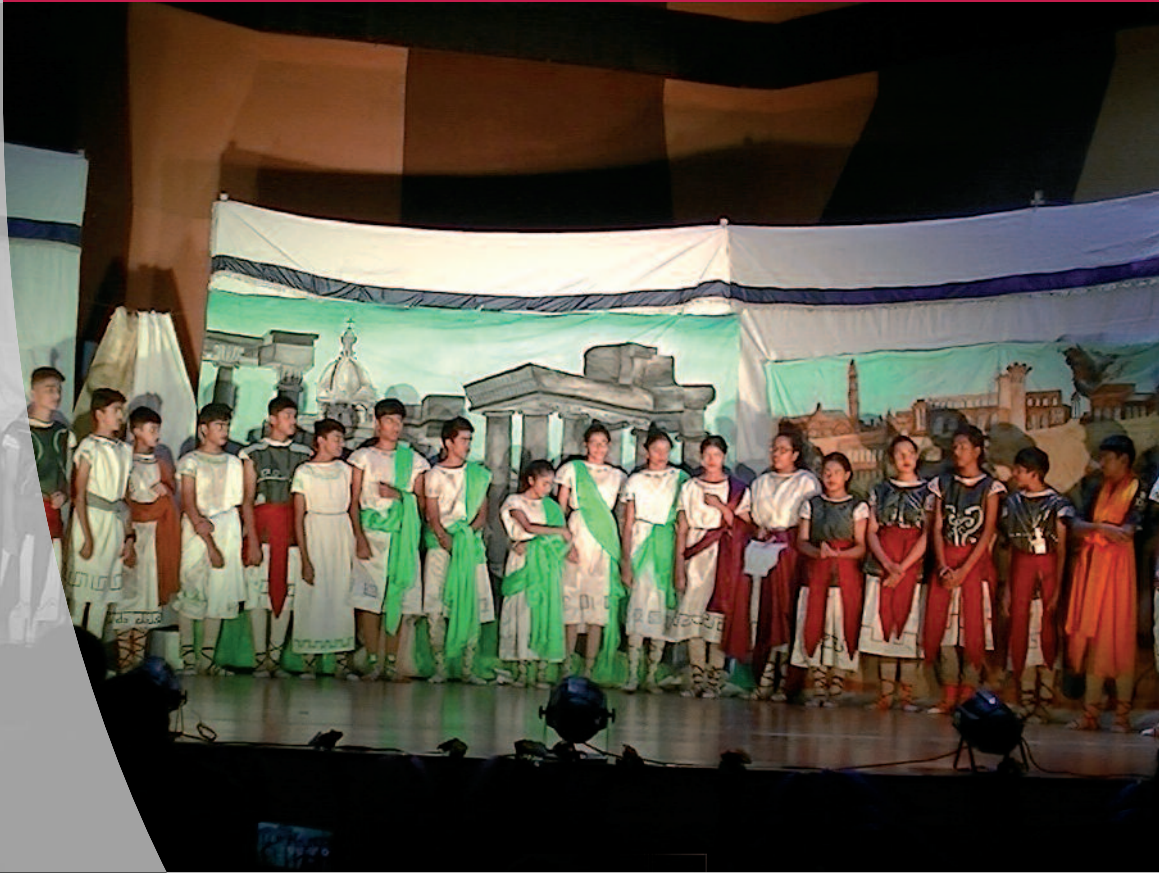




Pedagogical Section  
at the Goetheanum

# Journal



Easter 2018, No. 63

## The Journal of the Pedagogical Section

**Publisher:** Pädagogische Sektion am Goetheanum  
Postfach, CH-4143 Dornach 1  
Tel.: 0041 61 706 43 15  
Tel.: 0041 61 706 43 73  
Fax: 0041 61 706 44 74  
E-Mail: [paed.sektion@goetheanum.ch](mailto:paed.sektion@goetheanum.ch)  
Homepage: [www.paedagogik-goetheanum.ch](http://www.paedagogik-goetheanum.ch)

**Editors:** Florian Osswald, Dorothee Prange, Claus-Peter Röh

**Correction:** Angela Wesser

**Cover picture:** Grade 8 of Sloka Waldorf School in Hyderabad/India

## How To Make a Donation to the Pedagogical Section suggested contribution: 30 Swiss Francs or 30 Euro:

**International accounts:** General Anthroposophical Society  
4143 Dornach, Switzerland

**EUR account in Switzerland** IBAN CH37 8093 9000 0010 0605 3  
Raiffeisenbank Dornach, CH-4143 Dornach  
BIC RAIFCH22  
**Marked: 1060**

**USD account** General Anthroposophical Society  
CH-4143 Dornach, Switzerland  
IBAN CH48 8093 9000 0010 0604 9  
Raiffeisenbank Dornach, CH-4143 Dornach  
BIC RAIFCH22  
**Marked: 1060**

**GBP account** General Anthroposophical Society  
CH-4143 Dornach, Switzerland  
IBAN CH77 8093 9000 0010 0601 2  
Raiffeisenbank Dornach, CH-4143 Dornach  
BIC RAIFCH22  
**Marked: 1060**

**From Germany:** Freunde der Erziehungskunst e.V.  
Postbank Stuttgart  
Account No.: 398 007 04  
BLZ: 600 100 70  
**Marked: Pedagogical Section, Journal**

---

## Index

3	Foreword	<i>Dorothee Prange</i>
5	Finding a Common Language – Educating the Educator	<i>Florian Osswald (on behalf of the project team)</i>
8	Focus on the Middle School – How do Methodological Approaches Arise from the Anthroposophical Understanding of the Human Being? Part 1	<i>Claus-Peter Röh</i>
13	Founding Impulses and the Future of the Waldorf School	<i>Albrecht Schad</i>
20	'Rudolf Steiner, College Meetings with the Teachers of the Independent Stuttgart Waldorf School'	<i>Christof Wiechert</i>
23	The International Forum: How to Support the Vitality in Waldorf Education	<i>James Pewtherer</i>
27	Julius Caesar – An Experience That Taught Us All	<i>Jyotsna Patnaik</i>
29	The Waldorf Expert Service (WES)	<i>Ernst-Christian Demisch</i>
31	Agenda	



## Foreword

*Dear Colleagues,*

Blossoms are starting to bloom in various colours in our newly designed interior courtyard which we are able to enjoy from inside the Pedagogical Section. The plants are presenting buds and young green leaves, and the sun rises high enough to shine on our heads again. What joy! Daylight is returning by degrees, spring is coming to the Northern Hemisphere!

How does Goethe portray an Easter walk in 'Faust'?

From the ice they are freed, the stream and brook,  
By the Spring's enlivening, lovely look;  
The valley is green with joys of hope;  
The Winter old and weak ascends  
Back to the rugged mountain slope.  
From there, as he flees, he downward sends  
An impotent shower of icy hail  
Streaking over the verdant vale.  
Ah! but the Sun will suffer no white,  
Growth and formation stir everywhere,  
'Twould fain with colours make all things bright,  
Though in the landscape no blossoms are yet there.  
Instead it takes humans decked out in bright gear.

While I joyfully write about the arrival of spring, I am reading these lines by Goethe and thinking about our worldwide school movement which has spread over the past 100 years and is still spreading across all continents. I am also thinking about the next 100 years.

Emil Molt asked Rudolf Steiner a question, and this gave rise to a completely new pedagogy.

In his article, Albrecht Schad looks back on the founding impulses back in 1919, the first courses, the lectures on pedagogy and the ensuing challenges. Christof Wiechert, commissioned to work on a revision of Rudolf Steiner's conferences with the teachers of the Freie Waldorfschule Stuttgart, is presenting this task and explaining what steps he took towards its realisation. We may ask ourselves how we transform these principles in our everyday practice. Are we working with the principles or do we have fixed concepts for each grade? Or, speaking in the mood of the Easter walk: have we become rigid in our actions or is our noble, enlivening gaze always on the children, the surroundings, the needs of our times? Are we approaching the future and all new things with hope? What is it that wants to be renewed? This also concerns the questions of teacher training. All these issues are addressed in a project, which takes into consideration the results from many conferences on this theme worldwide, and is presented in an article by Florian Osswald. Claus-Peter Röh looks at questions in the middle school. Education and striving and many new colours are needed here. Which seeds must be tended or re-sown to create blossoms and light and to engender joy to watch these blossoms, bind them into bouquets and receive new seeds? How do we meet the pupils and help them develop through the storms of puberty, and to mature into independent individuals in the upper school, who will then find their way out into the world, even though we have no concept of what that world will look like?

James Pewtherer gives a report of our last meeting of the International Forum in Dornach.

There are many colleagues now who have finished their work in the classroom but are happy to continue their pedagogical work in one way or another. This has led to a so-called Waldorf Expert Service which can be approached for help where this is needed or meaningful. Ernst-Christian Demisch of the Witten-Annen Institute has written an article inviting you to follow his example.

And last but not least, we have again provided an article from a classroom.

Jyotsna Patnaik writes about the experiences she and her Class 8 had when they put on a class play in Hyderabad in India.

We hope that with these articles we are able to bring some inspiration to your work, be it with pupils, colleagues or parents, and we would like to thank you for reading the journal.

We would also like to use this opportunity to thank you very warmly indeed for the many cards and good thoughts which we received at Christmas and New Year from all around the world. Our table and the computer were filled with beautiful pictures and words. Thank you also very much for the donations, large and small, given to us in 2017. We do really appreciate these gifts sent to support our tasks as well as the journal. You are a great help!

Many good wishes for your work. We wish you joy in the great task of accompanying the development of children and young people in both kindergartens and schools, as well as adults in adult education and teacher training.

Thank you all, and best wishes,

*The Pedagogical Section*

## Finding a Common Language – Educating the Educator

*Florian Osswald (on behalf of the project team)*

*Translated by Karin Smith*

A number of lecturers based at the Waldorf Teacher Education Centres Johannesburg, Chengdu, Buenos Aires, San Francisco and Hyderabad took part in regional meetings before February 2018 as part of the project "Teacher Education".

The project team "Teacher Education" met in January 2018 to work through the comprehensive papers drafted at the various regional meetings.

The team members are Aina Assland (Norway), Neil Boland (Australia and New Zealand), Jon McAlice (USA), Trevor Mephram (UK), Carlo Willmann (Austria), Claus-Peter Röh and Florian Osswald (Pedagogical Section).

The team has tried to find a common language for the issues expressed in the regional meetings. It has tried to answer the following question: "Are there any common areas for development among the Teacher Education Centres worldwide?"

The team has found the following common areas for development which have been independently identified in every regional meeting:

The areas "Finances", "Recognition of Degrees" and "Basic Knowledge and Language" are fundamental for the design of study programs. Increasingly, it can no longer be taken for granted that people entering teacher education programs everywhere bring with them some basic knowledge. The finances are also an important issue. Further, each centre will have to answer the questions around the

formal recognition of degrees according to their own legal and cultural background.

The project team is working on drafting a description of each of the eight areas of development by the end of March 2018. The descriptions will then be sent to the centres for consultation. The central questions are:

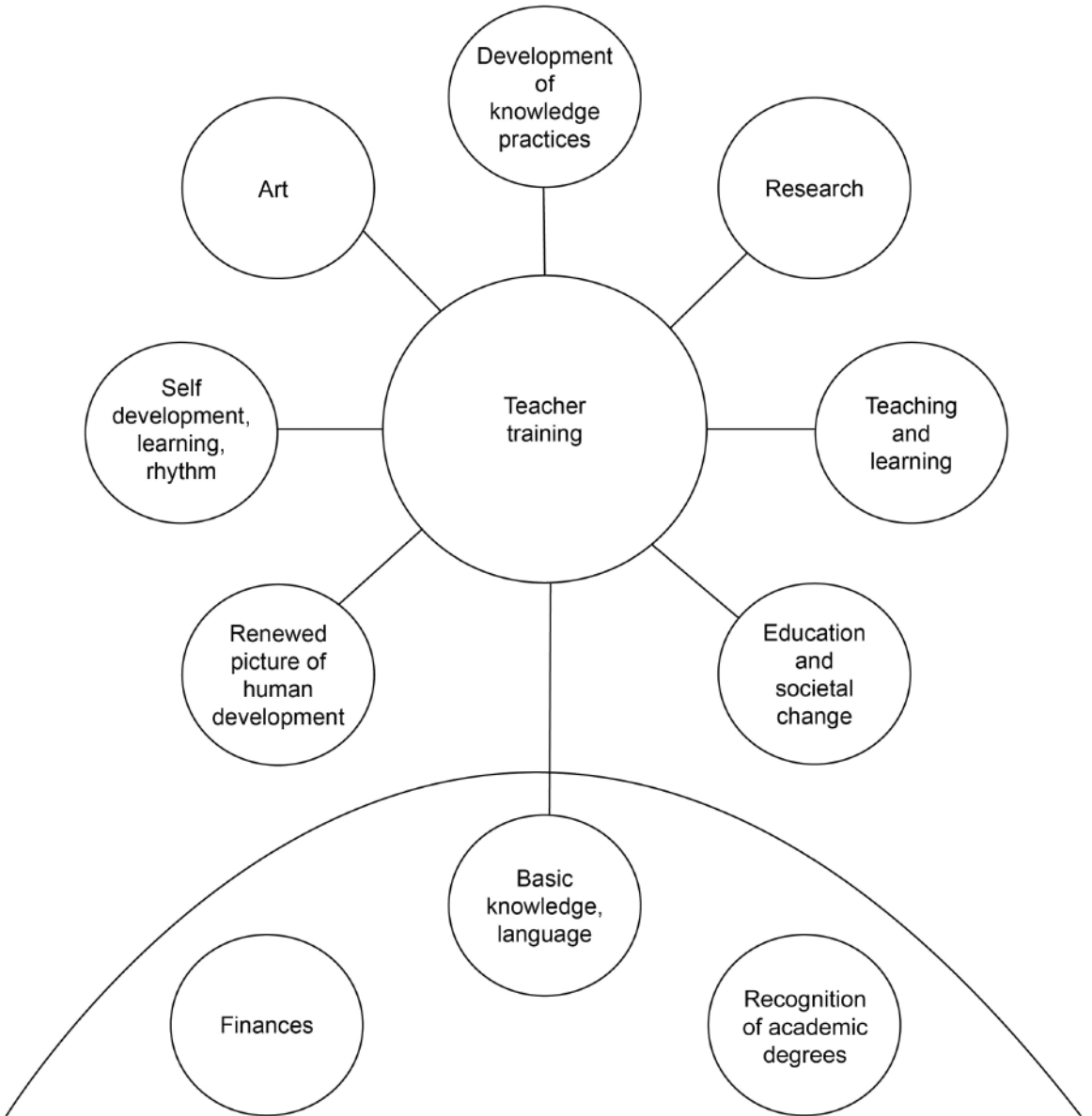
- Are the descriptions of the areas of development appropriate?
- Are there any important areas missing?

In many regions, the regular cooperation of teacher educators has only just begun. In other areas, there are already some well-established forms of cooperation. This leads us to the next question:

- How do the various regions establish regular cooperation?

There are already quite a number of cases of successful regional cooperation, such as in Brazil, Argentina (high school), North America or the European Network of Academic Steiner Teacher Education (ENASTE) in Europe. However, there is often a lack of information about the other regions. As a next step, we are organising trans-regional meetings and are establishing a network of teacher education centres.

As soon as we have agreed on a common basis in connection with the areas of development, we will tackle the processes: How do we intend to achieve the goals which shape the areas of development? It is important to be aware of the differences between the various



goals. Research goals are achieved by different means, for example, those of self-development. To begin with, each centre has to describe the processes in accordance with their individual circumstances. However, some uni-

versal steps within the processes will be identified. Describing these universal patterns to assist the centres will be one of the project team's further tasks and will be the main focus of their meeting in November 2018.



We hope that as many teacher education centres as possible are discussing the draft of March 15<sup>th</sup> and are sending their thoughts back to the Pedagogical Section. The more comments that are sent to us, the richer the areas for development will become.

We are aware that many centres already work with a detailed program of study which addresses every aspect of teacher education, including finances. Steiner's pedagogical impulse has inspired a variety of initiatives. How does this impulse live in the various practical applications?

In conclusion, we would like to emphasise the aims of the project once more: Its aim is to encourage and strengthen the cooperation between Waldorf Teacher Education Centres in order to establish a network between them.

For many issues mutual help between the centres is possible, but they need to know of each other first.

In the next journal we will report again on the project.

## Focus on the Middle School – How do Methodological Approaches arise from the Anthroposophical Understanding of the Human Being? Part 1

Claus-Peter Röh

translated by Christian von Arnim

As it approaches its anniversary, Waldorf education faces existential questions: what are the inner and outer impulses with which this school movement approaches the next hundred years? In what way does the original spiritual impulse live in the reality of school today? And where are its vitality, figurative nature and power of imagination placed at risk in the encounter with normative learning systems and programmes?

"In 1922, in his lectures to the younger generation after three years of school practice, Steiner said: *'Waldorf education is not a system of education at all, but an art to awaken that which exists in the human being.'*"<sup>1</sup> Have we in the school movement after 99 years of development built up the capacity for self-criticism in such a way that we can describe the boundary between such awakening of what is individually human in lessons and the application of more general learning programmes?

### Setting the Educational Course in the Middle School

The "interfaces" of our holistic form of school in particular reveal the tension between the influences of external standardisation and inner measures developed with the young people themselves in mind. Alongside questions about the school enrolment age and the period of the final exams, it is particularly the

Middle School in the transition from childhood to adolescence in the Upper School which is an important and necessary, but also sensitive interface. In the initiative group of the International Forum on education in the Middle School, colleagues from different countries described the challenges of this period of transition in the following words:

1. It is a developmental phase "in between the forces": vulnerable, sensitive, always "searching for something".
2. If the educational background of this developmental period is unclear, colleagues feel "unsettled" in the face of the great transformations.
3. Insecurity, expectations and demands can turn into a feeling of being under pressure: pressure from pupils, parents, colleagues.
4. Reactions vary: some teachers now "keep hammering at" the upcoming content to be seen to be doing the right thing. Others fall back on what has proved itself previously.
5. If the power of judgement is demanded with too much intensity, pupils can become "too old" too quickly. If childlike playfulness is continued for too long, the pupils remain "too young" for too long.

---

1 Rudolf Steiner, *Pädagogischer Jugendkurs*, 4 October 1922, p. 30. Published in English as *Becoming the Archangel Michael's Companions. Rudolf Steiner's Challenge to the Younger Generation*, SteinerBooks, 2006.

Even these few descriptions show the dramatic nature of this age. The great transformation in the development of the pupils demands a fundamental transformation of the lesson. The customary and familiar provides less and less support and every new methodological step means setting a specific course: the pivotal force between too early/too late, too firm/too easy and too standardised/too playful can only reside in the inner space of freedom of the teacher's personality. Thus in this period of change in particular, the connection between the quality of the image of the human being which the teacher carries within themselves and the steps applied in the lesson can be experienced at an existential level: access through the anthroposophical understanding of the human being to a comprehension of the pupils at this age becomes a guide and the basis of decision-making with regard to teaching methodology.

In this context we will look at what follows the birth of the astral body in the middle school period from two different perspectives in order thereby to develop questions about methodology.

### **What does the astral body do before it is born?**

In a Class 7/8 we can experience the different and individual way in which the significant event, which we call the "birth of the astral body", takes place. It is possible, for example, that a girl who is among the older children in the class and has reached a certain maturity transforms herself in a teaching situation with a mighty jolt: her work rhythm which had supported her learning for many years – also for the benefit of the whole class – falls apart one morning with apparent sudden-

ness. In tears she tries to explain to her friend that she can no longer paint as she used to and no longer wants to. Nothing her fellow pupils, the teacher or her parents say can ease the pain of this inner fracture on the way to something new.

From this moment on she faces the world and also herself in a different way: what she previously accepted with joy and wonder is now questioned in a more serious and profound way. Other children, including many boys, pass through this inner fracture to a new development in a lengthy and often silent manner. In lessons, this can be noticed in the more questioning looks, the loss of the lightness of childhood in their movements, and gradually also in the nature of their questions and writing.

These signals indicate how much the personality of the pupil is transformed with the birth of the astral body. What does the astral body do *before* its "birth"?

Whereas the etheric formative forces are transformed on the eruption of the permanent teeth into the forces of learning and memory, the astral body is highly active in a different way in the years of school up to puberty: in all rhythmical experiences, in everything they hear, in making music, singing and speaking the child is thoroughly supported by the differentiating flexibility and mobility of the astral body. The astral body is the musician in the children. If it now begins to be released as described, the inner soul aspect is, we might say, "thrown out" into the world. Thus Steiner writes: "*With puberty, the human being is thrown out of the spiritual and soul life of the world and thrown into the external world ...*"<sup>2</sup>

2 Rudolf Steiner, *Die gesunde Entwicklung des Menschenwesens*, GA 303, p. 238. Published in English as *Soul Economy. Body, Soul, and Spirit in Waldorf Education*, SteinerBooks, 2003.

What was assimilated during the early years of school with a child's joy and devotion to music and rhythm, now has to be newly acquired by their own strength and effort. No wonder that the pupils at this age live in constant tension between being thrown out into the world and their inner emotional life and its search for orientation.

The growing power of thought and judgement which can provide orientation and support in this conflict now becomes very important. With regard to teaching methodology, this leads to the challenge to connect with the pupils' experience of the world and themselves on the one hand, and to open up conceptual connections on the basis of this experience on the other. In the context of the progression from "conclusion via judgement to concept" as set out in the ninth lecture of *The Foundations of Human Experience*, the experiences in physics and chemistry for example lead from the observational experience of the phenomena – the released astral body is an alert, active observer – through a description of what has been experienced to the identification of laws.

### **Etheric Heart and Astral Body as an Organ of the Middle**

A completely different perspective on this period of the Middle School arises when we look at the connection of etheric and astral forces in the human heart. In the volume *The Human Soul in Relation to World Evolution*,<sup>3</sup> Steiner describes the etheric and astral development of the school child above all as a transformation of their very own heart forces. He begins by describing the incremental individualisation of the etheric forces:

- On the way to birth, the unborn human being attracts the cosmic etheric forces to themselves. These forces help to form the body after conception.
- In the first seven-year period, these etheric "stellar forces" surround the child as they grow up in imitation.
- From the time of the eruption of the permanent teeth, these stellar forces from around the child radiate into their interior with all the child's individual learning, experiences and activities.
- With puberty, these etheric forces are concentrated in the heart.
- If the development of this, their own "etheric heart", is successful, the first, the inherited or "substitute" heart dissolves.

The educational importance of the individual development of the heart organ can be described in that it becomes a kind of new organ of the young person for the affiliation of their own being with the surrounding world as a whole. Just as this relationship echoes in the second morning verse, "*I look into the world, in which the sun is shining, ...*", so the individual etheric heart, developed over the years, becomes an organ of perception for this affinity.

The development of the astral body is directly connected with this etheric formative process: the former does not have its sources in the cosmic ether but carries everything within it which the developing human being brings along into life as abilities, qualities and goals. In this way, at the beginning of life, this astral body is still full of a wealth of

---

3 R. Steiner, *The Human Soul in Relation to World Evolution*, Spring Valley: Anthroposophic Press, 1984 (in German: GA 212).

individual things it has brought along. In the course of the years of childhood, growth and schooling, this wealth of aptitudes then moves down in the course of daily life, learning and work into the growth of the body, into acquired learning and skills. From a teacher's perspective, we then sometimes stand before the personality of a pupil and are amazed at what they have brought along into life. Or we ask: what other aptitudes still await to be developed?

On the path of incorporating the "old" aptitudes we have brought along, something completely new occurs at the same time: every movement made, every action of the young person is inscribed into the astral body from childhood onwards. Thus the astral body becomes an organ in which all the acts of will are collected and which becomes increasingly inwardly concentrated. During the time of the Middle School and puberty, this organ is consolidated specifically in the region of the heart and ultimately coincides with the etheric heart. This congruence is described by Steiner in the following words: *"Thus, from puberty a central organ is created wherein all our doing, all our human activity is centred. In the same region where the human being has their heart the sum total of all their activity is centralised, but in this case neither physically nor etherically, but astrally. The significant thing is that at the onset of puberty, [...] the human being's etheric heart is so prepared that it can take into itself the forces which develop from our activity in the external world."*<sup>4</sup>

This special constellation of the heart's connection with the world, the orientation towards the action of the central astral organ of the will, and the beginnings of judgement in thinking opens a special gateway of des-

tiny in the biography. It can be impressively experienced in the pupils of Class 8 in their profound questions, in the transformation of their fields of interest, and in the way they reflect on ideals.

### **Perspectives of Teaching Methodology in the Middle School**

If we combine the constellation of this central organ, as discussed, with the birth of the astral body as described at the beginning, the nature of the pupils' openness towards and connection with the world in this developmental phase is revealed:

- With the release of the astral body, the young person existentially rediscovers themselves in their experience of the ebb and flow of external world events. They receive a first new foothold in their growing ability to think and form judgements.
- In the very individual vitality of their heart, developed out of their own biography, they can encounter the world in deep inwardness.
- Through this central astral organ they are profoundly connected both with the world and their innermost experience in every action and deed of their own.

If in Waldorf education we take the child's experience at their respective stage of development as a guide with regard to teaching and education, the characteristics we have just described will lead to questions of methodology: how can we accommodate the profound desire for the experience of, encounter with and understanding of the world in the lessons of the Middle School? How can we encourage to an even greater extent the

<sup>4</sup> See note 3, p. 122.

power of the interest in and will to act for the world in the phases of learning? A fundamental key to these goals will lie in the nature of the posture and exploratory attitude which develops in the teacher when they regard the development described above. After all, school life often reveals that such an inner questioning attitude leads to the events in lessons themselves producing clues which encourage us to further steps.

Thus, here are a number of examples below which touch on such methodological moments of awakening:

In Geography in a Class 7, groups are formed to make a map of the world. In one group, a pupil describes the situation of animal species on the brink of extinction with such feeling that the group asks to investigate the subject further and subsequently contributes it to the production of the map as a whole.

During the "geometry of space" in a Class 8, a pupil is impressed by the "perfection" of the pentagon-dodecahedron. He resolves to use a workshop to build the shape out of aluminium rods for the classroom. The relationship between calculations, drawings and static problems in making the object and its (subsequently safe) mounting lead to new, unexpected learning experiences.

From that time onwards, that pupil started wherever possible to develop his own ap-

proaches and questions in the main lessons. When, in agreement with the class parents, an increasing number of independent experiments were undertaken on food and drink in a subsequent main lesson on the chemistry of food, this pupil focused his interest on a sugar beet factory nearby. He began to busy himself with research-like activity which ended, after a number of visits to the factory, with a presentation to the class of the whole manufacturing process. Both in terms of its content and in the attitude of interest towards the work, his presentation made a deep, sustained impression on the whole community.

It is self-evident that the lesson situations described here cannot be used like a recipe. In the first instance they can only point towards a greater focus on the world and doing in the methodology of the Middle School: where the will forces in harmony with inner experience were wholly focused on the world, inner and outer learning was able to develop new depths.

In order to deepen this question further, the Pedagogical Section conference on the anthroposophical understanding of the human being from 21 to 23 September 2018 will be wholly devoted to middle school development.

In Part II of this topic, the qualities of imagination in relation to teaching in the Middle School will be considered in the next *Journal*.

## Founding Impulses and the Future of the Waldorf School

Albrecht Schad

translated by Christian von Arnim

The Waldorf School Uhlandshöhe was founded in Stuttgart on Sunday, 7 September 1919, a risky enterprise. The end of the First World War in November 1918 had left Germany and Europe destroyed. At a lecture in Dornach during those days, Emil Molt heard Rudolf Steiner say that "what now needed to be done was to listen to what the situation required" (GA 191 and Leber, Stefan 2002). During a conversation with a foreman, Emil Molt had, for the first time, raised the idea of setting up a school. At the end of January, in a conversation with Molt about what needed to be done, Steiner mentioned that what little money there was should be used to set up schools. Now, through Emil Molt, the opportunity arose to realise something with which Rudolf Steiner had been occupied for a long time. For as early as 1907 he had published his essay *The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy*. Here Steiner developed the first thoughts underlying Waldorf education.

On 23 April 1919, Rudolf Steiner was asked by Emil Molt during a works council meeting of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory to take over the management of a school he wanted to set up. Steiner accepted the request. On 30 May, the Restaurant Uhlandshöhe and the grounds that came with it were deemed to be suitable for the establishment of a school and acquired by Emil Molt with his own private means. From 20 August to 5 September, Rudolf Steiner gave 14 lectures entitled *The Foundation of Human Experience*. These were supplemented by 14 further lectures on *Practical Advice to*

*Teachers* as well as seminar exercises and lectures on the curriculum. At the time, twenty-five people and some guests attended these preparations for the Waldorf school; 12 of them then started as teachers. Motivated by these lectures, and full of enthusiasm, the school began its work. It was established at breathtaking speed in a few months and started with 12 teachers and 256 pupils in eight classes. The average age of the teachers was 32. In 1925, when Steiner died, it had already grown to 897 pupils taught by 56 teachers.

As already mentioned, Steiner had concerned himself with questions of education for a long time before the establishment of the school. He himself had taught in a variety of contexts and had considerable practical experience. The first section of the essay on *The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy* already reveals the motives which led Rudolf Steiner to his fundamental thoughts for an initial outline of education. Steiner noted that life at the time raised many "contemporary issues" and "contemporary demands". He wrote about the question of women's rights, issues connected with education and schooling, questions of rights and health, etc. Thus for him, the main issue was perceiving the needs of the times.

He went on to note that there was an immensely large number of attempts to provide answers, but that it might well be suspected that these answers were inadequate. He argued that many people wanted to transform life but did not understand it in its foundations. Where did Steiner see the possibility to

develop reformist ideas out of a deeper investigation of human life which could become productive and practical? He saw it in spiritual science: "The task of providing a practical understanding of the world which encompasses the nature of human life must by its very nature fall to spiritual science." (GA 34, p. 310). Spiritual science is then briefly characterised. By its nature it should not be drily theoretical, only satisfying cognitive curiosity; neither should it be a means for some people to obtain a higher level of development for themselves for selfish reasons. Spiritual science, according to Steiner, should be involved in working on the most important tasks of contemporary humanity, on developing its well-being.

But Steiner the realist also knew that spiritual science "will, however, have to anticipate being attacked and having doubt cast on it if it ascribes such a task in particular to itself. Radicals and moderates as well as conservatives in all fields of life will have to respond to it with such doubts. For at the beginning it will not be able to please any party because its prerequisites lie far beyond any party operations. Because these prerequisites are rooted solely in the true understanding of life. Anyone who understands life will only be able to set their tasks out of life itself. They will not set up any arbitrary programmes." (GA 34, p. 311).

Little has changed today in that respect, except for the possible difference that the distancing from esotericism and spiritual science today partly arises in our own ranks as well.

On the eve of the course on the foundations of human experience, Rudolf Steiner gave an address on 20 August 1919. The foundation of the Waldorf school was to be a real cultural deed, a renewal of the cultural life of

the present. The Waldorf school was to educate and teach in such a way as required by the human being, by the whole nature of the human being. But there would also have to be compromises, justified compromises because they would speed up this cultural deed. "Compromises are necessary because we are not yet at the stage where we can accomplish a truly free deed. Bad teaching goals, bad graduation goals are prescribed by the state." (GA 293, p. 1). And he continues: "We are facing a hard battle and yet have to perform this cultural deed. In doing so, we have to reconcile two contradictory forces. On the one hand, we have to know what our ideals are and yet have to possess the flexibility to adapt to what is far removed from our ideals. The way that these two forces can be brought into harmony will be difficult for each one of you. It will only be possible if everyone utilises their full personality. Everyone must utilise their full personality from the beginning." (GA 293, p. 2).

Then it is very clearly stated that anthroposophy cannot be subject matter that is taught in any lessons, but that the methodological foundations can be provided by anthroposophy. The address ends with a passionate appeal to those attending: "We must not only engage ourselves in our particular tasks. We will only be good teachers if we have a living interest in everything that happens in the world. It requires our interest in the world to obtain the enthusiasm which we need for school and our tasks. That requires flexibility of spirit and devotion to our task. We can only draw on what may be obtained today when we turn our interest, first, to the great needs of our time and, second, the great tasks of our time, neither of which can be thought of as being too great." (GA 293, p. 4).

At the start of the twentieth century, parallel to the events outlined above, "a group of



high-minded young people had come together in Dresden bound by friendship. All of them were students of architecture who had come to painting out of an untameable inner drive. All of them were gripped by the unrest of the times and all were filled with the same passionate striving to be serious about their artistic and human ideals. The goal they had set themselves was to free painting from the bonds of dead convention and to renew it out of the spirit of truth in a creative statement. At the same time the idea of an artistic community, as van Gogh had already dreamed of, was to be put into practice. That group, bound by work and friendship, in which a new way of seeing and creating had broken crucial new ground and out of which German expressionist painting was to grow to assume European importance, was *'Die Brücke'* (The Bridge). In the first years of their association, its members, out of a longing for truth, friendship and communal work, developed an expressionist 'Bridge' style without recognition and without knowing how directly their core concern was in line with the European spirit." (Buchheim, p. 9).

The association of these young artists had higher goals which were to encompass the whole of existence, the whole of human life, and they wanted to draw the motivation for artistic creation from life. At the time Fritz Bleyl, Erich Heckel, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff were students at Dresden Technical University. They came together in a revolutionary group. It was probably Schmidt-Rottluff who came up with the well-chosen name *"Künstlervereinigung Brücke"* (Bridge Artists' Association). With this name they wanted, quite self-confidently, to give expression to the path that others followed to reach them. All four young men came from a non-artistic background. Schmidt-Rottluff's father was a miller, Heckel's was a railway engineer and Kirchner's a paper special-

ist. To begin with they drew and painted as a hobby. Their parents had planned conventionally secure careers for them. It is remarkable that these young people rebelled with ruthless determination against the academic impressionism which was taught at the time in Dresden by, for example, Gotthard Kuhl or Eugen Bracht and did not follow the assured reputation of Max Liebermann. They deliberately gave up academic, secure and officially recognised careers. "The impact of their young community turned against conventional sensitivities, against hypocritical feelings, against a superficial art establishment, against the arrogant philistinism in education. They wanted to give expression to the truth of their time, create a breathing space for art, establish painting without a fixed code and put it back at the centre of human existence." (Buchheim, p. 37).

They attempted to push forward into the unknown without any preconditions and sought the unity of art and life. The path they pursued was a deliberate decision. They experienced a spiritual need and attempted to re-establish painting at the centre of human existence. In doing so, it was clear to them that there was no solution in ingratiating themselves with existing academic or social norms. This led initially to serious insults and attacks on them. They were accused of arbitrariness and self-indulgence. Emil Nolde, who had meanwhile joined the *"Brücke"*, commented about this conflict in a letter: "Dear friend, in art, what are laws? What is arbitrariness and lack of restraint? Every true artist creates new values, new beauty, and new laws arise – if we want to use this tricky word. The new and beautiful things they bring are described as arbitrariness and lack of restraint because they do not subject themselves to the current laws. These are charges which every kind of brilliance is forced to endure. First there was

art, then later on aestheticians and scholars formulated laws, unfortunately." (Buchheim, p. 42).

The parallels at the time in the development of art and the Waldorf school are striking. There is the deep inner desire to perceive the needs of the times, take up the great issues of the times and seek answers. These answers were not sought in the academic world. They did not arise through the search for recognition from others. Hence the association of artists also called itself "*Brücke*" (Bridge). A bridge which others can access if they have a serious, existential interest in the search for true, new answers. The answers were sought in life, in the whole existence of human beings themselves. It appears that the great impulses of renewal for the future of art and schooling did not come from the academic world. The one-sidedness at work in the latter was painfully obvious. The impulses and renewal came from the observation of the world, from an interest in the world, from an interest in life. And then it was completely up to the individual – when, as Steiner put it, each person contributed their wholly individual personality.

In the following passages we will look at the problems which Steiner saw in the first attempts of the Waldorf school to get on its feet and the suggestions he made.

The first school year passed. At the beginning of the second school year, in the third week of September between 15 and 22 September 1920, Rudolf Steiner gave four lectures. They are known as "*Meditativ erarbeitete Menschenkunde*" (Meditative Study of the Human Being). In these lectures, he attempted to tell the young college of teachers clearly what he considered to be necessary and said he would "provide you with a kind of supplement to some of the things I set out in the introduc-

tory courses on education last year." (GA 302a, first lecture). We have to understand that Steiner had repeatedly visited the school, attended lessons and teachers' meetings in the course of the previous school year and thus knew from his own observation what he was talking about.

Right at the start of the first lecture given on 15 September 1920, Steiner draws the attention of the college of teachers to the foundations of Waldorf education. "The teachers in particular should be made aware – and in drawing attention to this, we stand on the ground of anthroposophically oriented spiritual science and want to shape the education required for the present time from this perspective – attention should be drawn above all to the fact that the teacher actually has to have a feeling, a sense of the nature of the esoteric as such," (GA 302a, p. 11). If Steiner felt it necessary to say this to the college of teachers after just one school year, we may assume that he already perceived deficiencies here at this stage already. The deficiency appears to be that it was no longer quite clear where the answers to the needs of the times should come from. And we can ask today: what is the current situation, almost a hundred years later?

Thereupon he talks about the causes of these problems. He makes a clear distinction between science and education. "In other words, the opinion existed that teachers as such were in some way the same as scientists: scientific training was virtually taken as teacher training whereas the two should be something completely different." (GA 302a, p. 15). Steiner thought that teaching should not be done on the basis of scientific theories but of the concrete perception of and empathy with the nature of the developing human being. In this respect, teachers had to become artists. That, too, does not always

appear to have been successful in this first year. He appears to have experienced his colleagues in such a way that he cried out to them: "This particular kind of innermost modesty, this feeling of our own development – that is something that should support the teacher: because such a feeling produces more than any abstract principle." (GA 302a, p. 20).

Right at the start of the second lecture on 16 September 1920, Steiner focused on the necessity of teaching the whole human being. "We cannot, of course, bring up and educate someone if we cannot, as it were, sense in the spirit the whole human being we are bringing up and teaching; because this whole human being still has to be taken much more into account during the time of childhood development than later on." (GA 302a, p. 25). In the following words, he tries once more to describe the whole human being and the associated developmental processes. Towards the end of this lecture, Steiner speaks radical words about science. "This is what we have to learn. We have to learn to carry something of the future mood within us which tells us that the possession of mere science turns human beings into something, as a result of which they view themselves as a kind of stunted soul-spiritual being. Anyone who is just a scientist will not have the drive within them, and be it only in forming the thought, to turn something scientific into something artistic. Only in something artistic do we understand the world. But we can always say: those for whom nature reveals its secrets will feel a longing for art. We should have the feeling: to the extent that you are only a scientist you are a mooncalf! Only when you start to transform your soul, spiritual and physical organism, when your knowledge takes on artistic forms, do you become a human being." (GA 302a, p. 39-40).

We might ask why Steiner uses such drastic words here. Let us remember, he was talking against the background of his own observation of the college of teachers and the attempt to give the newly born Waldorf school guiding coordinates to take away so that the realisation of the basic impulse would not be put at risk. After all, it was not just that Steiner himself was an academic, but he also employed primarily academics in setting up the first college of teachers. He cannot, therefore, have had a basic problem with academics. But he had already tried to make clear to his colleagues in the past that they were not at the school as academics, but as teachers and educators. But many colleagues must have showcased the academic to such an extent, and this appears to have influenced the work with the pupils so negatively, that he saw himself obliged to intervene to correct the situation. We will still investigate this further.

Steiner was very closely involved with the school in the following years. Whenever he could, he would go to Stuttgart to the Waldorf School Uhlandshöhe and support the everyday life of the school as actively as possible. Three years later, he gave a further series of lectures, again in the autumn, with the aim of providing ideas for the inner penetration of the teaching and kindergarten teaching professions. With his remarks, he wanted increasingly to set the "right mood" for his colleagues. Much would "depend on this mood" in teaching and kindergarten teaching. In the first lecture on 15 October 1923, he mainly discussed that human beings are threefold in nature, also with regard to educational activity, and then described the different roles which educators had in Greek classical antiquity, Roman classical antiquity and from the start of the modern age.

For Steiner, the Greek educator was a gymnast who educated using outer, bodily physi-

cality as their starting point. Thus, in moving their arms and legs, pupils moved them in such a way that spiritual influences entered the rhythmical as well as nervous-sensory system through the limbs and metabolic organisation. By therefore moving in a particular way, the whole human being was educated from below upwards.

The Romans had already forgotten this ability to cultivate the soul and spirit by way of the physical body. They had primarily educated through what lies close to the soul entity in life, through language, that is through the airflow via the middle of the human being. With the Romans, the educator turned from a gymnast to a rhetorician.

From the fifteenth century onwards, the rhetorician was gradually transformed into the doctor. Now the nervous-sensory system was turned into the foundation of education. Now education became theoretical. Now school became a teaching institution divorced from the world. Steiner was disturbed by the one-sidedness which only any longer grasps the world with the head. The academic schools founded by Wilhelm von Humboldt had a particular focus: ancient languages and mathematics. These subjects, which are primarily detached from the world, occupy the head. That is how von Humboldt removed the fears which the noble families of these schools had.

Steiner now reproaches the college of teachers: "We are disinclined inwardly to discard the doctorate, even if we don't have one, even if it is only a general part of our consciousness." (GA 302a, p. 110). What did Steiner mean? Let us once more hear what he has to say:

"But we have reached the point today, in particular, that we have to develop the syn-

thesis of these three elements in the human being – because that is also a threefold structure in human nature: gymnast, rhetorician, doctor – and such a development is most urgently required in the education system. If therefore everything could go according to the ideal, it would be an ideal for the teaching faculty to be able to constantly cultivate on the one hand separately in the noblest sense gymnastics, in the noblest sense rhetoric [...] and in the noblest sense the element of the doctor, but then to combine these three elements. [...] It should be pointed out that for their art of education and teaching, teachers simply need the combination of outer movement, the spiritualised gymnast, of the ensouled rhetorician, and thirdly of the spirit infused with life, not the spirit which has become dead and abstract." (GA 302a, p. 111).

Steiner thus set out that the threefold human being should also be educated and taught in a threefold way. He implemented this approach in the methodology of the lower classes, in infusing lessons with an artistic approach, or in working out phenomenological methods for the higher classes, such as for example in Goetheanism. But even in his time there was the problem that the state, from the top down, demanded that all emphasis should be placed on the doctor. It was very clear to him that the demand to educate and teach the whole human being in a balanced way would provoke resistance and opposition.

In the near hundred years that followed, Waldorf schools spread tremendously, not just in Germany and Europe. Thus, today there are about 1,100 schools on all continents worldwide with the exception of the Antarctic. The reason for this is that the education of the Waldorf schools is guided by the human being and their development and

it wishes to satisfy neither state nor religious theories, nor conditions imposed by external associations or financial donors. But in order for Waldorf schools – which are founded, after all, when parents want a good school for their children – to be allowed to operate in all these different countries, compromise is necessary. In each country the schools have to tread the narrow path between ideals and compromise in a great variety of ways.

In Germany, the most recent demand of the state is the academisation of educational institutions and thus also schools. Such academisation ultimately affects all anthroposophical institutions. And it requires no great prophetic powers to recognise that in the long term only those institutions that go along with such academisation will be able to continue working. This requirement of the spirit of the times is the current compromise. Academisation itself, to the extent that it represents a one-sidedly isolated doctoral element, will not be able to bring about a human-focused deepening of the current issues in education. Equally, it is not possible for the other two levels of the threefold

human being to contribute to a renewal of education in one-sided isolation. Only when we succeed in combining individual forces, and therefore reaching the whole human being in the noblest sense in the pupil, the student and the educator, can truly new qualities be developed.

The founding impulses have been described in historical parallel to the “*Brücke*” association of free artists:

Perception of the needs of the times

Drawing on an understanding of human life

Being engaged with the whole of our personality

We continue to be some distance from the founding ideals being realised. Thus, the goal of operating a free school system which starts from an investigation of human life and which by its nature is connected not just with the whole world, but with the whole cosmos, continues to exist. And, in view of events today, so does finding the full courage and strength to advocate these goals.

## Bibliography:

(Translator's note: all page numbers refer to the German editions.)

**Buchheim, Lothar-Günther:** *Die Künstlergemeinschaft Brücke*, Buchheim Verlag Feldafing, 1956.

**Leber, Stefan:** *Kommentar zu Rudolf Steiners Vorträgen über Allgemeine Menschenkunde als Grundlage der Pädagogik*, Vol. 1, p. 13. Verlag Freies Geistesleben, 2002

**Steiner, Rudolf:** *Die Erziehung des Kindes vom Gesichtspunkt der Geisteswissenschaft*, in GA 34, p. 310, Rudolf Steiner Verlag

**Steiner, Rudolf:** *Allgemeine Menschenkunde als Grundlage der Pädagogik*. Available in English as *The Foundations of Human Experience*, SteinerBooks, 1996, (GA 293 in German)

**Steiner Rudolf:** *Erziehung und Unterricht aus Menschenerkenntnis*, 1993. Available in English as *Balance in Teaching*, SteinerBooks, 2007, (GA 302a in German)

## Rudolf Steiner, College Meetings with the Teachers of the Independent Stuttgart Waldorf School

*Christof Wiechert*

*Translated by John Weedon*

Officially the three volumes are called "Rudolf Steiner's College Meetings with the Teachers of the Waldorf School". They are to be found in the *Gesamtausgabe* (Complete Works) under the abbreviation GA 300a, b, c; last published in 1976.

In 1932, the Waldorf teacher Erich Gabert, asked Marie Steiner's permission to publish the college meetings, it was granted under the condition that he only bring 'what is essential'. Gabert set to work on the raw material which consisted primarily of Karl Schubert's shorthand. Only three times was a stenographer called upon, on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September 1919 and on 6<sup>th</sup> February 1923.

First of all, parts of the college meetings appeared in a hectographed (copied) form for the colleagues at the school, who received a personally numbered copy. Later on, the college meetings appeared in numbered booklets; the final version is the one from 1975.

It looks as if Steiner's wording was largely reconstructed by Gabert from various sources, as in the records of other participants; the conversations were mainly reproduced in abbreviated form, the names of colleagues who asked questions or took part in the conversation were anonymised and the children did indeed get names, but not their own ones.

Thus it was a torso full of cracks and damaged parts.

Nonetheless, what gold gleamed through the cracks, what wonderful suggestions were to be found there, what exciting conversations you could more or less follow! Yes, indeed, it was almost as if you were really close to the evolving history of the first Waldorf school, yes almost a contemporary witness. There is Steiner among the colleagues not as a revealer, but as a seeker with the others for the right solution to a pupil's problem. You experience Steiner as a curriculum developer, as an assured leader through the child studies, but also as someone appealing to people, challenging them to do the tasks better, to look after the pupils, and not to hold lectures. Through the cracks of this mighty torso his gentle, friendly humour glitters (Oh, they are new in the school, so fine and full of morning sparkle ...), his comforting voice and sometimes castigating the (hidden) truths of failure in harsh words, for which he apologises at the end of the college meeting. You are a witness to a gigantic process of creation, when you are prepared to look through the cracks.

Through all the years of my teaching work and even beyond them, these college meetings have been a kind of vade-mecum (handbook in constant use) for me for what was actually meant and a never-failing source of inspiration, not of the spiritual understanding of humankind itself, but of the actions proceeding from it.

We can be deeply grateful to the Pädagogische Forschungsstelle (Educational Research Centre)

of the Association of Independent Waldorf Schools in Germany for agreeing to enable a new edition of this treasure to be published. The association had to dig deeply into its pockets to enable the *Nachlassverwaltung* (the Administration of Steiner's Estate) to commission a new edition, an edition which makes this torso of three volumes available in such a way that, despite everything, it becomes accessible to generations of Waldorf teachers, for whom everything pertaining to the time of founding the first school is history or a story; such access can fill readers with enthusiasm, maybe even inspire them. For what occurred between Rudolf Steiner and the teachers in the years 1919 to 1924 has an archetypal character, is not subject to the passage of time, and will not age essentially, because it is in keeping with the times, with evolution and with the child.

How has it been tackled?

The structure of the text has been radically altered through a few modifications:

1. That which in earlier times counted as 'not essential', and, in fact, was taken down in shorthand, but not published, is seen differently today. From the modern viewpoint perhaps the 'inessential' has become essential all of a sudden. For the reader of today wants to know how it went, what was going on in the minds of the participants. As a result the body of the text has been extended by roughly 10 to 12%. Thus, for example, the dramatic first college meeting after the Goetheanum fire (17<sup>th</sup> January 1923) has been printed verbatim.
2. There is a brief introduction to each college meeting. In this introduction (never more than a page) the circumstances, the situation of the school and the events in Stuttgart are briefly touched upon. How

long it had been since Steiner had seen the school, whether he had visited the classes, whether he had held an address at the monthly festival, how long (usually how short) the holidays between the school years were mentioned as well. You can so easily form a picture of how the situation was at the school. Wherever several college meetings can be read together, because they were held just one day apart, there is always one introduction for such a group.

3. The names of all the colleagues appear in plain language and, in as far as the shorthand tells you, what they said and asked.
4. For legal reasons, the Rudolf Steiner *Nachlassverwaltung* has unfortunately decided that the children's names should remain unrecognizable. Thus, they have invented names for all the children, which hardly offer the possibility of getting to the real names. Only very few exceptions have been made, where the substitution could be interpreted as a cover-up (for example, with the Rascher brothers).
5. Significant, even controversial or debatable statements by Steiner are new and, in part, have been commented on in detail, sometimes with the help of colleagues. Thus, Ruprecht Fried has revised the unsatisfactory comments on Steiner's structuring of earth evolution (geology) in a most illuminating way by revealing what scientific sources were available to Steiner at the time. Albrecht Hüttig has brought essential new viewpoints to light in the not so easy discussion around French during the occupation of the Ruhr after the First World War.
6. A detailed list of contents for each college meeting is given at the beginning of each volume, something missing until now.

7. For the sake of simplicity the college meetings, along with the dates, are numbered right through. whether this impulse will be reborn in more and more people, teachers, parents and pupils.
8. Of course, the list of references and the index of terminology have been reworked. Through these measures, we hope that the college meetings become and remain accessible to the coming generations. Being reborn means, for the present time, each person finding within themselves a source of living anthroposophy, not just one to be read about. And that is the inspiring thing about these college meeting documents. Although they remain fragmentary, they document the intense life of changing matters with and out of a will to do so, to create what is new as well as doing justice to the true time spirit. They awaken in people the faculty of discrimination for the signature of the time spirit, namely for the spirit that wants to write the continuation of human evolution as distinct from the spirit that hinders it.

If you read the college meeting reports together with the book written by Tomáš Zdražil on the history of the establishment of the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart (appearing in 2019), then they offer something that can give new Waldorf teachers, who have a heart for it, access to this world-wide, educational impulse, that arose out of widespread social destitution.

These volumes should appear in 2019, in the year of the centenary of the Waldorf School impulse. Everyone knows, everyone feels: these hundred years will mark something. They will show whether this impulse for education in keeping with the soul attitude of the present time becomes something historical and then slowly dies away or else

It goes without saying that strong striving for knowledge of a spiritual science of education is essential and it is nourished by the numerous transcripts of the education lectures and the comprehensive secondary literature. Here, in the college meetings you are really close to the events themselves, close to what was being called for by the destitution of the time.



## The International Forum: How to Support the Vitality in Waldorf Education

*James Pewtherer (with thanks to Douglas Gerwin)*

The last meeting of the International Forum with members of about 33 different countries was in Dornach in November 2017.

If we all want to meet the emerging needs of today in the realm of education we have to be willing to continually re-examine the premises out of which we work as a school movement. On the one hand, we have the 1100+ schools and 1600+ early childhood centers around the world which are based on Rudolf Steiner's teachings of human development. On the other hand, the growing diversity of cultures along with changes in societal norms oblige us to reject forms from the past which do not serve us now. Indeed, now more than ever we are obliged to become researchers in two worlds. True Waldorf educators need to be keen observers of the sense-perceptible world and also meditants who work inwardly in order to perceive the spiritual realities behind this visible world of ours.

The International Forum is increasingly attempting to work out of the recognition that meditative practice on the part of its members (and indeed, by every Waldorf educator) is a central tool in the "toolbox" of anthroposophically-inspired education. In this age of information overload, we can see that building the organs of inner perception and living thinking into our daily work as educators is a sine qua non of SteinerWaldorf (Steiner Waldorf: not hyphenated) education and early childhood practice. One step in this

direction for us in the International Forum has been the resolve to connect our work with the lectures in *The Foundations of Human Experience* to the class lessons from the School of Spiritual Science. We do this with the recognition that building these inner organs of perception can give us the insight to meet the needs of children and youth today. The ability of every Waldorf educator first to cultivate and then to apply the discoveries from their inner work will determine the relevance and the effectiveness of our schools now and into the second century of Steiner-Waldorf education. It is one way to realize Rudolf Steiner's call to the teachers to do this inner work. As he put it at the end of Lecture 3 (21 Sept. 1920) in *Balance in Teaching*:

The educator must receive into himself the knowledge of man, must comprehend the knowledge of man by meditating, must remember the knowledge of man: then the memory becomes active life. It is not just common memory, but rather one that puts forth new inner impulses. This memory wells forth from the spiritual life, which in turn flows over into our external work ...<sup>1</sup>

With the spread of SteinerWaldorf education around the world, many of the cultures in which it is now to be found are very different than those in Rudolf Steiner's own time. Moreover, the expectations and norms of European and western culture have also

---

1 Steiner, R. *Balance in Teaching*, (also *Meditatively Acquired Study of Man*) (GA 302a). Mercury Press, 1982.

changed in the almost one hundred years since the founding of the first school in Stuttgart. Then, as now, we form our schooling out of the conception of the nature of the human being in the fifth Post-Atlantean Epoch.

Here follow some of the issues on which we worked at our November 2017 meeting in Dornach.

### **The Challenge and Need for Research in Waldorf Education**

As research is one of our ongoing tasks in the International Forum, we began a deeper dive into the topic as noted below.

Research methods seem to be changing their emphasis. For instance, the prizes awarded in the sciences by the Nobel Commission were related to smaller and smaller details rather than broader questions about the understanding of human beings and the world. Thus, we see that there is a certain fragmentation shown by studying the many small parts rather than seeing these in the context of the larger whole which would tell us more. In our research discussion, we noted the findings of a Swiss MD who was predisposed to view anything spiritual as pure speculation. Yet, in his study of how learning takes place among the 900+ pupils he observed, he found that each child has a uniquely different way of learning that came from an individuality that could not be explained only by heredity and environment. He found that this learning could not be addressed by the predominant "one-size-fits-all" methods used in almost all educational systems. The result, he found, has been that it becomes increasingly difficult for children and young people to find their place in life well into adulthood. He attributed this to the failure to meet their unspoken but core questions about their place in the world.

The above failure underlines how Waldorf Education needs instead to meet these issues by carrying such things as:

1. the nature of "will" in learning;
2. the growing tendency in society to have a fragmented view of the world and the human being, resulting in its effect on learning and understanding;
3. a better understanding and use of the four elements (and the spiritual beings behind them) and the temperaments in teaching.
4. our task must include guiding the development of the "I" in our young people so that they know themselves as world citizens (and not citizens with a narrow view of their nation);
5. developing inter-school and inter-country contacts;
6. developing approaches for the healthy preparation of the birth of the astral body and the free imagination that it will bring about;
7. addressing the phenomenon and its resultant challenges from the divide between the earlier emergence of "physical puberty" at age 12 and the later "soul puberty" at age 16;
8. understanding the transformation from the etheric heart before puberty to the astral-etheric heart at +/- age 14;
9. to examine how best to work with modern adults in Teacher Education so that the anthroposophical sources for their future work reaches down into their will lives.

The unity of the education in following the arc of development of a human being's humanity from birth to age 18 is a lofty and important ideal. It is somewhat challenged at the moment by the evident disruption of that arc in the middle grades where seemingly more or something different needs to be done. The students at this age need to be taught how to think, even as we avoid mere repetition in the interest of building skills. The challenge at that age is to lead them into creative work with ever-new ways of learning and building their capacities and skills. This needs some new thinking.

### **Some Points of Interest from Country Reports:**

**CHINA** continues its rapid expansion of Waldorf schools but now faces increased scrutiny from the government, especially after the recent five-year Communist Party congress. The demand for professionalism on the part of the schools has now become existential. Waldorf schools need to show that they act out of integrity in all their work and in respect to Chinese culture rather than importing western ideas. The exuberance and youth of the huge, new generation of Chinese is calling for more mature social responsibility within the schools themselves. The teachers within and between the schools are challenged to work together in this climate.

**BRAZIL** faces a huge societal challenge with fully 22% of the population below the poverty line. Also startling for Brazilian society is the fact that the death rate for children between the ages of 10 and 19 is greater than that of Afghanistan and its ongoing war. This is the environment in which the Waldorf schools are working.

**GERMANY** now has 240 schools, 800 kindergartens, 86,000 students and 8,600 teachers. The German Waldorf School Asso-

ciation (*Bund*) now projects that they will need 2,700 new teachers in the next 2 to 4 years, a number which seems out of reach. So where will these teachers come from? In a survey of Waldorf high school students, the prevailing sense was that they are enthusiastic about their Waldorf education but put-off by the stale teaching they sometimes meet in their older teachers. With the change of generations in school leadership, the leaders in the German movement are looking for active students of Rudolf Steiner to lead the schools into the future. They are finding that the renewed emphasis on child study in schools is one help in leading to an anthroposophical deepening among the teachers.

**WALDORF – 100:** A presentation on the current status of the immense efforts being put into the centenary events showcased some very exciting and creative approaches to the celebration. At the center of these efforts in every country around the world is an emphasis on the "Waldorf Principle" of the universal human. Activities are taking place with:

*The Foundations of Human Experience* lectures; child study; helping the bees; a drama prize in a contest to write a new play (in German) that embraces the "human core" values of Waldorf education, (a similar effort is encouraged and hoped for in the English language); a new orchestral composition to be played by Waldorf high school student orchestras, around the world; work on a second Waldorf film as to the "How?" and "Why?" of the education (the current [first] film addresses the "Who?" and "Where?" and was viewed over half-a-million times as of November 2017).

**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STEINER WALDORF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (IASWECE):** This international group has

decided to focus on three areas of study as part of their focus on the Waldorf centenary.

First, it is clear that children from birth to age 7 are allowed to stay "asleep," living and playing in their will-life in the early childhood places in our movement. At the same time, the early childhood teachers work strongly with the sleeping will of the child. This, then, begs the question as to how the "awake" adults who teach them can avoid negatively influencing the children as the teachers themselves work out of their own wakeful consciousness.

Second, how can EC teachers develop strong co-working and social skills so as to foster healthy social forms among themselves as a department?

And third, how can EC classrooms promote healthy social skills among the children themselves given the natural state of freedom found in the child of 0 to 7 years?

### **Going Forward**

The IF will continue to assess our progress as a movement at this point, even as we turn in our studies to the needs of the future. We will look at education through the various lenses of art, science and religion, knowing that the fragmentation noted above is to be found in all three of these areas. In religion, this shows itself particularly in the rigidity with which all

the major religions now have major segments of their adherents who are turning to a fundamentalist view of what it means to be a "proper" Christian, Jew, Muslim, etc. In response to this trend, it was noted that no less a figure than the Dalai Lama has declared that ethics are more important today than religion. We educators will need to counter this tendency towards rigidity in both individuals and society. It will be an important aspect in the education of the child in our schools.

For Waldorf education to keep its vitality, we will need to connect with both the stream coming towards us out of the future and with what comes to us out of the night. In short, Waldorf educators will need to nurture imaginative cognition in themselves and the children if it is to be prepared for what the world needs of us as schools and them as future citizens.

In its next meetings in May, the International Forum will continue its studies out of the Class Lessons from the School for Spiritual Science. We have also resolved to look more deeply into digital technology and artificial intelligence. It is our resolve to more fully state the anthropological basis of our education, linking it to spiritual scientific research as we do so. Along with this declaration, we need to make our ideals clear enough to our parents and the world so that all can see what we are working for.

## Julius Caesar – An Experience That Taught Us All

*Jyotsna Patnaik*

*A teacher tested by the blunt edge of Caesar's sword*

I have been a teacher at Sloka, Hyderabad since 1998. During my 20 years at Sloka I have not only taught kindergarten classes, but have been a class teacher through three cycles of classes. I have seen several entertaining performances staged throughout the years. I successfully staged two Shakespeare plays, *A Mid-Summer Night's Dream* and *Julius Caesar*, with my eighth graders. We staged *Julius Caesar* on February 10, 2018.

My recent experience of performing "Julius Caesar" is very vivid and fresh in my mind and I would like to share it with you. It all started in October 2017 when I decided to have my eighth graders perform the play. I knew the plot of *Julius Caesar*, but it had been years since I had read Shakespeare's original and so the first step was to read the play again. This time it was a group effort – my eighth graders read the play with me. My colleague Alpana, an expert in English literature, further helped me with this endeavour. She spent several weeks defining and bringing to life each important character in the play, which added meaning and flavour to the play.

On December 23, 2017, I handed out the specific roles to each student, in the hope that they would use the two-week vacation to learn their parts by heart. Alas! I was sadly mistaken; I forgot that I was dealing with fourteen-year-olds. All budding adults with strong opinions. Only two girls, playing Brutus and Cassius, stuck to the plan that I had laid out on December 23, 2017. The remaining twenty-five students had chosen to forget or maybe even ignore my instructions.

Assigning the roles was not easy. In order to ensure that every one of the twenty-seven eighth graders would be an integral part of the play, I had three students playing the part of Mark Antony, four playing the part of Caius Cassius and five playing the part of Marcus Brutus.

In January of 2018 we relentlessly started working on the play. We had one month to deliver and it became an arduously long month. It involved begging for extra hours from my other colleagues and shouting out the dialogues behind closed doors. Many of my colleagues watched my plight from afar and finally I had some help. Sanjay Mandaiker and Alpana took a few students and started working with them on the different Acts in the play. Towards the final week, two more colleagues jumped on the band wagon.

We had to work on emoting, movement and last but not least, the boys' pubescent voices. Still unaccustomed to the changes in their voices, the boys did not realise the power they were wielding with the new voice decibels. In addition to focusing on the nuances of acting, the students also had to work on the two backdrops, costumes, props and detailing of props. All this had to be managed after a history lesson and before the buses left school. The girls worked like ants, tirelessly making daggers, swords, scrolls, helmets, etc. and each piece was accurately detailed; whereas the boys made daggers and swords that did not match their personalities, but insisted on using their daggers and not borrowing the right sizes. One can notice the individual pride here! In addition, one

could see their struggle with failure; they were not ready to accept it. I spent an afternoon trying to reason with them, explaining to them that the props were just not right because one dagger looked like a Christmas tree while the other had no blade at all!

Before we knew it "D-day" had arrived, February 10, 2018. We were at the auditorium almost six hours before show time. The students were ready in their handmade costumes, but the garters would not stay on. What could we do this late in the game? Well we got creative and glued them to their socks. They looked beautiful in their costumes!

It was a quarter to four and my musician students took their places and began playing the piano, the violin and the alto recorder to entertain the parents who had begun to trickle in. The final hour came, we lit the lamp and the curtains were raised. The hall was full and there was no looking back. These boisterous, independent, stubborn fourteen-year-olds on the verge of adulthood put on a stunning show! They were remarkable in playing their characters and portraying true emotions. It was truly a spectacular performance!

One of the girls, Veda, expressed the class's thanks and as a grand finale, they sang a

song to me expressing their heartfelt gratitude. The entire class had me in tears and their parents could not believe what they saw. The song made all the hard work and long hours worthwhile.

It has been two weeks since the performance and when I look at the class now I see a big transformation in their social dynamics. They have changed in the way they conduct themselves and it is amazing how many new skills these students have managed to learn. I am convinced that enough cannot be said about the importance of a play in the eighth grade. Every fourteen-year-old must experience and participate in a profound drama. This helps the child handle the great drama that is unfolding within themselves and the experience enables the child to build up its own resilience. These children have become seasoned riders and are able to harness the wild horses within! There is such a sense of pride within me, but more than that I am grateful that I had the honour of working with this group of children!

For me the experience was just as profound. I started with a group of fourteen-year-olds with an attitude and who were all sharp edges, and now I have a group of fourteen-year-olds who came out of the experience a little more rounded around the edges.

## An Example to Follow: The Waldorf Experts Service (WES)

By Ernst-Christian Demisch, Bochum, Germany

The basis of everything we learn in the course of the first seven year cycle, i.e. learning by example, always remains accessible. Learning continues even into old age, e.g. in smartphone evening classes for mature adults. Some years ago, when I first learned about the SES, the Senior Expert Service of the German business sector, I thought that's something we could do with in the Waldorf movement. In the same way as the SES facilitates experts from Germany to support development projects abroad for a period of time – including fledgling Waldorf schools like those in Kazakhstan and the Philippines – retired Waldorf educators could share their professional knowledge for the benefit of those schools that are in need of such expertise. In Germany this is called 'The Treasure of Silver Hair' – a pun on the title of a popular adventure novel. I was inspired by the concept of the SES when, in the spring of 2015, I invited 25 former Waldorf teachers from the 45 schools in North Rhine-Westphalia to a gathering at the *Institut für Waldorfpädagogik* in Witten. And, without much ado, the Waldorf Experts Service was born. In no time at all, lists were drawn up detailing the teachers' personal and professional profiles, and distributed throughout the school network. Thus, experienced class, specialist subject and upper school teachers became available to assist schools as supply teachers for anything from individual classes to entire main lesson blocks, theatre projects, induction training for new colleagues, obtaining state recognition, preparation of faculty meetings, parents' classes, etc. At the same time, the executive board of the

BdFWD (Association of German Waldorf Schools) worked on the realisation of a national WES. Our website was financed with a government grant and support from the *Hannoversche Kassen*, and has been up and running for a year: [www.waldorf-experten-service.de](http://www.waldorf-experten-service.de). It explains the log-in procedure for both Waldorf experts and schools. There are currently more than 70 teachers and a similar number of schools on the register. The website's moderator is Rüdiger Reichle, former principal of the School for Sick Children at *Herdecke Gemeinschaftskrankenhaus* hospital in Germany, while Klaus-Peter Freitag is the representative of the BdFWD. While there have been requests from within the kindergarten movement and the Association of Curative Education Schools, their inclusion would necessitate a significant organisational expansion and an increase in staff. What started out years ago as a project involving a few individuals, has evolved into something much bigger, both in human terms and as an organisation, spreading help and support. The WES is now able to help many schools in dire straits, as well as support educators who, at the end of careers spanning several decades in the classroom, need to make the transition into retirement. Beyond that, the WES sees itself as contributing to the creation and development of a new 'age culture' which focuses on the participation of the individual in new forms of living communities. In order to facilitate a debate about this and other questions about the Waldorf Expert Service, we are inviting interested parties to join us for our first conference on 9 June 2018 in Kassel (11 am to

4 pm at the *Anthroposophisches Zentrum*). We are delighted to have Prof. Peter Schneider as a guest speaker. For many years, he has tirelessly championed the formation of a new 'age culture' based on the ideas underpinning Waldorf education and society at large. Drawing from my own experience, I can confirm that this initiative is about embracing the developmental laws of man's final seven year cycles (post 63 years of age)

and how these principles are to play an active, stimulating part in our society.

This is to be both a suggestion and a recommended example to follow for our school movement worldwide. There's so much to do – so let's get started!

Please send your queries and suggestions to [demisch@wittenannen.net](mailto:demisch@wittenannen.net)



## Agenda

2018

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| May 25 – 27       | Trinitatistagung (Religionslehrertagung)<br>(only in German)  |
| September 21 – 23 | Conference about Middle School  |
| October 28 – 31   | Educational Support Conference  |
| November 9 – 13   | Second School of Spiritual Science Conference of the Pedagogical Section<br>(All Pedagogical Section Circles worldwide are invited) |
| November 15 – 18  | Meeting of the International Forum<br>(only for members)  |