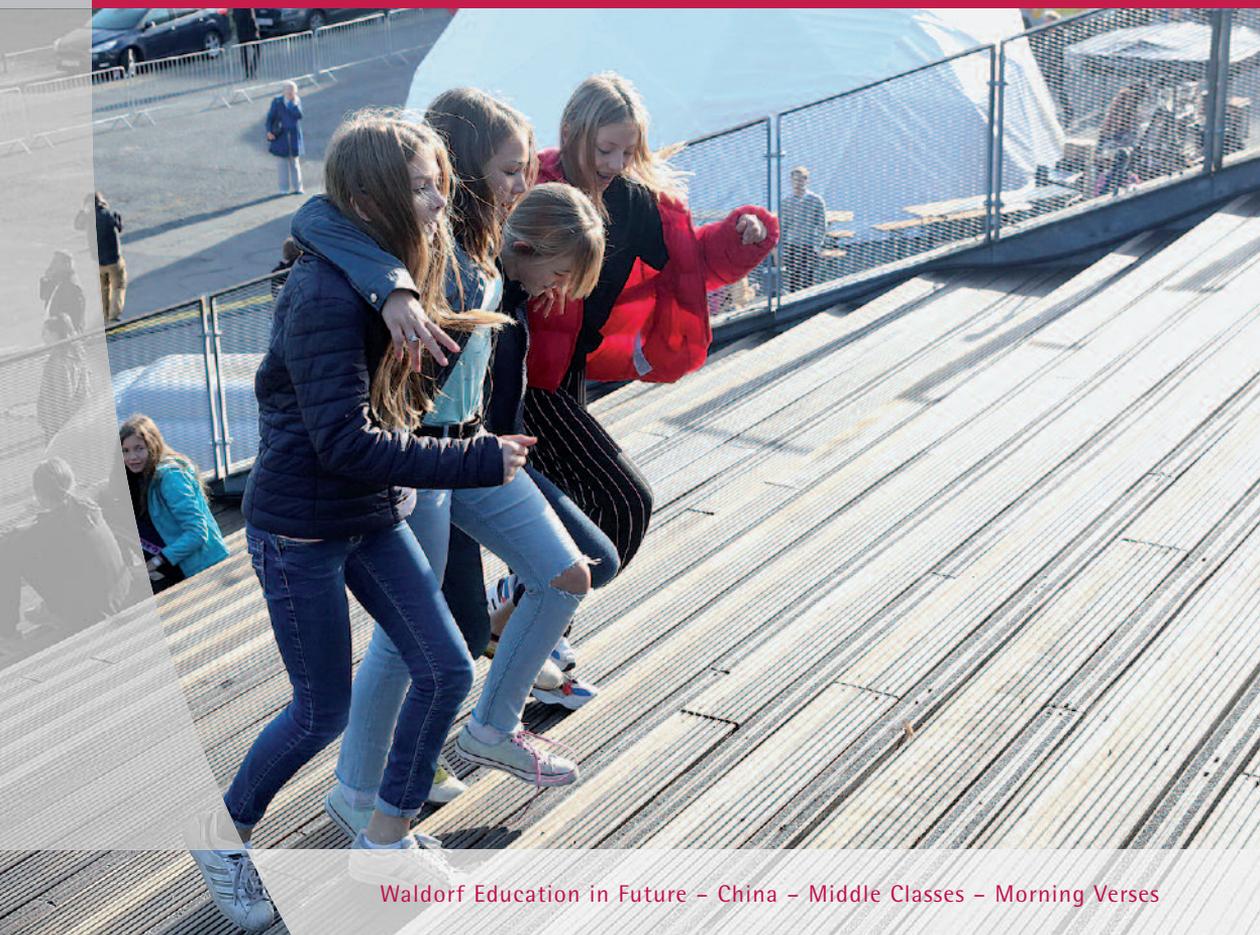




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# Journal



Waldorf Education in Future – China – Middle Classes – Morning Verses

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## Foreword

*Dear Colleagues,*

The new decade has started. What is our destiny for our Waldorf schools? This question from our previous edition continues to be asked. Let us approach all new things with joy!

The current Coronavirus situation in China i.e. Asia and now almost everywhere in the world poses new challenges for the people there. The teachers are requested to teach their pupils via the Internet as there are no lessons taking place in the classrooms as normal. How long will this situation continue? Until the end of March? Until April or even May?

Do we teach kindergarten children via the screen too? How do you teach lower and middle school lessons online? It is not so difficult to imagine digital lessons in the upper school. A collection of emails giving eye witness reports from *Chengdu* provide us with a convincing experience of the situation.

The significance of the basis of our pedagogy is ever increasing. What is it we are building on? What are our foundations? How do we make the study of anthroposophy, on which our pedagogy is based, a resource in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

How do we renew our approach to the morning verse? Following the publication of the little book 'The Morning Verse in Different World Languages', *Dorothee von Winterfeldt* has written an article in which she shares her

many thoughts about the structure of the morning verse thereby giving us clearer understanding. It is very inspiring!

What are the questions that continue to occupy us with regards to the middle school? Claus-Peter Röh shares some thoughts, complemented by some ideas from the Middle School Working Group.

Articles by *Christian Boettger*, *Gilad Goldschmidt* and *Christof Wiechert* pursue the question of how we will work with Waldorf Pedagogy over the next 100 years. Many ideas are shared here to inspire all of us in our schools and communities to go on a search for renewal i.e. to imbue the foundations with new impulses and to penetrate traditions!

*Jon McAlice* presents decades of research from the work of the Pedagogical Section.

Finally we include another institutional report, this one is by *Albrecht Hüttig* about the international engagement by the Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen in Germany.

As ever, we hope to provide our readers with a great variety of ideas and information.

With all best wishes, and in particular wishing strength to our Asian friends for their current challenges!

*The Pedagogical Section*

## The Waldorf School: Perspectives for the Future

*Gilad Goldshmidt, Harduf, Israel*

### **Introduction**

The Waldorf school is 100 years old! We can look with pride at the Waldorf movement in these 100 years; yet also with concern at the years that we have ahead of us. Proud because we have become a proper world movement; concerned about the great challenges that we are facing.

### **Our Strength is our Weakness**

More and more children on all continents are being taught at Waldorf schools or at schools with elements of Waldorf education. For an education system to exist for 100 years and then to flourish too is not a matter of course. The main reason, in my view, is the spiritual inspiration – the anthroposophical background – which Waldorf education is based on, and the very clear and formed structure of the education that Steiner and his successors created in lots of books, lectures and college meetings; education which penetrates right into the details of teaching.

We, as Waldorf educators, have a tradition; we have practical methods, we know "how it should be done", we already have 100 years of experience, and we know that it "functions". This is our strength.

Precisely this is our weakness too. Our forms, our tradition, our methods derive from a spiritual source of inspiration, but from a source which was revealed 100 years ago. Because our work is of spiritual origin, it works. It was definitely in keeping with the times then, but is this the case today as well? We live in a very different world from then: the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat are en-

tirely different from 100 years ago. Is it not also the case with the children's needs, the views of the parents and the motivation and inner attitudes of the teachers?

Knowledge is a two-edged sword: it is a force, it creates security and offers a basis; however, it can also close something off and hinder something new. In order to respect Steiner's heritage, to cultivate it further and to work in keeping with our times, i.e. to think through the given forms, to listen to the stream of time – to do this we must make a huge effort.

My attempt to seek an answer to all these difficult questions – or better put, to seek the direction of an answer – leads me to the following three levels:

### **Esoteric Work**

I take the view that if an individual does something with their whole heart, then they are able to realise what to do and how to do it. In any case, it is like this with the vocation of a teacher or educator. In the language of anthroposophical human evolution, we may say: what we formerly learned from the gods, should come from the depths of our souls today. Thus, in our limited, difficult and sometimes chaotic soul life there is a source of the spiritual stream, of wisdom – but the question is: How do we get there?

The Waldorf impulse first came into the world through Steiner himself. Then there were his trusty followers, who developed the impulse further and extended it. We are living in a time in which neither Steiner nor his

followers nor exceptional individualities who can teach us, are alive. We are all alone, fending for ourselves. That can be discouraging. However, I prefer the conclusion: Then we must rely on our own resources.

The major issues of our time will not be resolved by Steiner's lectures or books. The books can and ought to give us a certain basis, enabling us to form an inner attitude, serve as a guide; the answers will only come through ourselves.

Thus, the matter is not complicated. We, as teachers, have the answers in ourselves and around us in our interconnections and interrelationships. Yet, how are we to reach into these depths?

\*

For many years, I have been accompanying teachers and young people in Waldorf training courses. In recent years, I have observed a curious phenomenon. A lot of young trainee teachers or young teachers, even those with a deep connection to anthroposophy, carry out their spiritual training through other spiritual paths: Buddhism, mindfulness, yoga, Kabbala, Judaism, Sufism, to name but a few. Thus, a young Waldorf teacher completed the training with excellent results, is a good and much-loved teacher, but for herself she practises Buddhism.

There is nothing to be said against it, yet I find this phenomenon strange. Why do young people come to us, learn a lot about the anthroposophical world-view, form a deep connection with Waldorf education, and yet choose other spiritual paths for their self-development? What are we to make of that?

In my view, it is caused by the difficult, challenging and lonely, anthroposophical spiri-

tual path. What counts as a matter of course on all the other spiritual paths that I know of, for example mentoring for the individual and supportive groups, are missing us. A lot of young people find our spiritual path too lonely, too difficult, and personal accompaniment is lacking. Thus, they work in a Waldorf school and find an answer to their deep spiritual needs somewhere else.

These thoughts have led several teachers and former teachers from the Waldorf school in Harduf, Israel, to try to develop exactly these above-mentioned methods as a part of the anthroposophical path of spiritual training. The approach is based on working as a group, in which each person is a student and a teacher at the same time. The group has a strength, which is the actual teacher. We have resolved to take the first steps on the anthroposophical spiritual path together (The basics first: "How to attain Knowledge of the Higher Worlds", the "Auxiliary Exercises", etc.). In Harduf we meet at least once a week. Several people take turns in leading the group and the work varies in a rhythm between small groups of 3 or 4 and large groups. The main thing for us here is meditating together, exchanging personal experiences of the past week and talking about new steps.

After having practised this method of working in Harduf for a certain time period ourselves, we intend to continue cultivating this work with the college of teachers in various Israeli Waldorf schools. Parallel to this, I am bringing this method of working into the Waldorf training courses in Israel.

It is my conviction that, if our students and teachers find their spiritual path in anthroposophy, if they find companionship, conversation, an exchange of personal findings, in a common effort and, of course, find the deep

perspectives of the spiritual training course, we shall be able to reach the spiritual source.

### **Exoteric Work**

The Waldorf impulse came to all human beings and should, in my opinion, benefit all children, if at all possible. This cannot succeed, if we simply carry on the way we are accustomed. In most countries of the world, the Waldorf school is a privilege for rich and/or educated, aware parents. Indeed, we have managed to spread very broadly as a world movement, and admirably so, but we normally remain within the same circles.

Here I see a swing of the pendulum. We should move in an inward direction – the last part – and then swing outwards. Movement in one direction strengthens and enlivens the other. That is movement between the poles so that we continually go deeper in each direction: the more the esoteric-meditative work is deepened inwardly, the more influence we will have outwardly and vice versa. At present we tend to be in the middle and at a standstill. Therefore, we need movement!

### **Research into Daily Teaching**

The third level is to be found in research of the daily work in the Waldorf school itself. As already mentioned, the Waldorf movement has its strength in tradition, in the forms which Steiner and his successors have created. That is where we feel secure; we know a lot. Yet it is there that we have our weakness too. For the forms have the tendency to stay, to become rigid and constrain us. In order to perceive the new era, the challenge of our environment and to face current issues, we need to open up, create a free space and at least for a while, forget the forms.

We may find help in the question: What is of lasting value and what has temporary value in our educational work? In other words,

which elements should we keep and which should we change so that they can rise up to the call of our time?

We must have the courage to question many elements of Waldorf education such as content, method and customs. I will emphasise my starting point once more – that each of us actually has the answers within them and that proper group work can help take us there. The path to a profound, spiritual place, where the indications to the answers lie, should definitely be taken.

By this, I mean work on the basics: Group work based on trusting and listening to the others. In the college meeting we can call all our teaching work into question. We can observe the signs of the times, the world in which the children are growing up, i.e. the circumstances of the school and the children, reading these signs in the children, along with the parents and young teachers. Based on these observations, we should research the educational traditions (what is done at the Waldorf school): What should stay? What should we change? In which direction? What exactly do our children need? What fosters their well-being? When and where do we have the feeling that the children are strengthened in their life forces? When and where do we have the feeling that they are drying out, getting tired?

In recent years, I have been accompanying several colleges of teachers who want to work on these questions. I cannot go into more detail in this article, but, if we answer these questions, and show the courage for new developments, based on our (anthroposophical) understanding of the human being, our pedagogy will develop further. Lots of qualities, such as, e.g. the artistic element in lessons, the significance of nature and the question of relationships for all

forms of learning, require renewed affirmation.

According to my experience in Israel, there are a lot of people in all educational circles, who have a deep yearning for precisely these "Waldorf qualities". In recent years we have had really lovely experiences with state schools and kindergartens that were looking for "Waldorf" inspiration.

I would like to stress my intentions even more clearly. I do not think that a state

school will be transformed into a Waldorf school. What matters to me is simple: that as many children (and teachers too) as possible practise the art of education, practise art, work in the garden, admire nature, look after animals and so much more and from time to time use Waldorf methods.

What I see before me is a great public educational movement which takes its inspiration from the Waldorf impulse. Parallel to this, there is the Waldorf movement. Both movements can work in a good relationship to one another.

## The Waldorf School in its Second Century

An invitation to an exchange of views

*Christof Wiechert*

*(translated from German by Margot M. Saar)*

### **Introduction**

We are looking back on a string of important celebrations all over the world. They have been colourfully documented and the media, too, had important things to say about them.

A great vista unfolds of what Waldorf and Steiner Schools around the globe have achieved, with much imagination and inspiration, in order to celebrate their centenary.

We can now gratefully conclude that these festivities have grown on truly fertile pedagogical ground. Stuttgart laid on a congress rich in content; major education conferences were held in Dornach, Bangkok and Buenos Aires. In many other places and in various events people reflected on the foundations of this art of education; and finally, a powerful manifestation of forces in Berlin's *Tempodrom*, where enormous efforts were made, not for reward's sake but for the cause itself.

What remains are musical and pictorial impressions, vying in colour and movement for a place in our memories. In summary we can say that the Waldorf Schools have demonstrated what they are capable of after a hundred years.

This contribution will ask about the future. Will the images stay the same? Will the second centenary look just like the first? Will the schools and this art of education continue to meet with the same levels of acceptance and criticism?

It is good to ask how Waldorf Steiner Schools will develop and what their second hundred years will be like.

### **Outline**

As we enter into this dialogue we need to consider how long the individual schools have existed. Schools that only embarked on this new adventure fifteen or so years ago, will have a different self-image and answer these questions differently from schools that have practised Waldorf education for thirty or forty years. Besides this largest group, there are also schools that are over fifty years old. The two latter groups feel the urge to shape the future, the need for a future-viable perspective, most strongly.

The very young initiatives are still in a process of self-finding and self-identification. The thoughts expressed here will therefore be less relevant to them. But we will ask nonetheless where Waldorf Education is heading. *Quo vadis?*

### **Opposition**

We must also think of the critics and opponents who, after a hundred years, keep targeting the school and the movement with the same accusations. Are their claims justified or do they need to be refuted? Again we need to ask how we will deal with this in future.

### **Our Self-Image**

The self-image of Waldorf Steiner Schools rests essentially on five pillars: firstly, a sophisticated developmental psychology arising

from Rudolf Steiner's spiritual-scientific research and underpinning the education. We think that we have important methodological indications for this. Secondly, a curriculum – ranging from pre-school to the end of secondary school and derived from the child's or young person's developmental stages – that facilitates gradually awakening and increasing learning experiences. For many subjects important and original methodological indications have been given that allow for a broad rather than narrowly defined implementation of the curriculum. Human development is, after all, a major undertaking that leaves no room for narrow-mindedness.

Thirdly, there is the artistic approach in all subjects, not as an end in itself but as a means to an end. These artistic influences bring intellectual and practical skills together and make the growing human being 'whole'.

Fourthly, Waldorf Steiner Schools have their own sociality; there is no selection based on talent or on parental means, no repeating of classes, no standard punishments, no discriminating grading in the lower school; and the administrative ideal is that of a teachers' republic. The fifth pillar is the firm conviction that the state must limit its influence and not seek to prescribe teaching contents, so that independent teaching is possible.

The modern view of the educational system is that the civil society – that is to say, the parents who wish for this education and those who are willing to provide it – takes responsibility for it.

The picture outlined here describes the school in its essence. Anyone who knows and understands education cannot seriously argue with this.

Rudolf Steiner must have been thinking of this when he said to the teachers in Switzerland, "Another aspect is that the crux of anthroposophical education is its method. The schools apply a certain method. It is not a question of any particular political direction but purely and simply of method. It is also not a question of any particular religious creed, or of seeing anthroposophy somehow as a religious creed. It is simply a question of method. In the discussion that followed my lecture cycle<sup>1</sup> my answer to the questions on this was simply that the educational method represented here can be applied anywhere, wherever there is the good will to introduce it. [...] I believe it would be a good thing if you could always give the greatest prominence to these two aspects<sup>2</sup>. They are perfectly true, and much damage has been done to us by the constant repetition of the view that Waldorf Education can only be carried out in schools apart from the main stream, whereas I have repeatedly said that the methods can be applied in any school."<sup>3</sup>

History has taught us that schools 'apart from the main stream' have basically become the rule. Beautiful, flourishing gardens of Waldorf cultures have sprung up. And while they can continue to grow ever more beautiful, they are hardly in touch with the social landscape around them.

1 Rudolf Steiner: *The Child's Changing Consciousness and Waldorf Education*, GA 306, Anthroposophic Press 1996, transl. R. Everett.

2 The first was the establishing of so-called 'model schools'.

3 Rudolf Steiner at the meeting of the Swiss School Association (*Schweizer Schulverein*) during the Christmas Conference, 28 December 1923, p.m. In: Rudolf Steiner, *The Christmas Conference for the Foundation of the General Anthroposophical Society 1923/1924*, Anthroposophic Press 1990, p. 168, transl. J. Collis.

In the 1990s, Professor Heinz Buddemeyer conducted an interesting experiment in Bremen (DE) that deserves not to be forgotten. The city-state's education secretary at the time asked Buddemeyer to join forces with Peter Schneider and examine whether Waldorf education was possible in a mainstream setting.

Some Waldorf teachers then began working in a regular elementary school. The experiment turned out to be very beneficial for that school: the students' performance, attitude, social skills as well as the general mood in the school, parental satisfaction, in short the whole ethos improved considerably. When the teachers were asked four years later who would like to continue, none of them said 'yes'. It was too late. The Waldorf Schools had, by then, cultivated their own 'gardens'<sup>4</sup>

I should mention here that Rudolf Steiner had envisaged a much faster spreading of Waldorf Schools. The opposition stirred up by the social threefolding ideas and the attacks from economists, politicians and the churches were so intense that fast growth, into the state education system in particular, was no longer conceivable.<sup>5</sup>

### **An Extended Picture**

Another picture to hold up next to the schools 'apart from the main stream' is that of the school of methods that can be put into practice wherever there is 'the good will to introduce it'. Such a school will probably differ from a traditionally grown one in that it will

be more institutional, fact-oriented, inconspicuous. And yet, we need to bear in mind that Rudolf Steiner thought this possible.

The Intercultural Waldorf School in Mannheim (DE) (a model that has been tried out in other places since), is such an extended school, a second form of Waldorf School that is less 'garden' but has more of an impact on the social environment.<sup>6</sup>

In Oakland, California, too, a Waldorf School has been established in a socially deprived area. This school does indeed operate with almost no garden but has become a refuge for children of many nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. These children learn through the art of education, but they also learn to live in peace with one another. This is the Waldorf Community School, which, unlike the Mannheim School, is supported by the State of California without any pedagogical interference.<sup>7</sup>

What characterizes this school is the smooth transition between school life and the students' family lives in the city. The two penetrate each other in that the school life is absorbed by, and can unfold in, the family life. There are no discussions on the school's principles or foundations, unless they benefit the students and their families.

We also see large city schools with up to a thousand students that consist only of an upper school. I met a college of almost a hundred teachers in one such school, all of whom

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4 Heinz Buddemeyer and Peter Schneider, *Waldorfschule und staatliche Schule, ein Erfolgsmodell nicht erst seit Pisa (Waldorf School and state school: a successful model not only since Pisa)*, Meyer, 2002.

5 Tomáš Zdražil, *Die Freie Waldorfschule in Stuttgart, 1919–1925*, Edition Waldorf 2019, cf. the chapter on critical voices and opponents, p. 266.

6 Michael Brater, Albert Schmelzer, Christiane Hemmer-Schanze, *Interkulturelle Waldorfschule. Evaluation zur schulischen Integration von Migrant\*innenkindern (Intercultural Waldorf School. Evaluation of the Integration of Migrant Children)*, VS Verlag, 2009.

7 See online: *Community School for Creative Education, Oakland (CA)*. Founded by Dr. Ida Oberman in 2010. Cf. *Festschrift of the Friends of Rudolf Steiner Education, 100 Years of Education Towards Freedom*, Berlin, 2019.

have quite a relaxed view of 'Waldorf training' (because upper school teacher training hardly exists). They have nonetheless a profound sense of what Waldorf education is. Most of them are young and relate naturally to its methods and approaches. Like the Community School these schools have an open relationship to the Waldorf School and the surrounding social landscape. But they are indeed plainer and more institutional than conventional Steiner Schools. They don't look like Waldorf. These schools can only exist if they convey the art of education in some other form. The Rudolf Steiner Upper Secondary School in the centre of Oslo (NO) with its future-oriented concept is one example.<sup>8</sup>

This form of school was pioneered in Wanne-Eickel (DE) where upper school students can choose vocational training along with a classic school education, allowing them to gain experience in the working world as part of their schooling. The same principle is applied in upper schools that operate as technical colleges.<sup>9</sup>

What all these initiatives have in common is the attempt to make the art of education openly accessible and, in doing so, realize Rudolf Steiner's intention to apply the Waldorf method wherever there is the 'good will' to introduce it.

Let us return to the traditional Waldorf School that operates 'apart from the mainstream'.

Its separateness has created a space for many internal innovations. Class 12 projects have been 'invented', for instance, or basket-making and metal work in the craft lessons, the 'moving classroom', the evolving approach to media education, the class plays and upper school plays, eurythmy graduations, puppet shows and so on: the list of ways to implement the curriculum is endless. Hardly any of them go back to Rudolf Steiner. The latest edition of the 'Richter Curriculum' has 800 pages, while the original curriculum, collated by Caroline von Heydebrand, had just about 40.<sup>10</sup>

Many of these achievements risk the school's main concern – the 'how' of learning – taking second place. Often, even the identity of the Waldorf School is sought in all these extras rather than in the slim and concise description of its essence. This is one reason, no doubt, why the general public has less and less understanding of the Waldorf schools. Due to these excessive manifestations and possibilities, the real educational goals are lost from sight, a development that in turn provides more targets for critics (who may sometimes even have a point).<sup>11</sup>

8 See OECD – Innovative Learning Environment Project (ILE) at Oslo Rudolf Steiner Upper Secondary School at [www.olso-bysteinerskole.no](http://www.olso-bysteinerskole.no)

9 For an overview of these developments see Volume 9 of *Kulturwissenschaftliche Beiträge der Alanus Hochschule*. Peter Schneider, Inge Enderle (eds), Das Waldorf Berufskolleg. Peter Lang, Wiesbaden, 2012.

10 Caroline von Heydebrand, *The Curriculum of the First Waldorf School*. Floris Books, 2010, transl. E. M. Hutchins. See also Martyn Rawson, Tobias Richter, Kevin Avison (eds), *The Tasks and Content of the Steiner-Waldorf Curriculum*, Floris Books, 2014, transl. J. Collis.

11 A striking example of this is Till-Sebastian Idel's, *Max – Matrose auf dem Klassenschiff. Eine hermeneutisch-rekonstruktive Interpretation eines Waldorfzeugnisses* (Max, seaman on the class vessel. Hermeneutic-reconstructive interpretation of a Waldorf report). Quoted in Volker Frielingsdorf, *Waldorfpädagogik in der Erziehungswissenschaft, ein Überblick* (Waldorf education within the education sciences), Weinheim 2012. It is about a report written for a boy in relation to his behaviour in the so-called 'rhythmical part' of the lesson, in which one is indeed hard pressed to discover any pedagogical relevance.

Before a new school year starts we sometimes notice that new textbooks have been ordered, with new approaches to maths, reading and history teaching. None of them have anything to do with Waldorf teaching but they are used by the teachers, while the schools in question advertise themselves explicitly as Waldorf schools.

There is a danger of form and content falling apart, which, moreover, also leads to an above-average number of burnouts among teachers because the pressure to do everything that needs doing, including the *Waldorf extras* that are – explicitly or tacitly – expected, is immense. The weight of these expectations is a well-known problem in many schools. It is not the pressure to serve Waldorf education, but the pressure to provide all these extras, which are deemed to make Waldorf schools what they are.

This makes the school socially vulnerable, internally as well as externally, and opens the doors to all kinds of preconceptions.

How shall we deal with this in future?

### **A Future Image of the Waldorf School**

A new Waldorf School could be *more modest, slimmer*. Instead of countless extracur-

ricular 'happenings', it should provide something innovative and focus on the 'how' of teaching! That should be what singles it out.

If we ask people today what they remember from their own school years they tend to mention class trips and class plays first. A future Waldorf School should be remembered for its special way of teaching.<sup>12</sup> A new *simplicity* would transform the relationship between students and teachers because they would be working next to rather than opposite each other.

This new *simplicity* would make schools more accessible so that the public interest would be drawn to them. They could offer *adult education* or other courses (many music schools today are using the premises of Waldorf schools for their lessons).

A new sense of quality could evolve, based not on exams, comparison and selection but on teachers feeling a new responsibility towards the children and students.<sup>13</sup> Child and student consultations instead of tests.<sup>14</sup>

### **School Sociality: the Example of Language Teaching**

When the Waldorf School was started in 1919, Rudolf Steiner envisaged a strong modern

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12 Heiner Barz, Dirk Randoll, *Absolventen von Waldorfschulen – eine empirische Studie zur Bildung und Lebensgestaltung ehemaliger Waldorfschüler* (Waldorf School graduates – empirical study on the education and biographies of former Waldorf students) VS Verlag, 2007. This publication presents the number of trips, class plays and outings as memorable rather than the teaching itself. Rudolf Steiner once said of the Waldorf School that the 'how' of teaching would inform the memories of former students; cf. lecture of 11 May 1919 in Stuttgart (GA 192); for an English translation of this lecture cf. Rudolf Steiner, *Education as a Source for Social Change*, Anthroposophic Press, 1997, transl. R.F. Lathe, N. Parsons Whittaker.

13 At the end of GA 293, Rudolf Steiner called on teachers to sharpen their "feeling for responsibility of soul". What he meant was a responsibility for the development of the child or adolescent, not only their achievements. Cf. Rudolf Steiner, *Foundations of Human Experience* (formerly *Study of Man*), GA 293, Lecture 14, 5 September 1919. A new English translation of the entire First Teachers' Course (GAs 293, 294, 295) will be published around Easter 2020.

14 See Steiner's prophetic description of the child study in *Human Values in Education*, GA 310, lecture of 21 July 1924 in Arnhem (NL), Anthroposophic Press, 2004, transl. V. Compton-Burnett.

language programme, with lessons in two different languages (at the time English and French) after every main lesson.<sup>15</sup>

This was only possible, as Tomáš Zdražil quite rightly points out, because (most) class teachers spoke other languages.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, there was also no distinction between types of teachers. As the schools grew, more subject teachers and language teachers were needed and this resulted in a division into class teachers on the one hand, and language and subject teachers on the other. The class teachers were the 'main teachers' while their language colleagues, above all in the lower school, were in danger of being seen as less important. This was detrimental both to the teachers' sociality and the teaching of languages. Modern language teaching was often below par; and again, this was most noticeable in the lower school.

This state of affairs would need to be remedied in the 'new' Waldorf School and there are ways of achieving this which need to be explored. If a school has parallel classes, for instance, the class teachers of two opposite classes could take on the language teaching in their own and the parallel class. If that is not possible they could cooperate closely with language teachers, with the latter taking co-responsibility for particular classes. The language teachers would still remain responsible for their particular languages. This can also work in schools that have only one class per year.

The new simple school will also question the proportion of part-time staff. The college of teachers needs to ask this question and establish conditions for the part-time colleagues, for instance that attending teachers' meetings is mandatory. All teachers must have the same responsibility in future; there can be no division in primary and secondary responsibilities. Interestingly, this was an issue even in Steiner's time.<sup>17</sup>

The importance assigned to modern languages (which Steiner saw as part of the school's identity) must be re-established in the new schools. This includes the endeavour to achieve other, and above all better, results at all stages.

### Simple Forms, Strong Education

A school's main concern is teaching. What does good teaching look like?

Els Göttgens<sup>18</sup>, a colleague who passed away seven years ago, was mentor to many schools, most of them on the west coast of North America. For many years, she was much loved and her work was greatly esteemed there, despite the fact that she was quite 'pedantic' and strict. She would, for instance, sit in with lessons, stopwatch in hand, and after 120 minutes point out how many minutes had been spent on real learning (usually not enough). How much time had been spent on proper practising? (usually not enough). She would also look out for a good lesson structure and whether all the children

15 See the first faculty meeting of 8 September 1919, or faculty meetings 40, 41 and 42, when a new timetable and new approach to language teaching was attempted. In: *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner*, 2 volumes, Anthroposophic Press, 1998, transl. R. Lathe, N. Parsons Whittaker.

16 Tomáš Zdražil, *Freie Waldorfschule in Stuttgart*, Edition Waldorf 2019, p. 188.

17 When Rudolf Steiner attempted to introduce a form of self-administration that was not carried by one colleague alone (in this case Karl Stockmeyer), others expressed the view that it seemed as if there were first- and second-class teachers. Cf. the faculty meeting of Tuesday 23 January 1923 (see footnote 15).

18 Dutch Waldorf teacher, 19.05.1921 – 30.06.2013, founder of the Brabant Waldorf School. Her book *Waldorf Education in Practice* is widely read in North America.

were addressed in a lesson; whether there was a healthy balance between artistic activities and learning, and whether the learning was artistic, original and creative. Aside from this rather 'technical' approach, she was a true expert in the art of education and in spiritual science.

Els Göttgens' conclusion was that however nice a school is, it can only be a Waldorf School if it practises the art of education. She often complained that, while teachers knew about the temperaments, they hardly ever applied this knowledge in class. It was her view that, if students practised properly, the time allocated to the main lesson would hardly suffice. And yet, many colleagues struggled to fill that time and much precious time was wasted. The essence of Waldorf education was her main concern. If teachers were able to grasp this essence, she thought, they would not only enjoy their teaching but gain energy and strength from it. Developing this faculty in teachers was what she aspired to. We often had the pleasure of experiencing the effect of her work in our schools: teachers seemed to 'understand' through her what an 'art of education' actually implied. It is a concrete, precise, consistent art and not something vague, woolly and personal. Els Göttgens lived Steiner's words that "*the practice of educating and teaching in the Waldorf*

*School must be impregnated with a true spiritual-scientific understanding of human nature*".<sup>19</sup>

### The Concept of Art

Roland Halfen wrote a wonderful essay about this, which is worth reading.<sup>20</sup> Also in the centenary year, Wenzel M. Götte published a volume on the artistic element in Waldorf education. His introduction makes us aware of the fact that this artistic element is not an end in itself but that it always unfolds its effect in the pedagogical context.<sup>21</sup>

The new simplicity plays an important role in connection with the question of art. Every artistic activity has an integrating effect. It lets the 'upper' human being work into the 'lower' one and vice versa. In other words, artistic activities involve (almost) our whole being – certainly cause enough for working in an artistic way! In addition, it is also true to say that the way we teach becomes an art in itself when we apply certain principles, such as making sure that the lessons 'breathe' between concentration and relaxation, that they are well structured and that there is a balance of images and words. When all these factors are in place, we can speak of an art of education. This art requires a skill that, once we have acquired it, will let us, almost unconsciously, do the right thing at the right moment.<sup>22</sup>

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19 Rudolf Steiner, *Die pädagogische Grundlage und Zielsetzung der Waldorfschule*, three essays, Einzelausgabe 1969, Zbinden, Basel (third essay; in GA 24, *The Renewal of the Social Organism*, Anthroposophic Press, 1985, transl. E. Bowen-Wedgewood, R. Mariott; chapter 'The Pedagogical Basis of the Waldorf School', p. 110.

20 Roland Halfen, *Erziehungskunst: Annäherung an einen Fundamentalbegriff in Anthroposophie und Pädagogik (The Art of Education Approaching a Fundamental Concept of Anthroposophy and Education)*, Beiträge zur Allgemeinen Menschenkunde, in Tomáš Zdražil (ed.), Edition Waldorf, 2017.

21 Wenzel M. Götte (ed.) *Das Künstlerische in der Erziehung* (The artistic aspect of education) Waldorf Edition 2019. In the introduction Götte describes space and time in connection with an enhanced understanding of human nature as elements of education; with special reference to Friedrich Schiller.

22 Rudolf Steiner described this faculty and how it can be acquired in his lecture of 21 September 1920 in Stuttgart. In: Rudolf Steiner, *Balance in Teaching*, GA 302a, SteinerBooks, 2007, p. 30, transl. R. Querido.

(I would like to mention here that 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century lifestyles have favoured images over the spoken word. This has resulted in a pronounced one-sided focus on imagery, on the visible, in all spheres of life, particularly education, while the spoken word, the audible, has moved to the background. It is part of the mission of Waldorf education to correct this one-sided tendency.)<sup>23</sup>

The question we face here is to what extent the arts or artistic activities serve education and when do they become an end in themselves. There are situations in the life of the school where one can ask 'Does this (artistic) activity serve the education or has it become an activity in its own right? Or is it simply there because art is always right and appropriate?'

Some schools' advertising makes you wonder if they are still about education at all. The same applies to other areas: Are Class 12 projects the pinnacle of education or have they become ends in themselves that have no pedagogical relevance in the life of the school? Is there any educational value in imitating these projects in Class 8? Is there a point to having a rhythmical part that has nothing to do with the rest of the lesson? How about wet-in-wet painting? We understand that it helps children use and experience colours and their effect independently of representational objects. The exercises we use are more than a hundred years old now. Will they, because they are so effective, be the same in a hundred years' time or are there other ways of achieving the same goals?

How is it with drawing, or form drawing? Or with handwork? Will the crocheted "Waldorf hats" ever be old hat?

Waldorf schools should present innovative ideas to each other, always asking if the new approach serves the evolving young person and the mission of Waldorf education.

There are many things, but they are struggling to become established. In the 1990s the Education Section organized World Teachers Conferences that included performances by students: recitation, recorder playing and eurythmy were not permitted. We were amazed at the original contributions we saw on the Goetheanum stage! The conference members, who had come from all parts of the world, were amazed to see eurythmy on unicycles for the first time in their lives! In 2019, at the Tempodrom in Berlin, the audience saw (and heard) eurythmy performed in wooden clogs!

### Questions for Schools in the Near Future

1. Can modern language teaching be reinvented in the way outlined above?
2. The gap between a purely human existence and algorithms and robots is growing smaller. Schools need to develop lessons that illustrate that we are spiritual individualities who can and must master machines. The students need to experience that they are in charge when they work with computers. What is human and what isn't? Could this be an additional task for religion teachers?
3. Because children and students use tablets and smartphones, they need more practice in improving the agility of hands and feet. Craft activities are not reserved for Christmas but have a place in the curriculum. An additional task for handwork teachers?

<sup>23</sup> This situation is impressively described in Rudolf Steiner, *Man and the World of the Stars*, GA 219, Anthroposophic Press, 1963, Lecture 6, Dornach, 17 December 1922, transl. D.S. Osmond.

4. If the technologization proceeds at the rate it does now, we should consider spending a whole day per week teaching outside, not only in Class 1, so that the senses can develop properly.
5. Given that, in Waldorf Schools too, more and more subjects become visualized, we will have to help the children or students to form inner images, of the stories we tell, for instance, or of other subjects such as geometry and history. Fewer essays and more imaginative exercises and conversations!
6. A thorough scrutiny of school life: What is essential and what is questionable and possibly irrelevant?
7. Can the school separate what is essential in Steiner's indications on education and

on teaching methods from more specialized anthroposophical contents? Anthroposophy is so rich and comprehensive that aspects that don't serve education can cause confusion. Each specialized area has its own anthroposophical discipline. Can we ask which aspects of spiritual science do or don't belong to the life of the school? Do we have to slim down and become more agile in this respect, too?

Pondering on the evolving human being is a worthwhile task. Pondering on an evolving school is equally worthwhile. But it is not only worthwhile, it is essential because if we don't do it, others will think for us and then it might be too late because 'those who do not move, will be moved by others'.

# Contribution to the Development of Independent Schools for a Society of Free Individuals

*Christian Boettger*

I was moved to write this article on changing our "school landscape" by two books that I was able to read in summer 2019: "*Alles könnte anders sein*" (meaning: "Everything could be different") by Harald Welzer and "*Weltklasse*" ("World Class") by Andreas Schleicher. This article consists of three parts: in the first I will present my thoughts on a possible course of school development and then two bridges will lead to the thoughts of Welzer and Schleicher, which led me to reflect in this way.

## **A School with a Prospect of Biographical Development**

I imagine a school in which even at the time of teacher training, but then particularly when a new teacher enters the school, they are asked to which of the four possible areas of responsibility they would like to commit themselves.

The first area would be the area of research and development of Waldorf education. This involves constantly developing Waldorf education further through research work. This kind of task can, for instance, be worked upon in collaboration with the researchers of universities or teacher training courses. With appropriate prior qualifications such a task may lead to a doctoral thesis, if applicable, via a scholarship. Of course, it is key that this research work always benefits everyday teaching work.

The second area would be that of training and further training. One can imagine here that such colleagues would first focus on de-

veloping their skills in introducing and mentoring new members of staff, but that then steps are taken in the work of training new teachers and also that the co-operation with teacher training centres for those studying while already teaching and those on full-time courses will be strengthened. For the school itself they could put forward interesting further training courses or workshops on an ongoing basis or even give them themselves. Training and further training will thus become an area of responsibility of the schools and will lead to the extensive networking of different schools.

The third area would be the work in the school's self-administration. This would involve relieving staff, who are active in other areas, of this engagement, taking on the direction and management of the school and preparing potential common decisions so well that they can be made without requiring a lot of time. This task is obviously an internal one in the school organism. It safeguards the autonomy of the school and school community, it connects the work of all teachers with the parents. A further area of responsibility, though, would be representing the school in the work of the association.

And the fourth area would be social work in completely independent areas outside the school; in principle, voluntary work on behalf of the whole school. According to the ideas of Harald Welzer, this work could be quite freely chosen. It would link the school with its surroundings or local community and

would probably bring back important issues to the school.

Of course, in the course of their teaching work at the school people could switch their area of responsibility; however, for the competence level gained to really enable the school's progress in self-governing and networking the period of commitment to one of the four types of task should be at least 5 years. I am convinced that these four areas would be of clear benefit not only to the individual school, but also to the association of Waldorf schools as a whole. For, they will help to strengthen a school's autonomy in a competent way and to foster solidarity among the teachers and the schools and teacher training centres. Of course, it is important for the colleagues working in the four areas to have time to share and discuss their experiences so that they can flow back to the college of teachers. Certainly, everything does not need to be so tightly pinned down in these four areas; the choice of fields of responsibility should take place in intensive, supportive, individual consultations.

I can hear two questions or objections: firstly, about the financing of such an undertaking and secondly, as to how someone can suggest such a thing, when everyone actually knows that teachers, especially teachers at Waldorf schools, are always so overloaded. I believe the many tasks in the school can only be satisfactorily resolved through a genuinely good distribution of them. If it is clear to everybody that our pupils are looking not only for teaching competence in their subjects from their teachers, but also for them taking an interest in the school as a whole and its educational basis, then ways will be found to reduce the teaching load as a whole and thereby to make activities possible that

go beyond the lessons as they stand; these, in turn, will have a healthy effect on the school organism. I think, once again following the suggestions of Harald Welzer, that even small changes can have a big impact at the end of the day, but you just need to make a start. Indeed, a school may possibly receive support from a foundation for such a project so as to gather the initial experiences.

### **A Brief Look at the Work of Harald Welzer: "Alles könnte anders sein".**

Harald Welzer, a sociologist and, as his colleagues call him, an architect of the future, who has become well-known as an author of books such as *"Selbst denken"* and *"Die smarte Diktatur"*, suggests in his book *"Alles könnte anders sein"* to simply think of society anew and he encourages people to start with small steps in the direction of their own idea of the future. The dead end with 'no alternatives', often conjured up, really means having 'no imagination'. Now this is not the place for a detailed book review, but in order to arrive at the helpful thought for school development which, among other things, led me to the idea of this article, I need to portray the outlines of his analysis of society and utopia.

From the start, Welzer's book is encouraging, based on the initial analysis that not everything in today's society is bad. It is a society which opens up *"the greatest possible freedom for its individual members"*<sup>1</sup> that people might be able to enjoy: a society which forgives mistakes. The mistake, he continues, is simply that in this society knowledge is taught and ignorance is practised. People may wonder how it comes about that there is still this incredible discrepancy. According to his analysis, at the same time, liberal democracy is under attack, geopolitically, in-

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1 Welzer, Harald: *Alles könnte anders sein*, p. 23; Fischer Verlag Frankfurt, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2019.

ternally and digitally, whereas a state based on freedom can only survive, if the moral substance of the individual citizen calls for and grants this very freedom.

In his next and key chapter he shows 17 building blocks with which a future world for free people can be built. Then in his final chapter the building blocks are checked to see how realistic a perspective there is for establishing them. In our schools we can see time and again that self-organisation and self-government will be one of the huge issues for the next century of Waldorf school development; and it is also one of the huge tasks for the survival of our democratic society.

In this article, the outstanding building block is solidarity with and for our fellow human beings. In a society, in which solidarity and support for other people is handed over increasingly to the nanny state, the individual person is to some extent becoming unaccustomed to solidarity. Welzer suggests rethinking this, "Instead, in a free society people would have to find a different kind of balance, in the sense of taking part in and sharing without discrimination benefits or assets in the public domain, this being implemented not only by the administration, but by all citizens. For the citizen, freedom means being different and being able to count on help".<sup>2</sup> Effective solidarity would mean a win-win situation for both sides, in that each person would stand for a cause or someone else without there being an immediate benefit for themselves. Welzer's students at St. Gallen University have developed a convincing idea within the scope of their dissertations: *"At least 20% of study, training or work hours should be available for voluntary work"*.<sup>3</sup>

This so-called 80/20 concept, he goes on, is an effective measure against isolation, it can give the individual more meaning in their life beyond working in their occupation, is real empathy training and, in the end, will lead to value creation in society. These students also made suggestions for its implementation by simply compensating employers for the solidarity work with payments from taxation. It is evident how much employers would gain from this active involvement of their workforce, for the satisfaction found through voluntary work outside their usual work would flow back to the workplace.

At this point, the work of our teachers at Waldorf schools occurred to me. What would it mean for the schools, if their staff would also get time besides their lesson time for such involvement outside the classroom? What would it mean for their lessons, for their relationship to the children and adolescents and, of course to the parents? Mind you, it obviously sounds utopian in the face of the serious shortage of teachers and the heavy load of work through the many other tasks that a self-governing school brings. How can space be created for these voluntary commitments?

**Andreas Schleicher: "Weltklasse-Schule für das 21. Jahrhundert gestalten" (Forming a World-Class School for the 21st Century)**

The second book is *"Weltklasse 2"* by Andreas Schleicher, who heads the Directorate of the OECD in Paris and is a co-ordinator of the PISA Programme. In this book he summarises his view of the schools of tomorrow which he gained from countless travels and investigations of the most varied educational systems around the world. Thus he says in the

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2 Ibidem, p. 142.

3 Ibidem, p. 208.

introduction, "In order to overhaul the school system comprehensively, not only is quite a different vision required of what is possible, but also intelligent strategies and effective institutions"<sup>4</sup>. According to his analysis, today's schools are the creation of the Industrial Revolution, in which the prevailing norms were standardisation and conformity to rules. Today, very different abilities are called for, for the system has turned out to be much too slow in this fast-living world. At the moment, even the best school systems in the world could not manage to do justice to the needs of the pupils and teachers any more. It requires, he argues, completely different basic conditions, under which the innovative powers of the teaching staff and schools can unfold. Reading these sentences, I wondered whether his experiences with Waldorf schools come through here, which he does not make public in his professional work.

In the course of the book, the educational system in Singapore, which came out first in one of the PISA studies, is looked at time and again. The Singapore Minister of Education made it clear to Schleicher in 2014 "what great significance Singapore attaches to the fostering of creative and critical thinking, social and emotional abilities as well as good qualities of character"<sup>5</sup>. Altogether, his book endeavours in six chapters to develop a concept of education through the eyes of an academic, and to expose myths about education. He pursues the question of what distinguishes effective educational systems, endeavours to approach the task of fairness in education and then describes in the two final chapters how people can enable educational reforms to

happen and which steps are the next ones to take. I do not want to get more into a book review, but rather portray one of the approaches for school development from Singapore that led me to the idea for this article.

*"Singapore promotes teacher development through its Enhanced Performance Management System. This system, which was fully implemented for the first time in 2005, is a part of a career and support structure in the educational system"*<sup>6</sup> This programme envisages that right at the start of their professional life new teachers are offered three different career branches to choose from. *"Firstly, the teaching branch, in which the teachers remain simply teachers and are able to rise to the level of master teacher, secondly, the leadership branch, in which teachers can take on leading positions in schools and in the Ministry of Education, and thirdly, the Senior Specialist Fast Track, in which teachers enter the Ministry of Education in order to (...) form a strong core of specialists (...) which opens up new territory and helps Singapore to maintain its leading position"*<sup>7</sup>

You will notice straight away that these branches do not have much to do with the development of Waldorf schools, but, after all, the basic idea is fascinating that nowadays there seem to be fewer and fewer young people who want to remain in their profession their whole lives without an outward change. Maybe this is a reason why in western societies fewer and fewer people decide for the teaching profession. In any case, we could ponder what kind of interesting biographical development opportunities we could offer young teachers.

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4 Andreas Schleicher, *Weltklasse, Schule für das 21. Jahrhundert gestalten*, Bielefeld, 2019, p. 16.

5 *Ibidem*, p. 27.

6 *Ibidem*, p. 109.

7 *Ibidem*, p. 109.

## Pedagogical Musicality in the Immediacy of Teaching – How to Change Oneself in Teaching the Upper Middle Grades

Colloquium of the International Forum concerning the pedagogy of the upper elementary classes – Part III.

*Claus-Peter Röh*

Out of the International Forum two years ago a colloquium started, concerning itself with the pedagogy of the upper elementary classes. All members of this group of 7 to 9 colleagues are or have been class- and subject teachers. The aim of this initiative group is to work on urgent questions concerning the specific development and methods of Classes 6 to 8 and to make that available for the school movement.

The sequence of the themes corresponded with the steps of change during the first teacher course of 1919: Out of the perspective of the human development at this age, practical methodological aspects for teaching were looked for. Therefore, the metamorphoses of the anchoring in body and soul, leading to the rising ability to judge, stood at the beginning. This was followed by the special meaning of the imagination at this age, by the rhythm of day and night in the so-called "threefold steps" of teaching and by the development of the etheric heart (see Part I in the Journal of the Pedagogical Section, Easter 2018, Nr. 63). To realize more exchange with the colleagues in the schools, colloquia and conferences about the methods in those Middle classes took place in Estonia, Hungary, Switzerland and Germany.

In September 2019, some members of the group had the chance to meet before the Waldorf-100 Celebration in the Tempodrom of Berlin. This time the main theme was the teacher himself: How do the dynamic

changes of the pupils challenge the teacher to change himself? The starting point was Steiner's Lecture 6 out of *Art, seen in the Light of Mystery Wisdom* (CW 275, 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1915). In that lecture the art of music stands opposite to the art of sculpturing and architecture. Out of that polarity, the aim is developed, to strive for new connections between the two sides, even up to a "reconciliation of the arts". From the interweaving of the arts in the building of the first Goetheanum, the perspective turns to pedagogy: A stream of sculptural forces rules within the young human being, within the pupil. What was brought along out of the realm of pre-birth wants to mould itself, wants to find its forms. An expression of this sculptural stream is bodily growth. Closely connected with that, the soul forces strive forward.

The forces of the teacher, with which he meets those sculptural lifeforces coming from the past in the children, are described as musical and as coming from the future: *"The very best in you which your spirit can think and your soul can feel, and which is preparing itself to make something of you in the next incarnation, can work on the part of the child that is sculpturing its form out of times long past."* In relation to this, the conversation led to different pictures of the musical quality in the teacher:

- Out of the aim of the Waldorf School to strive for an 'education towards free-

dom', the concept of 'musicality' is widening to a basic forming force in teaching. In this sense, the immediate effect can be experienced not only while practising music, but also in all rhythmic-musical elements of the lesson: This can be in the healthy change from tension to relaxation in the rhythm between listening and speaking or in the breathing between the element of thinking and the activity of the will.

- The influence of the musical element on the community can be experienced in many situations of teaching: Encountering the young human being and building up a conversation in a lesson, the musical element leads to a quality of awareness, in which the individual impulses as well as the perception of the social wholeness of the group live within each other.
- The main point of the musical quality in the teacher was described as a growing trust in future development: By working on himself, by questioning the necessary steps for the future and by experiencing challenging 'eye-of-a-needle-situations', inwardly and outwardly developmental steps, which were not visible or expected before, can be realized.

Following this description of the effects of the pedagogical-musical elements on the liveliness and changeability of teaching, the question was posed in relation to the middle classes: According to your experience, which are the existential turning points in the work as a class- or subject teacher in the transition from the lower to the middle classes? Which own developmental steps were helpful and reliable meeting the new challenges of this age? In the following final part three main aspects of each participant are expressed:

*Ellen Fjeld-Koettker (Norway)*

- We need to widen our interest and try to have an imagination of the true being of the "other," of every pupil with whom we interact daily.
- It is important to be aware of how our pupils respond to the content we teach – is it relevant and meaningful? Do we give them the necessary soul space to breathe and enough opportunities to interact?
- Can we ask ourselves: Why do we teach this theme or block at this time, just now? Is it appropriate according to the age and development of these pupils?

*Michal Ben Shalom (Israel)*

- Find out: What is my 'water of life'? Where do I 'drink', to gain new forces? Is it my daily work, a conversation, a daily walk, a moving thought out of anthropology, a moment of quiet, poetry or music?
- Can I realize a new step of teamwork out of a healthy exchange in my faculty?
- Can I find a way to formulate and to move questions between meditation, night-time, "fishing" in the morning and experiences in the classroom?

*James Pewtherer (USA)*

- Passionately remember your own youth when you were that age. Love the way these pupils see and meet the world now.
- Try to make an inner picture of who this youth will be in the future: What do you see? An engineer, an artist, a doctor, a social worker or a journalist? Can you help them to find their own destiny path?

- Create spaces where you call on their will, on their own activity as pupils. Oblige them to be co-creators of their world.

### **Pedagogical Musicality in the Immediacy of Teaching**

The final task was to develop concrete, perhaps small, but realistic working steps from these questions and objectives. In the attempt to formulate the effects of these steps on teaching, different gestures and time qualities became apparent. First of all, effects on the students' side, which are in a clearly noticeable temporal succession to the teacher's activity, were described.

The intensive mental preparation and thinking through of a topic the next morning often leads to an increased inner security in the teacher. A feeling can arise from having made the topic one's own in such a way that it is available with greater flexibility.

In addition, the effect of one's own artistic, voluntary work, for example when drawing or sketching during the preparation of content and method, often appears the next day in the variety and determination of the working approaches, also on the students' side.

Other effects of the above-mentioned exercise steps do not come into play as a direct consequence, but rather appear as metamorphoses and transformations: Where, for example, a space of questioning mental reflection on a situation or an encounter in the classroom is formed, a transformation of the atmosphere towards greater awareness and attention can often be noticed the next morning. It seems as if yesterday's intense reflection has "tuned" one's attention like a kind of instrument.

If the interest in the way in which the student personalities participated and expressed

themselves increases, a noticeable consequence in the following days is often an increased awareness for sensory perceptions of the individual pupils: How do they move and meet each other? How do they individually approach work? This metamorphosis plays a decisive role, especially where students in this time of the Middle Classes confront us with new riddles through their behaviour: A deepened interest in the moments of inner reflection opens up new possibilities of perception and new perspectives on the young person in the following encounters.

This "tuning" of one's own "instrument of perception" can take place in different ways, for example, as described above, by remembering one's own student and youth time. Through conversations with other teachers in the class or with parents, the inner space of questioning interest can also be widened to such an extent that new aspects of development can again become apparent in the course of the lesson.

If we continue to follow the qualities of the musical "tuning" of an "instrument of perception" in the educator, the liveliness of immediate teaching and encountering corresponds to the performance of music. In a concert, the essence of a composition is realised through the harmony of the people performing music. Thus, in the moment of teaching, education is realized through the harmony of the human being: If the educator succeeds in attentively observing the young person as he goes along, he can 'hear' his inner reactions and questions from the immediacy of the encounter and connect his actions with them. Conversely, in the midst of the events, the young person also experiences the whole person in the educator. If both sides sound together in such a musical way, both directions of will can meet in a free way on the respective theme.

This level of a deeper teacher-student encounter has been one of the foundations of Waldorf Education since its foundation. Steiner describes such a perception of the young person in the immediacy of action as an intuitive element necessary for education, which has its roots in music: "One must also learn to read, so to speak, the result of one's own pedagogical action. Then, when you fully appreciate this, you will see what an enormous importance it is to intervene in the right way, especially with the musical element, in education and teaching in elementary school (up to Grade 8) and to have an understanding of what the musical element in a person actually is". (Rudolf Steiner, *The Essentials of Education*, Lecture 3, Stuttgart, April 10 1924 in German: GA 308)

The need to be alert to one's own pedagogical actions resulting from the encounter with the pupils is also the call for self-evaluation of the work. Especially where the development of the students in the Middle School is going through dynamic changes, it is of decisive importance to perceive the effects of one's own teaching. In this sense, such a musical teacher-student relationship forms the breeding ground for learning through mutual free will impulses. At the same time, this musicality is a key to a deeper perception of one's own actions and thus to continuous development. Being questioned about the musical secret of his life and work the 80-year-old cellist Pablo Casals once answered: *"I think I'm slowly making progress"*.

## An introduction to the report from China consisting of different emails collated by colleagues from Chengdu

*Dorothee Prange*

*translated by Steffi Cook*

Fortunately the Pedagogical Section is in frequent contact with our Asian friends. They and their initiatives are currently going through a period which is not at all easy. Colleagues are relating their experiences, their worries:

"Suddenly everything stood still, many sick people, many dead, overworked doctors and nurses! No more room in the hospitals, new ones were quickly put up. The crematoria are in need of assistance to help them manage the situation. People are sad, fearful, frustrated and upset at the same time. Everyone holed up together in their small apartments,

all working online to keep up with school work and jobs. All of a sudden daily life takes place in a completely different way".

At the same time our friends in China have become creative: hotlines have sprung up for answering questions, information on everyday living is available, ranging from ideas for playing games together to reading a book. Teachers' meetings are taking place via Skype and several pre-planned pedagogical meetings and visits are replaced by a series of Skype conversations. This, to date, applies to China, Hong Kong and Korea!

## Eyewitness Reports from Chengdu

*by several authors*

In China, because of this terrible epidemic, everything has paused. The whole environment and atmosphere are really intense. Many people are infected and dead. Many doctors and nurses have also collapsed. People who work in a crematorium in Sichuan have to go to Wuhan, to support the crematorium, because so many people have died. In the crematorium in Wuhan lots of cellphones are on the ground and they have not been taken away. Relatives cannot come and there are no ceremonies. People are very sad, very angry, frustrated and upset. This is a huge disaster and trauma for most Chinese people.

We are already at home and cannot go out for a month. Now, everything is slowly getting better. This Spring Festival we must stay at home without school and work, this gives us a lot of time to be with the family, to be with children in daily family life, cooking, cleaning, reading, playing games, and meditation, etc. Many people have cherished life and a sense of family very much. This is a very precious gift from this terrible event. We all have learnt so much from this terrible epidemic. I hope the governments can also make big changes to make medical and science truly independent from political control.

It may take a few weeks to start the new school term again. So we are all at home to work through internet. Our early childhood education forum (CECEF ) has done a lot of work to support parents and children together to go through this difficult time.

Because there is no school, that government required "no school but have to keep learning". Therefore, all schools must have launched online courses which means that teachers have to do broadcasts live or send work to children online. Since a couple of days ago, every day, according to the school's daily schedule, parents request to assist their children to study in front of the screen. Chinese, math, English, sports, art, etc. A lot of young children cannot follow and focus, so parents have a very hard time. It's very messy, crazy and confusing, just like a drama. And the teachers and schools have to constantly adjust, and it is also very hard for them. Now, many children say they really want to go back

to school and have face to face study, no more online courses. It is very interesting. I really hope that someone can do research on this special situation to compare the differences between online learning and in-class learning for young children. It must be very valuable research.

As Waldorf teachers, we have to strive to find a balance in this process. On the one hand, we minimize the time and chances for young children to use the screen, but we still have to use the Internet to do some work. For primary schools and kindergartens, our focus is to use the online courses to support parents and encourage them to take care of their children's lives and studies at home. For middle or high school students, they do need some online courses. I have to say that we are also all learning how to cooperate with the Ahrimanic forces, not simply confront or avoid them. It is very interesting innovation and experimentation for us too.

## The Structure of the Morning Verses

*Dorothee von Winterfeldt – Atsiki, Limnos, Greece, October 2019*

*Translated from the German by Margot M. Saar*

Translator's Note: some passages in this article refer specifically to the German language. I have included them in this translation because they might be of interest to English-speaking readers too. When it comes to punctuation and structure it can be helpful – as the author points out – to look at Rudolf Steiner's handwritten versions even if one does not understand the language.

This year, we celebrate not only the centenary of the Waldorf School but also that of Rudolf Steiner's handing over of the Morning Verses to the teachers of the first school in Stuttgart (DE). Why and how this came about – shortly after the school's opening – is described in detail in the little book *Die Morgensprüche in den Sprachen der Welt* [The Morning Verses in the Languages of the World], published by the *Pädagogische Forschungsstelle* [education research centre] in Stuttgart. We also learn about the background of the verses from the minutes of meetings Rudolf Steiner had with the teachers once the school was founded, particularly the meetings of 25, 26, and 27 September 1919.

The morning verses have since been translated into many languages; almost 40 of them are included in this little book. In many schools they are spoken by the students every morning. I therefore often worked on them with teachers and student teachers when I visited Waldorf Schools and teacher training seminars across Europe, because in many cases I had the impression that the verses had been passed on but their content was not really consciously penetrated.

Among other things, this was apparent from the fact that the structure given to the verses by Rudolf Steiner was often not observed but had been replaced, particularly in the verse for the older classes. I, too, had learned this different way of speaking the verses as a young teacher and it took some time before I realized that I had stumbled into the traps Rudolf Steiner may well have deliberately set for us.

When studying the verses in diverse working contexts, it was my main concern to encourage the course members to observe the verses precisely. I would always hand out copies of Rudolf Steiner's original handwritten versions (extracts of which can be found on the cover of the book mentioned above!), with a printed version on the following page for clarity. We would start by looking "naïvely" at the original manuscript because one can discover much in them even without knowing German. We then looked at sounds, rhythms, grammar and syntax. It is enlightening even to just look at the punctuation Rudolf Steiner uses, which he does in some places in quite a pronounced and deliberate way.

Before I go on to my main concern, which is the structure of the verses, I will point out various other aspects hoping to inspire readers to study the verses in more depth.

### Sounds

Have you ever noticed that the verse for the lower classes does not initially use the sound "oo" [the vowel 'u' in German]? Have a look for yourself when it appears for the first time and where else it is used.

### Rhythms

The verse for the lower classes uses the iambic metre. This has a strong waking-up effect on the children that guides them into the school day as it were. If the verse has been spoken over a longer period of time, however, without being consciously penetrated and with a strong emphasis on rhythm, it ends up being just rattled off. We can prevent this by gently raising the children's consciousness (I refer to a passage in Lecture 4 of *Balance in Teaching*, where Rudolf Steiner speaks of the polarity between the 'I' being too much or too little incarnated.)

(By the way: I have often heard people say that one should not discuss the verses with the children. Yet, in his meetings with the teachers Rudolf Steiner says quite clearly that one can explain aspects of the verses to the children once they know them by heart.) In the verse for the higher classes there was originally a line where the rhythm could have become a trap, but Rudolf Steiner corrected this by indicating, in the fourth line from the end, that the order of two words should be reversed [see footnote 2].

### Grammar and syntax

In German, the verse for the lower classes begins with a genitive (*Der Sonne liebes Licht* – the Sun's loving light), leading us from the periphery to the centre. The word 'I' does not appear at all for some time. The verse for the higher classes, on the other hand, begins with 'I', and it is essential that the students themselves articulate this word. If the teacher leads the recitation there is always the danger that the students only come in on the second word, omitting the important word 'I'!

I am glad to say that the debate about the first line of the morning verse for Classes 1 to 4 has subsided: for a long time the view has made the round in the German Waldorf world that Rudolf Steiner had meant to say, or dictate, "*Der Sonne Liebeslicht*" (The sun's light of love), rather than "*Der Sonne liebes Licht*" (literally: The sun's dear light). The difference soon becomes apparent if one familiarizes oneself with the essential qualities of the parts of speech.

And why, one may ask, did Rudolf Steiner [in line 5] not use one compound noun "*Sonnenlichtesglanz*" [as would be customary in German] rather than keep the three nouns separate [which is unusual]: "*Sonnen Lichtes Glanz*"?

In conclusion, I would like to call attention to the metamorphosis, in German, from "*arbeitsam und lernbegierig*" (diligent and eager to learn) to "*zum Lernen und zur Arbeit*" (for learning and for work). Originally, Rudolf Steiner had also used nouns in the lower-school verse but he amended this later by hand.

Maybe these brief contemplations can inspire readers to study the verses in more depth.

*Incidentally: In a course I gave as part of a post-graduate training programme, we spoke very openly about personal experiences of the verses. One course member said she really had a problem with the words "arbeitsam und lernbegierig":<sup>1</sup> We agreed that we should not recite anything with the children that we feel uncomfortable with, but that we also have to learn to understand the child's soul in a new way, because children are often able to cope with difficult con-*

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1 Both words are unusual in modern German and can come across as old-fashioned.

cepts. – As the course went on, we discussed Rudolf Steiner's suggestion to "explain" aspects of the verse to children once they knew it by heart. I proposed to give Class 2 children a small task as homework: the children should, for the next day, think about what their favourite word from the verse was. This can be a helpful remedy when classes tend to "rattle off" the verse (see above). Looking in more detail at the meaning of words gently raises awareness. – The mother in question came back laughing on the next day, saying she had asked her daughter, a Class 2 child, what her favourite part of the verse was and the girl's enthusiastic answer had been "arbeitsam und lernbegierig".

### The Structure of the Morning Verses

If we look at Rudolf Steiner's handwriting "naïvely", as I suggested earlier, we notice that entire passages appear to have been written seamlessly, without changes, while in others words were deleted or amended. It is worthwhile comparing these changes with the original versions.

At first glance, one cannot discern a clear structure that would indicate shorter or longer pauses in recitation. But a structure emerges if we look at the punctuation.

**Comma, semi-colon, full stop and dash** are important structuring aids. People no longer know the purpose of the semi-colon today and rarely use it. In order to understand its meaning, we only need to look at the two signs of which it is composed: a full stop above a comma. They signify that a main clause, and therefore a partial thought, comes to an end (full stop) while the overarching line of thought continues (comma).

Rudolf Steiner's use of these punctuation marks is conspicuous and they are important

indicators as to whether the voice should go up or down at the end of a line. After a full stop or semi-colon the voice goes down, indicating a conclusion; a full stop will be followed by a longer, a semi-colon by a shorter pause before the next phrase. After a comma, the voice goes up because the sentence continues. A full stop followed by a dash clearly indicates the end of a paragraph.

I don't need to say any more, really, because I have already given you enough material so that you can embark on your own research. But I would like to say something in summary about the structure of the two verses.

The verse for Classes 1 to 4 is basically made up of one single extended thought: the first full stop only appears shortly before the end. The final two lines are like a summary – indicating an interaction of "from thee" and "to thee". The structure here truly reflects the overall content of the verse.

The verse for the higher classes has a very clear *threefold structure*, with the first part only coming to an end after "I look into the soul that, living, dwells in me", not before! In this section it is also important to note the semi-colon after "wherein the stars are gleaming". It indicates that the voice must go down because a new line of thought begins: first we looked up to the heavens and the cosmos; now we look down to the fourfold world of stones, plants, animals and human beings. But we have not finished looking yet, because now we also look "into the soul". Full stop!

This more analytic, linear section is followed by a shorter one of four lines that has more movement and a lemniscate quality, ending with a full stop and a dash.

The entire verse concludes with an expression

of will, in the wonderful statement "I, seeking, turn myself". Here, the rhythm is broken by the insertion of the word 'seeking' where the expected rhythm would have a rather soporific effect.<sup>2</sup>

I discover in this structure a threefoldness that one could relate to the familiar triad of "thinking, feeling and will".

This threefoldness can be made visible by printing the verse with a space in between the individual sections.<sup>3</sup> How the verse should be spoken is shown by the punctuation – semi-colon, comma and full stop, as described above. Special attention needs to be given to the semi-colon after "wherein the stars are gleaming", the comma after "the plants they live and grow" and the semi-colon after "a dwelling in our soul". The first two of these examples in particular, illustrate how much importance Rudolf Steiner attached to the conscious penetration of the verse's content. Letting oneself be guided by the rhythm dictated by the words "wherein the" at the beginning of each line, leads to the incorrect punctuation and ultimately the distortion of the structure intended by Rudolf Steiner.

*Of the translations into European languages that are accessible to me and which are included in the publication mentioned earlier, only a few follow Rudolf Steiner's indications. This may be because these translations are based on faulty German versions. Maybe this article will inspire readers to look at the verses with new eyes.*

In the Greek language, by the way, the semi-colon has a different meaning because it is

used where we would put a question mark. In such a case, the punctuation cannot simply be taken over from the German. The semi-colon needs to be replaced by a full stop, but one needs to be aware that the line of thought continues.

The translating of Rudolf Steiner's work poses an immense challenge, and respect and gratitude is due to anyone taking on such a task. I would also like to take this opportunity to warmly thank the editors and collectors of verses who made the little book of morning verses possible.

**I would like to end by sharing some of the experiences I had on my many school visits:**

Many years ago, at Eckernförde Waldorf School in Germany, a Class 6 gave me one of the most wonderful experiences I have had on my travels when they spoke the morning verse in Latin – with incredible presence and radiance. Unforgettable!

In a school in Estonia the class teacher let the class speak the verse by themselves, without even starting them off. There, too, I witnessed how children can connect independently with Rudolf Steiner's words.

In Trianemi, the first school in Greece to apply the principles of Waldorf Education, Class 5 were speaking the verse in their first year when I was invited to visit them. I asked the class teacher if I could speak the verse once in the German original, and she happily agreed. It was wonderful to see the children's eyes as they followed my recitation with earnest devotion. When I had finished one

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2 Translator's note: in the German original Rudolf Steiner first suggested "Will ich mich bittend wenden" (following the expected rhythm), but then indicated that the words 'mich' and 'bittend' should be reversed: "Will ich bittend mich wenden" which results in an (unexpected) syncopated rhythm.

3 Cf. the 2005 edition of GA 40, *Wahrspruchworte*, p. 349f; and at the end of this article.

boy called out, "TELIA" – which means as much as "perfect" – and the whole class applauded. Thank you, Rudolf Steiner!

And finally, we all know that upper school students can grow tired of the verse. I came across such a situation in a Class 9 in Askim, Norway, where I was invited to spend two weeks teaching English for two hours every morning. The students vigorously refused to speak the verse with me, in whatever lan-

guage. I suggested to them that we could create a new translation, in English: this also gave us good lesson material and allowed them to work intellectually with the verse. Taking the German original and their Norwegian translation as a basis, we worked intensively every morning at the beginning of the lesson – for two weeks. Imagine my surprise when they asked me on the final day if they could speak their newly created English version together!

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Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner, 1919-1922, Volume 1, Hudson, NY, 1998, translated by Robert Lathe & Nancy Parsons Whittaker.

Rudolf Steiner, *Balance in Teaching*, Great Barrington, 2007, lecture of 22 September 1920, translated by Ruth Pusch.

Der Sonne liebes Licht,  
Es hellet mir den Tag;  
Der Seele Geistesmacht,  
Sie gibt den Gliedern Kraft;

Im Sonnen-Lichtes-Glanz  
Verehere ich, o Gott  
Die Menschenkraft, die Du  
In meine Seele mir  
So gütig hast gepflanzt,  
Dass ich kann arbeitsam  
Und lernbegierig sein.

Von dir stammt Licht und Kraft,  
Zu dir ström' Lieb' und Dank.

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Ich schaue in die Welt,  
In der die Sonne leuchtet,  
In der die Sterne funkeln;  
In der die Steine lagern,  
Die Pflanzen lebend wachsen,  
Die Tiere fühlend leben,  
In der der Mensch beseelt,  
Dem Geiste Wohnung gibt;  
Ich schaue in die Seele,  
Die mir im Innern lebet.

Der Gottesgeist, er webt  
Im Sonn'- und Seelenlicht  
Im Weltenraum, da draußen  
In Seelentiefen, drinnen. –

Zu dir o Gottesgeist  
Will ich bittend mich wenden,  
Dass Kraft und Segen mir  
Zum Lernen und zur Arbeit  
In meinem Innern wachse. –

The Sun with loving light  
Makes bright for me each day;  
The soul with spirit power  
Gives strength unto my limbs;

In sunlight shining clear  
I do revere, o God  
The strength of humankind  
That though so graciously  
Hath planted in my soul,  
That I, with all my might,  
May love to work and learn.

From thee comes light and strength,  
To thee stream love and thanks.

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I look into the world,  
Wherein the sun is shining,  
Wherein the stars are gleaming;  
Wherein the stones are resting,  
The plants they live and grow,  
The creatures feel and live,  
And we to spirit give  
A dwelling in our souls;  
I look into the soul  
That, living, dwells in me.

God's spirit lives and weaves  
In light of sun and soul  
In heights of worlds without  
In depths of soul within. –

To thee o spirit of God  
I, seeking, turn myself  
That strength and grace and skill  
For learning and for work  
In me may live and grow. –

## Pedagogical Section Research Week

*Jon Mc Alice*

Since the early 1990's the Pedagogical Section has hosted an annual research week focused on various aspects of Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophical/anthropological understanding of human development. Initiated by Heinz Zimmermann and Jon McAlice, the research week has continued under the guidance first of Christof Wiechert and more recently of Florian Osswald and Claus-Peter Röh.

Initially, the work focused on deepening an understanding of the 14 lectures of the Study of Man as a source of pedagogical insight and creativity. It later branched out to include other aspects of Steiner's approach to understanding the nature of being human and how these relate to his educational lectures. In recent years, the work has expanded to include consideration of the mantra of the lessons of the First Class of the School of Spiritual Science as a path towards a deepened understanding of Rudolf Steiner's anthropological approach.

Over the course of a number of years, the question of Rudolf Steiner's concept of the "I" has been the focus. Remarks made in Bologna and then explicitly again in the last chapter of the new edition of the 'Riddles of Philosophy' point towards an understanding of self and self-as-agency that comes to expression as an ongoing dynamic between the peripheral or lived "I" and the centered "I" that is conscious of itself. This dynamic expresses itself as an iterative dialogue between the experienced and the cognized world. The shifting nature of this dialogue can be recognized both in the course of the development of humanity and the development of the individual human. It is the soul/spiritual context within which Steiner's ecological approach to education evolved.

These considerations of the nature of the self and its relation to the world within which it becomes conscious of itself have led to fruitful discussions of a number of key aspects of Steiner's pedagogical approach: the role of sense experience in child development, sleeping and waking, the development of memory, the role of movement and rhythm. They have also led to a considered questioning of the challenges Waldorf education is facing in light of the changing life-world of today's children and young people. This leads to a questioning of many of the assumptions that lie at the foundation of current approaches to education. Do all children need to learn the same things at the same ages? How much math does one need to be truly human? What role does the artistic play in an individualized learning process? To what extent can Steiner's characterization of the stages of child development based on his observations a century ago still be said to be valid?

In addition to shared study and exploration of Steiner's work, each year participants present their individual work. Topics can range from teaching mathematics in the 6th grade to the role of humor in esoteric studies. In recent years, insight of the growing presence of digital technology in the life-world, there has been a recurrent focus on questions relating to the healthy development of bodied consciousness and the role the etheric plays as the medium through which the soul/spiritual takes hold of and gives form to the bodily organism.

We look forward to other research weeks in the next years.

## Aspects of the International Engagement and Co-operation by the Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen (the Association of Independent Waldorf Schools, Germany)

*Dr. Albrecht Hüttig, member of the Board of the Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen from 2007 until 2017; member of the IAO Board, lecturer at the Freie Hochschule Stuttgart  
Translated by Steffi Cook*

It is a well-known fact that the Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen (the Association of Independent Waldorf Schools) has been engaged internationally for decades, and this work is continuing. Their initiatives can be listed as follows: European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education (ECSWE), European Forum for Freedom in Education (effe), International Association for Waldorf Pedagogy in Middle and Eastern Europe and other Eastern countries (IAO), the Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum, the International Forum/The Hague Circle and the Friends of Rudolf Steiner's Art of Education. These diverse institutions reflect the fact that Waldorf pedagogy is effective worldwide. This in turn, means there are global tasks to be tackled; among them are the right to own a trademark, global legal and political scenarios, the quality of Waldorf education and, by association, the quality of Waldorf teacher training courses, the creative adaptation of curricular indications depending on the geographical regions, etc.

Understandably, a recurring question has been whether this engagement and its financial implications should be part of the important tasks of the Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen. My answer to that question is, yes. Why? Anthroposophy and Waldorf Pedagogy are focused on the human being, and never limited to a region, nation or continent. The cultural impulse that was channelled into the founding of Waldorf Schools

applies to all human beings. Overcoming national feelings, especially after the First World War, was an enormous concern and inner goal for Rudolf Steiner because all national thinking presents a dangerous, destructive luciferic force. The rage of fascism was based on such thinking. All Waldorf schools – including the kindergartens and therapeutic institutions – have the chance to contribute to a vision of 'one humanity in one world' – which is exactly what they are doing.

Far-right populism with its nationalistic motivation, which is growing in many countries and regions including Germany, is a threat not only to the fundamental principles of state, but also to the formation of a global sense of being human together. Anthroposophy and consequently Waldorf pedagogy are committed to this task. Numerous Waldorf school partnerships are effective in this way.

Another significant motif for me is that brotherhood as an original revolutionary demand is still very much a current issue which is also in need of being transformed into something concrete. The Waldorf School movement in Germany, unlike other associations, has resources which make it easier to provide help where help is needed. This has to be actively wanted and supported by all those involved in the decision making. For example, in the spring of 2019, the Waldorf schools in Germany decided to support the

work done within the Rudolf Steiner archive. This extended beyond promoting the publication of CW volumes relevant to Waldorf Pedagogy, which had in fact already been done. A sum of over € 80,000 was pledged to enable the continuation of current work on maintaining and making accessible the collection of manuscripts, notes, books, essays, etc. left behind by Rudolf Steiner. The contribution will cover a period of three years after which the subject will be reviewed.

The engagement of the Bund is also relevant with regards to the trademark. Using a trademark is necessary to legally protect the Waldorf quality, and to prevent anyone from applying the term „Waldorf“ to a pedagogical institution – school, kindergarten or thera-

peutic institution – without authorisation. The Bund will take legal action if this rule is not observed. A delegation of representatives from the International Forum and the Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen are working together on issues of trade law. The vision for the future is that the right to use the trademark will be administered internationally. An international Waldorf organisation will award a licence if a school wishing to call itself a Waldorf School meets the quality requirements of Waldorf pedagogy. The future will show whether this idea can be applied globally once it has been tested in a small setting. It goes without saying that global engagement will require global consciousness by all those involved. We are now given the opportunity to work together to cultivate this consciousness.

## Agenda

### 2020

June 2020, 5 – 7

Trinitatstagung  
(only in German)

June 2020, 17 – 19

Faustschülertagung  
(only in German)

October 2020, 24 – 27

Conference for support teachers and school  
doctors (German, English, Spanish)

### 2021

March 2021, 3 – 6

Conference about Cleaning in Schools  
(different languages)

### 2022

April 2022, 18 – 23

World Teachers' Conference  
(different languages)