

JOURNAL

FOR

WALDORF/RUDOLF STEINER EDUCATION

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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

Welcome to Journal 11.2

Our last Journal appeared in May this year, following many major changes in the relationship of the State with "special character" schools such as ours, in the form of National demands upon Curriculum, assessment and reporting. These challenges continue – but we are meeting them with a united effort, on both sides of the Tasman.

We start this Journal with an article on Portraiture in the curriculum by Van James (artist and teacher educator in Hawai'i). We thank scientist and former upper school teacher, Diederik Ruarus, for his contribution comparing creationism and main stream science.

Rosemary Gentle (RSSA Executive Officer) writes of the efforts of the Rudolf Steiner Schools Association (Australia) concerning meeting the Federal government's National Curriculum demands (an area with which the Pedagogical Section has been able to assist – as mentioned by Peter Glasby last Journal) plus similar efforts in New Zealand, as outlined by Thomas Proctor.

Sebastian Suggate contributes with his peer reviewed article, based on his PhD research on early versus later reading effects (the bibliography alone is invaluable for those speaking to main stream audiences, showing respected research that supports later reading).

John Allison completes his article on Accompanying the child - which relates to his latest book A Teacher's book (2009) - our thanks.

Paul White gives a lively account of a Flinders Ranges Stones and Stars experience with Peter Glasby and "mates" in the Australian desert heat of January this year!

Please check out the back cover for dates of educational conferences and seminars – we could not include all of them, however, each date represents an enormous amount of work and preparation, let alone the juggling of venues, times, and human resources. We look forward to seeing many colleagues at the 2010 Kolisko Conferences in Hawai'i, New Zealand and Australia.

(continued on inner back page)



INTERNATIONAL KOLISKO CONFERENCE

10 - 14 July 2010
St Peter's School, Cambridge, New Zealand

Connecting with Today's Children Healing body, soul & spirit

Eugene Kolisko was the school doctor for the first Waldorf School and he worked closely with Rudolf Steiner extending health practices consistent with the body-soul-spiritual nature of the human being for school age children. Kolisko conferences throughout the world are for Doctors, Nurses, Therapists, Teachers, Educators and Parents.

This conference is about understanding the OTHER - inter-recognition, inter-acceptance and inter-dependence. A place of interaction and interchange - empathy. We will explore anxiety, social withdrawal and hyperactivity in children, with lectures, art work, discussion and workshops that are practical on how to help.

We welcome Dr Michaela Glöckler, paediatrician & leader of the Medical Section at the Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland. She will be the keynote speaker addressing the theme.

KOLISKO CONFERENCE

Further information:

Medical Section
Dr Simon Bednarek
89 Auckland Rd
Napier
simon.bednarek@gmail.com

Federation of Waldorf Schools
Kathy MacFarlane
kymacfarlane@gmail.com

Pedagogical Section
Moll Foster



Meeting the Needs of Children Today!

International Kolisko Conference
February 14-18, 2010
Honolulu, Hawai'i USA

Dr. Michaela Glöckler, leader of the Goetheanum Medical Section, Switzerland, will keynote a conference on "Reading the Needs of Children and Understanding the Stages of Human Development--Birth to Age 21."

Other international presenters will also join this exciting conference for Teachers, Educators, Doctors, Nurses, Therapists, and Parents.

More information to come

Sponsored by:

Honolulu Waldorf School

Anthroposophical Society in Hawai'i

Medical Section of the Goetheanum

Contact: Van James at pacificajournal@gmail.com

The Portrait: Picturing Oneself in the World

Van James
Hawai'i
USA

So God made man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. –Genesis, 2:27

If the human being is made in the image of God, then it stands to reason that a portrait of a person reveals not only a physical appearance but something of the hidden spiritual essence, something of the divine spark in the person portrayed. Therefore, having one's portrait painted may lead to self-knowledge and self-transformation. Creating a self-portrait may be yet a more effective means to self-understanding and soul metamorphosis.

Every artistic expression is a kind of self-portrait. Every time we do something in the world we express a *picture* of our self. Waldorf students, daily active in the arts, create countless self-portraits in their drawings of houses, their landscape paintings, essays, poems, and dramatic presentations. Even solving math problems and playing games portrays the student through that activity. A child's every creation is a snapshot of her nature and character and an indicator of her stage of development. Good teachers can discern disposition and development by means of the work their students produce.

Besides this, from the kindergarten and early grades, children in a Waldorf school are encouraged to draw the human form. Eventually they do portraits and self-portraits in the visual arts. This work, an intrinsic part of the Waldorf art curriculum, is not just an exercise in observation and training in artistic technique but also an opportunity for self-contemplation, self-comprehension, and self-realization. Portraiture can be an important part of a child's healthy development and process of self-discovery.

The Portrait in History

Images of pharaohs, kings, deceased ancestors, and saints were created through the ages, but usually the entire figure was depicted. The Romans first emphasized the facial portrait with the sculpted bust that captured only

the person's head and shoulders. Often such busts were placed on pedestals. Although full-length portraits are not uncommon today, both in painting and in sculpture, we generally understand the word portrait to mean the image of a person's face. The word "portrait" originally meant an image of any natural or man made object, be it flower, rock, table, or animal. Beginning in the 15th century, and most especially since the 17th century, the term portrait referred to the image of a human being.



Fig. 1. Albrecht Dürer did his first self-portrait as a teenager. This silverpoint rendering, done on a specially prepared paper that does not allow erasing, was done in 1484 when the artist was thirteen years old. It is Dürer's first known work and the first known self-portrait in European art. This example was done by a ninth grade (class 9) Waldorf student.

The facial portrait became particularly significant during the Renaissance. Leonardo (1452-1519), Raphael (1483-1520), Michelangelo (1475-1564), and other great

Renaissance masters created portraits of contemporaries and established the tradition of self-portraiture. The Northern Renaissance artist, Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), did several penetrating self-studies over the course of his life (fig. 1). His pictorial self-examination set the standard for European self-portraiture in his time. This was the dawn of the scientific age. A new consciousness, which included an increased sense of the importance of the individual, used the self-portrait as a vehicle for self-reflection.

Nearly two centuries later, Rembrandt followed this theme of self-portrayal and used himself as a model for experimenting with light, dark, and the earthy Dutch palette of colors. At the same time he posed the simple and ultimate human question: "Who am I?" Rembrandt created more self-portraits than any other artist before him, about one hundred, and provided an example of the inwardly searching, morally striving human being (fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Rembrandt, a master of the effects of light and dark in painting, carried out repeated self-portraits as black and white etchings and as oil paintings on canvas. This watercolor rendering of Rembrandt's work is done by a class ten Waldorf student.

At the end of the 19th century, Vincent van Gogh, the post-impressionist artist, painted a number of self-portraits in the last few years of his life. He undertook an intense and desperate self-search to break through the veil of appearances in a quest for the deeper meaning of life (fig. 3).



Fig. 3. This self-portrait of Vincent van Gogh was recreated in watercolor by a class eleven Waldorf student.

The portrait and self-portrait continue to be important, used by modern (fig.4) and contemporary artists today as a means of exploring the deep mystery of the human being. Although generally a very private and personal theme, the self-portrait actually reveals aspects of the universal search for self-knowledge and is therefore an area of art that has far-reaching appeal.

The Childhood Portrait

Children seek, in a natural and unselfconscious manner, to create their own portraits throughout their formative years. When the young child first discovers a crayon is not for eating but for making marks on tables, walls and even on paper, she begins to draw— around the age of one-and-a-half or two years old. She first produces a



Fig. 4. Portraiture is a regular theme for the modern and contemporary artist; here is a double portrait after Emil Nolde, by a class eleven student. Class eleven students meet themselves in a special way through colorful, Expressionistic self-portraits.

combination of looping swirls and back-and-forth zigzag markings, referred to, fondly, as scribbles. These circular and straight line drawings become more controlled and specific, culminating in concentric circles, star forms, and circle-and-cross motifs around the age of three years (fig. 5).

Usually, by age three or four, human figures begin to appear as a further evolution of the circle-and-cross drawings. The Tree Man, Happy Face, and Ladder Person are often self-portraits of the child-artist even when they are said to be someone else. The creative imagination of each child is directly linked to her own growth processes. One sees the strength of the child's surging will forces in the Tree Man, the polarity between the head and the limbs in the Happy Face and, in the Ladder Person, the formation of the spinal column and the activity of the nerves and the sense organs.



Fig. 5. The stages of development in children's drawings, beginning around the age of two, show the gradual control over curved and straight scribbles, the closing of the circle and the crossing of the star, leading eventually to the forming of human figures; all of which are self-portraits of the child.

In these first attempts to render the human form the child naturally depicts the processes involved in her own physical development. As the forces that promote growth are freed from the task of forming the physical body they become the impulse for creative imagination in the child and the power of intelligence in the adolescent. These forces are essential to the healthy development of the child and can be cultivated as faculties and capacities. They should not be underestimated or allowed to atrophy.

In the Waldorf kindergarten, children are encouraged to draw simply by being given crayons and paper. No



Fig. 6. Class one chalkboard drawings should be simple, clear and archetypal. They are one of the most important teaching tools for instruction in drawing the human figure, but they support all other classroom subjects as well.

formal lessons or drawing instructions are necessary—no coloring books. The children need to be shown only basic use of materials—how to hold the crayon, for example.

In first grade the teacher helps the children with drawing techniques by means of chalkboard examples. Colorful, blocky forms without outlines, are viewed daily by the children as illustrations of stories told by the teacher and as part of the regular school lessons (fig. 6).

Figures are built up organically, from inside out, by surface areas of color rather than by contour lines that fix the form and that are only later colored-in as an after-thought. The teacher shows the first graders how one can “grow” the picture from a color “seed,” gradually arriving at the finished “fruit” form (fig.7).

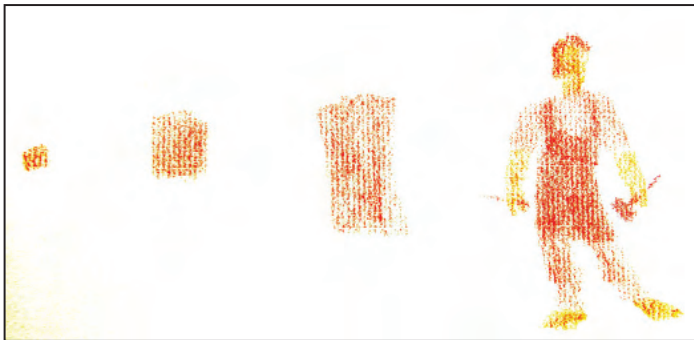


Fig. 7. The most natural way to draw is to “grow” a form from inside out. To build up a drawing from the ground up, so to speak, makes the process just as important as product.

Such a process is truer to the reality of things and has a moral integrity with relation to the object of perception. An outline intellectualizes and separates one from the phenomena, it makes the world into a fixed and finished concept. Outlines finish a form before it has any substance to justify its existence. As Paul Cezanne, the father of modern art, observed, “There are no lines in Nature.” The natural philosopher and poet, Johann von Goethe, too, said, “The eye sees no lines, only colored planes in various shades of light and dark.”

This surface area approach to creating a drawing is a holistic methodology, whole-to-part, that has important consequences for brain development and thought patterning in the life of the young child. To arrive at a picture of something after going through a process of growth and development that is true to the reality one is depicting has an ethical basis and veracity that contour outline drawing does not possess. This is as true in drawing

landscapes, plants and animals, as in drawing people. Coloring books are not used in Waldorf schools because they thwart the child’s own imagination by providing a fixed, linear image that someone else has produced. Giving children a blank paper on which to draw gives them creative freedom.

In the early elementary school—grades one through three—it is the full-length portrait of the human being that is important for the child to draw. Here the person is more than just a face! Arms, legs, torso, and head are all part of one whole person. This wholeness has an inside and an outside, a center and a periphery. This means starting drawings from a middle point and drawing outwards. In the case of a human figure, one naturally starts with the center of the body, the heart, and adds the extensions of the head, arms, and legs as appendages and connections to the outside world. The center-to-outside orientation is directly related to the child’s own experience of herself: I am related to the world as a point is related to the circumference of a circle. It is also the simplest way to draw and develop a form or figure—from inside to outside.

Around age nine a dramatic change in the child’s awareness takes place. She becomes aware of herself as a being separate and disconnected from the world. This makes possible a new approach to representing the human figure. In fourth grade, along with the study of the diversity of the animal kingdom, of fractionalizing numbers, and other subjects that address this new awareness, the child might attempt a first facial portrait, guided by the teacher.

The divisions of the face—where eyes, nose, and mouth are located—may be understood as parts of the whole, i.e. fractions. After guiding the children in creating a toned oval shape on their papers the teacher can show how half way between the top and bottom a guideline for the eyes may be drawn. Quarter divisions indicate the scalp line and bottom of nose, while a further division of one-eighth of the whole shows where the mouth may be placed. Ears are placed in reference to the eyes and nose guidelines, and the neck can begin at the outside corner of the eyes for a female or the bottom of the ear for a strong male portrait. When children are asked to use colors that approximate their own skin, hair, and eye color, the result

is a striking, unselfconscious self-portrait, done without the aid of mirrors or photographs.

The Adolescent Portrait

In class seven, while studying the Renaissance, the portrait work can be presented in the context of the great artists' search for the laws of human proportions. Studies by Leonardo and Dürer can be shown as students work now in a Renaissance style and technique. Both of these artists developed their own detailed proportional models for the human figure. It is important to point out to the students the fact that such systems were only designed as a framework and were never strictly followed by the artists who invented them. After establishing laws of proportion and perspective, these artists abandoned use of these rules in their later artistic work.

Recreating portraits of the Old Masters, just as adolescent apprentices did in workshops five hundred years ago is a time-tested, skill-building approach appropriate for the class seven and up into the high school. Working now with chiaroscuro, the effects of light and shade, the young person is challenged to pay much greater attention to outer details (see fig. 1). The resulting portrait may bring about a deep awakening of soul at this time.

In grades seven, eight, and nine there is a strong emphasis on the polarity of light and dark, scratchboard, and block printing. This is a good time to also experiment with different black and white drawing techniques. In class ten however, a gradual rediscovery of color can be approached with the earth tones of the Dutch palette. Working from Rembrandt portraits is well suited to this age group (see fig. 2). Building up the near-monochrome color scale of Rembrandt's oil paintings through simple watercolor applications of golden yellow, browns, and black, is key to successful results. Painting large, flat surface areas of color, rather than drawing, allows the human face to literally arise out of light, darkness and color. If the students follow their Rembrandt picture with a watercolor self-portrait in the same muted tones, they experience an immediate relation with the historic painting exercises.

In class eleven, after preliminary work with Impressionist, Post-Impressionist (see fig. 3), and Expressionist techniques (see fig. 4), the students can again attempt

a self-portrait. This time the emphasis is on subtle color nuances, bright hues mixed by the eye of the viewer rather than on the actual plane of the picture, and on color as expressively charged, visual emotion. The visual drama of such an approach meets the interests and developmental stage of this age group—all the previously mentioned artistic work is done by all of the students.

As a culmination of the high school years, besides the creation self-portrait clay busts (the exact point where this and other artistic projects are done may vary from school to school), oil and acrylic portraits may be a worthwhile endeavour. If elective painting classes are offered in class eleven and twelve other more challenging, self-chosen projects that involve portraiture may engage students.

Picturing Oneself in the World

Even if in later life students don't draw, paint, or sculpt another self-portrait, it is the artistic learning process and the dealing with visual appearance, form, color and composition, during the formative years that can shape the very way they look at the world and see themselves in that world. The art of portraiture, the self-portraiture in particular, is a process of putting oneself into the world and creating oneself in that world. It captures both an outer image and creates an inner substance. The portrait gazes back at us and tells us something of who we are; it shows us things we did not necessarily know before. A moment in time is captured but is then transformed over time. The portrait can be a way of learning what it means to be human and, if we're lucky, realizing something of the divine spark within us.

(First printed in *Renewal*, Fall/Winter 2005)

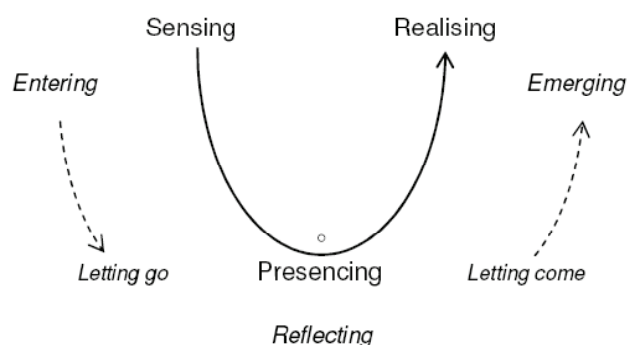
(with acknowledgement and thanks to Ronald Koetzch, the editor of *Renewal*).

Learning to Accompany the Child - Part Two

John Allison
Melbourne
Australia

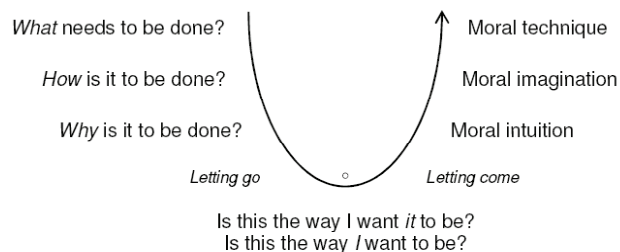
In the first part of this presentation (Allison 2009), I considered what it means to accompany the child, in a social field between shelter and challenge. I also reflected on the process through which we can be fully present; and through which we might grasp those insights we need, and embody them. In now taking these considerations further, we can observe that often today, we have a question, at the edge of which we feel completely in the dark. This is a common experience, yet it is quite discomforting, and can result in some unfortunate consequences. I've considered some of these previously (see the lecture 'Values and Steiner Education' on my website). We can observe that reactivity to doubt, hatred and fear can fuel some very troubled and troublesome behaviours, characteristic of the unfree person...

There is a path I advocate, first presented systematically in the 1980s by Glasl and Lemson of the Netherlands Pedagogical Institute (NPI) and called by them the U Procedure. It has been a valuable tool in organisation development since that time. Recently it has been elaborated as Theory U by Otto Scharmer; however, I now prefer to call it the U Path. It is an archetypal movement, a genuine praxis-path, which in essence looks like the following:



I have summarised Scharmer's development of Theory U, and articulated my version of the U Path in my lecture 'Presencing through the Life Processes'—there is a transcription on my website, and it is also the final essay in *A Teacher's Book*. Therefore I will take the principle as a given, and here develop the process further in relation to our theme. First, let's recall the concepts we've considered

from the *Philosophy of Freedom* and plot them on this U Path:



Here, on the left hand side, descending deeply into reality, is the path that opens—invisibly at first, as the way ahead can seem pathless—to the future, but before which is an abyss, a void of unknowing. In the face of that nothingness, all past certainties become insubstantial, unreliable. The New, the originating, renewing impulse, emerges only out of darkness; and what is ultimately experienced there as spirit certainty has to be tested by the world before it is valued:

There, on the threshold, the response, the spirit, is kindled ever new within; here, in an unholy and needy country, this spark is to be proven.

~ Martin Buber

We must have the courage to enter into the 'valley of the shadow of death'. I know that's a rather dramatic way of putting it! But there is in fact a little bit of death involved in this process—darkness before dawn, a *letting go* that must precede a *letting come*. Only then, through those stages we have already delineated from *The Philosophy of Freedom*, does the future emerge.

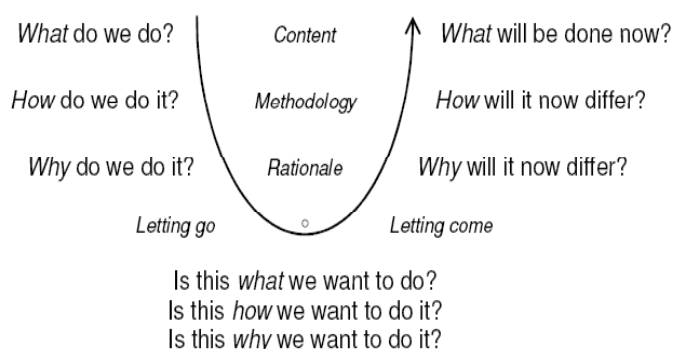
To make this more concrete, let's consider the Waldorf Curriculum—those penetrating *indications* by Rudolf Steiner which, in their purest form, appeared as moral intuitions, in many cases then elaborated by him through moral imagination into actual approaches to subjects and ultimately instituted into practices. A wonderful example of the way Rudolf Steiner himself worked with this pathway is the development of writing and reading in the Waldorf School. Steiner's moral intuition was that reading

would best be delayed until the children were about ten years old, but the authorities demanded outcomes before that age. So Steiner, living into the situation through moral imagination, exploring the possibilities and limitations, began to develop an approach that mirrored a progression in the evolution of human consciousness. Ultimately, his highly skilled moral technique lead to the teaching of the letters, proceeding from story to drawing and movement, to the abstraction of the alphabet and writing, and thence to reading, in the way it is done in the first grades — a way that is intended to cause minimal harm, if only the child is allowed to live the journey...

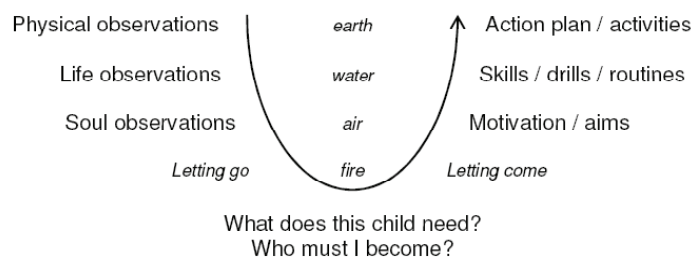
If we get this right, it's a great example of accompanying the child. And here we have to recognise there is a real challenge: to what degree do we truly accompany the child on this journey of realisation? Or do we now follow a tradition, an established path, cooking up a palatable education from a recipe? We might have to admit that in many cases we have worked these original indications (that is, pointings towards the way) into detailed recipes which are adhered to quite programmatically. Some suggest that this is useful—maybe justifiable—for an inexperienced teacher; but my fear is that these recipes will be the death of Waldorf Education. There can be a rigidification, resulting in unexamined practices, often referred to—you will have heard it, maybe said it—as 'the way we do it here'...

But education is an art and therefore the practitioner must confront the crisis of the blank canvas. My experience is that this is inevitable—circumstances, either inwardly or outwardly generated, require it. We can consider here two situations where genuine threshold research is productive; the first is curriculum review; the second, child study.

In the case of *curriculum review*, I believe we would be well-advised to undertake a continual and thorough reflective practice leading to renewal:



As individuals we can undertake this as a daily practice. For institutions, in our weekly meetings it forms a basis for creative and responsible group-work. The U Path can provide a procedure for our dialogues. As a further instance, in a *child study* we can work it like this:



Each time we need to find our way into the heart of the matter, asking:

- What do we observe? What are the physical phenomena?
- How do the concerns or issues manifest themselves? How is the habit-body active? How do the circumstances play out? In what situations is this apparent?
- Why might this be? What triggers these episodes / phenomena that cause us concern? What soul conditions do we perceive?

These are the first three stages of observational enquiry, through which we diagnose the situation. Then, because we do not really know, because we feel ourselves to be in the dark, because if there was not a lack of insight we wouldn't need to be talking about it at all, we have to *let go*. We feel ourselves to be helpless in this situation. This can be painful to endure. But we can only progress—and this seems to be a contradiction—if we are not attached to outcomes. Here, at the bottom of the U, in the valley of the shadow of death, to which we return repeatedly, the questions confront us at an existential or spiritual level. Michael Ray of Stanford University articulates the core questions thus:

- Who is my Self?
- What is my Work?

The answer to the first question, in terms that Martin Buber might use, is in the order of the 'I-Thou'—to know oneself as a Self, there has to be an Other. This is a fundamental matter of orientation. And the answer to the second

question has to do, not with having a job, but a vocation, a Calling. What is my *magnum opus*? My *real* work? The poet John Keats calls this task 'soul-making'. I've often referred to his wonderful letters, in which he says that we must develop 'Negative Capability—that is, when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact or reason.' This *negative capability*—the ability to stand in nothingness—is the prerequisite state for moral intuition.

Here, in what Keats calls 'the vale of soul-making', we notice that the attention – in those first stages so strongly focussed outside – has become more inwardly directed. When I was teaching my Class One in 1978, I brought a particularly problematic child to the attention of my colleagues. I didn't know what to do, but I was convinced the child needed to change. After discussing this child's problems for a while, seeing them all manifesting 'out there', I caught the eye of one of the other teachers, who asked me quietly, compassionately, bleakly: 'Who do you need to become, John, in order to enable this child's development?'

Answers to such a question do not always just pop up! In fact there is a resistance to even registering the question. Time, and an attendant courage to live with the questions is needed; in his 'Letters to a Young Poet' the German poet Rainer Maria Rilke says marvellously of this challenge:

Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and to try to love the *questions themselves* like locked rooms and like books that are written in a foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given to you because you would not be able to live them. The point is, to live everything. *Live* the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live some distant day into the answer.

In the child study, the questions that come at the bottom of this U curve are:

- What does this child need? Who must I be for this child?

Are these questions in reality any different from those asked by Michael Ray? However they come, often these

are humbling questions, which acquire answers only after a profound and often difficult process of *letting go*. A Taoist saying tells us that only when the cup is empty, can it be filled. So, letting go... Letting go, too, of the fear of failure:

In my discovery of the deed that aims at me — in this movement of my freedom the mystery is revealed; but also in failure to fulfill the deed as I intended, the mystery is revealed to me.

~ Martin Buber

Hence, the need for a rigorous *reflective practice* on this path: we act, and, as it may or may not be good, we must examine our action. Then, *letting come*, we are attentive:

Action springs not from thought but from a readiness for responsibility.

~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer

We stand in the Valley of the Shadow... At the bottom of the U Path... We learn to *be there*. My mentor Albrecht Hemming always played with the meaning of the word *responsibility*, giving it a spurious though suggestive interpretation in terms of 'response-ability'. An ability to respond... We can reflect on this as we work our way up from the bottom of the curve:

- The emergent moral intuition gives us purpose, motivation, and an aim — this is a response to *Why*.
- As we develop the possibilities in our imagination, a need for developed capacities becomes apparent. We may need new skills, techniques, methods — this is a response to *How*.
- Change can be imposed, inflicted — to enable genuine development, to enable the New to emerge, moral technique is the art of small steps through an action plan and action learning — this is a response to *What*.

As we emerge, that inward transformation is enacted: 'You must be the change you want to see in the world,' said Mahatma Gandhi. These final steps are willed action — responses, not reactions. Their efficacy becomes visible only in the following days. Or maybe years later... This is

the archetypal U Path. It is adaptable to all situations; for instance, I have formulated a U Path question sheet which I give to parents in my workshops, a particular version for them to troubleshoot difficult situations involving their teenaged children... It works, even when it is followed as a prescription, but it is more potent when the process has become internalised. When it is lived. So I say to parents, 'Pin this on your toilet wall, where you can contemplate it daily.' It's quite a good place for letting go!

I have presented this U Path in some detail; you may prefer to live in mindfulness of the essential indicators of the pathway, and especially of these accompanying phrases that come from the Taoist economist Brian Arthur:

- Entering / Sensing: 'observe, observe, observe' — *become one with the world*
- Reflecting / Presencing: 'retreat and reflect' — *allow inner knowing to emerge*
- Emerging / Realising: 'act swiftly, with a natural flow' — *bring forth the new*

In the heat of the moment, it simply means: press the 'pause' button, see what you're looking at, reflect on what might be required, then do it. If you want to consider it in greater depth, you can download that essay, 'Presencing through the Life Processes', from my website. Or else you could visit Otto Scharmer's website to find a detailed exposition of his Theory U.

Now, as I come towards the end of this talk, I find myself thinking of the emergence of the butterfly from its chrysalis. Have you ever watched this process? On a number of occasions I've watched monarch caterpillars, those enormous black-and-yellow creatures bristling with stiff black hairs, amazed by the way they carve at the edges of the swan-plum's leaves in a kind of culminating feeding frenzy. Each time, at a certain point, the engorged body seems to become slightly indistinct — the last time it happened I remember rubbing my eyes in order to focus — but it was as if a slight haze shrouded the creature... Then, quite suddenly the caterpillar had fastened itself from its hindquarters, hung down in the form of a 'J', and ... I think I must have looked away at just this point, distracted, perhaps because I was in the presence of a

mystery — and a few moments later there was a plump chrysalis, jade-green with a series of golden dots around its rim.

That monarch chrysalis did not seem to change for the first week or so. Someone told me that if I had cut it open at the end of this time, I would have found no caterpillar, nor yet a butterfly — just a fluid mush (now *that's* an evocative image in considering the changes taking place in the adolescent! But that's another story...). The green chrysalis gradually darkened, first becoming nut-brown, then blackening, until eventually the butterfly's wings appeared beneath the translucent shell. About two weeks after forming, the husk split, and the monarch butterfly emerged — but not yet resplendent — it was bedraggled, crumpled, struggling to get out. Again, I have been told that if I had tried to help it at this point, to have cut it free, to ease it from the chrysalis, its wings would have been deformed, and I would have deprived it of its full development.

Once free, it sat in sunlight, its wings pulsating gently. The monarch was pumping them up into their full expansive glory... Then it took to the air and light and warmth of late summer.

This butterfly image is often used as a symbol for the process of going through death, to the point where the soul and spirit are released from the husk of the body. And here I can relate it to that little death that has to take place in *letting go*, so the inner knowing can emerge... Sometimes there is form, sometimes there is mush, sometimes there is a difficult transition. How therefore does one accompany the caterpillar-child, the chrysalis-child, the butterfly-child, through its transformations? It begins through learning to accompany the questions through their inward transformations:

He listens to what is emerging from himself, to the course of being in the world; not in order to be supported by it, but in order to bring it to reality as it desires, in its need of him, to be brought — with human spirit and deed, human life and death. I said *he believes*, but that really means *he meets*.

~ Martin Buber

This is why I referred to that gesture we saw in Raphael as *empathic presence*. Empathy is the ability to accompany the inner as well as outer life of another being. David Garb — whom some of you may know — has given a great characterisation of empathy, in contrasting it with sympathy. In sympathy, one loses oneself in the other: 'I see you're in a big black hole — let me get down there with you.' In antipathy, on the other hand, one loses all real relation with the other: 'I see you're in a big black hole — but that's none of my business.' In empathy, however, there is the I-Thou relationship: 'I see you're in a big black hole — what are you going to do about it? How can I support you to do it?'

To be present — on *presence-ground*, as presence-beings in *world-presence*. That is how Rudolf Steiner articulates it in his lessons in the School of Spiritual Science. 'You are not on the Path until you become the Path,' is how the Buddha said it near the end of his life. This mystery — as I put it earlier this evening, of being there, with open-hearted interest, not attached to outcomes — this is what I mean by empathic presence. It takes place in the world-field between shelter and challenge, which also are gestures that belong to the task of the teacher, and which in fact open up the space for all I have presented here...

If it seems I have talked more about the adult than about the child, then you've recognised my intention. For children need us to become adults. Rudolf Steiner suggests that the truly educative element is that a teacher develops, and he articulates this methodically in the so-called 'pedagogical law' — that the higher member in the adult constitution works upon the lower member in the child (eg the adult ego works upon the adolescent astral body, and so on). We live today in an adolescent, reactive society; to become responsible (response-able) is an adult task.

Have I made this task sound complicated? I haven't intended to... I've wanted to share these aspects of theory and practice to illustrate quite clearly what otherwise can seem abstract or mystical — to create a context in which we recognise what Martin Buber means when he says that 'there are moments of silent depth in which you look on the world-order fully present.' Yes, I say to this, knowing that such presencing moments are the source — at least the ambience — of moral intuitions, if only we

would notice them, if only we are sufficiently attentive. Then we might deliberately prepare such moments, have the imagination to see possibilities, and develop the necessary moral technique — thus learning ways in which we can truly accompany the child.

Let's conclude with a little prayer by Melbourne cartoonist Michael Leunig that evokes the tender touching of hands we see between Tobias and Raphael:

Dear God,
We loosen our grip,
We open our hand.
We are accepting.
In our empty hand
We feel the shape
Of simple eternity.
It nestles there.
We hold it gently.
We are accepting.

- Amen

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There are transcripts of two other lectures on my website www.johnallison.com.au which provide complementary backgrounds to aspects of this essay:

Presencing through the Life Processes
(Christchurch Sept 2006)

Values and Steiner Education (Perth July 2007)

Evolution caught between intelligent design /creationism and mainstream science^{1, 2}

Diederic Ruarus
Christchurch
New Zealand

Within the anthroposophical world view, evolution of 'mind and body' is a fundamental notion. Rudolf Steiner (1861– 1925) hailed Charles Darwin's (1809 – 1882) findings as very important, and, in the context of the time, rightly so as it clearly made a case for evolution. In this article I want to focus on the clashes between the view held by mainstream science and those who have a different opinion on the subject of evolution, and in particular of the beginnings.

Thomas Huxley (1825–1895, Great Britain) and Ernst Haeckel (1834– 1919, Germany) postulated that the human being is descended from the great apes at some time in the past. Initially Darwin didn't go that far in his writings. At the end of 'The Origin of Species' (1859)³ he writes (p 429):

"Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having originally being breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning, endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved."⁴

In the last chapter of 'Descent of Man'⁵ (1871, Chapter 21, par 2), Darwin writes:

"The main conclusion here arrived at, and now held by many naturalists who are well competent to form a sound judgment is that man is descended from some less highly organised form. The grounds upon which this conclusion rests will never be shaken, for the close similarity between man and the lower animals in embryonic development, as well as in innumerable points of structure and constitution, both of high and of the most trifling importance, - the rudiments which he retains, and the abnormal reversions to which he is occasionally liable, - are facts which cannot be disputed.

Fossil records had been studied long before Darwin and had given rise to the notion of an ordered past; fossils of trilobites⁶ (fig.1) were found in older earth strata than those of *Archaeopteryx lithographica* (fig.2)⁷ (discovered in 1861 in south Germany).



fig 1. An exceptionally well preserved trilobite from Beecher's Trilobite Beds. Segmented legs are clearly visible. At this Lagerstätten soft body parts are preserved by pyrite. (540 – 230 Mya⁸).

- 1 It is inevitable that in an article like this generalisations will occur; just as there are mainstream scientists who do not subscribe to the physicalist view (see 15) there will be intelligent design adheres or creationists who accept evolution in some form.
- 2 For the purpose of this article I'll accept the conventional view on the geological time line, as that view is not material to the following.
- 3 Darwin, Ch The Origin of Species 1995 (1st ed 1859), p429 Studio Editions.
- 4 He could be called a creationist 'avant la lettre'.
- 5 Darwin, Ch, Descent of man, 1871.
- 6 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trilobite>
- 7 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dinosaur>
- 8 Mya = million years ago



fig 2. The famous Berlin Specimen of Archaeopteryx lithographica (230 – 65 Mya)

The notion of development too; Empedocles (~450 BCE) mentions it and so do various later scholars. The idea of development as opposed to the creation of various 'finished' species gained more prominence in the 18th and 19th centuries. Darwin published his 'Origin of Species' in 1859. Haeckel in 1868 and Huxley in 1869 state that the human being is descended from a common ancestor of the human and the apes, ie the human being is a mammal amongst many others; Haeckel called this common ancestor *Pithecanthropus alalus*⁹, and predicted it would be found in Indonesia¹⁰.

Towards the end of the 19th century many scientists were at ease with the view that one could see a progressive development in the animal (and plant) kingdom; the view that each species had been created 'ex deo' was held, and still is held, by many religious people of the Christian, Islamic and Judaic faiths.

And this is the point where the controversy has its anchor: did life start through an act of a creator or did it come about by chance¹¹? Using the word creator not only assumes a non-physical entity, but also an intelligent one and implies a plan, an idea that hopefully, will be realised in the fullness of time. It is of course all too possible that this assumption is wrong, and we're dealing with a creator-being acting on a whim, without a plan.

The current controversy¹² between intelligent design/creationism and materialism basically revolves around one's 'world view': the basic assumptions and beliefs one has about everything concerning our world. The notion of evolutionary development as such is not at issue, even most creationists recognise a progression in the later created creatures compared with those of earlier creations.

Mainstream science holds that we can reduce all phenomena (emphasis on all) of the world surrounding us, by applying the laws of nature to inanimate objects. As long as we confine ourselves to the realm of the non-living this view doesn't seem very controversial. For the adherents of this view, the world we know, with everything belonging to it, is the result of random processes and chance; there is no underlying plan, no goal to be achieved. For the purpose of this article I'll use the term 'physicalism' for this view¹⁴.

The view held by intelligent design/creationism adherents, that the world we know with everything belonging to it, has, as its cause, the act of a non-physical entity. As mentioned above, this implies at best, an initial concept of what is to be achieved and a plan how to achieve this, at worst a whim of the moment. For the purpose of this article I'll use the term 'non-physicalism'¹⁵ for this view.

I want to stress that both views are based on a belief:

Physicalism: that everything concerning our world is the result of random interactions between material objects, governed by laws of the physical world.

Non-physicalism: that in the fullness of time everything concerning our world will be shown to be the result of an idea brought to fruition.

Both positions or belief systems are equivalent in that, at present, there is no evidence, in the scientific sense, for either. To some, one may be more acceptable than the other, but that's a matter of judgement, ie world view, not science.

The following quote may illustrate how a physicist sees the problem¹⁶:

"I do not understand how the scientific approach alone, as separated from a religious approach, can explain the origin of all things, It is true that physicists hope to look beyond the 'big bang' and possibly explain the origin of our universe as, for example, a type of fluctuation. But then, of what is it a fluctuation and how did this in turn begin to exist? In my view the question of the origin seems always left unanswered if we explore from a scientific view alone".

As mentioned above the controversy is anchored in how life¹⁷ came about:

physicalists: Life is the result of complex processes occurring between material objects;

non-physicalists: Life comes from the creator being, the creator imbues its creations from life;

Not only do physicalists need to bring back the phenomenon of life to the random processes in nature but they also have a grave problem to explain: to tell a coherent story about how the physical and its interactions can be the cause of feeling pain, thoughts about physicalism or God and a myriad of other phenomena, concepts, emotions, wishes and the like but most of all, how life came into being or 'chanced'.

The non-physicalists have an easier but different problem to explain; to tell a coherent story about how the non-physical interacts with the physical, perhaps not for the initial act but certainly for all our actions. For example, how does the decision to write about evolution translate into physical processes that result in this article?

Reading 'Occult Science'¹⁸ by Steiner makes it crystal clear which belief system should be prevalent within

anthroposophy. Steiner describes a host of non-physical entities all involved in manifold ways with realising the coming into existence of a hierarchy of Freedom and shaping the appropriate environment. It is a detailed story, sometimes difficult to understand, but it places the human being in a very concrete relationship with its physical and cosmic surroundings, with the animals and plants and her/his fellow humans. Steiner also describes the nature of the human being from the same perspective, an idea incarnating in changing environments and going on a journey.

Steiner's take on evolution could be called 'top down', the conventional view as 'bottom up'¹⁹.

What do I mean by this? Well, without going into too many details, according to Steiner the idea to create what we call a human being was what started the current evolutionary process, of which the fossil record is only the physical trail which documents this process; the more complex the fossil records, the more complex the developing idea of the human being. So 'top down' in the sense that the idea for the atom bomb, VW or scissors, was there before the items mentioned. The main stream view is that these items were built from the material available through random processes.

There is no conflict between Steiner's view on evolution and the findings of science²⁰, ie the sequence of fossil findings; fossils are the remains of the mineralised substance of animals, so they can only be found of animals with bones, teeth (vertebrates) or chitinous exoskeletons (invertebrates). If the first 'incarnation trials' were of a non-mineralised nature, then we shouldn't be surprised at not finding any fossils. As the earliest fossils date to the end of the Neoproterozoic (Ediacaran period, which is the end of the pre-Cambrian period, roughly 544 million years

9 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernst_Haeckel.

10 The first human remains were found in Indonesia (Java Man dug up by E Dubois, initially named Pithercanthropus, later renamed Homo erectus).

11 For a brief overview of the current thinking see Inside Science, ed R Fifield, Penguin 1992, p213.

12 The controversy in education about teaching evolution versus creationism/intelligent design is not a scientific one but one reflecting our view of the relation between education and society.

13 These laws have been developed by studying our mineral world, inanimate objects and dead animals.

14 'Physicalism', the view that the real world contains nothing but matter and energy, and that objects only have physical properties, such as shape, mass, electrical charge, etc; (p 679 The Oxford companion to Philosophy OUP, 1995); thus all phenomena are to be explained ultimately by these concepts.

ago) era, we must conclude that any 'human incarnation' before that time was of a non-mineralisable nature²¹.

In his book, *Occult Science* and elsewhere Steiner also gives an indication of what you or I have to do to go on a journey aiming to acquire the tools to do our own research in the non-physical world and corroborate (or not) Steiner's findings. These tools may be very different from those acquired when studying physics, biology or music, the effort is probably the same but of a very different nature, the results of a more lasting and rewarding nature. Steiner not only tells a story, and a gripping one in my view, but also gives you the tools to check it out.

Steiner's view of the co-evolution of the human individual and the earth is fascinating with far reaching implications for ourselves and the earth: it describes 'us', not 'them' as does 'detached' 'objective' science.

In conclusion, evolution is to be taken as a panorama of phenomena, the interpretation of which is determined by our personal world view; the discussion (in most cases) is about the possible interpretations, not about the phenomena themselves.

(with acknowledgement to the author and to Vee Noble, the editor of *Sphere* vol. 10.2 June 2009, for permission to edit and republish)

15 another term could be: teleologicalism, striving towards some goal.

16 Towness, Ch H as quoted in Ferris, T: *The whole shebang*, p245 Weidenfeld & Nicholson 1997.

17 As we know it on our planet.

18 Steiner, R *An Outline of Occult Science* (1910, CW 13) Rudolf Steiner Press 1990.

19 'Bottom up' may seem more in tune with our democratic leanings, but not necessarily in tune with evolutionary reality.

20 Here I mean 'The findings of science' as the phenomena science studies, not the interpretation of these phenomena based on scientific theory and world view.

21 The fossils found in the Ediacaran period are a mystery to current science; conditions that prevailed on earth prior to this period may have been very different and not allowed for fossilisation or the substance of the organisms prior to that time wasn't suitable to be fossilised. I assume this applies to the organisms Steiner mentioned in *Occult science* as 'mineral-plant-animals, mineral-plants, plants-animals'.

Our own Australian Steiner National Curriculum Framework...

Rosemary Gentle
New South Wales
Australia

(Rosemary Gentle is the coordinator for the Rudolf Steiner Schools of Australia -an Association – the equivalent of the New Zealand Federation and UK Fellowship)

In 2008, an integral part of the incoming Federal Government's *Education Revolution* policy was the commissioning of an Australian National Curriculum. The National Curriculum Board was set up in 2008 to design and oversee the process with the specific mandate of having a national curriculum (K-12) in English, Maths, Science and History published and ready for implementation in all Australian schools from 2011 onwards. This process has been a very consultative one which our movement has engaged in with energy –

writing submissions, providing feedback to framing papers and attending State and Federal forums – at all times striving to protect the right to deliver our own curriculum informed by our own educational principles.

However, another pathway also opened up, which looked much more promising.

Under the Schools Assistance Act 2008, passed at the end of 2008, compliance with the as-yet unwritten Australian National Curriculum was made mandatory for all Australian schools. Failure to comply would jeopardise federal funding – the bulk of funding for independent schools.

At the time of the passage of the Bill, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, in response to questioning promised that a national recognition process would be drawn up for “well-established legitimate international curricula such as Montessori, Steiner, International Baccalaureate and the Cambridge University Examinations” already operating in the Australian educational landscape. This offer was confirmed by Ms Gillard in a letter to the RSSA in February 2009.

Between February and the present moment, ongoing conversations and negotiations have taken place between representatives of the RSSA and the National Curriculum Board and subsequently the ACARA Board (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority) about how this process might look, the criteria that might need to be met and what that might entail for us.

In mid-2009, a working party of ACARA was established to propose a draft process. Professor Barry McGaw, Chair of ACARA, wrote to the RSSA in August, informing them of this and giving some indications of the basis upon which evaluations of different curriculum frameworks might be made. A draft process was then sent to the RSSA Executive on September 3rd in preparation for a consultative meeting to be held on September 25th between ACARA and representatives of the RSSA and the Montessori Education Foundation.

It became very clear to us that, at the time we applied to ACARA for “recognition” (mid 2010) we would have to submit a National Steiner Curriculum Framework along with our application. Whilst all Steiner schools in Australia have their own curriculum documentation, up to this point there has not been a published National Steiner Curriculum in this country.

The RSSA Executive, after much consideration, took a proposal to the August delegates’ meeting at which all schools in Australia are represented. The proposal was that the membership agree to commission the design, development, writing and publication of a National Steiner Curriculum Framework.

Initially this was viewed as primarily a response to a demand from outside. However a profound change of mood occurred at the meeting. In the course of

discussion, there emerged strongly a common desire not to be reactive, but proactive – to recognise and seize this opportunity to:

- Collaborate
- Unite in purpose,
- Support and strengthen our national movement through finding the common ground
- Increase each school’s identification with the national movement
- Articulate our ideals and show how they inform our curriculum.

At the end of the day, it was envisaged that each school would have a viable national curriculum framework document which enabled each school to remain true to its mission. Oh yes... and ACARA would accept our curriculum as comparable to the Australian National Curriculum, would publish that recognition and advise all State registration and accreditation authorities of our status - giving us national credibility in a way that we have never had before.

The proposal was accepted! And now the exciting task begins!

This is probably the biggest exercise the RSSA has undertaken—and the most vital! The process will incorporate a research phase, a curriculum writing phase and an editing/publishing phase, overseen by a project manager. The documentation needs to be ready by mid 2010, when ACARA will be ready for applications. It needs to be made clear here that the “recognition” if successful will only be applied to member schools of the RSSA – a national “sign-off”.

Big exercises require considerable funding and time is of the essence! Member schools have been asked to dig deep and to find initial donations of up to \$1000 immediately. This combined with an allocation from the RSSA of \$10,000 will get the ball rolling. Schools have also been asked to budget for an extra levy for 2010 to fund the balance of this project. Of course, any and all donations from individuals or parents’ groups would be more than gratefully received!

This is our moment to gain national recognition and to ensure the steady growth of Steiner/Waldorf Education in Australia – let’s all get behind it!

The Secret Language of Form: Visual Meaning in Art and Nature

Book Review by
Robyn Hewetson
Hawkes Bay
New Zealand

- by Van James (2007) Published by Rudolf Steiner College Press
ISBN 978-0-945803-88-1

When I read Van James' new book on art, *The Secret Language of Form*, I was immediately inspired to begin writing a book of my own called, "The Secret Form of Language." This is not the first time I have felt the synchronicity between Van James' work and my own aspirations for the arts of speech and drama. The first occasion was when Van James spoke at our conference in Christchurch, New Zealand on Art and Consciousness. It was here I heard him break down the word "responsibility" into the phrase, "response ability." I knew then that I had the inspiration to continue my own work. I thought: "Which one of the arts develops the greatest ability to respond to all the manifold demands of modern life?" For me it is drama – and live performance. So began my inspiring journey of looking into Van James' wisdom about the Spirit and Art.

As with Van James' previous book, *Spirit and Art: Pictures of the Transformation of Humanity*, the production of the book is pleasing both to the eye and to the hand. The pages are arranged with easy relationship of the text to the many illustrations. There is space on every page for someone like me, who makes notes and references to other places where the text sends me roaming.

Van James is interested in communicating. His investigation into art is about exploring the language of form and how it has both educated and shaped us.

The opening sentence in the foreword caught my attention completely:

"There is a language that the people of all lands, cultures, and times have spoken to communicate their deepest truths and aspirations. This language is the same language Mother Nature speaks through all her creations."

In his first book he describes the journey of art from ancient times, through many civilisations to our present time with its call to arms and its over abundance of things to look at. This new book delves deeply into the forms that surround us, in nature, in the things we build and create, in the rituals and scribbles of our children and our great artists.

Van James is not only an artist with a paint brush and colour, he shows once again in this book that he is an artist of the word, presenting his theories and his examples with clear but evocative language, leading us to an experience of the things we are seeing, and describing them to us in a way we can retain and examine for ourselves. He takes us into seven basic categories of form for easy examination: Curve and Straight; Point and Dot; Circle and Spiral; Chevron, Zigzag and Lattice; Ladder, Spine and Tree; Symmetry; Cross and Swastika. The book is also full of wonderful quotes that illustrate the formative nature of art:

"The image cannot be dispossessed of a primordial freshness which ideas can never claim."

- John Crowe Ransom

"Art does not represent the visible, it makes visible."

- Paul Klee

This is a book that should be read far more widely than in our Steiner School communities. It is a book which enriches our understanding of our human journey, rich with symbols to live up to and into. It is a feast of visual imagery and explanations of cultural forms and illuminations of modern life – even to seeing why some of our commercial products succeed more than others. The photos, reproductions, diagrams, drawings are beautiful and clearly shown. The text explores the things we see around us and the end result is that the reader begins to be mobile in a new visual language.

My own artistic endeavour is more directed to the word, but time and again I found that Van James' descriptions of form and the language within it elucidated my own studies and teaching. I have found that I am quoting him in my classes with adults and reaping the benefits of his clarity with rich responses from my students. I read the book in one sitting for the first time, but know I will return to it many times both to study the text and to engage with the pictures of form and shape. I am inspired to attend an art class or work on some of the forms in this book just to learn more about what surrounds me in the world as the Secret Language of Form.

Research into Early Reading Instruction and Luke Effects in the Development of Reading

Sebastian Suggate
Department of Psychology
University of Otago, NZ

Few doubt the importance of developing reading skills in modern society; however, tests of adult literacy suggest that many adults nationally and internationally do not read sufficiently well [1]. The often-advocated means to best address this problem is to start reading instruction early and intervene early when children fail to make satisfactory progress [e.g., 2, 3].

The argument for early reading instruction is based on a number of ideas, including that (a) child development is a quantitative process, (b) reading is skill-dependent, (b) the earlier children learn reading skills the more time they have to practice them, such that (c) when children fail to learn these skills, the result is a downward spiral of failure. This downward spiral of failure has been called the Matthew Effect [4], from the Gospel of Matthew, whereby the rich become richer and the poor become poorer such that:

“for unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath” (Matthew 25:29).

To illustrate the danger of how the rich become richer, it has been estimated that a good middle school reader might read 10,000,000 words in a year, whereas a poor reader only about 100,000 [5].

There also exists two lines of evidence that are taken as near proof of the importance of learning to read early. The first—and very large—line of evidence links pre- and early-school performance on measures of reading skills (e.g., letter-knowledge, phonemic awareness, word reading) with later reading achievement. Second, reading and early-reading interventions targeting these skills exert improvement [e.g., 6]. However, as I have argued in other places [7, 8], these lines of evidence generally do not include sufficiently long-term data, and when they do, the associations between early literacy skills and later reading achievement weaken [9-11], or are superseded by language [12]. Instead of disputing the relative merits

of these lines of evidence, it is better to examine firsthand evidence comparing the reading achievement of children who began reading instruction either earlier or later.

International Studies

There appear to be two published quantitative international analyses of reading as a function of school entry age. Elley [13] analyzed data from the 1990-1991. International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) study, examining the reading performance of nine and 14-year olds across 32 countries. Using an index of social and economic development to adjust countries' reading performances, the mean school entry age of the top and bottom 10 performing countries was calculated. The countries with the highest adjusted reading performance at age nine began school nearly six months earlier on average.

However, Elley did not appear to replicate this analysis with the 14-year old children in the IEA study. Therefore, the comparison instead compared the achievement of nine year old children only—the children that started formal schooling at age seven had been reading for two years, whereas the children that started at age five had been reading for four years. To address this limitation, I re-analyzed data from the 2006 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), investigating 15-year olds' reading achievement across 55 countries [7]. After controlling for similar social and economic factors as Elley, it was found that there was no difference in reading achievement as a function of school entry age.

Preschool Research

Unfortunately, little published research exists specifically addressing the effect of preschool literacy instruction and long-term reading achievement. Some research has investigated academic achievement (e.g., reading and mathematics) from academically-focused preschools. Generally, long-term academic benefits are not found [14-18], particularly if the comparison is a preschool without an academic component [17]. In terms of the

effect of preschool programs (such as Head Start) for at-risk children, evidence for a long-term benefit specifically in reading skills is also inconclusive [15, 19].

Within-Language Studies

In 1970 the Northrhine-Westphalia cabinet (in Germany) commissioned a study to investigate the effect of moving forward the SEA from six to five years [20]. Data were collected from 25 typical kindergartens (preschool in US) and 25 pilot early schools (with an academic focus and earlier starting age). In the kindergartens emphasis was on play, social skills, daily-life activities, music and rhythm, and artwork. The early schools enrolled five-year-old children and provided academic instruction with reading and mathematics components. In the academic domains, the early school children out-performed the kindergarten children at school entry, but the differences were no longer evident by the second year of schooling [20].

Durkin [21] investigated the effects of a two-year pre-grade 1 explicit reading program on 37 four-year-old children in two classes, by comparing these to children beginning reading instruction in grade 1. During grades 1 and 2 the experimental group showed higher reading performance, but this advantage was no longer evident in grades 3 to 4, once intelligence quotients were controlled for.

Waldorf Schooling

Three studies have been conducted that capitalize on this contrast in experience with reading instruction for state and Waldorf students in NZ (where comparatively intensive reading instruction begins at age five). Turnbull [22] gathered data from school archives for children who had either: (a) only attended Waldorf schooling, or (b) began school in a state school but had later transferred into a Waldorf school. By the time the Waldorf-only children were aged 12-13 years, they were achieving at the mean of the national norms and by age 14, the Waldorf-only children exhibited a higher reading performance than those who initially began in the state school.

We conducted a cross-sectional study with 12-year old children attending either state ($n = 50$) or Waldorf schools ($n = 54$) [23]. Measures accounted for HLE, receptive vocabulary, parental education and income, economic status of the school community, and ethnicity. After controlling for these factors, the two samples were

performing similarly on measures of reading fluency, nonsense-word decoding, word reading, and reading comprehension.

Finally, we conducted the most psychometrically comprehensive and largest longitudinal study investigating school entry and reading in New Zealand with groups of children attending either state or Waldorf schools [24]. Participants ($n = 287$) were drawn from three cohorts in either their first, third, or fifth year of schooling and followed for two years. Measures accounted for vocabulary, the home literacy environment, reading-self concept, parental education and income, community economic status, second language proficiency, and ethnicity. Reading and pre-reading growth was followed over time and measures of comprehension, oral reading, phonemic awareness, and word reading were given. According to the analyses and computer modeling, the reading trajectories for the two groups converged around age 10, with the groups reading similarly thereafter.

Across all of the reviewed international, within-language, and preschool research, the evidence converges to suggest that, by the beginning of the teenage years, there is no advantage in long-term reading performance for an earlier beginning of formal reading instruction. Unfortunately, research regarding disadvantaged samples is lacking; however, internationally there was evidence to suggest a *lower* variance in reading performance for later starting countries [7] – indicating fewer disadvantaged readers. For specifically disadvantaged samples, Head Start research with a literacy skill focus has yet to demonstrate a *long-term* advantage in reading [15] using an appropriate comparison group.

Luke Effects in Reading

To understand and incorporate these findings, I have proposed a hexamorous (i.e., having six-parts) conception of reading development leading to a Luke Effect [8]. Specifically: (a) reading depends on the development of language, (b) reading depends on the development of neurobiology, thinking, social and learning skills (i.e., background factors), (c) reading depends on the development of text-reading skills, (d) reading is constrained by language and background factor development and reading skills, (e) reading skills develop in brief windows whereas language and background factors take longer to develop, and (f) decoding skills,

all other factors held constant, develop more quickly for older children.

These six factors combine to give rise to the Luke Effect [8], where reading develops more quickly for older than younger children. Moreover, earlier readers experience advantageous development only in *text-reading* skills which do not improve language or background factor development, because of the simple texts read at that age. Therefore, the later readers can use their superior background factor and language development to more readily acquire the text reading skills. Finally, language and background factors (such as knowledge, motivation, thinking capacity) are what drives reading for most people, because—except in the case of dyslexia—these determine ability at understanding the content of text.

Together this can be described by the *Parable of the Sower in the Gospel of Luke*:

A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. Some fell on rock, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown (Luke, 8: 5-8).

Accordingly, the early years can be seen as a time in which the 'soil' needs to be adequately prepared. This preparation is, I would argue, likely be better if it focused on language, imagination, play and physical activity, rather than skills such as alphabet knowledge and text reading¹.

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1 For readers who may feel that this account leaves out the anthroposophical conception of child development, I feel complete sympathy. I would like to emphasise that this account was designed for a conventional-scientific audience, thus rendering explanation of this effect in anthroposophical terms currently impossible. On closer inspection, the Luke Effect is largely consistent with such a conception, a fuller explication of which is beyond the scope of this essay.

Briefly, however, the relative ease with which older children acquire text-reading skills could be attributed to the change in consciousness around the first dentition and the liberation of the formative forces from building up the physical body. In fact, from an anthroposophical view, the preparation of the 'soil' could refer to the pedagogical practices in Waldorf kindergartens and schools.

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Dr. Manfred von Mackensen

Freely Translated by Peter
Glasby
Mt Barker,
South Australia, 2009
and unrevised by the Author.

This book is long overdue and has had a complex history of translation which began at Mt Barker, to and fro-ed between the USA and Mt Barker, during the 1990's and now has finally come to fruition. People involved at different times, whom I sincerely thank, include, Bob Lathe and Nancy Whittaker as well as John Petering.

I have had it on my conscience all that time and am relieved that at last it is in print and has taken the form that it has, which includes the second part, a laboratory project for 9th class students which involves making wine, distilling it and then going on to use it to make simple home medicines.

Draft versions of the translation have been made available for some years to teachers for their own private use, however, not in as full a form as this completed edition.

Special thanks needs to be made to Dr Manfred von Mackensen who has been so generous in giving permission to translate his valuable work so freely. His main question has been: "Have you done the experiments?". The answer to that is: "Yes, many times". As you will read in his own Forward to the book on page 1, he never intended the book to be the final word on the subject but rather "a guideline and standard for what can be done."

I can only hope that the many other works on Chemistry, written by Dr Mackensen can also be made available to the English speaking world. They include: comprehensive descriptions as this one for the chemistry main lesson blocks for classes 7 - 12.

I would like to draw particular attention to the work on the eleventh class chemistry, where he attempts, in my opinion successfully, to lay down a basis for phenomenological chemistry based on a spiritual view of the human being within a spiritual cosmos. Chemistry is in many ways the subject which faces the greatest difficulty in being taught within the Waldorf Schools. After all in the still commonly accepted paradigm, matter is the primary phenomena of the cosmos. Life, Soul and Spirit are derivative from it. The spiritual philosophy developed by Rudolf Steiner could not have a more radical departure from this paradigm with the position that spirit is primary in the cosmos and all else is derivative of that.

The reader will need to encounter this difference in approach in this work and hopefully will experience its merit in understanding substance in life and process.

The Translation is unrevised by the Author; and all responsibility rests with the translator.

I would also like to thank the RSSA (Rudolf Steiner Schools Association of Australia) for a grant of \$2500 towards the publication of this work.

The book will be available for A \$25. Please order directly by contacting :pglasby@adam.com.au

(Those ordering from New Zealand may contact waldorf@clear.net.nz)

Peter Glasby, September, 2009: Pedagogical Section, PO Box 318, Mt Barker, S. Australia, 5251

Standardised Testing and Rudolf Steiner Education

Thomas Proctor
Christchurch
New Zealand

Thomas Proctor, Principal of the Christchurch Rudolf Steiner School, is also a member of the executive for the New Zealand Federation of Rudolf Steiner Schools (equivalent to the Fellowship in the UK, the RSSA in Australia and the Bund in Germany).

Democracy is a great concept—both human freedom and equality are enshrined in it—but when, in November last year, the newly elected government in New Zealand instituted policies that are antithetical to the essence of what Rudolf Steiner schools aspire towards, we are in a difficult democratic position.

Difficult, because many of our schools have become integrated with the State (100% funded state schools, with an enshrined special character) and are required to institute government policy whether we agree with its direction or not.

The choice to become part of the state system was a significant destiny choice for our integrated schools and there were always going to be benefits and challenges in this relationship.

We integrated to make ourselves more 'future resistant' and have gained enormously from it. Our profile in New Zealand as an educational institution has soared positively over the last two decades to a point where almost everyone has heard of some positive experience of a Steiner pupil. The integrated schools are significantly better housed (in lovely architecturally inspiring buildings) and much better resourced than we could have wished for. Many of our schools are full to overflowing and our support organisations, like the Taruna College for Adult Education, have blossomed because of the full classes and large numbers of teachers we have.

However, integration is also a cross we bear.

It was just two months after entering office, that the new National (conservative) government passed a law requiring students at every level (from school entry to

year 8 or class 7) to be tested yearly to ensure they have achieved the nationally decided norms for literacy and numeracy. This is because of a concern that as a nation our students aren't achieving highly enough at the National qualifications (NCEA level 2) at about 17 years of age.

For our Waldorf Schools it is entirely antithetical to our core beliefs to impose tests determining academic achievement upon young children with a fairy tale and imaginative consciousness.

Teachers and academics throughout the country have reacted in a variety of negative ways to this legislation – most were concerned that the emphasis on literacy and numeracy in the form of benchmarked standardised testing will be to the detriment of other learning. It hasn't worked in other countries, has lessened engagement in learning, has increased failure rates, resulted in teachers teaching to the test and in the USA, the funding of schools has even been linked to these test results (Mitchell, 2009).

Our Government's answer to this criticism is to allow schools to use their present assessment systems. This is certainly a better model than that used in UK and USA but is still being hailed by commentators as a 50 year backwards step.

There are many other problems – like the use of the data to create league tables comparing schools' achievement to one another (universally detested), how children with learning difficulties will fare, the lack of time for teachers to administer, mark and analyse run tests or how results will be nationally moderated.

For the New Zealand Steiner schools, the new National standards will cut across our philosophy of later learning as one of the 'cornerstone' child developmental needs in a Rudolf Steiner education (refer Proctor, T. (2008)).

It's a critical factor that our integrated schools are facing – and one that could trammel our reason d'être. It's a real

pity this has happened at this juncture, as 2010 is to be the beginning of new wave of the revised national curriculum – a curriculum that is the best State curriculum seen in years. It is a testament to the maturity of our national education where the qualities of becoming a human are ‘put in centre stage of the learning’ (Ministry of Education 2007). It promulgates key competencies **of thinking, managing yourself, participating and contributing, an ability to use symbols and language and relating to others** which are ‘keys’ to becoming a successful person in the modern world. Subject matter (the lesson content) has become the means by which these qualities can be practised.

The overall vision of this new curriculum is for all students to be confident, life long learners actively involved and connected—it could be taken from a Steiner school charter. Our Waldorf schools celebrated this new direction, as it appeared national state education was becoming closer in its visions to a Steiner ideology. So, although we applauded the new curriculum as a new vision, we are now faced with the national standards which threaten our core beliefs (implemented from 2010, with mandatory reporting to the Government from 2012).

This is not something we can avoid but something that we have to find a way to manage. In its most hard-line form, we may have to decide to be or not to be a Steiner school; i.e., not conform and see what happens, or, find a negotiated compromise through a relationship with the Ministry, (“we”, being the national Steiner body).

The latter is what we are trying to do. Many wonderful parents from our schools wrote submissions to the Ministry expressing their concerns; teachers from our schools have met with Ministry of Education officials, and the general impression is not a gloomy one. Every official has been careful to say they are speaking as an individual and not on behalf of official policy, but the general feeling one gets is that if we can prove that at years four or five (class three or four) and similarly at class 7 that we are meeting the standards there could be no reason why our educational philosophy shouldn’t be continued, particularly as we are responding to the expressed desire of our community (to be a Steiner school).

This gives us hope. There is still much to be done and negotiated.

(with acknowledgments to Vee Nobel, editor of *Sphere*, 2009 and to the author for permission to edit and publish)

Further note: 23rd October, 2009 :

The announcement of the final form of the national standards was announced today. This follows the Minister announcing last week that all advisory services for the Arts, Physical Education, and Science were to be stopped for primary schools and the funding to be directed to numeracy and literacy to support the standards.

Such has been the concern from all NZ principals about the development, consultation and lack of clarity of the process that this announcement (hailed by the Prime Minister as the most important educational statement for 20 years) was boycotted by almost every educational sector.

The New Zealand Federation of Rudolf Steiner Schools intends to strongly represent our case against early testing in the next months, supported by recent PhD research on the positive effects on later academic learning and the most recent review of English learning.

The right wing movement in education worldwide is creating a challenging time for us in New Zealand and one that requires us to both reaffirm what we believe is the essence of a Steiner education, while negotiating a way through the requirements.

In my experience, each of these challenges has both sharpened our purpose and, in a strange but excellent way, made our schools stronger.

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www.nzherald August 1st 2009

Why National Standards must allow for the Special Character of Schools

Sebastian Suggate

PhD Candidate, Dept of Psychology,
University of Otago, NZ

(Written in June 2009, when submissions were being gathered by the Government concerning the introduction of annual National reporting of standardised testing from the first year of school till aged 16 in New Zealand- with thanks to the author for his support of the Steiner School stance –ed).

The government of New Zealand has recently passed legislation requiring that schools regularly assess their students and compare the test results to national standards. The aim is to “lift achievement in literacy and numeracy (reading, writing, and mathematics) by being clear about what students should achieve and by when” [1]. The stated goal, therefore, is that comparisons to national standards would formatively facilitate children’s progress – however, as will be argued, national standards become invalid if schools have a special character.

Without doubt, test development and psychometric evaluation has been the focus of a great deal of psychological and educational research, resulting in some quite impressive achievements [e.g., 2]. However, there are also misconceptions about what test results mean, such that indiscriminate provision of test results may—particularly in the case of schools with a special character—cause confusion and alarm, thus hindering the role of the school.

A score on a standardised test simply means that on that day, at that particular moment, the score that a particular child received, places him or her at a certain rank on the test normative sample. During psychometric validation of tests, statistical relationships between groups of scores on the particular measure are compared with how those particular children scored on other measures. This provides evidence of the validity for tests (i.e., do they measure what they are supposed to measure) and reliability evidence is obtained from, for example, retesting the same children on an alternate-form of the same measure and seeing if their scores are consistent.

There are, however, two characteristics of standardised tests that should be mentioned. First, the psychometric evaluation depends largely on the performance of not

individual children, but groups of children. Second, the statistical relationships between scores on the particular measure and the comparison test-validation measure are never perfect (in fact a strong relationship would be considered if a correlation coefficient in the vicinity of $r = .60$ were obtained between two tests of the same skill. This would mean that only 36%—the square of $.60$ —of the variance in measure A is predicted by measure B; in short there will be a significant proportion of children who perform comparatively poorly on one test and comparatively better on another measuring a similar skill). Therefore, in fact, as the Ministry of Education caution, scores for individual students should not be over-interpreted – evidence about how children are achieving needs to be gathered from multiple sources.

The most important consideration in the use of standardised testing is that the children’s scores are compared to the normative sample. In the case of schools with a different curriculum, the psychometric *validity* and *utility* of such a comparison may evaporate entirely.

To take a specific example, children do not begin explicit learning of reading skills in Waldorf schools until they are older, around seven years. By contrast, many children on the day of their fifth birthday in New Zealand enter state schooling and begin learning to read. Most state schools do—and have done so for years—report quarterly progress on semi-standardised tests to the Board of Trustees (e.g., Running Records) and, at age six, most schools administer the six-year-net [3] to a significant proportion of their students. From our research at the University of Otago, where we have been (a) evaluating measures of early literacy development [4, 5], and (b) investigating the reading development of children in state and Waldorf schooling [8], let me present some data to shed some light on this.

We have a measure of nonsense word reading that can be given to children in the middle of their first year of schooling and we have found that this measure predicts later reading quite strongly both for state ($r = .65$) and Waldorf ($r = .72$) school children. However, if the scores on this measure are compared against an estimate of national

norms (i.e., the state school performance) it would be found that the Waldorf pupils were in the 7th percentile in the middle of Class I, compared to age-matched state school pupils at the end of year 2. Parents receiving only this piece of information meaning that, on average, their children are coming 93rd in a race of 100 people, might be quite alarmed. However, as evidence now converges to suggest—including data from New Zealand—their children will not be disadvantaged by the later start in reading, once they are a few years older [6-10]. Therefore, the comparison to non-Waldorf norms, provided little useful information about “what students should achieve and by when” [1] – because they go on to achieve well despite the seemingly poor initial score.

This brings me to my conclusion – there is nothing to fear about the results of standardised assessment, because these *may* provide useful information, of more concern is if the data are not interpreted correctly. If it were the case that state requirements were such that standardised testing were required, then Waldorf parents would need to be informed that the results for particular children at certain ages were invalid, because they applied to an irrelevant normative sample, based on a pedagogy with an entirely different philosophy.

Clearly, comparing children’s scores on some standardised measures to the national norms would not be psychometrically sound practice, and may even be considered unethical if it creates undue concern and confusion. Therefore, adoption of national standards must respect schools’ special character.

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The introductory nature of the course means that it is likely to assist administrators, school board members and others involved in educational leadership in Steiner schools to better understand the unique educational ethos of the communities in which they work.

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STEINER EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

The unit aims to provide an introduction to the philosophy that underpins Steiner education. The investigation includes a dialogue between Steiner's educational approach and contemporary perspectives. The phases of human development as outlined by Steiner are explored in relation to recent research findings in physiology and developments in educational psychology.

STEINER CURRICULUM CONTEXTS

The syllabus for this unit focuses on offering an introduction to both the original and the contemporary context of the Steiner curriculum. The survey encompasses an overview of curriculum change in the global environment and then focuses on the curriculum as practiced in Steiner schools. The philosophical underpinnings of the humanities and science subject areas are explored as a phenomenological and experiential research pathway. Current and future curriculum issues are critically evaluated in relation to the study of human consciousness and the way it has developed through the major historical and cultural periods as defined by Rudolf Steiner.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE FRAMEWORKS

Participants are given the opportunity in this unit to develop their approach to Steiner methodology within a specific subject area. The perspectives that have been discussed in the above unit are now applied in a practical way to curriculum planning.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE IN ACTION

Participants apply the curriculum plan from the above unit and keep a record of its implementation and evaluation. There is scope here for a postgraduate style in-service practicum training where a mentor teacher oversees and assists a new teacher to learn Steiner teaching methods and ways to apply the philosophy in practice.

BENEFITS

- An introduction to Steiner Education
- University accreditation
- FEE-HELP
- Articulation to study at Masters level
- Career advancement
- Networking
- Inter-personal & group communication skills
- Reflective practice
- Ongoing research skills

WORKLOAD

The amount of time spent on the home study plan depends on prior knowledge, skills, and learning style. As a guide the notional total for a 3 credit point unit over a 14 week semester is assumed to be 150 hours or an average of 10 hours per week. However as this calculation includes weekly time spent in class, the class hours accumulated during the intensive can be deducted, reducing the total to about 7 or 8 hours per week.

MANILA FLOOD APPEAL, 26th September , 2009

Greetings to all Waldorf School colleagues,

Currently I am in Manila, visiting, as I have done for the past 3 years, to work with teachers in the Manila Waldorf School. On Saturday, 26th Sept, devastating floods hit Manila and the surrounding areas. Nearby from where I am staying the river flooded making people close by homeless. Within 100 yards lies the Upper school of the Manila Waldorf School. It is a 2 storied building and the floodwaters went through the lower storey. We spent Sunday afternoon helping to clean up the mess after the waters had receded. While there is damage to the building, the biggest loss was in the library, particularly the teachers' personal resources, books, textbooks, teaching resources etc. These would have been bought over time at some cost. Next year the school has to move to new premises and this is a huge task, physically and financially. The floods have come therefore at a very inopportune time. This is an appeal specifically to help replace valuable teaching books and resources. Could any Colleges consider their own teaching resource budgets to see if they could spare any money in this current year to help replace these resources? Floods here are considered an act of God and therefore there is no insurance. I am sure the morale of the upper school teachers here would be greatly uplifted were any help from overseas colleagues forthcoming.

Best wishes and thanks

David Simpson (Te Ra School - Kapiti Coast - New Zealand)

DONATIONS : New Zealand only - if online is more convenient than a paper cheque - you may use online banking to : **Prometheus National Bank 06 0701000 706100 account code B41163.0 Asia Pacific- Manila.**

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With thanks,

Ineke van Florenstein Mulder

(Administrator of APIS =Prometheus Asia Pacific Initiative Support Funds)

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One year full time

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06 8777 174

Stars and Rocks - a trip into the Flinders Ranges, South Australia, (19th – 21st January, 2009)

Paul White

Hastings, Hawkes Bay
New Zealand

*We have this way of talking and we have another.
Apart from what we wish and what we fear may happen,*

*We are alive with other life, as clear stones
Take form in the mountain.*

Rumi "Evolutionary Intelligence: Say I am You"

Around November, last year, Peter Glasby put out an invitation to anyone interested in joining him on a two day 'Stars and Rocks' expedition into the Flinders Ranges as an optional lead-in to the Australian Anthroposophical Society Conference on Evolution. With the invitation went the warning, "it might be over 40 degrees and wearing a corked hat against the flies plus carrying a supply of water for the non- air conditioned 8 hour bus journey to the Ranges will be necessary!"

I didn't care how many flies would be swarming round my face, how far over 40 degrees it got or how much work I still had to complete back at University in New Zealand - if Peter Glasby was going into the Flinders with mates like Brian Keats (astronomer, BD calendar writer) and Johannes Kuehl (leader of the Natural Science Section at the Goetheanum in Switzerland), and was inviting anyone who wanted to come, then I definitely wanted to go!

About sixty other people similarly could not resist the call. We had ourselves a pilgrimage! And it was in the spirit of a pilgrimage that we left.

I can't claim to be well up on geology. To be honest, before the trip I didn't know my Cambrian from my Ediacaran and fossils had always been that part of the museum that I skipped through on my way to the bigger stuff!

Yet Anthroposophy has served to awaken interest in areas that I had long since consigned to the boring basket. Also, I was keen to learn more of the sort of science which will not just resurrect my garden but will save us from global warming, credit crunches and shopping malls. After

twelve hours heading north on the bus getting to know my fellow travellers, I felt reassured that I was not alone in my enthusiasm and relative ignorance.

The fact is you have to start somewhere. The key is starting. Even Charles Darwin wrote in his autobiography:

On first examining a new district nothing can appear more hopeless than the chaos of rocks; but by recording the stratification and nature of the rocks and fossils at many points, always reasoning and predicting what will be found elsewhere, light soon begins to dawn on the district, and the structure of the whole becomes more or less intelligible (p. 77).

We were blessed with an expert guide in Peter and a landscape that having been forced upwards by a diapir revealed layers formed over millions of years spreading out from the central dome in a concertina-like arrangement. Start at the centre and you get the oldest layers, walk outwards and you are effectively walking through time.

So our journey began seven hundred million years ago. Such huge numbers seem so ridiculous it is easy to be dismissive of them. But the fact is it is not just carbon dating, or light emission from quartz sand, or transformation of potassium or radioactive emission that gives these dates. It's all of them, each corroborating the other, so there must be something to it. What does however need to be borne in mind, as Peter was at pains to point out, is that interpretation of these results can be flawed because of two implicit assumptions: the first, uniformitisation—that is, the assumption that conditions in the past were as they are now—and the second, that matter is primary, which leads to the conclusion that the answers to the mysteries of evolution lie in what we can now perceive with our senses as the results of this process. To put it in terms of an analogy: the secrets of the prints in the snow can be found in the prints themselves (the person or animal that made the prints not figuring in the

picture at all). So it was that we were invited to view the landscape with new eyes, Peter leading us to particular spots that exhibited noteworthy features.

There were the stromatolites for instance. Thin layers of compacted mud would be followed by these extraordinarily exuberant, organic forms known as stromatolites. Then other layers of tightly compacted mud, followed by another layer of these full, flowing forms. Could this be a picture of rhythmic time, a breathing in followed by breathing out, an aerobic or oxidising period followed by an anaerobic or reducing phase?

As we proceeded down a shallow valley we encountered different, green igneous rock. Peter challenged us to explain how it came to be there? (This man wanted us thinking!). As the temperature touched the forties you



Stromatolite: living spirit made material



A dragon-like Stromatolite – layering as you've never seen it before!

wondered how anyone could hold to uniformitisation implicitly or otherwise and still acknowledge the action of glaciers carrying pieces of the hard rock diapir down from the dome.

Stranger still was the discovery of igneous rock by a geologist several years back who became convinced that there must have been volcanoes in the area and proceeded to devote two years to finding them, to no avail. A chance encounter with a fellow geologist at a parents' meeting at their respective daughters' school was to lead to his getting to the bottom of the mystery. Over three hundred kilometres away, the impact of a meteor (known as the Acroman Impact) had been strong enough to send rock debris into this area.

The Ediacaran fossils were our next mystery. The Ediacaran period is only a recent addition to the geological vernacular, a small plaque ("the golden spike") commemorating its international recognition here in 2004 (apparently much to the chagrin of Russian geologists who had claimed to have discovered evidence of just such a period in their own lands some thirty years before!). Returning to the fossils, how could it have been that these earliest sea creatures, lacking any skeleton, could have left such clear imprints in the rock? How soft had the rock been, how hot the earth? How had 'the spirit' moved?

The evenings were something of a highlight for me on the trip and not just because I like eating camp tucker! We were truly blessed in having our two astronomers, Brian



An Ediacaran fossil



Some pretty archeocyatha fossils on boulders

Keats and David Tressemere on the trip, not to mention a stunningly bright Milky Way (Magellanic clouds as you have never seen them before). Brian regaled us with Greek and Aboriginal legends of the stars, while David encouraged us to develop our relationship with Aldebaran and other stars of the heavenly realm, that something of their mystery might be revealed to us. On the second night we were spoiled with an extra treat. Peter's mate, the wise station owner, John McEntee joined us. He generously shared his impressive knowledge of the languages and ways of the Aboriginal people, while we all sat or lay around the imaginary campfire, drifting in and out of 'dreamtime'. Of the original five hundred or so languages only twenty seven remain. They are tonal languages so a slight change in tone creates a very different word as John delighted in demonstrating to us.

John joined us for the first visit of our final day, to the site of a former Aboriginal settlement. Rock carvings attested to the fact it was an ancient site, now a dry, river valley. The east-west orientation of the hill, looking out into a distant valley, its nearness to the source of the red ochre, sought out by Aboriginal tribes from as far away as North Queensland for its unique quality (tests have shown the ochre to have a composition remarkably similar to human blood), all added to the mystery of the place.

Our appetites whetted we got stuck into fossils for the rest of the afternoon, bringing ourselves right up into Cambrian times.

The last place we visited was the Sacred Canyon, a series of chambers, about three hundred and fifty metres from start to end, with several carvings on its steep walls, particularly in the final space wherein was contained a cave. Walking through from one chamber via a narrow passage to the next, it was not hard to imagine that this might have been the site of an initiation process. I was surprised by how strongly, both positively and negatively, some of my fellow travellers experienced this walk.

The return home was a blast with plenty of singing and silly games, adding to the fond memories I take from this trip. In particular, I returned with a new love, the Australian red gum. It might not have the power or girth of my New Zealand loves, the giant Kauri of the far north or their Totara cousins of the far south, but it certainly has the resilience and colour, captured so beautifully by the painter Hans Heysen, whose touring exhibition, as luck would have it, was gracing Adelaide at the time of our stay. Indeed, it was quite extraordinary how green the canopies were in that dry and arid land with no shag pile green carpet as in the New Zealand bush for the casuarinas, gum and acacia trunks to emerge out of.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Peter Glasby, Laurie Toogood and all the people involved in making this trip possible. This, and the conference that followed it, were very special events and I feel privileged to have been able to attend them. Yes, thank you indeed.



Aboriginal carvings – concentric circles

SOUTH EAST / ASIAN WALDORF AND WALDORF INSPIRED KINDERGARTENS AND SCHOOLS

**Current list compiled by Hans Florenstein van Mulder and Marjorie Theyer,
Christchurch, New Zealand - as on October 2009**

MALAYSIA

- 1) Penang (Georgetown) K Taska Narnia Langit School
- 2) Kuala Lumpur Kelip Kelip kindergarten (Da Vid Lim)

SINGAPORE

- 1) Waldorf Stream Kindergarten Association
(Paula Huggins, Stephanie Taylor)

INDONESIA

Jawa (Java) EC/K Waldorf Kindergarten initiative Irdhal Lala

PHILIPPINES

- 1) Manila Waldorf School Class 1-12
(Mary Joan Fagardo)
- 2) Manila - Acacia Waldorf School Class 1-7
- 3) Manila - Kolisko School Class 1-6
- 4) Ilo Ilo Island Waldorf School - primary plus teacher training
(established 2005) (Jim Sharman)
- 5) Cagayan - St Michael Play garden
- 6) Pampanga - Prado school

THAILAND

- 1) Bangkok - Tridaksa Waldorf School K and Classes 1-7
(Kung Usa)
- 2) Bangkok - Panyotai Waldorf School
K and classes 1-11 Teacher training
(Porn and Janpen Panosot)
- 3) Bangkok - Baanrak Kindergarten
(Ahpisseri Charanjanaphet)
- 4) The temple school- Kindergartens in Waldorf Stream
- 5) 15 Waldorf Schools for the deaf and teacher training
(Dr Jitanand)
- 6) Teacher training - "International Hulp fonds"
the Netherlands Curative and Kindergarten training
Aphinpon Keeripatt

VIETNAM

Ho Chi Minh City 3 Kindergartens (Suong Le, Than Cherry)
Hue - "Happy Bamboo Family" curative education
Established 1996

NEPAL

- 1) Kathmandu - Tashi Waldorf School - class 1-3 (Eva Bhujel)
- 2) Bal Mandir Temple Waldorf inspired kindergarten in an
orphanage and class one (Kanti)
- 3) Shanti Sewa - leprosy community and Waldorf inspired school
classes 1-7, Marianna Krishna School

TAIWAN

- 1) Ilan School-Kindergarten and Class 1-9 Cixin Mercy Heart over
800 pupils. Teacher training.
- 2) Ilan-Foundation Stone High school Class 10 (June Yu)

- 3) Taichung city Leishan K and Class 1-8 plus teacher training
(June Lin) Also starting class 9
- 4) Feng-Le in Taichung (a small school)
- 5) In Taichung Goodness Beauty Truth School (Shan Mei Zhen) K
10 groups plus Class 1-6 (Alice Lee)
- 6) Kaohsiung City (industrial) 4 Kindergartens-Waldorf inspired
(Yi-Ling)
- 7) Hsinchu City University -teacher training (Li- chen Lin)
- 8) Taoyan city Within an existing State School-classes 1-3 are
Waldorf (Waldorf stream opens 2008) Supported by I-lan
School

JAPAN

- 1) Ashitanokuni Steiner School Gakuen CI 1-2
- 2) Fujino Steiner School CI 1-12
- 3) Hokkaido Steiner school Izumi no Gakko 83-2 CI 1-9
- 4) Kyotanabe Steiner School CI 1-12
- 5) Tokyo-Kenji-no Gakkou
- 6) Yokohama Steiner School

CHINA

- 1) Chengdu K and classes 1-7 plus teacher training
(Li Zhang = Principal, Harry Wong = management)
- 2) Beijing K Fengdan kindergarten and 4 others
(Tammy Hughes)
- 3) Shanghai K 2 in Hanzhou
- 4) Guangzhou K and primary school initiatives Shanding
kindergarten and school
- 5) Hong Kong High Gate School early childhood plus K
- 6) Garden House (Cannie Bennet) early childhood and
kindergarten Constance Kindergarten
- 7) Heart Source extra lesson and craft
- 8) Xi'an- Beiju Qijiang Huafu kindergarten

INDIA

- 1) Sloka The Hyderabad Waldorf School, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad
(KG to Class 10) (Nirmala Diaz)
- 2) Diksha A Secunderabad Waldorf School, Secunderabad,
(KG to Class 8) (Sandhya Majeti)
- 3) Prerana Waldorf School, Gachibowli, Hyderabad,
(KG to Class 6) (Indira Varma)
- 4) Abhaya Waldorf School, Gundlapochampally Village,
R.R. Dist. A.P. (KG to Class 9) (Narendra Balusu)

SOUTH KOREA

- 1) Seoul Korean Waldorf Association (Prof. Ho)
- 2) Seoul Gwacheon Free Waldorf School kindergarten class 1-9
(Eun Wa Lee)

World wide list available from:

<http://waldorfschule.info/upload/pdf/schulliste.pdf> -editor



Join the growing world-wide movement towards Steiner education

AUT's Bachelor of Education provides for Steiner Education specialisation (Primary Teaching and Early Childhood) in its third year of study. You will be prepared for employment as a early childhood, primary or intermediate teacher in Steiner and state schools. Our classes are streamlined so that there are two days per week on campus and strong tutorial support afforded by small classes. This course integrates a three fold approach essential to Steiner Education: conceptual and cognitive, aesthetic and artistic, and practical. Rich and supportive mentoring is given to all student teachers whilst on teacher placements in the field.

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- Steiner Education Theory
- Mathematics III: Steiner
- Professional Inquiry and Practice
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- Programme Planning, Assessment and Evaluation: Steiner Early Childhood Teaching / Steiner Primary

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An Australasian Asia Pacific Kolisko Conference
July 14-18th 2010

Venue: The Kings School, Paramatta, Sydney, Australia

In the light of recent historic developments in Australia, this conference will provide inspiration and working opportunities to develop curriculum on the basis of the health and education of a child.

www.koliskochild.com

Presenters include:

Dr Michaela Gloeckler – Leader of the Medical Section, Switzerland
Christopher Clouder – Founder of Alliance for Childhood, England
Peter Glasby – Pedagogical Section, Australia

Key tasks of this conference:

- Redefine the direction of modern curriculum out of creative principles
- Identify opportunities for development from medical and pedagogical views of the human being
- Inspire those who are passionate about creative education and the future generation

Contact: Sue Scott suescotttau@yahoo.com.au (AAMA)
Peter Glasby pglasby@adam.com.au

Facilitated by the AAMA and the RSSA - Australia

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Course Duration: 550 hours

The Certificate in Foundation Studies in Rudolf Steiner Education course has been spread over two years to enable practicing teachers to participate. Average weekly hours 4.5.

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Delivery is based on a combination of:

- Independent study
- Tutor/mentor support
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There are 5 residentials in the course to be held in school holidays.

Residentials offer participants the opportunity to meet fellow students, share experiences, learn from one another and deepen understanding through direct contact with tutors.

Residentials could occur within schools with groups of teachers undertaking the course.

Modules with an * require residential attendance prior to beginning the module.

Anthroposophy and Steiner Education and Life Phases are prerequisites to the study of other modules.

Enrolment

Application forms are available from the website or from the Distance Education Course Coordinator at Parsifal College. Enrolments by 1st of December for the following year's intake.

Course Costs

Details of Course Costs, Enrolment Fee (non refundable) and Payment Options are available from our web site or from the Distance Education Course Coordinator at Parsifal College.

Enquiries

For all enquiries regarding our courses please contact the Distance Education Course Coordinator at Parsifal College:

Email: distance@parsifalcollege.edu.au

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 Parsifal College

About the Course

This Part Time Distance Education Course is primarily designed to provide State-trained teachers with the Anthroposophical foundation studies necessary to support teaching in a Steiner school. It is open to all who are interested in Steiner education or who wish to enrich their teaching practice. It provides an understanding of the basis of the Steiner educational curriculum together with a rich program of inner development based on artistic practice and observations of life.

Modules are written in a weekly format and while providing understanding there is an emphasis on experience and application through artistic exercises, observations, readings, research tasks, journal entries and essays.



Qualification and Pathway

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Anthroposophy and Steiner Education

The nature of the human being, human capacities of thinking, feeling and willing, the physical and spiritual bodies of the human being and the twelve senses.

Life Phases

Phases of development of child and adult, temperaments, soul types and life crisis as a pathway towards growth.

Educational Foundation Studies

An introduction to the philosophical background of Steiner Education. Implications for content and methodology of teaching in accord with the specific stages of a child's development both generally and individually. Applying an understanding of the underlying principles of Steiner education to the role of the teacher in relation to different age groups in a Steiner school. Structures and management in a Steiner school.

Evolution of Humanity through Story, Poetry and Art*

Study of Ancient India, Persia, Egypt, Greece and Rome through legend, myth, poetry and art to understand the principles of human development in relation to individual development.



"An awakening experience that
will always enrich my life."
-Gracie

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Goetheanism: Meeting of Science and Art

Observations leading to an understanding of how water, warmth and air weave and work in the world of plants and animals.

Visual and Performing Arts as a means to the development of both a rich inner life and a flexibility in imaginative processes together with artistic skills necessary for classroom teaching.

Painting and Drawing*

Goethe and Steiner's colour theories. Form polarities arising from elements and ethers. Working with darkness and light. Principles of line, dynamic, transition etc.

Sculpture and Architecture*

Practical experiences in observation and modelling. Metamorphosis of form and creative expression through clay.

Music*

Elements of music: melody, harmony, rhythm, beat, writing, reading, singing, listening and playing music.

Eurythmy*

Experience will occur daily during residentials. Movement as a creative medium for individual expression and for the expression of universal laws.

Speech and Drama

Experience will occur daily during residentials. Working with language as a creative and formative force.

 Parsifal College

Editors

Neil Carter waldorf@clear.net.nz

Peter Glasby pglasby@adam.com.au

Reviewers:

Robin Bacchus	- New Zealand
Hannelore Henning	- New Zealand
Van James	- Hawai'i
Alduino Mazzone	- Australia
Diederik Ruarus	- New Zealand

Layout:

P Jayesh Narasimhulu	- India
Shaik Abdulla (abbu)	- India

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Please send contributions for our next edition to both editors by 1st March, 2010. Please use .doc word attachment for articles and keep photos as separate image files. Use font size 12 and for referencing please use the Harvard system or APA.

The opinions expressed in this Journal are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editors.

EDITORIAL

(continued from inside cover)

Over the last few weeks, nature's forces came into violent contact with human beings – typhoons, floods, earthquakes, tsunamis in various parts of our world. Scientists are now considering there may be connections – (see the appeal for aid for Manila –pg 31)

In our next issue we wish to concentrate on news from Australasia and invite readers to contribute to the following theme: "taking the original indications from Steiner as to Curriculum (from Steiner's lectures, Conferences with the original Stuttgart teachers, Stockmeyer's and Martin Rawson's Curriculum book etc) -how have we modified the original indications so they are relevant to our modern students – their geographical locality and times, yet still based upon a science of the spirit – or Anthroposophy ? This subject is the theme for our College of teachers here in Christchurch this term.

Maybe the actions of our Governments have brought our schools more together – in finding common ground and by communicating with each other?

Such communication and sharing is the prime aim of our Journal- please let us know if what we produce is of value to you. We thank the generosity of the authors, Waldorf Schools, the RSSA in Australia, Federation of Waldorf Schools in New Zealand and the A.R. Nelson Trust, NZ.

The next deadline for copy is March 1st next year, 2010.

Neil Carter (Christchurch, New Zealand) and

Peter Glasby (Mt Barker, South Australia) – editors

- Neil Carter, Peter Glasby

We welcome contributions to our next issue, please email in word attachment to both editors,
Neil Carter waldorf@clear.net.nz and Peter Glasby pglasby@adam.com.au
for Journal 12.1 by 1st March, 2010

Art work, photographs and articles, reports of Conferences etc, book reviews are all welcome

CONFERENCES / SEMINARS 2010

January 11th-15th

Australia - Glenaeon: Class Teacher Curriculum Intensives – Class 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 run concurrently. Lecturers - Andrew Hill, Ann Jacobson, Diane Tatum, Lynne Collett . Contact Peggy Day – peggyd@glenaeon.nsw.edu.au 02 9417.3193

January 21st-25th

Anthroposophical Society in Australia Annual Conference, Hobart, Tasmania

Cornelius Pietzner (Goetheanum), Ute Craemer (Monte Azul Community Ass., Sao Paolo) , Helmy Abouleish (Sekem, Egypt). Full day guided wilderness experience will be available on January 20th. Contact: www.anthroposophy.org.au jreidbradshaw@gmail.com

January 21st – 27th

Aotearoa Summer Youth Gathering: The world and I: Meeting the world and shaping the Future. Te Ra Waldorf School, Kapiti Coast, New Zealand. Contact: youthgathering@gmail.com ; www.summergathering.co.nz

January 21st -26th

Extra Lesson Post Graduate Diploma commences

3 year part time course, Tauranga, New Zealand. Institute for Learning difficulties Pty Ltd
Contact : www.extralesson.com; rosemarydm@xnet.co.nz

February 12th – 14th

Eurythmy Conference

Auckland, New Zealand. Contact: Kath Beattie beattiegk@xtra.co.nz

February 14th -18th

International Kolisko Conference – Hawai'i

Key note speaker: Dr Michaela Gloeckler, Honolulu, Hawai'i, USA Contact: pacificajournal@gmail.com

February 15th

NZ Full time Diploma of Rudolf Steiner Education (DRSE) commences

Taruna, Havelock North, New Zealand. Contact: admin@taruna.ac.nz

May 14th -16th

Meditation Workshop, with Arthur Zajonc and Carina Schmid

Tauhara Retreat & Conference Centre, Taupo, NZ. Contact : suesimpson@clear.net.nz

May 16th -22nd (beginners) and 23rd -29th (advanced)

Khandala Waldorf/Rudolf Steiner Education Seminar, India

Contact : abanbana123@rediffmail.com

July 10th – 14th

International Kolisko Conference – New Zealand

Keynote speaker: Dr Michaela Gloeckler

St Peter's School, Cambridge, New Zealand

Contact: waldorf@clear.net.nz or k8ymacfarlane@gmail.com

July 14th -18th

Australian Kolisko Conference

Key note speaker: Michaela Gloeckler

Venue :Kings School, Parramatta, Sydney

Contact: suescott@opusnet.com.au

October 1st - 4th

Anthroposophical Society in New Zealand Annual Conferences

Taikura Rudolf Steiner School, Hastings, New Zealand

Contact: suesimpson@clear.net.nz

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Stars and Rocks article (pp 27-29) - photos - Paul White.

Map of South East Asia and Australasia (p 30) - Class 9 students from the Christchurch Rudolf Steiner School, New Zealand.