symbol of Christianity is the empty cross rather than images portraying Christ dead on the cross, since those images can communicate a sense of destruction and annihilation.

^(45th) False ideologies lead to a lack of discernment. For example, idolizing the Bible can prevent some readers from recognizing the higher spiritual position of the New Testament in relation to the Old Testament. Human beings are even capable of idolizing parts of the body itself, as seen in the worship of the penis associated with Shiva or the eye represented by the Eye of Horus.

^(46th) The system constantly tries to hide and distort what it sees as true Christianity, which nevertheless continues to survive in a more imperfect form. Humanity still faces the same opposing system, and the examples set by the “saints” remain important because they show people how to confront it and move toward spiritual elevation.

^(47th) The “saints” lead us to Jesus, who leads us to God, as He is the perfect human model who does not obscure our vision of God. And although we should worship God²⁰², Jesus can be revered as a model²⁰³, and we need that too. For that reason, I believe the title “Lord of Hosts” should be replaced with “Lord of Peace,” because Jesus is the Prince of Peace. He established an immense kingdom without resorting to war, even though many wars were later fought in His name.

²⁰¹ BIBLE, *John* 5:19 — “Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”

²⁰² BIBLE, *John* 5:23 — “that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him”.

²⁰³ BIBLE, *John* 3:14-15 — “Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”

(48th) Even if someone sees God as a higher mental structure rather than a literal being, that idea would still carry immense power. Atheism often arises in response to flaws found within religions, since idol worship and fanaticism — both commonly present within religious groups — work against balance and clarity. Even so, many religious people encourage those behaviors without realizing it.

(49th) Male circumcision — a practice tracing back to Abraham and still followed by Muslims and Jews for religious reasons — is another example of what I see as a primitive religious ritual. It seems illogical to believe that God would condemn someone for lacking a mark on the penis, an idea that can lead to a form of phallic veneration. Even so, male supremacy — which may reflect that same form of idolization — remains common in many religions, including Catholicism.

(50th) Passion, when it becomes obsessive, can also be viewed as a form of idolatry. In my view, when it develops into a condition characterized by intrusive and repetitive thoughts, it should be treated medically, including with antidepressants if necessary. The expression “Love is blind” accurately describes a kind of psychological blindness linked to imbalances in neurotransmitters. Yet society does not usually recognize it as an illness, partly for cultural and political reasons, because intense passion increases consumption and is often encouraged through stories and entertainment. A person consumed by obsession becomes emotionally enslaved, showing how idolization — whether of ideas or passions — can lead to forms of enslavement.

(51st) Children and the elderly, like the seed and the tree, represent the possibility of human renewal, perhaps because they are less likely to idolize themselves. Childhood and old age are the stages of life that come closest to God — when they are guided well. The child is our raw material, or recycled material for those who believe in reincarnation. The elderly person, seeing everything come to an end before their eyes, including their own body, may feel as if they are returning to that original state. Spiritually, this can be understood as a rebirth, a return to the source.

(52nd) Children and the elderly are separated by age but united by occupying opposite ends of life, which brings them closer to truth. Along with the limitations that come with age, both recognize more deeply the need for love. A child is like a seed imagining itself as a tree. An elderly person is like a tree, yet often feels like a seed again because they spread the knowledge gained through experience — a true inheritance for humanity.

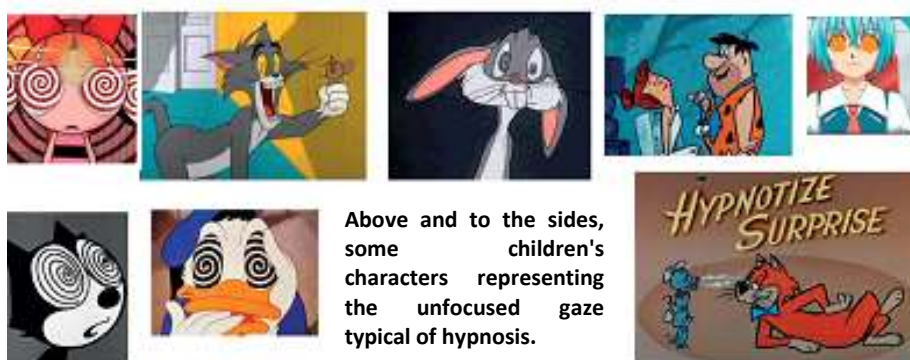
(53rd) We should think about the older person we once imagined becoming and change within ourselves whatever might make living with us difficult in the future. We should make an effort to become kinder, because not every elderly person is difficult to care for, but living with someone who lacks kindness can be exhausting.

(54th) Our inner child should not be spoiled either, because that too can create difficult relationships. At the same time, the inner child remains a safe reminder of the purity we once had. Through it, we can still see the adult we once hoped to become, giving us a chance to find our way again. We should change whatever within ourselves would disappoint our inner child or shame the elderly person we may one day become.

(55th) Past and future come together when identity is involved. By reconnecting with the child we once were, we invest in the elderly person we will someday become. This is one way to help reshape society's outlook, because it encourages greater care and attention toward the children and elderly people around us. Changing ourselves can already be a powerful step toward changing the reality we live in.

Images VI

In the next section, images from the opening of the series *The Tomorrow People*. In these images, we can observe the use of hypnosis techniques. Extreme focus is forced, and focus is one of the keys to hypnosis. By directing attention to a stimulating object, a single thought develops, centered on that one object. This process causes a lack of depth—meaning, there's no real reasoning about what's being seen. This shallow focus causes variations in the speed of electrical pulses in our brains, which then start to emit “alpha waves,” a slower brainwave. When this happens, our focus becomes so narrowed that we can't actually see the object anymore. At this point, we enter a trance and stop evaluating, allowing other thoughts to influence us.



Frames composed of images sourced from the internet.