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Introduction

Dear colleagues,

As usual, our Michaelmas issue includes a copy of the Section Newsletter.

We are called upon, as human beings today, to listen out for the morning call of the spirit, the morning call of Michael. We develop this listening quality best in the encounter with others, since such encounters allow us to experience the spiritual dimension that is as much part of us as our physical existence.

Meeting others is not always easy in our time. It can be challenging and relies on a mutual understanding that we first need to acquire. It needs special awareness.

Inspiration for your working together in schools, for understanding each other as colleagues or as teachers and students, can be found in two books by Christoph Wiechert. The first of these books is available in German, English and Dutch, with a Spanish translation on its way. The title of the English translation is “The Joy of Profession” (translator: Dorit Winter). The second book will be published in November in the German language (title: “Du sollst sein Rätsel lösen”). We call your attention to these two publications again because various teachers’ colleges have pointed out to us that they have not heard of or seen the book yet.

We often also hear from colleagues who say that they never get to see the Journal. It seems to vanish in some schools. Florian Osswald and Claus-Peter Röh are sometimes asked about it when they visit schools. The Journal is sent by post to all schools and we are happy to provide more copies if required.

The present Journal focuses once more on the recent World Teachers’ Conference. The articles by Rosie Simpson and Dorit Winter are included in German translation. We are pleased to say that the lecture by Wolfgang Schad is now also available for our English-speaking friends. Albrecht Schad’s article on the seven-year rhythm is now also available in English.

We include an article by Louisa Oberholzer that looks forward to the first International Foreign Language Teachers Conference next April. It deals with the question of language learning in relation with a country’s culture, underlining two aspects that are particularly relevant in multicultural societies.

Florian Osswald writes on the theme of self-management in schools: a wide field that needs reconsidering.

We hope you will enjoy reading these articles and that they will inspire you to include the one or other aspect in your teaching or preparation.

With Michaelic greetings
from

the Pedagogical Section

Steps towards Collaborative School Management

Let me start with a picture.

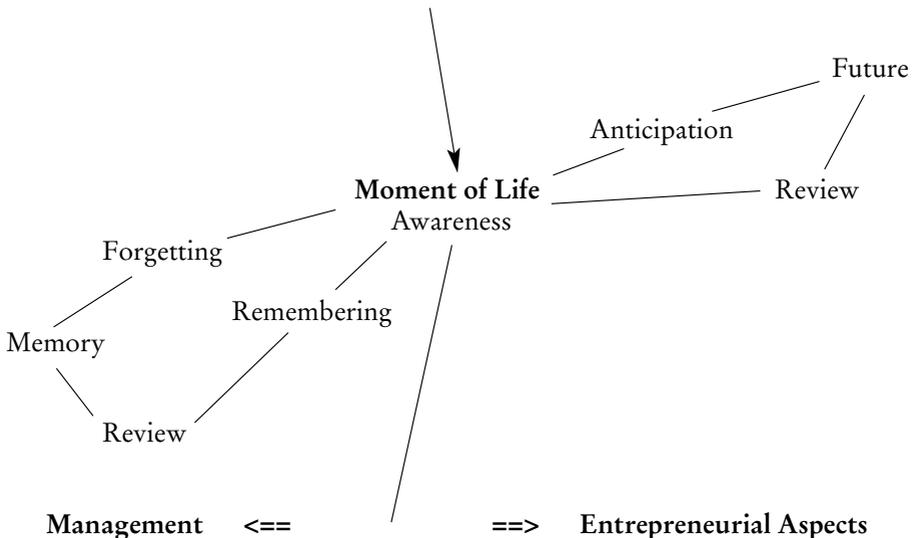
Why are we able to stand on only two legs? Three points of support are usually required for any object to be able to stand firm. Where is therefore the third leg?

There must be various answers to this question. One of them forced itself on me: it must be our waking consciousness. We would not be able to stand upright without our waking consciousness and as soon as it diminishes we are sure to fall. Our first few years of life are an intense search for uprightness, it needs to be acquired.

The ability to stand upright enables us to walk freely into space; it enables us to discover the world. The three legs work together harmoniously when we walk. Each of them has a task; there is the leg holding the full weight, the leg which swings forward and the waking consciousness. The whole organism partakes in the act of walking. Each part serves the whole. However, the movement does not take place in a void. The environment has an immediate effect on the act of walking. Let us try to find our school organism in this picture now.

The third leg

How do we acquire awareness for our task to govern the school collaboratively? Rudolf Steiner's pedagogical impulse leads to a particular way of teaching but it also leads to a particular ideal of collaborative school management or self-government. The following sketch will illustrate this double aspect.



Each moment of life has a double effect. Normally, we concentrate our awareness on the aspect which leads to memory formation. We want to teach in such a way that the lesson content can be remembered but also forgotten in the right way. There is an intimate relationship between remembering and forgetting. Rudolf Steiner often mentioned the importance of conceptualization. These are the realms of learning processes which are part of our daily teaching.

However, the effect the moment of life has on the future is not so easily understandable. I might for example forget my bag at school and fetch it the following morning. On my way there I might meet an old friend whom I have not seen for a number of years and he tells me a story which answers a question I have long tried to answer. This particular moment of life stays in my memory not only because I forgot my bag at school. From this, an important insight can be gained for our teaching practice. Our lesson preparations are anticipations of the future but life will adjust them. When we look back, when we review a particular lesson, we realize what has become of our anticipation. Anticipation always involves some risk taking. We can never really know what will happen. Reality emerges anew at every moment. An entrepreneur invests into the future and therefore takes risks. This is where teacher and entrepreneur meet. Both of them are involved in a permanent learning process and therefore become skilled in capturing what is to become. In this way, a 'circular' process emerges which can also be observed on the other side, on the side of memory.

Therefore, teachers are, according to Rudolf Steiner, not only educators but also entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurs train their entrepreneurial awareness; teachers train their sense for the expectant in the students. If we achieve expertise in this area we might develop what Rudolf Steiner called "pedagogical instinct".

Thus, every moment of life carries two qualities:

A quality which develops memory and bears the character of management and a future, germ-like quality with an entrepreneurial gesture.

The teacher with an entrepreneurial spirit has two legs; one which carries the weight, the managerial leg and the leg which swings forward, the entrepreneurial leg; both are present in his consciousness. He wants to take steps in the spirit of the "third leg".

The leg which carries the weight (or doing the good)

'How can you learn about yourself? By observing never, but through action. Try to do your duty and you know at once what is in you.' (Goethe, Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship)

When we become active we follow the principle of individuality. Only the individual can be active in a responsible way, the group cannot but it is the group's task to create the right conditions.

If a group delegates a task to an individual, it is the group's task to set the parameters, to determine the task, the competences and the time frame. The clearer the parameters, the better the individual can take action according to the wishes of the community.

It is one of the most important tasks of the college of teachers to develop a culture of encouragement which offers the individual complete trust for a given task.

The form in which this is to be done must be decided by the group or college of teachers. The form is not given initially but has to be found within the given circumstances. Life itself will show whether the chosen form is appropriate.

To me it seems crucial for teachers to be aware, that school management is part of their responsibility and that they are practising it daily. School management is not an addition but it is part of the school ideal. The question now is how is it to be shaped? It is the task of the people who are involved in the respective school to find the appropriate form. However, it is important for the decision making body to make those decisions in accordance with the practicing teachers.

Today, putting ideas into practice is met with more and more resistance because many procedures have to do with crafts such as repetition, routine, connection to the subject matter and so on. One of the most beautiful experiences for us is when we have truly mastered a skill. Let us not forget that Nicolaus de Cusa, in his search for the name of God, has called the last God 'The God of Expertise'. There is an evolution towards expertise or mastery.

In their book on "Artificial Intelligence" Hubert and Stuart Dreyfus have identified five stages an individual goes through in order to become an expert, in order to become one with the action.

1. close connection to the context
2. gradual separation away from the context towards an understanding of the underlying principle
3. from the underlying principle towards focus on the target; the ability to set priorities
4. intuitive clarity – conscious decision
5. to be one with the action – pedagogical instinct emerges

Without any repetition there can be no expertise. Repetition is a wide field. We should distinguish between at least two types of repetitions:

- to practise an action to the point where I understand how something works.
- The practice which only starts when I have already learned the skill.

On the second level we penetrate further into the skill. For example a piece of music at this stage becomes more and more real music and we can free ourselves from the mere technique.

The leg which carries the weight allows us to stand firm. This could for example be a transparent and up-to-date technique of bookkeeping which allows us to make an informed decision on the state of our finances. Consistent procedures give a feeling of safety. Clearly regulated cooperation conveys peace in the storms of everyday life. The leg which carries the weight wants to stand firm.

The leg which swings forward (or not to lose trust in waking up)

The leg which swings forward has to do with the relationship between the individual and the group as well as the relationship of the group with the individual and the judgements which are part of this process.

Which conditions allow the leg to freely swing forward? We shift the weight onto the leg which carries the weight and need extra awareness in order to stay upright. If we can feel the leg which carries the weight to extend all the way towards the centre of the earth we feel even safer.

We have to make an effort again and again to leave our solitary position and step into the group, into the community. We step across a threshold, adjust our position for the leg to swing forward freely and fulfil its task. The moment of hovering, the moment of suspense which happens just after we leave the firm ground, is the moment when a new direction may be found and is one of the most important processes in a community. The purest form of this moment is manifested in the principle of dialogue.

The point is not to ask ‘who is right’ but to understand others. What are their thoughts and intentions? Do I engage with them and am I able to understand them from their own point of view? As a teacher I am familiar with this attitude. I try to understand the thoughts of the others and do not answer with ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. If I muster enough understanding, an answer to the question might be found out of the mutual effort.

Jehuda Amichai writes the following words in a poem:

‘No flowers grow in spring
At the place where we are right.’
(Jehuda Amichai: Zeit. Gedichte. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag 1998)

Let us allow the chance for others to see springtime in bloom.
Rudolf Steiner mentioned the process of forming an opinion very early on.

It absolutely does not matter at all whether the individual judgments and concepts of which our knowing consists correspond to each other or not; the only thing that matters is that they ultimately lead us to the point *that we are swimming in the main channel of the idea.*

(GA 1, Goethean Science, X: Knowing and Human Action in the Light of the Goethean Way of Thinking)

All the various rivers which all stem from the same source but all find their own way to the valley have the possibility to find what is common to them. This is the start of today's community. It is not given but must be created anew again and again.

“The matter of real importance today is that man shall really grasp the truth that it is necessary for him to become. He cannot rest upon anything he already is, but must continue in the process of becoming. Moreover, he must understand how actually to see into reality.”

(GA 186, The Challenge of the Times, Dornach, 6.12.1918, The Anthroposophic Press, Spring Valley, NY, 1941).

Community is like the human being: something which is in a constant process of renewal.

The individual has to be aware of his or her task in connection to the community. Based on the evolutionary principles of the individual we can say:

There can be no community without individuality.

For the creation of community we can say:

There can be no individuality without community.

But we still have not got to the core. It is not only important to turn things around. The individual is also called to follow an inner path. We can see a new community emerging out of the principle of dialogue. However, which spirit breathes in these efforts?

There can be no community without something bigger.

Rudolf Steiner started the course for teachers in 1919 with a meditation. This beginning lived on in all of the following lectures and tainted the content with a special colour which appears in what we call approach and attitude. Out of the work which the individual gives as a gift to the community, a common thread becomes apparent and so the courage for action emerges in the community. But the direction which the leg that swings forward should take will only show itself if the community is able to form a vessel. The depth of this vessel is created by the understanding we muster for our fellow beings and a drop of wisdom can then fall into the vessel.

Here we have a task which is still in its beginnings. However, it is at the same time the most crucial point in the question of management. Can we really stand together for something mutual?

We have opened up various fields of practice: Child study work on the foundations of human experience, research questions and so on.

Where will our path take us? Where will we put down our foot after the hovering? Do we dare to take conscious steps? Are we in motion?

Every moment of life is a new miracle. It is worth looking at it with curious eyes.

Florian Osswald translated by Karin Smith

I and Body

The dignity of children lies in their immortal nature. This immortality is unique and irreplaceable in every person, making each of us a partaker in Universal Human Rights. Cultures or states that fail to acknowledge Universal Human Rights know nothing about human nature. Georg Wilhelm Hegel, the German Idealist philosopher, knew about the dual aspect of the human I: through our I each of us is part of humanity, for only human beings have a purely individual and therefore inseparable and irreplaceable I. Each I is different from that of any other person. The I is the most individual and, at the same time, the most universal aspect of being human. Only biological organisms are determined wholly by the interaction of hereditary and environmental factors. If we reduce human nature to this kind of biologism, we do not recognize the human essence even though we might think that we acknowledge Universal Human Rights.

But how do I and body relate to each other? What is the difference between them? The difference between them lies in the body's extraordinary wisdom and maturity. Physicians have always been aware of this fact when they spoke of the "wisdom of the body" because without that wisdom all their efforts would be futile. No chemist in the world can achieve what one tiny liver cell can achieve.

It is very different with the I. The I is imperfection personified. It keeps striving without ever fully attaining what it strives for. The Spanish poet Juan Ramon Jiménez subsumed the experience in a few lines:

Don't run, walk slowly:
Just walk towards yourself!
Walk slowly, don't run,
for the child of your I,
the eternal newborn,
cannot keep up with you!

Rudolf Steiner often referred to the I as "the baby" among the four members of the human organization (e.g. GA 99, p. 79). The I finds this difficult to comprehend, seeing it considers itself to be the highest of the four members. In "Occult Science" Rudolf Steiner described that high, benevolent beings conceal the human I from itself, because, could it perceive itself fully, it would be deeply disappointed with its own inferiority and, filled with shame, would lose all confidence in itself. (GA 13, Schad 1979 and 2011). We are protected from this vision until we reach the threshold of the spiritual world. Knowing that the hierarchies act as our teachers makes us more modest.

But still: everything depends on this mere seed, this pure potentiality that has no distinct properties (because others would have them too). This is what allows the

I to evolve. And because the I needs to evolve, it decides to incarnate in order to undergo, through and in a physical body, a development on earth that it would not be able to undergo in the spiritual world. This is the mission of earthly life. This is why the I needs its temporal bodies. But knowing the human organisation is not enough. However enlightening it is for the I to be able to distinguish between the levels of body, life, soul and spirit within itself, it is even more important that it knows how these levels are transformed into one another. We need to be able to differentiate them before we can look at their inner relationship. As early as 1907 (GA 99) Rudolf Steiner removed the veil from this secret:

If the I passes through its biography, full of interest in everything new and striving to achieve what it cannot yet do, it will come with a gifted, talented astral body in its next incarnation. True talents are not inherited, nor are they disposition: they are the result of former interest. – Someone who manages to bring a degree of order to his emotional life, to his moods and desires, will have a strong and healthy ether body in his next life. – Someone who strives for cultural harmony in the sphere of his unconscious life forces, by cultivating an artistic and religious life, will be able to form a beautiful physical body for his next life. – All changes we achieve in the world through physical activity in one life, will meet us as karmic events in the “outer” world.

What does this mean? In the course of our reincarnations, the physical members of the human organisation evolve, top down, one from the other. All three of them are ultimately metamorphoses of our former I activity. The I plays an important part in generating the three lower levels of existence.

As a consequence we each carry as our present astral body the fruit of our I activity in a previous life. In our ether body we carry the results of our I activity from two lives ago, twice transformed. The physical body represents the transformation of our I activity three lives ago. Much of its mysterious earthly existence is made comprehensible to the I in soliloquy:

We often experience emotions in quite an ambivalent way. Is it I who am angry? Or does the anger take hold of me as something outside me? When we learn Latin we hear about verbs that express emotions being deponents, that is, they only appear in the passive voice: *irascor* = I am overcome by anger; *laetior* = joy is taking hold of me. Or is it maybe not the I that enjoys or suffers? Am I my astral body or am I really my I? Rudolf Steiner once said of this: “There is little of the I in what we experience in another person. The I reveals itself through the astral body.” (GA 148, lecture of 17 December 1913). The astral body resembles the I and therefore the two are often confused.

It is different with the ether body, our health body. Our individual state of health is clearly not as easily accessible to the I. Shakespeare has his King Lear say:

“We are not ourselves when nature, being oppressed, commands the mind to suffer with the body.”

The ether body is not only one but two incarnations removed from its original I activity.

The physical body is most difficult to reach for the I. If you don't like the shape of your nose or ear lobes you can't change it through will power: you need a cosmetic surgeon. In the far distant future, the spirit human being will be able to directly transform the physical body. At present, the physical body is three incarnations removed from its initial development.

This explains why the **astral body** as the carrier of the karma of the last earthly incarnation can be a gift (or talent) and a burden at the same time. As a soul space, it supports the I in earthly life. But the I nevertheless experiences the daily shortcomings in the astral body. Morality and culture teach the I to educate itself. This self-education consists, in the first instance, in the I educating its own astral body. We know that education is not possible without self-education.

The **ether body**, on the other hand, is of much greater help to the I: the I cannot take charge of liver function or hormone regulation, which is just as well, because the imperfect I would cause considerable mischief every day, hour and minute. This is where the wisdom of life becomes apparent in everyday life. The ether body owes its capacity to the fact that it has passed twice through the spiritual world after death, because each time the I-impulses were transformed under the guidance of high hierarchical beings.

The **physical body** is three incarnations removed from the I and has therefore been prepared by the hierarchies three times. It has become the furthest developed, wisest member of the human organization. What would the true I do here on earth without a physical body? We owe much to our physical body, too. Its perfection can only be understood on the basis of reincarnation. Novalis wrote:

“Touch a human body and you touch a temple.”

Proponents of the natural sciences might object: the I that develops in the course of reincarnations and the hierarchies that support it alone can't achieve this. What we inherit from our ancestors and our geographical and historical milieu also plays a part. But this is not a real objection because the child's spiritual individuality seeks out circumstances that are as suitable as possible, even though they never fit perfectly. (GA 99, p. 74) For the I can never fully identify with either of the two aspects – ancestors or environment. It has to learn through them. And despite the increasing distance that exists between the members of the human organization, they evolve one from the other, beginning with the germ that has the greatest potential for development. The I and its temporal bodies belong to each other because of their karmic metamorphoses. The I creates its physical members in order to learn through them.

Following on from these fundamentals of human existence we now come to the central question: How can the child's spirit being permeate the

prepared members of its organization? How can it incarnate? How does it find access to its bodies? It cannot do this by itself. The first answer is: through the nurture, education and teaching of parents and teachers. I used to ask at parents evenings: “Dear parents, you all have long years of experience in educating. What do you expect from school now?” There are many answers, but nobody has ever thought – and teachers wouldn’t either if Rudolf Steiner had not told them – of the most elementary aspect that Steiner described in the very first lecture to the very first Waldorf teachers: the spirit soul (or soul spirit) and the temporal body only come together through breathing and the alternation of waking and sleeping. It is the task of the school to teach the **right breathing** and the **right way of sleeping** (GA 293). Teachers have discussed this for almost a hundred years so we don’t need to go into it here. What is of importance for us here is the gesture that both have in common: rhythm.

Rhythm is the central tool of education. All rhythms, short and long, draw the spirit soul into the temporal body. That is why we start the school day with a rhythmical part. We should come to an agreement again on this controversial topic by looking at the nature of rhythm.

Rhythm is not the same as beat. A beat is the repetition of the same while rhythm is the repetition of something similar. It is not the monotonous stamping and clapping because that – just like a beat – lifts the I out again.

No healthy breath is ever like another, no healthy heart beat like the one before. Rhythm is the recurrence of something that was there in the nearer or more distant past. Each rhythm is different each time from before and therefore open to the future which is never fixed. Rhythm therefore includes the past **and** the future into the stream of the present. This makes it possible for an eternal being to find a home in the here and now, and not lose itself in the moment but extend the present more and more into the past **and** future. This is what makes us human: that we learn from past experience and strive far into the future. No animal, not even our closest relative, the chimpanzee, is able to do that. The raven apparently comes closest (Reichholf 2011), although it has not attained historical consciousness yet or the ability to plan long-term projects.

We are very fortunate to have recently learned about physical rhythms in the human body through the findings of chronobiology or chronomedicine. It was the anthroposophist and occupational physician Gunther Hildebrandt (1924 – 1999) in particular who, from 1951 to 1999, explored the entire range of human rhythms with a group of students and researchers at Marburg University (Germany). Some of these scientists will speak at this conference.

The rhythms of threefoldness

Hildebrandt started from Steiner’s indication that the healthy ratio of heartbeat and breathing, which is 72:18 (or 4:1) per minute, underlies many works of

poetry, in particular the great epic poems of world literature (GA 281). Although he carefully controlled all influences, Hildebrandt's studies on healthy students tended to show considerable deviation until he began to monitor the candidates' pulse and breathing around the clock: all rhythms settled into a ratio of 4:1 during the phases of deepest sleep between midnight and 5 a.m., the time when recovery is strongest (Fig. 1).

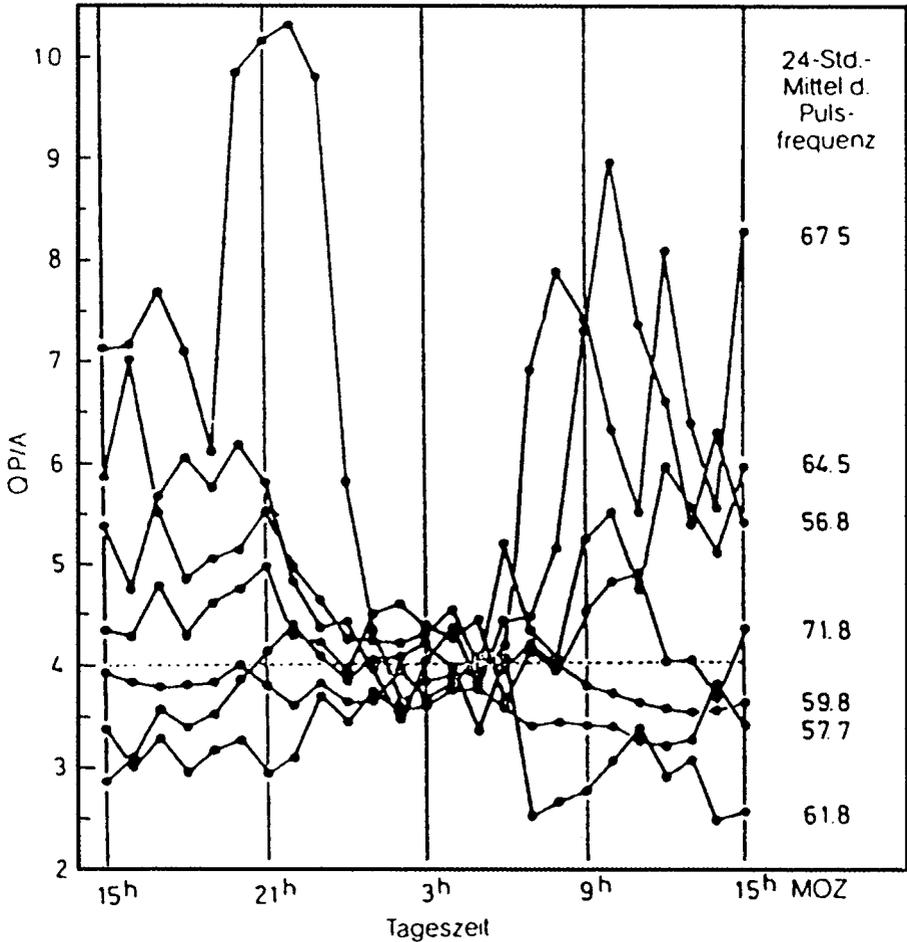


Fig. 1: Pulse/breathing ratio (P/A) in seven test subjects over 24 hours under regular resting conditions. The results shown were taken hourly. During the deep-sleep phase the ratio settles at 4:1. (Based on Hildebrandt 1961)

If we use the right kind of poetry in schools, the children will recover even in the daytime because of our teaching. Steiner expected children to be greatly refreshed after a good eurhythm lesson.

Fig. II also shows everyday rhythmic activities as well as musical tempi in coordination with breathing and pulse frequencies. Four beats in a bar prevail in music and constitute the rhythm of the Indian Vedas, the Finnish Kalevala, the Middle High German Song of the Nibelungs and the Parsifal Epic. The epic poems of

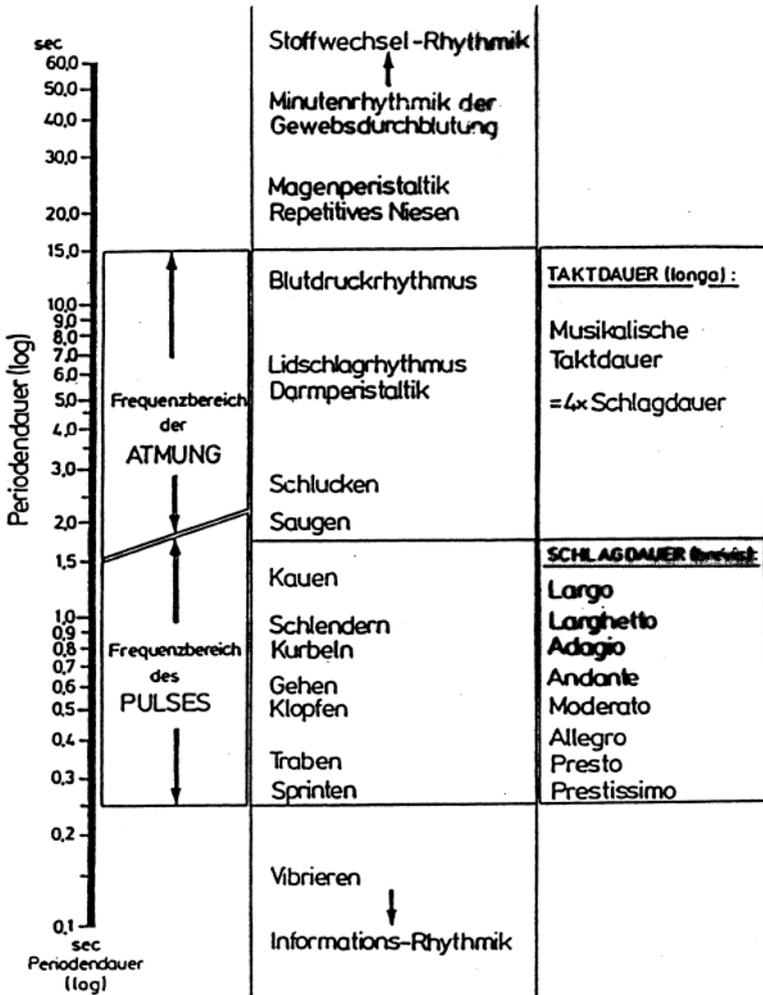


Fig. II: Periodic movements and musical rhythms in coordination with breathing and pulse frequencies. (Based on Hildebrandt 1990)

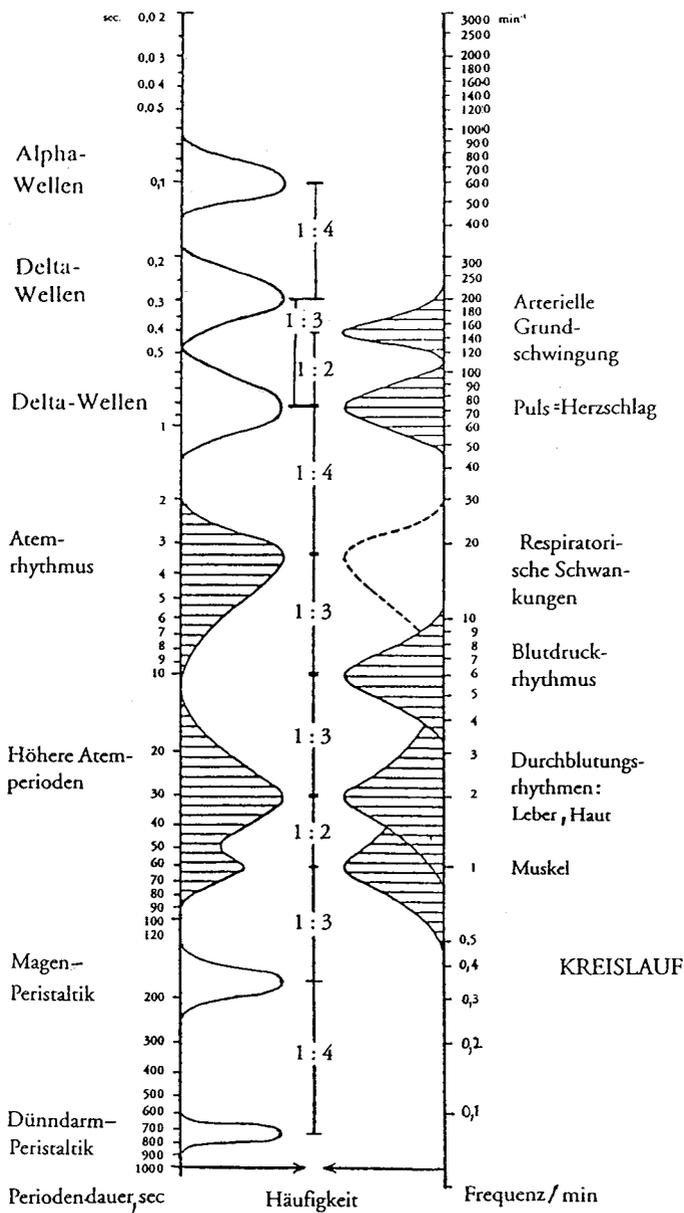


Fig. III: Respiration (left) and circulation rhythms (right) compared to each other (in integers) and in comparison to the cerebral (above) and gastro-intestinal rhythms (below). Day readings. (Based on Hildebrandt 1967)

Homer and the Romans are written in hexameter with a break for breathing, which means they are octametric or have 2×4 beats in a bar. What effect did the recitation of thousands of these verses over hours and days have on the speakers or listeners? Their organ rhythms became more stable which affected not only their souls but also the life processes right into the physical body. The short-term rhythms of the nervous system and the long-term rhythms of the metabolic system (e.g. digestion) become attuned to each other. The former represent the fastest rhythms (up to 800 per second); the latter the hourly or day-and-night rhythms of the organism.

Fig. III shows the centre of the range of rhythms in even more detail. Note the preference for integral ratios 1:2, 1:3, 1:4; that is, the octave, the fifth above the octave, the double octave. The connection with music is noticeable. During the day, respiration, blood pressure and circulation follow a three in one (waltz) rhythm.

Fig. IV shows the situation at night: the three beats in a bar have become four beats. The double octave is clearly the rhythm most conducive to recovery.

In 1984, Hildebrandt brought all these findings together in Figure V. It was the first time that the threefoldness of the human organism was shown as a time order or time body. We are used to seeing threefoldness represented as a spatial image of the physical body. It is, however, primarily a temporal phenomenon that is reflected in the physical. (Schad 2003, 2006).

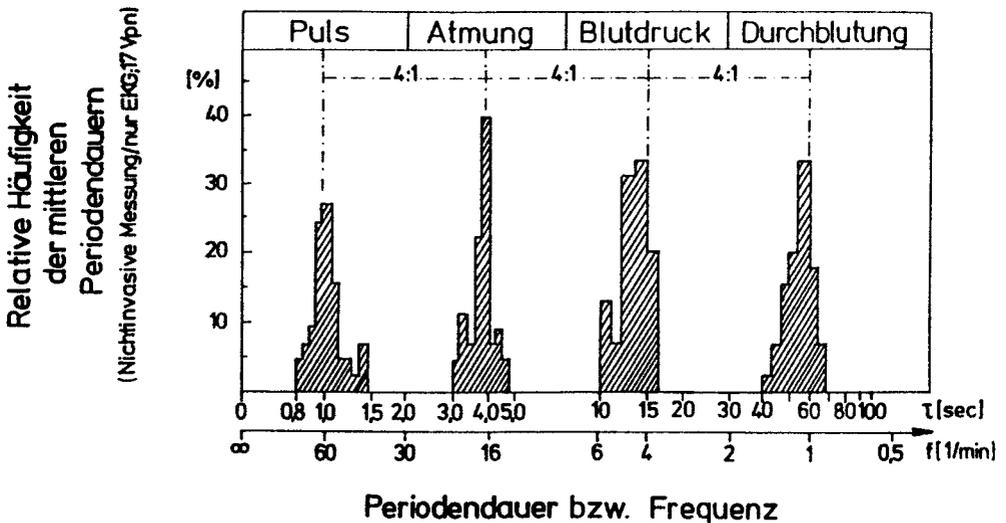


Fig. IV: Four respiration and circulation rhythms during night sleep. At the time of the strongest relaxation the double octaves 4:1 appear. Cycle lengths are shown in seconds, frequencies per minute. (Based on Raschke et al. 1977)

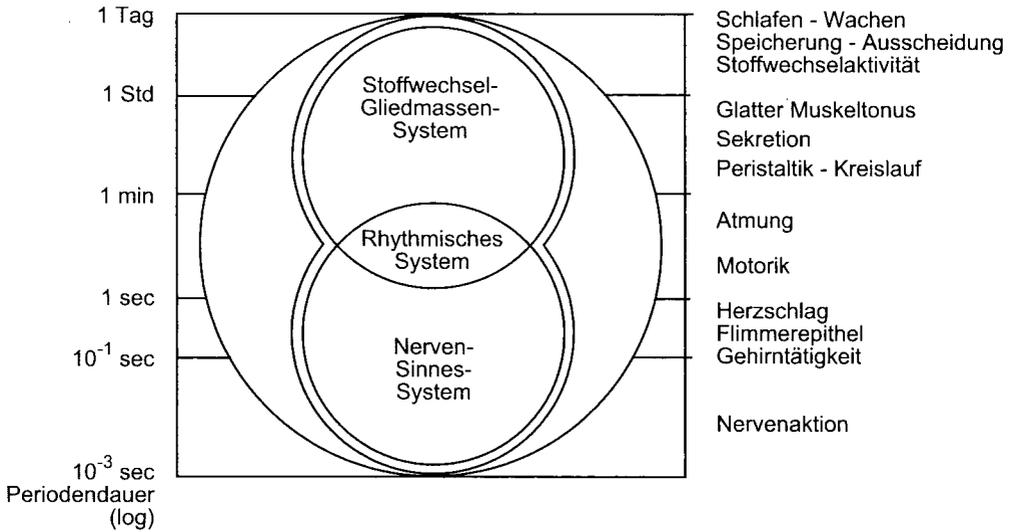


Fig. V: The time order of human physical threefoldness in logarithmic scale. (From: Hildebrandt 1984)

The rhythms of fourfoldness

Much of Hildebrandt's scientific research was based on Rudolf Steiner's lecture of 21 December 1908 ("Rhythms of the human bodies," GA 107, lecture 11), in which he described the rhythms of all levels of the human organization:

- The day/night rhythm of the I.
- The weekly rhythm of the astral body.
- The monthly rhythm of the ether body.
- The yearly rhythm of the physical body.

They are planetary rhythms: the rotation of the earth takes 24 hours, the moon cycle takes a month; the week reflects the four lunar phases, the earth takes a year to move around the sun. The connection with the members of the human organization is noticeable to a varying degree. If you spent a sleepless night or suffer from jetlag, you feel that your I is weakened on the next day. Sleeplessness or somnolence can severely undermine the I's everyday routine. – The lunar rhythm is unconscious. It is the rhythm, for instance, of the unconscious vegetative nervous system, of menstruation, the division of pregnancy in 10 sidereal months (28 days x 10 = 280 days between the last period and the due date), but also of the eye's unconscious sensitivity to colour. It is the rhythm of the ether body.

The weekly rhythm is the one that is most difficult to grasp biologically. For a long time it was seen as a purely cultural rhythm, defined by the creation story in the First Book of Moses. Hildebrandt and his team did, however, find

physical proof of this rhythm. It is not a spontaneous biorhythm that is set off autonomously. It is initiated when the organism suffers from infections, wounds, the loss of blood, fractures etc. The organism responds to such injuries with a healing process that usually has a seven-day rhythm (see Fig. VI).

The physicians of antiquity knew about this. Ingrid Bandt-Reges, one of Hildebrandt's co-workers, put together an overview of the periods of crisis and healing in the works of Hippocrates, Galen and Avicenna (see Fig. VII) that shows the predominance of the weekly rhythm (Hildebrandt, Bandt-Reges 1992).

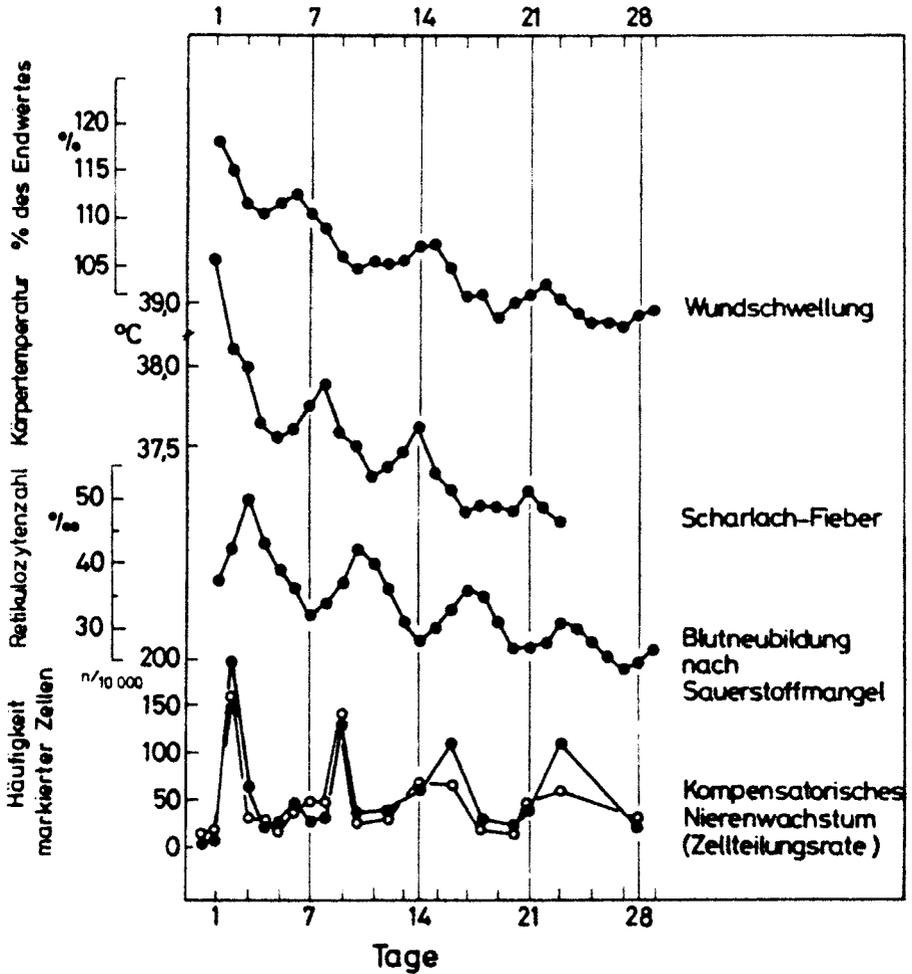


Fig. VI: Examples of weekly (circaseptan) healing processes. (Based on Hildebrandt 1981)

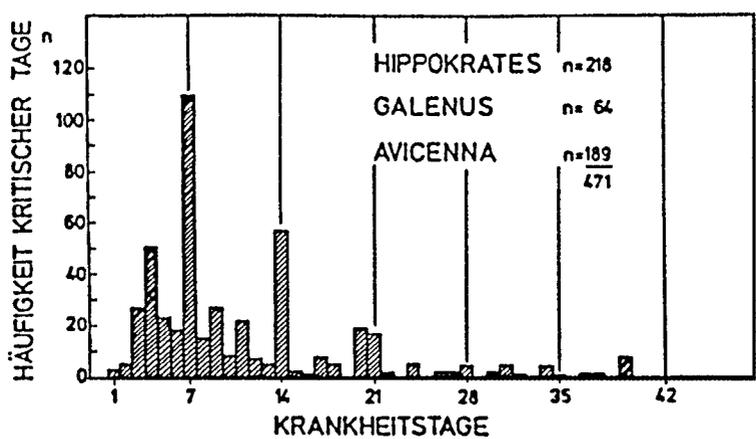
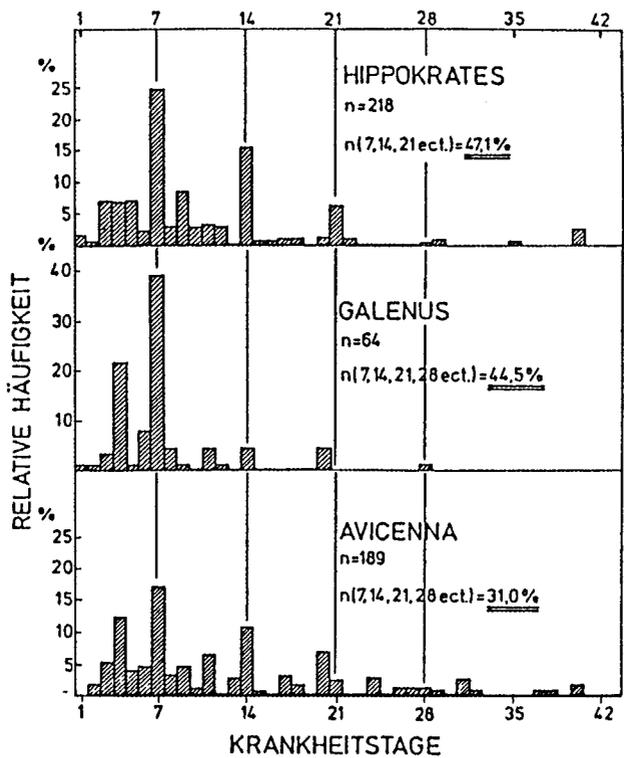


Fig. VII: The frequency of critical illness days that are important for prognosis, according to ancient and medieval physicians. (From: Hildebrandt and Bandt-Reges 1992)

The astral body as such is the ether body's opponent and interferes with it in many ways under normal circumstances. The ether body balances these disturbances through the weekly rhythms. This is why we need the ether body.

According to Rudolf Steiner, the physical body needs a year for its embryonic development because one has to add three months to the nine synodic or lunar months of pregnancy. Physicians refer to this period as the "trimenon". It is the time children take to stabilize physiologically and immunologically after birth. After another earth cycle – that is, a year and three months after birth – the child's milk teeth are fully formed (GA 201, lecture 3). Not all the milk teeth might have come through yet, but the hardest substance of all twenty milk teeth,

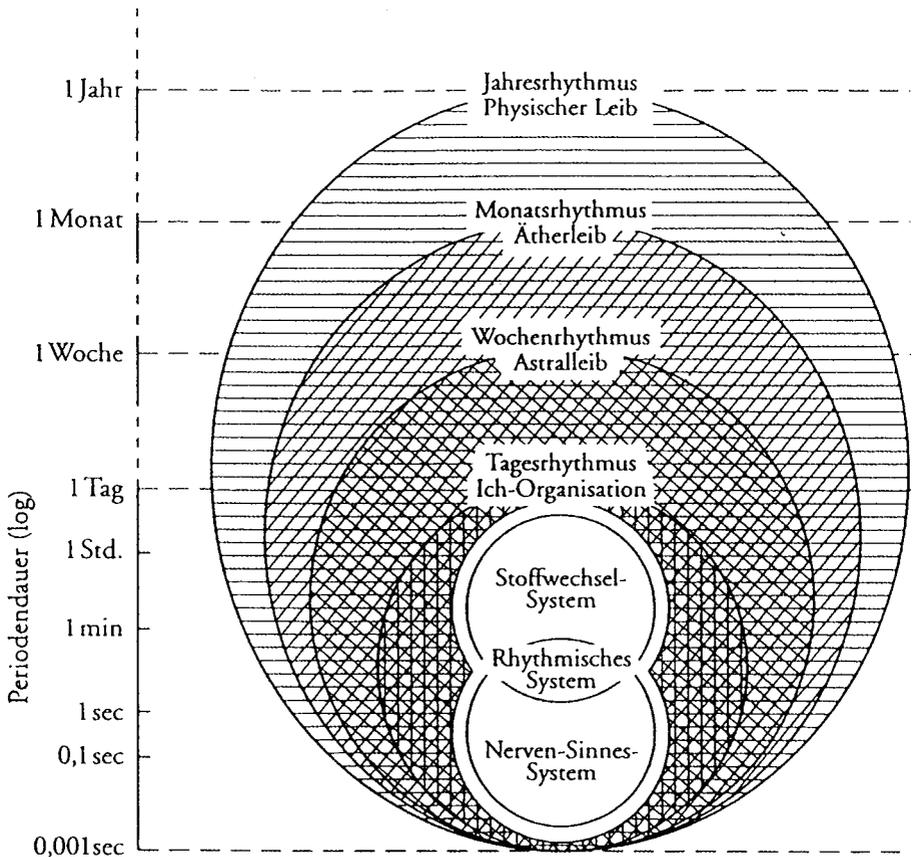


Fig. VIII: The hierarchy of exogenic long-term rhythms and their function as carriers of the endogenic rhythms of the human physical threefoldness. (From Hildebrandt 1984)

the enamel, is complete by then (Schad 1994). Another important step in the physical development of the body has been accomplished.

In 1984/85 Hildebrandt subsumed Steiner's indications and the results of his observations in Figure VIII. For further study we recommend a book for Waldorf teachers by Bernd Rosslenbroich, that will soon be reedited [in German]: *Die rhythmische Organisation des Menschen* (1994), as well as Hildebrandt's synopsis of Steiner's important indications regarding rhythms (1997).

We are human because we have a physical body, life forces, a soul and a spiritual dimension. This needs to be understood as otherwise there can be no education fit for human beings. By getting to know the rhythms of all four levels of existence, we become aware of the validity of considering the daily, weekly, monthly and annual rhythms in education and teaching. How do we recall the lesson contents of the previous day and prepare for the next day? Why does the weekly timetable need to be hygienic? What is the significance of the four-week rhythm in planning main lessons? How do we celebrate the cycle of yearly festivals in the life of the school? We understand better now what we can do and how we can teach more effectively.

Biographical rhythms

When we enter more deeply into the temporal aspects of human threefoldness and fourfoldness over a longer period of time we realize that there are even more long-term rhythms: the biographical stages in a human life or seven-year periods. Curative teachers know very well that the change of teeth, puberty and skeletal maturity (we are fully grown = grown-up) can vary immensely. In a lecture Rudolf Steiner gave in Stockholm (GA 143, 16 April 1912) he pointed out that all children deviate from the seven-year rhythm to a greater or lesser degree. The reason for this is Lucifer's interference with human evolution. This interference is responsible for the differences and the individualization in early childhood, from about the third year (GA 150, 14 March 1913). Steiner said that we cannot rely on the fact that children develop in a strict seven-year rhythm, not even on average. It is nevertheless the best education we can give to children for the whole of their future lives, if we convey to them a seven-year rhythm during childhood and adolescence. It will give them the foundation for the continued realization of their biography. Steiner pointed out that, when writing his essay on the "Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy," he had not had a particular child in mind but the child being as it would have unfolded if Lucifer had not interfered: children would only imitate in the first seven years, be devoted to the beloved authority in the second, live in future ideals during adolescence and not refer to themselves as "I" until the age of 21.

The seven-year rhythm is consequently not a diagnostic result, it is a therapeutic task. It must not remain mere theory but become living – not rigid, beat-like – teaching practice. Education can then support the healing of what Lucifer has disturbed. It is what makes Waldorf teaching a Christian education.

Two and a half years ago we had a pedagogical conference at the Goetheanum. Heiner Ullrich, an opponent of Waldorf education, spoke there about the empirical research of developmental psychology that had come up with quite different stages of child development (the third or ninth year, for instance). Ullrich concluded that Steiner's pedagogy reverted to stale, ancient Greek traditions and was shrouded in numeral mysticism around the number seven. There was no such thing, he said, as developmental laws. The only response from our side was that there might well be developmental laws for children. But the opponent was right. The natural sciences speak of laws when there are no exceptions, otherwise they speak of rules. It was clearly a misunderstanding.

Another, even wider, life rhythm is that of the moon nodes. Rudolf Steiner referred to them only a few times. It is the time when the same constellation of earth, moon and sun appears before the same fixed-star sky as at the time of birth: a rhythm of about 18 and two-third years (6793.39 days). According to Rudolf Steiner, a spiritual window opens for a few nights at those intervals, allowing for new orientation in a person's biography. We experience four or five moon nodes in a lifetime. In 1981 Georg Glöckler established that this rhythm is not identical with the Saros or Metonic cycles, but that it is a moon node cycle or nutation period. Florian Roder provided rich biographical evidence for this in 2005. Rudolf Steiner advised upper school teachers to identify the relevant days or nights of the first moon nodes of their 18-year-old students (usually during class 12) and think more intensely of the student in question during that time. It would be beneficial, he said, if at least one person did this for the adolescent. The young person did not need to know about it because the event took place in deep sleep and not in waking consciousness.

It is therefore not a matter of identifying one's own moon nodes and waiting for some spiritual impact during those nights since this might well lead to a lack of openness and even prevent the event, especially as it takes place in deep sleep. It is obviously important not to focus on oneself, but to think selflessly of others.

There is an even wider cycle: a person's average life expectancy. The life cycle is certainly never beat-like. The span of someone's life is entirely individual.

So we have three biographical cycles that are longer than a year:

- The seven-year period is the rhythm of the body's renewal, as Steiner often pointed out. The question remains as to what he meant by physical, material body substance. Neither the physiologists nor the biochemists have found the answer to this question yet.
- The moon node rhythm enters deeply into the spirituality of sleep, that is, into the ether body which is also a biographical organism.

– A person’s lifespan encompasses their individual soul space and its subsequent development during life after death.

We can add, as the widest rhythm, that of historical evolution which makes each of us part of humanity: the sequence of our repeated earthly lives. All current social problems find their human and social resolution in reincarnation: the decision to interfere with prenatal life, caring for the dying, gender issues, the generational divide, the acceptance of people with disabilities, racial problems (Schad 2005). The latter problem in particular will be resolved once we realize that each of us has, in the course of his or her incarnations, passed through all the races. The “tat vam asi – this is you” applies here, too, as does Goethe’s statement: “Only what bears fruit is true (legacy).

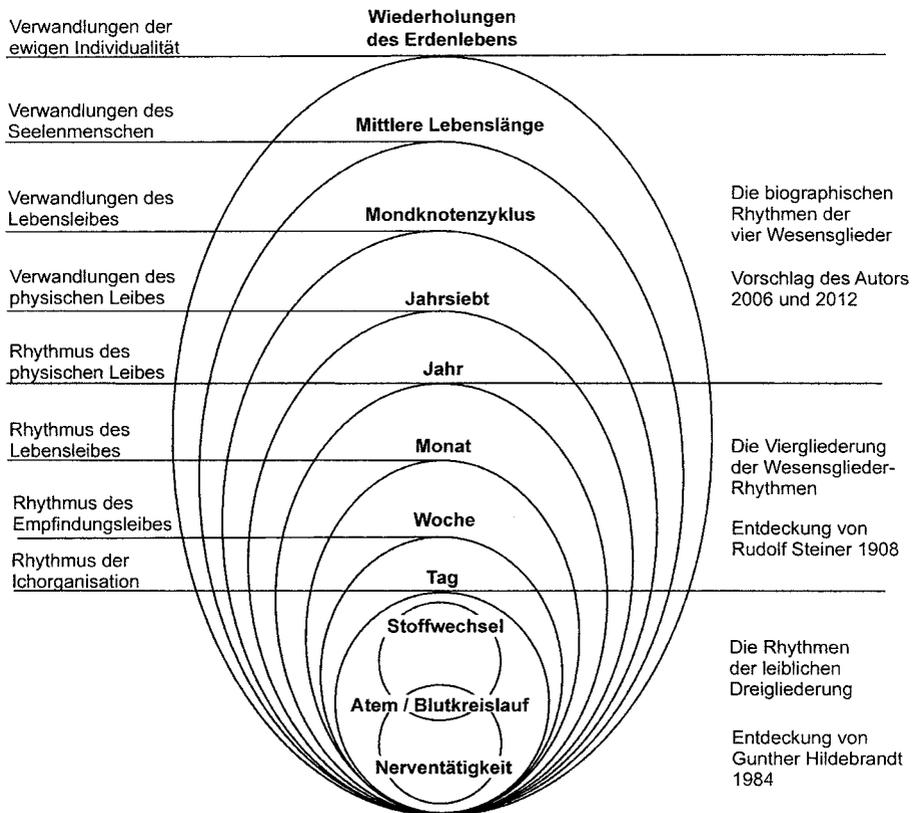


Fig. IX: The entire range of the human time organism. (from Schad 1997, revised)

Rudolf Steiner also referred to a cosmic rhythm: the passing of the sun's vernal equinox through the zodiac, that is, the precession movement during the Platonic cosmic year of ca. 26,000 years. From a Copernican point of view it is the rotation of the earth's axis in the cosmos. Within each zodiac sign – that is in a period of 1,100 years on average, with major individual deviations – the individuality seeks and goes through two incarnations, one male and one female. It is the reincarnation process that makes a healing rhythm possible and therefore allows for the further development of the spiritual human individuality towards ever greater selflessness, because through reincarnation human beings can develop in a way that is appropriate for the spirit. We therefore include this widest of all human rhythms in the synopsis shown in Figure IX.

Conclusion

To end with, I would like to tell you a true story from our education movement. For decades, the Waldorf School in Stuttgart has offered a “Public Summer Week for Teachers” at the beginning of the summer holidays. The event was initiated by Ernst Weissert and often attended by teachers from mainstream schools in search of inspiration. Between the daily lectures and work groups there was always a plenum session for discussion. Every year there would be a particularly challenging question. Here is one such question:

We always thought that individualization is important in Waldorf Schools and that teachers devote much time to the individual child. But in all the lectures and work groups we hear about typologies: the four temperaments, the four members of the human organization, threefoldness, seven-year periods, small- and large-headed children etc. Are you not creating types of children?

Two colleagues would usually volunteer to answer the questions: Ernst-Michael Kranich and Stefan Leber. Mr Kranich put all typologies to one side, emphasizing that the individuality of each child was our primary concern. Stefan Leber would then get up and say: it is not our task to promote the individualization of the young generation, but to lead them, in their great diversity, back into the stream of universal humanity. Only then will they become social beings.

I asked myself then, in the 1970s and 1980s, which side I belonged to. And I realized that I belonged to both sides, consecutively. The one must be the metamorphosis of the other. It is the transformation of one position into the other that is important:

We pick up the children where they are; as the individuals they have increasingly grown into through their karma and in the course of human history. Humankind has become ever more differentiated. That has been Lucifer's gift, beginning with the “Tower of Babel”. Lucifer brings the light of personal freedom. We must not demonize this like churches, creeds, states or other collectives have done for millennia. They did not succeed, on the contrary. We must recognize this destiny of humanity and accept it as a given anthropological

constant. Our individual I brings colour to our life. It is allowed to overestimate itself for a while and see itself as very wise. The higher, true I, is the baby, however, its own eternal child. It becomes aware of this at the threshold to the spiritual world. It needs help from something greater than itself. Education can give this help. The innermost mission of education is to lovingly guide the awakening individuality towards the reunion of all human beings. This is what makes Waldorf education a humane and global education. It wants to re-awaken in human beings a spiritual interest in each other. That is its Christian dimension. It is also what we aim for with this World Teachers' Conference.

Wolfgang Schad
English translation by Margot M. Saar

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On the “seven Years’ Rhythm”

On the ninetieth anniversary of the Waldorf school in 2009 Christof Wiechert published an article in the *Goetheanum*. At the end of this article he directs our focus to the tasks which lie ahead of us in the next ten years, as he envisages them:

- The school movement must find its way forward to a new balance between the impulse and structural forces. The structure is to serve the impulse and not vice versa.
- Classroom teaching habits (we have always done it like that) require examination and probing.
- We need to be conscious of the fact that with Rudolf Steiner’s art of education a paradigm change in education as such has taken place. However, in keeping with the times we live in this is not a given, rather it is realised afresh every day in the classroom. This is the only thing that can give the art of education legitimacy.

If we inquire into our own habits as teachers, then we may well realise that we like to tell parents and one another in the college meetings that the children and adolescents develop according to a seven-year rhythm and we need to take this into account. The following article investigates whether this is so.

In 1907 Rudolf Steiner published his work “The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy” in the journal *Lucifer-Gnosis*. In this description of the nature of the child he sketches the foundations of anthroposophical pedagogy for the first time. In this short work Steiner describes how the human sheaths develop in a seven year rhythm; whereby he mentions two important events, the *change of teeth* and *puberty*. In connection with them he speaks of the birth of the etheric body and the birth of the astral body. Well, there are not only considerable variations from this with individual children, but also with the statistical mean we are confronted with considerable variations in the phenomena themselves.

The statistical mean of the first visible **change of teeth** does not lie around the age of seven, but around 6.3 years (the first molars coming through). “If we understand the change of teeth to mean the formation of the whole set of permanent teeth, whereby the milk teeth are replaced, then this process takes from the sixth till the twentieth (fortieth) year.” (A. Husemann, 1996). However, we can take the change of teeth to mean the development of the crowns, in other words, when the enamel, the hardest substance in the body, is completely formed. At 6.3 years with the first molars coming through, the crowns of the permanent teeth are fully developed. Only the calcium deposit of the crowns of the wisdom teeth is still missing. If we add on to the 6.3 years the nine months of the body’s development that actually takes place during pregnancy, then this pretty much adds up to 7 years.

	Milk teeth	Permanent teeth	Wisdom teeth
Three-dimensional Form	high level of constancy of form, specific to the species	family specific tooth forms, genetically dominated	extremely individual, particular forms relatively common
Timing of the Teeth coming through	constant timing of the coming through within relatively narrow margins hardly any differences between the sexes	increasing variability of teeth's coming through from 1 st to 2 nd period and to 3 rd period pressing ahead with the change of teeth with girls	timing of their coming barely predictable, i.e. very individualised

Even if the time when the wisdom teeth come out can hardly be predicted in the case of actual individuals, nonetheless, there is a main emphasis around the age of 20/21. The change of teeth as an expression of the birth of the etheric body thus becomes apparent at seven as the seven year rhythm with minor reservations. However, the timing becomes more irregular, the older the person becomes. We may observe increasing individualisation.

Puberty does not occur at 14 years, but rather it (first menstruation) occurs with girls nowadays in Central Europe at about 12.3 years (9-17 years); whereas 100 years ago it occurred` at 17-18 years in Northern Europe, at 14-15 years in Central Europe and at 12-13 years in Southern Europe. Thus in the present day we have more Mediterranean conditions. So in Rudolf Steiner's times this was not a homogeneous process.

The maturing of the soul has gone in the opposite direction, for it has slowed down. In 1913 Rudolf Steiner wrote about it in *Occult Science* in the appendix "The Course of Human Life", saying the birth of the astral body does not take place briefly around 14th year, but lasts from 12th till 16th year. In most recent times it has become really obvious. Thus we have the physiological maturity pushed forward to the twelfth year and even further and simultaneously the maturing of the soul extending to class 10. Where is the seven year rhythm in all that?

The developmental psychologists in 20th century cannot find a seven year rhythm either (say Piaget and Kohlhaas).

Then Steiner speaks of the birth of the ego at 21 years. Nowadays the legal age of full criminal responsibility is recognised to be 21 years (in Germany). However, the bulk of the rights you get when you become of age (making contracts, marrying, military service, voting) were moved forward to 18 in 1975. At present it is being debated in the case of the age of full criminal responsibility. In the meantime you can get a driving licence at 17.

appear with healthy adults in sleep, though, because during the day the soul life is constantly altering it. The strict rhythm is only achieved with these organs at night, during the day it is constantly being disturbed and broken up.

Daily Rhythm:

Rhythm of the ego (GA 107):

Not only waking and sleeping pendle in the day and night rhythm, but also the body temperature, the sensitivity to the cold or the blood sugar concentration (basis of our consciousness) show a daily rhythm, like so many other parameters.

Weekly Rhythm:

Rhythm of the astral body:

The swelling of a swollen cheek from dental treatment or from swollen gums recedes in a weekly rhythm. The healing process of infectious diseases reveals a weekly rhythm.

The weekly rhythm is the body's answer to invasive hurts and wounds. The full range of the soul's life is just in itself already traumatic enough for the life body.

The span of the soul's awareness covers roughly a week through its own activity:

3 days of memory, the present day and 3 days of the future.

Monthly Rhythm:

Rhythm of the etheric body:

We can find a classical monthly rhythm with, for instance, the female period or with the due date of the birth after 9 months (10 sidereal months). Convalescence breaks begin to really take effect after 4 weeks. So it is the rhythms of reproduction, of growth and the processes of recovery that have a monthly rhythm.

Yearly Rhythm:

Rhythm of the physical body:

Seasonal illnesses such as influenza also occur in an obvious yearly rhythm. The curve of the death rate also shows a clear yearly rhythm. Train drivers' false reactions are greater in summer than in winter. If we add to the 9 months of pregnancy the first three months of breast feeding, during which the infant receives significant immune protection from the mother through her milk until it develops its own immunity as well, then after 12 months the baby's physical body will be finally independent of the mother's physical body.

Thus we can describe a lot of rhythms and assign them to the influence of the sheaths. We can observe and describe rhythms, which are connected to supersensible members, perfectly well. But then the argument with the seven year rhythm being a matter of a purely supersensible rhythm, which, therefore, cannot be observed physically, falls away. However, what lies behind the seven year rhythm?

Let us return to the text of 1907, mentioned in the beginning. In a lecture held in Stockholm on 16.04.1912 (GA 143) Rudolf Steiner relates that in his booklet "The Education of the Child from the Viewpoint of Spiritual Science" it is not the development of a particular living child that is described. This is how he says it in his own words:

"If we consider various things and view the human being in relation to reality, then it will become apparent to us that, if at a particular point in earth evolution, namely in the Lemurian epoch, only the progressive powers had intervened in human evolution, the individual's overall development in adolescence today would take a quite different course; it would be in step with ego development. At any time the soul development would be exactly in accord with the physical development. Then the human being could not possibly have developed otherwise than the way it is called for today in, for example, my short text 'The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy'. If in those times only the progressive powers had been at work, then that would have had the bizarre result that in the first twenty years of their lives people would have become much less independent than they are now. This lack of independence is not meant in the usual sense, it is meant in such a way that actually every one of you would be very much in agreement with this lack of independence. For in the first seven years human nature is set up purely for imitation. Since people as adults would not do anything shameful, if only the progressive powers in Lemurian times had been active, then children would not be able to imitate anything bad from their first to their seventh year. In the second period of seven years the principle of authority would prevail, whereas nowadays it is becoming not merely a pest that individuals want to become independent between their seventh and fourteenth years. Indeed they are being brought up to form independent judgements. Adults would be unquestionable authorities for the children. From their fourteenth to twenty first year the individuals would have looked far less inwardly in at themselves, they would have directed themselves to the outside world. The power of ideals, the power of living into their life dreams, would have become immensely significant for them. Life dreams would spring from the person's heart, and then full ego consciousness have emerged in his or her twentieth or twenty first year. Thus in the first seven years of life the period of imitation would occur, then in the second seven years of life the period of looking up to authority, then in the third seven years of life the sprouting of ideals, which would lead man to his full ego consciousness. In the course of time man has been thrown off this

path of evolution by the total of those forces at work in evolution, called the Luciferic forces. Since Lemurian times they have torn the human ego consciousness away from its bedrock of its bodily constitution. The fact that we have an ego consciousness at the most tender age can be put down to the influence of the Luciferic forces.”

Who is it that Steiner describes in his text? The development of a child is described as if it took place without the intervention of the Luciferic forces. Such a development is the ideal of Waldorf education. It is not an account of how the human being is, but rather of the way the powers that brought about mankind wanted the human being to be. However, this has not been realised in the evolution of mankind. Through the intervention of the Luciferic forces in human evolution it took a different course. The consequence was that the individual developed ego consciousness much earlier, and not at twenty one. None of us knows a child who follows this description. For then there would not be any problems in education!

- Do children imitate everything that is good in the first seven years? Definitely not always!
- Are adults constantly natural authorities in the second period of seven years? Certainly not!
- Do our upper school pupils have only an idealistic interest in the world until they are 21?

Only really in secret!

Steiner points out to us that we are not entitled to expect that the seven year rhythm is a self-fulfilling rhythm, which we could see in the child in every case. This is something we have usually just overlooked. A seven year rhythm is not simply a fact to be diagnosed. By deviating from the seven year rhythm the child shows its individual development, connected with its karma. With each child we cannot do better than offer him or her the seven year rhythm as a help for his or her life. Then it can link up again with the archetype of mankind. The seven year rhythm is not a diagnostic reality, but rather a therapeutic-educational task. We cannot expect that a child only imitates in the first seven years. Also ‘authority’ in the lower and middle school and the ‘idealistic interest in the world’ in adolescence do not just become realities as a matter of course, but they are an educational task:

- What can we do so that the child can imitate in the first seven year period for as long as possible?
- What are the conditions required in order for the children to want to seek the authorship of the teacher themselves, which is what is meant by authority?
- What can the upper school teachers do so that the adolescents are able to develop an idealistic interest in the world and to live it in the third seven year period?

What happens when the child reconnects with the seven year rhythm? Wolfgang Schad expressed it like this, “But if a connection can be re-established with the seven year rhythm through the help of the adults educating the young person, then the individual destiny can connect with the thing that connects all human beings with one another: with their humanity If we lead the children entrusted to us back to the seven year rhythm, then we will help them to overcome the counter-forces working against everything human.”

Now Rudolf Steiner goes on to relate that we need to reckon with the fact that the inner impulses of development in the early years of life up to the change of teeth are different from those in the subsequent period up to puberty, followed by different ones again. Even in the second half of life the individual goes through processes of development. “... *then the forces must be developed in him during his school time, which can only become strong in this period, so that they cannot be broken down again by later life.*” He then continues, “*And what we have been through in the time between the change of teeth and puberty, appears somewhat earlier on, in our forties.*” (Steiner, R., GA 192, p. 195). And a little earlier in the same lecture he speaks about the faculties that emerge, “*Yet there awakens the faculty of love in the social realm, without which there are not any social institutions in the world. It awakens only on the basis of the healthy nature of authority between the change of teeth and puberty.*” (Steiner, R., GA 192, p. 194).

Rudolf Steiner draws our attention to the fact that essentially during the class teacher period forces must be developed, which we can only develop at this time and which, in later phases of life, roughly in our forties, would be available to us as socially active love.

Where do the problems mainly arise in the present? Where the seven year rhythm goes adrift:

At the transition kindergarten/school
At the transition middle school/upper school
At the transition upper school/vocational life

Nowadays in numerous countries in the world we have Waldorf schools with very different requirements according to the state regulations. This also applies within a country such as Germany, because each Regional Ministry of Education finds different criteria on how the schools have to be. So schools are always under the duress of having to take account of these requirements and of making them compatible with their own ideals. Seeing the seven year rhythm as a task can be such a help with organising schools. Then development can be supported in a meaningful way, no matter how the school is outwardly organised.

Dr. Albrecht Schad

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Yes and No, Please and Thank You in a Foreign Language Or The Role of Culture in Language

In the forum of education today, throughout the world, we are experiencing an unprecedented meeting of languages and cultures. This makes a new demand on teachers of foreign languages to bring a lively and authentic experience of these languages in the classrooms. This will play a vital role in deepening our understanding of different cultures and in building qualities of tolerance and acceptance.

In the foreign language lesson in South Africa, it is not a foreign language that is taught. It is one of the languages spoken in the country. It is becoming increasingly clear to teachers that the presentation of the lessons in these languages must be far more intimately connected to the culture so that children can find their way to bridging the communication gaps.

Communication involves culture and teachers are finding that they cannot ensure full communication skills by only teaching the language. Simply to teach children to say please and thank you is not enough. The differences in the way various cultures thank and ask, once they are understood, are enough to stop us in our tracks. It is not the words, but where they are applied and when.

Please and thank you messages comprise a small example of the wasteland of failed communication that occurs when very different cultures meet. Apology is another one. In one culture apology may be seen as an indication of maturity and self-development. In another it may indicate insincerity. The challenge for the teacher is to provide a vigorous interface between the cultures in the classroom, so that there is lively discussion and debate about the differences. In schools where these cultural differences occur in the teaching body as well, this kind of discussion is just as important in the staffroom.

Looking someone in the eye is a powerful communication. This too has many different meanings. In some cultures it may be inappropriate to do this in certain circumstances. In others it may be interpreted as rudeness to avoid this. Often the words themselves are only part of the meaning and there are customary gestures, which add levels of meaning. Much animated and sometimes humorous discussion happens in the classroom when the teacher asks the group to communicate in gestures as well as words. Dealing with these aspects of language in the classroom brings a shared understanding of the differences and helps to reduce racial intolerance.

In South Africa, as in many other countries, urban migration has created large shantytowns close to the major cities. Here, an urban culture emerges that responds to a new high density living environment for many poorer South Africans, whose roots are in the rural villages. Teachers are finding that city children do not know their own cultural practices and traditions. Such practices remain intact in the villages of origin of their parents but do not form a strong part of their lives in the cities. Unless children regularly visit these villages with their parents they know about the practices more by hearsay, than by the penetrated experience of fully participating in the rituals and traditions. So teachers have to find a way to bring these cultural experiences alive in the school.

Recently the staff of one of the schools where the children are predominantly Xhosa speakers, cast about for an appropriate Michaelmas story. They decided on a very simple story line about a young girl who went back to her parents' village in the Eastern Cape. Being a stranger from the city she was initially not accepted by the village girls but one day they called her over and included her in the practice of an established village tradition. The language teacher told the story in both English and Xhosa and the children took on the characters and mimed the action. It was heart warming to see the delight of the parents as their children mimed the secret preparations of the girls who stole off into the forest to cut wood. Then they undressed and revealed their traditional skirts and jewellery and placed the bundles of wood on their heads. The girls had selected an old couple who could not cut their own wood for the winter. They came singing into the village carrying the wood as their gift, which they laid at the feet of the surprised and delighted old couple. The words of the old grandmother brought the story to an end. "The stars in the sky, they shine down on us tonight and they bring light to all men. You young girls are like the stars in the heavens and you bring light to our village.

The parents were grateful for the reawakening of their own culture that they saw taking place in this simple festival. It is in this deeper penetration of the culture that we can begin to work with the spirit of the language and the folk soul of the people.

With the spread of Waldorf education into Asia and into the countries of the southern hemisphere the way the foreign or second language is taught will become more critical. There is a new demand to re-look at Steiner's guidance and inspiration so that we can respond appropriately to the sometimes overwhelming meeting of cultures we encounter in Waldorf schools today. The upcoming World Foreign Language Teachers Conference in Dornach (April 1-6, 2013), will offer a unique opportunity for language teachers from all over the world to undertake this project together.

Louisa Oberholzer

Agenda

Forthcoming Pedagogical Section Conferences and Events at the Goetheanum, 2012

2012

October 19 – 21, 2012

Pädagogische Tagung zum Thema:
Künstlerischer Unterricht als Resonanz-
boden für das Ich – vom Wesen des Kindes
und Jugendlichen zwischen Vergangenem
und Zukünftigen
(will not take place)

October 28 – 30, 2012

Conference for Extra Lesson (in German)

2013

January 18 – 19, 2013

Conference for Swiss Teachers
(in German and French)

February 15 – 17, 2013

Meditative Practice (in German)

April 1 – 6, 2013

International Conference for Foreign
Languages