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Education for a liveable future

Nana Göbel, Berlin Germany

While preparing this article, a major repair had to be done at our house. In the meantime, this matter has been dragging on for two and a half months, because on the one hand there is a forest of regulations which, if not complied with, leads to the loss of insurance cover, and on the other hand, the companies (and here we are talking about the German market leader), either cannot deliver spare parts at all, deliver the wrong spare parts, declare that they are not competent, have employees who do not answer, deliver to the wrong address and so on. My impression is getting stronger and stronger that the real world is no longer functioning efficiently, the world of regulations is dragging a leaden weight over the country and the number of employees who are still capable of solving a problem without instructions is declining drastically.

This world of reality that is functioning less and less contrasts with the bubble world of Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, Tumblr and the like, which offer a pretence that something important is constantly happening there. More than 4 billion people worldwide spend time in this bubble world and are entertained and informed to an extent and in a manner that is hard to beat in terms of empty reason, slackness in judgement and lack of depth.

Humanity seems to be oscillating between these two states

at the moment, and that is not particularly exhilarating. If it is true and we are oscillating between an ever more inadequate reality world and an ever more inane bubble world, then the question of the educational mission at the beginning of the second century of Waldorf education arises anew and in a manner that is sharp, urgent, uncomfortable and unbending.

Until now, ideals guiding inner and outer human development, freedom and love, have been at the heart of Waldorf education's mission. Of course, aspirations for freedom should not be misunderstood as "everyone can do what he wants" and "thoughtless embraces for everyone", so the latter is not to be confused with feelings. Rosa Luxemburg's view that freedom is always freedom for those who think differently, and not a privilege of the few, must certainly be supplemented in several respects. Freedom always also means: to become active oneself without a mandate and to act out of oneself in consideration of the other. And the other then refers not only to people, but also to plants and animals, climate and natural resources. Love then means creating the inner space within oneself that offers the other person opportunities for development. In this sense, freedom is directed towards oneself, and love towards the other.

Fine, you might say, go ahead and build on your ideals and dream on. I would say, however, that if we give up this dream – our ideals – we give up being human. Consequently, in view of the fading world of reality and a world of bubbles that is dominated by appearances, it is a question of organizing



New Waldorf School in Chişinău, Moldova.



kindergarten and school in such a way that children and young people experience a healthy nature and a functioning world of reality and that they can discuss their real questions about people and the world with their teachers in such a serious way that they grow and strengthen inwardly as a result. Then, they can learn to deal with the bubble world in such a way that it does not swallow them up.

I wanted to take the liberty of making this preliminary remark because I see more and more that we will not achieve fundamental renewal without clear diagnoses. And this renewal is so important if we still want to be in a liveable and lovable world and society 40 or 60 years from now.

For the Friends of Waldorf Education, this means that we should take every opportunity to fight for more curricular and structural freedom, knowing full well that mainstream education policy – especially in Europe - has been going in the opposite direction for twenty years. For the Friends of Waldorf Education, this still means supporting teachers and parents wherever they want to set up pioneer schools and show how different school can be. It also means encouraging individual parents and teachers to do what seems right to them and not what the mainstream demands, and sometimes that means financing legal costs.

This is why we have financed the construction of another school building for the Waldorf School in Chişinău to an astonishing extent for the Friends of Waldorf Education, even though it is a state school. The school had to provide sufficient room-space for parallel upper school classes to be accredited as a lyceum in the first place.

The kindergarten rooms provided by the city in the mid-1990s, which the school has a right of use without limit of time, have long been insufficient for their purpose. For a long time, the school had been using every corner including the basement rooms. There was only one solution: a new building. And this new building was essentially financed by the Friends of Waldorf Education, and that means to a large extent by two donors who made large sums available to the Friends. I would like to thank these two donors very, very much, even without mentioning their names. After we had pledged the funds, work on the new building began. This building is now largely completed but has not yet been approved. Sometimes, it is not clear why. In July 2021, parliamentary elections finally took place in Moldova, through which the pro Western party prevailed against the pro-Russian party. From the outside, this is a good signal for the future of the country. Now, however, the new government must show that it really is doing everything new. And that is why the Waldorf School curriculum, which has always been accredited until now, will no longer be approved. Everything will need to be presented, re-explained, elaborated, approved, and with a pro-Western model, this will mean even more cognitive orientation, even less art, even more exams, or performance reviews. What sounds promising for the country as a whole can create the greatest difficulties in individual cases.

In another concrete pioneering situation, the Trianemi School in Athens is the first school in Greece with a programme other than the state programme. Trianemi has now expanded to such an extent that a sixth grade (and thus the top grade of the primary school) has just been able to open this school year for the first time. We are determined to help this school finance its own school building and have already done much to acquire a plot of land on which the plans can become reality.

These two examples can perhaps suffice to show that, in addition to the ongoing support of educational institutions, such as the school for the Dalit in the desert of Rajasthan, or for disadvantaged families in Ongata Rongai, Kenya, we also have educationally focused tasks; tasks which will lead to schools opening the doors for next Waldorf schools. And if we succeed in this, then we also succeed in opening a door to a future worth living and loving.



Nana Göbel is co founder and executive director of the Friends of Waldorf Education .

English translation: Trevor Mephram

Afterward

I had written this article when the world had been hit by the epidemic but not yet by the war in Ukraine. Of course, this is not the only war currently shaking people's lives. The war of the military regime in Myanmar against its own people has now lasted more than 500 days, the war in Syria more than ten years. But we are more affected by the war in Ukraine here, because it is not only an attack against the Ukrainian people, which is bad enough, but it is also capable of radically changing the world order. We owe more than 70 years of peace in Europe to this world order.

Whenever a country is drawn into a war where there are Waldorf schools, we try to help on several levels. We do emergency educational work with children, but also emergency educational training for teachers and we support the



people affected financially. We kept it that way during the war in Myanmar, because we continued to support the small school in Myanmar as well as the kindergarten work to the extent that the work was possible at all. Now we are in the process of a huge campaign to help the colleagues of the Waldorf institutions in

Ukraine to live. About 7 million people have fled Ukraine so far. Among them, of course, are pupils, parents and teachers from Waldorf schools. But many colleagues have also remained in Ukraine; at least in those places where missiles are currently hitting but the cities have not yet become a militarily contested battlefield. Every month we are currently raising between €100,000 and €120,000 to finance salaries for all the Waldorf colleagues who remain in Ukraine. This is especially important during the summer months when there will be no other income. And this support has been made possible by the fact that very many people in Europe as well as in the USA are helping with donations, that very many schools have not only taken in Ukrainian Waldorf students, but have also contributed with donations. We are deeply impressed by the commitment of the many donors.

In this respect, the focal points of the work of the Friends of Waldorf Education are constantly shifting and are oriented towards the current challenges in East, West, North and South.



Students of Stupeni Waldorfschool in Odessa, Ukraine.

[The following three anonymous articles were first published in Waldorf Worldwide, Newsletter of the Friends of Waldorf Education, Autumn/Winter 2021/2022]

Kyrgyzstan: Traffic Chaos and the View of the Mountains



The Nadjeschda children's center is in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan. 90% of the country is 1,000 meters above sea level. The highest mountains are always covered in snow and stand at over 7,000 meters. Nadjeschda is a center for alternative and free education that takes care of children and young people who have been classified as "ineducable" in Kyrgyzstan, which means that they do not receive any public support to attend kindergarten, school and corresponding therapies, and are not integrated into society.

Therapeutic education, elements of Waldorf education, the pedagogy of Janusz Korczak and other forms of therapy are brought to these children and young people, so that in the course of time, half of the children can move to state institutions. Their daily journey to the center is, in some cases, very long and arduous.

"Early in the morning, the bus collects the children from all over the city and they travel for quite a while before arriving at the Nadezhda center. Almost all the children come by bus, only a few are brought by their parents. The children cannot come on foot or by bicycle because of their physical limitations and because of the bad roads. Only the 12 children who live in the nearby residential group are brought on foot or by wheelchair.

Almost all the other children come to the children's center in two minibuses (marshrutka), each of which has its own

route. The collection of children from every corner of our city and around it starts early in the morning at 7 am. At this time, the first child sits down on the bus and ends up being the last to arrive. The distance covered by the first minibus is about 25 kilometers one way, and the second minibus travels 60 kilometers one way. In total, the children need one to two hours to get to school. Unfortunately, it can take much longer, especially in winter and autumn when the weather changes and it rains, snows or the roads become icy.

The biggest problem (not only in Bishkek, but in the whole country), are the bad roads. There are bumps, holes and damaged sections of roads, especially in districts outside the city limits. Sometimes there are no paved roads at all. And in autumn and winter, the roads there become difficult to pass because of a soggy, viscous layer of mud. Frequently you get into rush hour and are stuck in a traffic jam for up to an hour.

The view out of the minibus window is of a mountain landscape, where the children can see snow-covered mountains 5,000 meters high and glacier peaks glittering in the morning sun. On the way back home it looks nearly the same but is accompanied by the sunset.

Apart from the difficulties of the way to school, the children love coming to the center. The Nad-jeschda Children's Centre is like a big family where the children receive therapy and have opportunities to communicate. Nevertheless, the achievements of our children in taking the long way to school day after day and their great willpower, eagerness and patience are worth praising!"

India: Through the Desert to School



The Darbari Waldorf School was founded in 2016. The 40 pupils range between the ages of 5 and 17 and they come from the caste of the "untouchables" -- the lowest caste of the legally abolished caste system in India, which unfortunately, still exists in many people's minds.

Darbari is in the Thar Desert of Rajasthan -- a harsh region. This stony desert with its sparse vegetation and extreme heat (temperatures go up to 50° Celsius), covers 200,000 square kilometers. Drought, blistering heat, simple living conditions and great poverty characterize the lives of the Bhil people who live here. In this remote area, there is an illiteracy rate of 70%. The children receive little education, only 5% complete school. The Darbari School wants to help the children develop into free individuals, independent of caste, gender, social status and religion. For girls from 13 years, attending school is the only way to avoid an arranged marriage. Increasingly, parents are resisting family pressure and sending girls to our school instead of marrying them off first.

"Darbari Waldorf School is located right at the entrance to the village. Most of the pupils come on foot. To do this, the children have to get up very early. The first thing they must do is fetch water from the well to wash themselves. Even if they are extremely poor and do not have running water, the children want to arrive at school clean. Most of the time they don't have a proper breakfast at home and eat leftover chapatis (a traditional flat bread), from the day before. It is not uncommon for children to encounter dromedaries, goats and cows in the wilderness, on their way to school! Pupils from distant villages sleep and live at the school and only return home during holidays; otherwise the journey would be too long. Arriving at school in the morning is always a powerful and moving moment. We all gather in a circle and sing in Hindi, English, French and Marwari before everyone goes to their classroom. Every morning is a new promise of hope!"

Nearly 20 years ago, in 2002, Nhu Tri, head-nun of the Dieu Giac Buddhist Temple in Ho Chi Minh City, added a Waldorf kindergarten to the orphanage near her temple, that she built and runs.

About 30 children find a free place of care here - some of them are children from the orphanage, others are children of poor families from the neighborhood. School education and





Vietnam: The Whole Family on One Motorbik

child-care are chargeable in Vietnam. If a family cannot afford the school fees, the children do not go to school, although there is compulsory education. That is why the kindergarten at the Dieu Giac orphanage is so special. Children whose parents can pay little or no money for care can also come here.

"Dieu Giac Orphanage is located in one of the districts of Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC), where most people move around on bicycles, small motorbikes and scooters. Here it is quite normal to see the streets full of all kinds of vehicles. Some of them are heavily loaded with goods, others have whole families – sometimes up to five people! – sitting on a single motorbike, for example. The onslaught of bicycles, cars and motorbikes never seems to end. Even our kindergarten teachers ride to kindergarten on mopeds. Lien Kim, one of the educators, took some photos to show how the children who live nearby ride to the kindergarten. At the orphanage, the bicycles line up along one side of the courtyard, which is also the shared public space of the Dieu Giac community. As soon as the children leave the fenced community compound to go out onto the busy street, they ride with their parents or siblings on various bicycles or motorbikes, in just as adventurous a way as is common in Ho Chi Minh City."

www.freunde-waldorf.de

Friends of Waldorf Education

(Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners e. V.)
Weinmeisterstr. 16, 10178 Berlin, Germany berlin@freunde-waldorf.de



Engines & Boats Lesson

P. Jayesh Narasimhulu, Hyderabad, India



The Engines and Boat Building lesson got off to a 'flying' start, with the Australian, Dutch, and Indian teachers and students arriving a few days before the inaugural on 8th October 2018. The first week went in a flash, with the teachers and students admiring their half-finished boats with pride! After a day of rock climbing around 40 km's from Abhaya school in Hyderabad, the second week started on a more sombre note with the grinding, sanding, gluing and painting work in full swing. Arm and legs ached with little respite from the daily routine, from 8.30 AM to 8.30 PM. The few engines and art 'physically' relaxing lessons in the classroom during the day brought a certain sense of balance. The art lessons were part of the entire program, teachers and students enjoyed the aesthetic element of the learning process. The piece de resistance was a fabulous seascape painting on the class 7 wall at Abhaya school -- images of a ship, north sign and sextant, which will enliven the Explorer's main lesson, for Abhaya's Class 7 students and teachers, in future!





After two weeks of hard work, the boats, sails, roof, motor and electronics were ready for use on the lake. The Laknavaram lake resort island in the Eastern part of Telangana state was an idyllic location for the river studies lesson, with depth profile and island bird's eye view drawings. Students had a great time swimming and jumping off structures into the lake when they were not studying or completing the assigned tasks. The teachers also prepared a treasure hunt race, using the boats and GPS instruments, for the three groups of students.

It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words and there are about 50 pictures in the link - <https://www.dropbox.com/s/ecm23u9cprle2yi/India%20taster.m4v?dl=0>, to describe in graphic detail the painstaking work, the camaraderie and the joie de vivre, that was an integral part of this group of students and teachers.

[m4v?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/ecm23u9cprle2yi/India%20taster.m4v?dl=0), to describe in graphic detail the painstaking work, the camaraderie and the joie de vivre, that was an integral part of this group of students and teachers.



All in all, a fabulous experience working with the head, heart and hand -- a potpourri of people, cultures, and technology coming together across land and sea! Students and teachers went home wishing the lesson could have continued a week beyond the formal close, on the 27th of October!

For more information about the next *Engines & Boats* lesson at Abhaya Waldorf School, Hyderabad, India, from the 26th Sep to 17th Oct 2022, please visit – www.waldorfworldwide.org.

Category	Program	Start (IST)	End (IST)	Participants	Platform/ Website/ Email	Mobile	Fee	Comment
Study group	Earth Science	3.30 PM Every Sat	4.30 PM Sat	Teachers	Zoom- jayesh 1958@yahoo.com	9885023377	Optional	Voluntary contribution
Online Math & Science workshops	Jamie York Academy	Ongoing	–	Students / Teachers/ Parents	Vimeo & Zoom - jayesh 1958@yahoo.com	8008823377	Multiple rates - contact for details	Teacher/ parent workshops - grades 1-12, Students lessons grades - 5-12
Training	Eurythmy training - Pacifica College, Australia	Feb-22	Jan-26	Adults interested in Eurythmy	pacificacollege@gmail.com	00 61 403171651	Contact organisers for details	–
Teacher Education	Foundation Course on Waldorf/ Steiner Education	Jan-22	May-22	Parents/ Teachers	google meet – contactus@csett.com	9819855336	Contact organisers for details	–
Teacher Education	Humanising Education	17th July 2022	21st July 2022	Parents/ Teachers	Hybrid – www.asc-hyd.com	9819855336 / 8008823377	2500 - Zoom, In person - 2500	Request for assistance form available
Student Lessons	Engines & Boats lesson	26th Sep 2022	17th Oct 2022	Class 10/11 students	www.waldorfworldwide.org	8008823377	Contact organisers for details	
Teacher Education	Waldorf Institute Direct	Sep-22	Apr-23	Parents/ Teachers	www.waldorfinstitute.uk		Contact organisers for details	
Teacher Education	Refresher week - High School - Focus Class 12 - Kassel Germany	31st March 2023	6th April 2023	Teachers	https://www.lehrerseminar-forschung.de/weiterbildung/internationale-fortbildung-oberstufe		Contact organisers for details	
Teacher Education	World teachers conference - Dornach Switzerland	10th April 2023	15th April 2023	Teachers	https://www.goetheanum-paedagogik.ch/en/events/world-teachers-conference		Contact organisers for details	

Teaching Parzival in Asia

John Chalmers, Bangkok, Thailand

"You say you long for the Grail... You foolish youth, no one can gain the Grail except one who is known in Heaven to be appointed to the Grail."—Wolfram von Eschenbach, Parzival



Eleventh grade student painting, Honolulu Waldorf School.

I am fortunate to have been able to teach the Parzival course for a number of years to the wonderful Thai students at the Panyotai Waldorf school on the outskirts of big bustling Bangkok. The school grounds are far enough out that the school's location has a natural atmosphere that includes an idyllic lake with herons and child-size monitor lizards. It is appreciated by those who commute from congested downtown areas and also by the many parents who relocated early to the land and housing around the school. It has developed into a well-functioning Waldorf community.

Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* is a treasure trove of images and symbols, but the question has arisen in Waldorf schools about its relevance as a main lesson in the upper school. It is a difficult read, even in German, I've heard. Medieval Romance poetry, written in the old German language, is an archaic Euro-centric work of literature. Getting students to read the English translation or even selected parts can be challenging. The teacher must really make an effort to bring the important aspects of the story to life. How is it relevant today for an American, Australian, African or Asian student? While it can easily be demonstrated that the Parzival main lesson was important to the early upper school curricula, as clearly indicated by Rudolf Steiner himself, the argument is that times have changed and the curriculum has gone through a metamorphosis. One can say the main lesson can now be about a quest for self-knowledge and can be explored in many different ways. In one instance, I heard recently that the biography of Malcom X was substituted as content for this main lesson. If it is just about the quest of adolescence then many approaches could be attempted.

Betty Staley, a central figure in the English-speaking, world Waldorf movement, correlates stages of adolescent development

with the Parzival story, and says in *Adolescence: The Sacred Passage Inspired by the Legend of Parzival*: "I call the journey through these stages of adolescence The Sacred Passage because it is the time of life when the sacred element is expressed in the unfolding of the Higher Self of the young person. No matter how chaotic this period can be, there is a sense of something intangible, mysterious, and divine working through it. The people who guide the teenager, significant meetings, feeling a sense of purpose — all these are also representative of the sacred in life."

What Betty calls the "The Sacred Passage" is a vital clue to the importance of the story. The question I often find myself asking is, how old is Parzival in the story? I think this is a separate analysis, but it is safe to say he is at least 16 or 17 when he leaves his mother. That would make him almost 21 when he arrives at the monk's cell (chapter 9-Trevrizent) and definitely 21 years old let's say, when he finally asks the question, thereby healing Amfortas and ascending to Grail lordship. The developmental stage of adolescence is sacred because it is an awakening of a higher consciousness both of desire and of thinking and continues episodically as life unfolds. Beginning in adolescence, one can romanticize, feel deeply and passionately and one can begin to reason and ponder the riddles of existence (philosophize). I would say that in actuality an adolescent is ready to take on neither. What I've come to understand is that young people at this age/stage begin to feel their thoughts and think their feelings. They are naturally open to wisdom and/or one could say, are naturally wise.

I have asked my 11th grade students in Thailand why we should study this old Germanic poem from 13th century Europe. I think they were often amused by the question. I've approached the content of the course in different ways. I am sure it has been taught by others more adept. But when I am asked to teach something, I'll usually give it a try.

I now retell the story to my Thai students in a greatly abridged fashion, so initially it is an advanced English as second language class. Then we ask some basic questions like: What is a fool? How does the story depict the Grail castle, the Grail ceremony, and the Grail itself? In other words, what is the Grail? Why does the Grail need protection? (There are many other "why questions" one could ask) And then, who is Parzival? Who is Klingsor? Exploring some of these illustrious dramatic *persona* and the mysterious tropes of "The Question" and "The Grail," can create a profound pedagogical context of inquiry. I asked one of my colleagues in the Philippines about her experience teaching Parzival. She said using many exercises to get the students to reflect autobiographically was very effective, but that she still used the Eschenbach story to lead them along the archetypal way.

It is interesting to note that the two authors with the top selling works of modern time are Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*, and J.K. Rowling, the *Harry Potter* series. Both of these writers reinterpreted aspects of the Arthurian holy grail literary tradition. Brown actually takes an angle from Leonardo's

famous painting *The Last Supper*. The grail trope thus has some demonstrable contemporary world wide appeal.

Parzival's quest for the Grail begins with him cursing God. He blames God for his dishonor and misfortune. He does not ask the question and he is shamed and belittled by the sorceress and Grail messenger. He is shamed by Kundrie before all his peers. In Asia we would say he majorly "lost face". His swift ascent to legitimate knighthood status is derailed. His desire to become "Sir Parzival" of King Arthur's roundtable is abruptly ended by Kundrie's searing proclamation. Parzival had a youthful fantasy to become a knight, he was gifted through Gamuret's bloodline with natural talent, but he had a Grail destiny to find. This shaming event has two relevant aspects: one is that the experience of shame in adolescence is often unexamined or even hidden, and the "losing face" shame that has roots in traditional Asian culture and is still evident in modern Asian societies. The fear of losing face or being shamed in one's group is a very powerful motivating force. It has been written about and can be sensed in those living geographically outside of Asia as well. This is not to stereotype, but to respectfully characterize. This is an important insight helpful in understanding traditional Asian culture in general, one of many lessons I've learned over the years, working in China early in 1994 and teaching since 2008 in Thailand and the Philippines. The great diversity and complexity throughout Asia is obviously impossible to address here.



Eleventh grade student painting, Acacia Waldorf School, Philippines.

It is Good Friday when Parzival arrives at the monk's cell of Trevrizent. He is despondent but ready to bare his soul to him, "To me joy is a dream, my joy is buried alive," Parzival admits. Trevrizent tells Parzival, "Man has a choice, God's Love or God's Hatred." Trevrizent tells the history of what he calls "malice" and "hatred" and "anger" which creates the great predicament of humankind. First it is Lucifer and his host from which this malice emerged. Then it was Adam's progeny, Cain, who by murdering his brother stained the virgin earth with the blood of malice. This is the curse into which we all are born from generation to generation, it is the idea of original sin and the idea of karma as well. The "earth was Adam's mother" says Trevrizent. The malice that is spoken of here is the central

psychological force in Eschenbach's poem. Lucifer and his gang had it, Cain had it, Parsifal had it and Klingsor had it. It is the curse and the cursing, it is the defiant malicious nature that is hidden in all of us, a *doppelgänger*. Parzival must confront this hidden malice in himself. He cannot become Grail King until he does so. (Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel *The Double*, 1846, presents the *doppelgänger* as an opposite personality who exploits the character failings of the protagonist to take over his life.)

This year with the 11th grade we ended with this as a definition of evil. Everyone could feel the depth of this insight and its relevance to life and living in the world. Malice is something that must be recognized in oneself and transformed. It is a quite familiar idea for many of my Thai students to understand implicitly, it is a cultural known. We don't just express emotions or let them seethe and overwhelm our inner life. Both would be considered unhealthy in Buddhist Thai culture. Interestingly enough there is a word for such an inner turning in Philippine culture or Tagalog as well "*lo'ob*, meaning "inside"¹ but not just a word or value, but virtue-practice of interconnectedness. It is an overcoming of one's personal emotion to maintain the unity and harmonious feeling between persons, especially in challenging situations. These nodes of relevance are good reason to study the content of the poem itself in a wider context. It is a who question, who is Parzival? The universal themes that can emerge are pertinent and engaging.

Klingsor who we are told has been castrated, has some kind of seething resentment and basically wants to make others suffer or at the very least, to become victims of their own passions (which unchecked leads to suffering, like the suffering King Amfortas). Klingsor, the magician, uses the weakness inherent in the world of chivalry and knighthood (the formalized code of social relations and proprieties), to ensnare and delude. The revealing of Klingsor's castrated state by Eschenbach, is intentionally connected to the magician's need to dominate and manipulate.

"Klingsor keeps constant company with the lore of necromancy, so that he is capable of overpowering by magic both women and men."



Eleventh grade student drawings, Panyotai Waldorf School, Thailand.

His power-seeking is a symbol of self-denial and self-delusion, an abysmal condition, ultimately bound to his feeling of powerlessness; symbolized by his castrated state. We can also connect this image of castration and resentment with the original murder by Cain and the “malice” born from this archetypal act. It can be seen in Parsifal cursing God for not giving him what he desired and had imagined to be his rightful status as “Sir Parzival,” knight of Arthur’s roundtable. Nietzsche called it resentment before the psychologists discovered it. As he states in his pithy aphoristic style, “Nothing consumes a man more quickly than the passion of *ressentiment*.” It is the ultimate blaming of the other.

What I’ve found from teaching in Thailand and the Philippines over the years is that the traditional virtue-practice in these very different cultures is a deeply felt recognition of the other person that is practiced in daily life even if one from the West might see it as ritualistic or cultural behavior. I think what is important about teaching Parzival is that it has many universal themes that the young person can identify with and explore in guided discussion. If one can present interesting and thought-provoking archetypal pictures of challenges and relevant ideals, which teenagers can explore in a group, it can be a way to help them with the cultivation of confidence needed to move through challenges and toward a pathway of ideals in life.

Generally, in science, we can say that there have been and will be in the future important discoveries; also I would say, there have been and will be further discoveries of the spiritual nature of the human being. This is territory Thai Buddhists and most Buddhists would designate as the basic work of their practice. If we can state it in this way, we can say a science of consciousness. This formulated notion from the process of the class really rang true for the 11th grade Thai students. As Steiner indicated, we are only free when we meditate, when we choose to learn and practice spiritual thinking, attention, and transformative imagination on many levels and from different perspectives. We can add the importance of the lesson of Parzival’s quest into the unknown, a crisis of doubt and even resentment towards his Grail destiny, and see that the unasked and asked question symbolizes the spiritual depth and healing power of compassion and openness to the other. It is the opposite of the kaleidoscopic enchantment that Klingsor created. These thoughts can possibly point us toward an understanding of what Rudolf Steiner means by *Grail Science* as a science of human destiny or a Spiritual (thinking) Science. We all go through important sacred passages throughout our lifetime, beginning from adolescence; adolescence being the archetypal sacred passage. We are all travelling through a kind of metamorphosis of becoming, especially in relations with each other. We must stay open to each other as an integral aspect of self-knowing. We must develop a vigilance, an authentic heart-thinking to appreciate and recognize the signposts of self-knowledge along the way.

Note:

1. Lo’ob. This “holistic” and “relational” aspect of loób is partly why the Filipino psychology movement sought to escape the confines of modern psychology, especially the behaviorism of B. F. Skinner. Skinner sought to understand human beings as experimental subjects. The Filipino psychologists were compelled instead to explore indigenous techniques such as pakapa-kapa (literally, “groping”) or pagtanong-tanong (“asking questions”), which eschewed rigid academic theories and sought to interact with the person in a more warm and humane manner, using natural pakikiramdam or social sensitivity (Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino 2000, 59-60). While it would not now be considered as conforming to the norm of “empirical research,” it is more faithful to how loób and kapa is revealed only by treating the other person as a full person (and not just a guinea pig or test subject) but within the context of a genuine relationship.



For over one hundred years this newspaper, Das Goetheanum, has been published in German. For the past three years it has also appeared online and now also in English. The following articles have been reprinted from this weekly online newsletter with permission.
<https://dasgoetheanum.com>

The Vacuum and the Plague

A meditative path into contemporary reality

ZVI SZIR - FIRST PRINTED MAY 18, 2022, DAS GOETHEANUM NEWSLETTER



All that is is being: the house, the mountain, the tree, the car, or the dog, as well as the fingernail or the hand, everything is being. From the elemental to the high spiritual, the beings weave into each other, they are and create the collective work that we call creation.

For our consciousness, their relationships are subject to a simple basic law: what is a unity in the spiritual world is a multiplicity in the physical; what appears as a unity in physical existence is a multiplicity in the spiritual. Thus, the essence of the plant appears spiritually as a unit, the primordial plant, and in the physical as a multiplicity of different plants. In the physical, however, a plant, for example, the rose bush on the wayside, appears as a unit, but as a spiritual reality, it is the action of the beings of the sun, the earth, the water, the minerals, life, the air, etc. But because a being is where it works, or because a being is a certain way of working, the plant, like any other single physical appearance, is a spiritual diversity. Every 'thing' is a spiritual diversity, a rich network of work in which no emptiness can be found. In other words, there is nothing that does not exist, everywhere where something exists, there is someone, there is existence, work, being. Being nothing is nowhere to be found.

«In my father's house» there are no empty rooms. But what is it like when a being does not unfold its activity, when a being withdraws and does not work, i.e. is not as it should be (there)? What happens to the empty space of activity in creation? What are the consequences of a spiritual vacuum, a spiritual emptiness in the true sense? What is the reality of «horror vacui», the «fear of emptiness», nature's aversion to emptiness, and the need of artists of antiquity to fill empty spaces?

Where something is not done, something else takes place. If the apartment is not tidy, chaos takes place, if the encounter is not carried out, loneliness unfolds, if the word is not pronounced, silence arises, thinking is not unfolded, then stupidity spreads. So the «horror vacui» is real; when an activity does not take place, a space opens up in which another activity, another being, can expand. Someone else moves in and unfolds his actions and being in the wrong place, in a habitat that is unjustified for him. Sucking, the spiritual vacuum seduces other beings to expand their work there, so that their own measure is exceeded; that which is good and right in a certain cosmic way becomes monstrous when it grows beyond its necessary space of existence: it becomes a plague. The essence of the plague is the activity in which a being expands its legitimate dimension to a catastrophic degree. The fact that the disaster may be necessary to restore a balance in a dynamic way does not make the disaster any less catastrophic.

Covid-19 is a symptom of the current plague that also pervades our relationship to the world, to truth, and to reality, to feeling and morality; it is a reality, a certain event, a behavior, i.e. a being. There is no question that this being has a justified existence in its diversity. However, there is no question that it has unfolded oversized. This panicked, Dionysian event – «pan» means the «all-encompassing» – has come so far out of its place in the cosmos that, like the Bacchantes, it threatens to tear everything apart. We ourselves stand in front of it, like

a derailed train, with the certainty that this event is not easy to stop. It has to be, as they say so vividly in English: «run its course». But the question becomes imperative: What is the vacuum that made this oversized derailment possible, even necessary? What essentially did not take place? What mental activity has receded, has stepped away from us, creating the vacuum in which the essence of Covid-19 has had to develop extraordinarily and disproportionately?



New Religious Wars

Anyone who was able to escape the monkey dance of opinions and listened to the events of recent years can see that, in addition to the painful loss of human life, it is the truth that emerges as a victim of the plague. Of course, it is not about the truth as such, it is inviolable, but about the human ability to recognize the truth, to pursue it thoughtfully. It is the ability to distinguish between what I have recognized and what I do not know, what is lost to the highest degree on a daily basis. In a devilishly ingenious, regressive train of the adversarial powers within us, we have again landed in a kind of medieval religious war. It seems that the truth is no longer accessible through the thinking of the individual mind, but has become a matter of faith and confessions. Whether we are for or against vaccinations, whether we belong to the believers of science or adhere to other theories, we all no longer distinguish, or only with extreme difficulty, between facts and fantasies, between what we know and what we believe in. Of course, there is nothing new about this, it is a process that has been accelerating for years, but it has reached a mega dimension that can be described as a pan epidemic in its monstrosity.

If I allow myself to be touched impartially by this fact, then I realize that this proportionless nature of the plague is essentially linked to the question of truth and facts, i.e. thinking and perception. In my mind's eye, a multidimensional shift in the relationships between thinking, perception, information, and knowledge appears to me, which has been building up for years but is now coming to a certain climax. I can see how

the pandemic is not so much connected to what we are doing, but to what we have not done step by step, almost unnoticed. It is us, the people, who have created a mental vacuum that has inevitably inflated the being I am allowed to call Covid-19 into panicked dimensions.

I can observe a shift in human experience that has decoupled thinking and perception so that significant parts of daily perceptions have become categorically inaccessible to thinking. A whole range of perceptions has emerged, with which I basically cannot connect mentally. Where thought should begin its actions, it is not possible, so that an essential spiritual action does not take place. Where it should take place, only a mental vacuum can be found. To understand this, we must briefly and repeatedly recall the relationship we have with the world as discerning beings.

Experiences without thinking

The world of nature as well as the objects created by humans appears to us as a perception through our physical organization. But what eludes us through the same organization are the thoughts, the essence of the things, what makes the things what they are, that is, their spiritual reality. We have to bring these back and forth to perception, on the path of mental intuition. So our thoughts are a kind of spiritual reflection of the aspect of things that underlies them beyond the one-time moment of perception. Thoughts are in our consciousness the shadow image of what is essential in things. In other words, thoughts are in things and inseparable from them. An oak tree is what it is because the law of the oak as an active thought system unfolds its activity on it, otherwise, it would only be a bunch of substances. The same applies to the flower, the bus, or the mountain as well as to every single mineral. It is the working being that reveals itself to me through the thinking of what and who it is. If I connect the thought gained with the given perception, then I recognize the world. Thus, recognition is a restoration of the relationship between experience and thought, the unity in which things are and which was first lifted only by my delimiting sensual constitution in my conscious experience of the world.



Reality and Representation

But if you have never smelled the smell of the sea, you will never be able to deduce the salty-moist experience from a screenshot. If I have never seen the sea, then the essence of the sea can only be brought closer to me as an analogy and comparative remembrance. If I perceive a photo, then the being is unapproachable to me or only accessible to me on the detour of memory. («Although it doesn't breathe, this accumulation of pixels on the screen reminds me of a face, it looks like ...») Experiences and information translated into linguistic or optical representations are always images, so they are the turning away of the experience on the matter, an already pre-analyzed, shaped experience that excludes my thinking from the relation to the matter. When I think about information, photos, films, and descriptions, then I am enclosed in myself. I follow a logic that can be true in itself, but I do not relate to the world and its essence. I see something in a photo and can think about it. But then I think about a photo and not about a thing. The working thoughts that are in the matter are no longer accessible to me through perception and intuition. I can explain a photo analytically, but it never gives me the certain recognition of an immediate experience.

Because the information is not what it informs me about, the photo of Everest is not the mountain itself, the intuitive exchange between my thinking mind and the world either does not take place at all or only in a reduced form. I can't really think about the limitless information that is served to me, I can only have opinions. («I don't know, but I mean...») Forming an opinion means that I cannot recognize, renounce recognizing, at least for the moment, and instead form my opinion.

When I learn more about the world, for example online, than I experience in real life, then the mass of things I am informed about grows far beyond the abundance of my experiences and my mental thinking takes a step back. Instead of thinking about the world and thus entering into an intuitive exchange between inside and outside, I begin to construct opinions within myself, to put information together. But this is more of a mental occupation of the mind and soul than a mental activity. Where my mind withdraws from the inhalation and exhalation of the world, which is the act of knowing, an emptiness arises.

Due to the sucking space of this vacuum, which has taken on huge proportions due to the flood of information, images, and videos, the epidemic had to take on pandemic dimensions. There is so much that lies outside of our immediate thinking as information that we usually inform ourselves rather than embark on the work of cognition. Every decision and statement based on little experience is opinionated and thoughtless and contributes to this vacuum. The excess of finished knowledge, as text, image, or film, has banished our thoughts from the world, where there should be a giving self between us and things, it has produced the absence of the spirit. The expansion of another, a non-I, into the sucking free space thus created is the essence of the panicked plague, is the disease of the sphere of the relationship between the inside and the outside.

Sidenote

This momentous behavior of the mind and the world is particularly evident to the extent that the representation of the world lays claim to the truth. So it is rather the news, documentaries, newspaper reports, etc. that deprive the possibility of thinking. It is precisely this kind of representation that leads us to believe that it is more permeable, that it essentially lets reality through. Feature films and literary texts as well as music recordings are in themselves what they are, artificial representations that do not correspond to the world, but lie within themselves, which follow the logic of fiction. That is why they can also be judged for «what they are». It is not for nothing that we always find the truth in literature and poetry rather than in daily newspapers. We can directly assess the sensory experience of a concert recording, even if we come to the realization that something is missing because it is not live music. The claim to truth that a representation makes is diametrically opposed to our ability to think through it. That is why Rudolf Steiner insisted, for example, that he had to speak in pictures. In any case, the above reflections are not intended to encourage alienation from the technological world of reproduction, but on the contrary: if we know what is at stake and what we can or cannot actually do spiritually, then we are only free to treat it fairly.

All pictures from Zvi Szir

The Shortest Pathway is Not Always the Best

FRANK CHIU FIRST PRINTED MAY 27, 2022, DAS GOETHEANUM NEWSLETTER

Impressions from the Asian teacher training this year at the Acacia Waldorf school in the Philippines.



“The goal is not just a goal. The goal changes the soul.” These two lines shared by one of our mentors thus started Jel and my wonderful 5-day intensive, brain-wracking and truly enriching Asian Teacher Training (ATT) journey.

The ATT is an annual training course that aims to prepare

Waldorf teachers, as well as help parents and other interested individuals, learn about Steiner/Waldorf pedagogy principles and practical applications. This training cycles through different countries. For this year, it was hosted by the Acacia Waldorf School based in the Philippines. This 21st edition of the ATT had the theme, “The Detour as the Shortest Way Forward: The Healing Aspects of Waldorf Education.”

On a daily basis, we had close to four hours of plenary lectures and separate main lessons. Lessons were classified under Study of Man, Early Childhood and Kindergarten, plus the different levels of Lower and Middle School. In the afternoon, we allotted almost the same amount of time for very engaging workshops: blackboard drawing, painting, games & movement, handwork crafts, book binding and music.

I signed up for Study of Man and blackboard drawing, and Jel joined the Kindergarten lessons and handwork crafts. It was a surreal learning, unlearning and relearning week for us, to say the least.

On the topic of sleeping and waking. When does sleeping become waking; and waking become sleeping? How can we help kids (and all of us adults included) sleep in such a way that they can bring their activities and experiences into the night, and bring them back the next day with better impressions, focus and renewed insights?

Emotion is the trigger for every breath. First is the breath, then the heart follows. Breathing connects with thinking, feeling and willing. When I breathe in, how will it trigger my brain thoughts? When I breathe out, what exactly happens and how does it help bring my thoughts out into the physical and spiritual world?

Regarding the catchy phrase of the “forgotten detour of forgetting” – how do we teach kids the equal value of remembering and forgetting? The more healthy the impressions we get, the more vibrant and healthy they will be. But how do we really, effectively teach them to healthily forget, providing opportunities for them to re-awaken and remember’?





On a practical level, when or how do we use mobile phones (and televisions) in front of our kids? Which age should they be introduced to these kinds of devices? Since their friends will eventually come from different schools using different instructional methods/pedagogies, how can we help them integrate and learn from each other's differences and individual uniqueness? How do we cope with the inevitability of fast foods and when, why and where do we introduce competitive sports?

As much as we enjoyed our seriously fun art workshops, they got us thinking about how we can truly introduce these activities into our localities – communities that would usually identify these things as play and/or leisure time endeavors available only for the privileged few. How can we genuinely bring into consciousness and integrate these activities as mainstream pathways towards the development of abilities and skills?

Obviously, we left with more beautiful questions than answers. And five-day journey left us with more questions in the space we were exploring: how can we be active and relevant partners in our own communities here in Palawan, relating the various fields of education, farming, health and enterprise development?

One thing though — we realized more and more that we became both students and teachers during this course. We looked at the questions and discussions equally as students and teachers – as students because as we constantly need to be wide eyed and ever-hungry to know more about our life, spirit and will streams, and as teachers because we also have other students to guide and must help inform a world that we ourselves do not know yet (i.e., our future kids, our staff, the farming communities that we seek to be involved with, etc).

We also realized that, as we ask why we want to be involved in fields and sectors seeking to help more people end different kinds of poverty, we realize that this movement goes both ways. It speaks to our constant yearning to be more and more human and to stretch ourselves to reach our highest and innermost self (our big I). And by stretching ourselves towards the periphery and towards our limits, there we get to feel the

most — the most of ourselves. There, we also get to meet the most of the other — and the nearest possible that we can get to feel the other people around us. And when we ask the 'why' genuinely, and as one of our mentor succinctly articulated it, we get to step into the most intimate will stream of the people around us. And in so doing, our lives weave with their lives. We breathe in and out together. And there, we get to create beautiful and harmonious opportunities to build better communities, better societies. And maybe, just maybe along the way, bump into the gates of paradise.

With me just entering the third cycle of my 21-year life cycle (if there is such a thing as 21-year cycles!) and Jel mid-way into her second 21-year cycle, we couldn't help but be thankful and wonder what's in store for the next chapter of our biographies.

On the Way to Growth

WOLFGANG HELD- FIRST PRINTED JUNE 3, 2022, DAS GOETHEANUM

Since 2020, the Demeter China Association (DCA) has been working to ensure that Biodynamic Agriculture is developed locally.



To this end, the DCA has organized various workshops on Biodynamic preparations on different farms. These workshops were open to a large community of people from Biodynamic and organic agriculture, trade as well as consumers, and all interested parties. The DCA's approach goes beyond the mere transfer of Biodynamic knowledge or practices and is aimed at a holistic educational experience that involves students in their thinking, feeling, and wanting. DCA member Hermin Tang shared his experience: «As someone who has participated in all the preparation workshops, it is a great experience to notice all the nuances when you make preparations every year. It's a moment to see if I've been able to sharpen my skills and my sensory perception.» For example, the training incorporated

online lectures by foreign instructors and Tai Chi exercises from this traditional Chinese Martial Art. The workshops strengthened the bonds and the network within the community. The community is relatively small, and as Hermin says, the DCA needs the support of its like-minded people and the guidance of experienced biodynamic farmers. At the moment, the main concern of the DCA is that the community grows and develops a network of practices – the workshops had this valuable effect. For Hermin, this was as challenging as it was worthwhile: «I enjoyed getting to know all the new faces in the group, especially the young people. Youth power is urgently needed to spread biodynamic agriculture in the future. I hope we were able to find a communication style that attracts many more young people.» Nevertheless, while Biodynamic Agriculture has been developing in China for more than 20 years, Hermin sees the need for experienced instructors who can support training initiatives across the country, not only on preparations but also on fundamental issues such as animal husbandry, beekeeping, etc. For Hermin, there is an urgent need to raise awareness of Biodynamic Agriculture and its products within the country. At the same time, we could make valuable contributions if we integrate traditional Chinese agricultural knowledge with Biodynamic principles.

Common Roots

JEAN-MICHEL FLORIN, FIRST PRINTED MAY 27, 2022

 dasgoetheanum.com/en/common-roots

What is the relationship between biodynamic agriculture and the indigenous peoples' understanding of nature? What can be learned here? Jean-Michel Florin, co-director of the Section for Agriculture at the Goetheanum, shares his thoughts.

A few years ago I had an encounter with Luzmila Carpio, a famous singer from the Quechua people of Bolivia. She was, for a time – under the government of Evo Morales – UNESCO



Luzmila Carpio, 2014. Photo: Mauro Rico, Ministerio de Cultura de la Nación.

Ambassador of Bolivia. An acquaintance recommended a record of her to my wife.¹ The music had really touched us. A few weeks later I was invited to a biodynamic farm in the South of France. In the evening I went to an eco-festival and was asked by my hosts to take her friend from Bolivia. While driving, we exchanged ideas, and suddenly I noticed: Next to me sits the woman whose voice impressed me so much. That's how you get to know each other! Later she told us that when she heard the birds sing, her mother knew that a guest would come in the evening: a self-evident life with the «invisible». We noted further similarities between the biodynamic approach and the Quechua tradition, starting with the fact that both see the Earth as a living being.

We wondered what kind of relationship we could establish between biodynamic agriculture born in Europe and the cosmological tradition of the Quechua. Each current might need the other. Luzmila told us that young people no longer cultivate their traditions, long for modernity, and throw away all spiritual foundations. Meeting people who practice spiritual agriculture in Europe in a «modern way» could encourage young people to take their traditions seriously. And we, as biodynamic Europeans, can gain more legitimacy for our search for a spiritual approach to agriculture through the tradition and growing recognition of indigenous peoples. On other occasions, I had also noticed that in many countries of the world, such as India, Togo, or Argentina, farmers who are closely connected to the earth long for a connection to their tradition and for a spiritualization of their work. How can we learn from each other? For this reason, we had for the Agricultural Conference 2020 «Ways to the Spiritual in Agriculture»² Representatives of indigenous peoples from all over the world were invited.

Who are the indigenous peoples?

In the stream of decolonization and emancipation movements, indigenous peoples assert themselves and seek recognition. They not only want to be tolerated or seen as interesting research topics for ethnology but really want to be taken seriously. To this end, its representatives actively participate in all major meetings, such as the recent Nature Congress in Marseille (UICN).³ Or at the COP 26 climate conference in Glasgow, where Dias Mirabal (member of the Wakuena Kurripaco tribe) represented the indigenous peoples of Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana and said at the press conference: «We are at COP 26 to have our proposal ratified to keep 80 percent of the Amazon alive. We are the Amazon for life, we are the cry of the air, the water, the creatures of the forest, we are here to get answers and action from the states.»⁴

They represent about 6.2 percent of the world's population and maintain 80 percent of the world's biodiversity. They inhabit 25 percent of the global land area. Many agricultural

practices on Earth have their origins in indigenous agriculture. It has now been proven that they have cultivated almost the entire earth for more than 10,000 years.⁵, contrary to the general colonialist opinion, indigenous peoples such as the Aborigines have stopped at the stage of hunting and gathering. They did it in very different ways. Sometimes as gentle as in the Amazon forest, where researchers recently discovered that the so-called untouched primeval forest with the greatest biodiversity is a cultivated forest.

Researcher Julia Wright from the University of Coventry⁶ had presented further connections between biodynamics and indigenous traditions during the last research conference of the Agricultural Section at the Goetheanum: In a joint action⁷ 16 representatives of indigenous peoples called on the movements of organic agriculture not simply to take these practices out of context, but rather to deepen the worldviews from which they originate, which respect living beings. They went on to explain that only a changed perspective can lead to the radical change of attitude that our time so desperately needs. In their appeal, these 16 representatives presented philosophical concepts that lie across their various cosmogonies. A remarkable achievement! The main aspects of the indigenous appeal can be summarized in the following six points: 1. Affirmation of the unity of human beings and nature against the modern view of the duality of human beings and nature. 2. Affirming that everything is alive instead of separating dead and living elements. 3. Reaffirming the constant search for balance instead of explaining the world with the dualism of good and evil. 4. Reaffirming the need for linguistic diversity in order to preserve the extraordinary diversity of reality in every place, given the exclusive supremacy of the English language.⁸ 5. Claim that human beings belong to the earth and not the earth to human beings. 6. Claim that the earth goes through cycles of change and that death brings new life, rather than the claim that the dying earth must be saved by us.

Common Roots

If you compare these basic concepts with the anthroposophical or biodynamic understanding of the relationship between human beings and earth, as Julia Wright does, you will find many exciting similarities. Is this relationship so amazing? Doesn't this substance, this knowledge, come from the same origin? Rudolf Steiner always pointed out that he had not invented anything, but had observed in the spiritual world with a scientific method. The indigenous peoples had and have also maintained contact with this spiritual wisdom. There are more similarities than one would think. That speaks for a rapprochement. The most important similarity is that one works with the 'hidden half of nature' and not only with the physically visible one. Various sociologists and anthropologists have studied the biodynamic practices and the worldview behind them. Most of the time they take as a basis the work of



the ethnologist Philippe Descola⁹, who lived with the Achuar in South America. He tried to understand their worldview and developed a theory based on four different ontologies (notions of being in the relationship between human beings and nature): animism, totemism, analogism, and naturalism. He showed that our civilization today is based on naturalism. His hypothesis is that on one hand there is the human being who lives in closed societies, and on the other hand there is something foreign: nature. Nature is everything that is outside, that can be used and exploited, hiked, or even protected. But it's not the place where you live.

Human beings are not part of nature. Naturalism created the duality of human beings-nature.

Descola shows that the other three ontologies do not make a strict separation between human beings and nature, which is why they have a less destructive effect on living beings than naturalism. In his study, Jean Foyer shows,¹⁰ that biodynamics is not only naturalistic but also sometimes animistic or analog when talking to animals and plants. These terms, which sometimes seem schematic, help researchers to understand biodynamic practices in their mental context. And so the indigenous peoples indirectly help to understand our biodynamic approach.

Consequences

The call of the indigenous peoples shows in a very efficient way how one can present one's otherwise only implicit worldview. It became clear how biodynamic agriculture or other organic farming practices should clearly present their «worldview» in order to avoid being seen as incomprehensible without context. It is difficult to understand certain «strange» practices and methods, such as the biodynamic preparations of horn manure and horn silica, without their context. Moreover, this call makes it clear that applying a method without its underlying mindset will not have much effect in the long run. He also shows that in our culture we should examine and acknowledge our roots more closely in order to tie our current way of life more closely to the past and thus go better into the future.

As a final consequence, you can discover a new task. Is it not urgently necessary to exchange ideas with the representatives of indigenous peoples all over the world? In order to deepen one's own traditions and to avoid that biodynamic agriculture, which has its origin in the European tradition, has a colonialist effect. Some biodynamic friends in different countries have already started with this.

Footnotes

- 1) Luzmila Carpio, *Le chant de la terre et des étoiles* (Une création inspirée par le grand livre des Indiens quechua). Harmonia Mundi, 2003
- 2) Documentation of the Agricultural Conference 2020. www.sektion-landwirtschaft.org/lwt/2020
- 3) Conclusion Congrès uicn 2021. <https://uicn.fr/congres-de-luicn-bilan/>
- 4) *Le Figaro*, 10/30/2021. <https://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/cop26-les-peuples-autochtones-plaident-pour-la-preservation-de-80-de-l-amazonie-20211030>
- 5) People have shaped most of terrestrial nature for at least 12,000 years. <https://www.pnas.org/content/118/17/e2023483118>
- 6) J. Wright, N. Parrott (Hg.), *Subtle Agroecologies – Farming with the Hidden Half of Nature*. Taylorfrancis.com (<http://taylorfrancis.com/>). 2021
- 7) *Whitewashed Hope*. 2020. <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/whitewashed-hope-message-10-indigenous-leaders-and-organizations>
- 8) See footnote 6.
- 9) Philippe Descola, *Par-delà nature et culture*. Gallimard, 2005
- 10) Jean Foyer. <https://orbi.uliege.be/handle/2268/241712>



Propaganda in the West?

LOUIS DEFÈCHE- FIRST PRINTED JUNE 3, 2022, DAS GOETHEANUM NEWSLETTER

It is common knowledge that the first victim of war is the truth. As free as the media landscape in democracies is against dictatorships, freedom of the press is not yet absolute. Some symptoms from last week.



Photo: Oliver Stone and Igor Lopatonok, two directors who denounce censorship in the West. Rome International Film Festival, October 2021. (IMAGO/ZUMA). Translation: Monika Werner

In recent years, but especially today, since the war has broken out, there is general talk of «Russian propaganda». The word «propaganda», from Latin «propagare»: «to spread», which was not originally a pejorative term, could be applied in its original meaning to almost any form of information medium. However, the word has received a distinctly negative connotation in the 20th century. The use of this term today disqualifies, from the outset, the medium to which it is attributed. Of course, any form of an authoritarian state that only allows controlled media is rightly denounced. But does this solve the issue of freedom of information in liberal countries where information is less controlled by the state?

Hidden Points of View

In his famous Harvard speech in 1969, Nobel laureate Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who had experienced the violence of Soviet totalitarianism first-hand, formulated a revealing observation: «One gradually discovers a common tendency of preferences within the Western press as a whole. It is fashionable, there are generally accepted patterns of judgment, and there may be general corporate interests, but the overall effect is not a competition but unification. [...] While there is no overt violence as in the East, fashion-dictated choice and the need to conform to mass standards often prevent independently thinking people

from making their contribution to public life. [...] This leads to strong mass prejudices, to a blindness that is very dangerous in our dynamic time. For example, there is a self-deceptive interpretation of the current world situation. It looks like a kind of petrified shell around people's heads.»

Just last week, during the Barcelona Film Festival, American director and four-time Oscar winner Oliver Stone presented his latest documentary 'JFK Revisited'. Stone is one of those left-wing Americans who use their right to freedom of expression to expose the questionable sides of U.S. power politics. «The intelligence services have misled us in many matters, especially in wars – in Vietnam, twice in Iraq, in Afghanistan, in Syria...», he said in an interview in 2020. Stone complained several times about the great difficulties in distributing his films. In fact, his last works are very little known: his four-hour interview with Vladimir Putin, 'The Putin Interviews' (2016), or the documentaries he made with the Ukrainian-born director Igor Lopatonok: 'Ukraine on Fire' (2016) and 'Revealing Ukraine' (2019). The silence surrounding these films is astonishing given the importance of the subjects and the notoriety of the directors, and indeed it existed long before the latter's unwavering closeness to the Russian president even after his order to invade Ukraine.

Freedom and Limitation

Last week we received two more reports that show that freedom of expression is also a struggle in Western countries. On one hand, the European Union announced the introduction of a 'Digital Services Act' (DSA) to regulate activities in the digital world. The stated goal is, of course, the protection of the individual from abuse, which may be justified. However, it should be noted that this is an intervention of the state in the public space of expression of opinion, and if this intervention wants to pretend what is true or false, then the state begins to want to co-opt the individual formation of judgments. In the USA, as well, a 'Disinformation Governance Board' was announced by the government a few days ago. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in censorship in the West, especially in the context of the pandemic but also in the context of war. Not only the Russian-funded news channels were banned ('Russia Today' and 'Sputnik'), but Youtube, for example, had already removed one million videos in August 2021 because of «dangerous misinformation about the coronavirus», according to Neal Mohan, head of product management.

And that same week, we learned that Elon Musk, the richest entrepreneur in the world, announced his intention to buy Twitter, one of the most powerful social networks of our time. He made the purchase on the grounds that the network was not transparent and practiced unjustified censorship. His desire is to defend freedom of expression in order to strengthen democracy. Many observers of the Western press

have sharply criticized the purchase and see the danger that the billionaire will take control of information. However, one of Twitter's founders, Jack Dorsey, said he trusts him. Musk had already distinguished himself in the context of the war in Ukraine by offering Ukrainians free access to his space network 'Starlink', but at the same time refusing to censor 'Russia Today' in the name of freedom of the press. Be that as it may, the billionaire will be asked to comply with the requirements imposed by the states and in particular by the European Union.

The Effect on the Heart

Ultimately, neither the European Union nor Elon Musk nor Oliver Stone will be able to rid us of propaganda. The formation of an objective judgment depends entirely on our individual cognitive activity, on our ability to diversify and verify our sources of information, to overcome our personal inclinations and prejudices in order to understand the most diverse points of view, but also to refrain from making too quick a judgment – carefully observing, patiently waiting, collecting many facts ourselves, and not just simply believing the major media outlets. And in addition to the external facts, it could also be essential to focus attention on one's own heart, on the inner experience that this or that reporting evokes in us. Because the events in the world, especially the wars, are nothing more than the external manifestation of what is happening inside, in the souls of human beings.

Contact: <https://dasgoetheanum.com>



What task does civil society have in times of crisis and war?

Michaela Glöckler and Friedrich Glasl

How do we fight for peace?

A state of war such as we have been living with since February 24th 2022 and which we are told could last for many years, is not only unbearable as an idea but is even more unbearable as a daily reality. See [video](#) by conflict researcher Prof. F Glasl. It becomes painfully clear from the war strategy and the way it is being promoted by the media that those responsible for the decisions do not have the skills that have become almost second nature for people who actively seek to create a healthy social climate and promote peace within the small framework of civil society. When the warring parties

merely make demands on each other and ramp up enemy rhetoric, the chances for peace and de-escalation diminish. How much time, money and effort is spent discussing sanctions and weaponry and how little is invested in mediation and possible de-escalation strategies!

Although beyond a certain level of escalation, it may appear that justice, freedom and dignity can only be secured with weapons and that pacifism has its limits, it is nonetheless vital to ensure that efforts are continually made to de-escalate the situation and find diplomatic solutions – neutral countries like Austria and Switzerland which are not members of NATO, have frequently been able to offer their services as mediators.

That peace doesn't come about by itself, but is the result of hard work is something that basically we all know: When is a partnership successful? How does a friendship hold despite differences? And what threatens harmonious family life, a common celebration, a good working relationship, all forms of teamwork? Bringing about peace means showing interest in the other particularly when he or she is different to oneself. By genuinely wanting to get to know one another, showing mutual respect for idiosyncrasies, interests and habits and not shying away from the learning of social skills, constructive developments can take place. Attending courses in non-violent communication, meditation and in certain situations engaging [professional counselling](#), can be helpful.

It is out of these considerations and the danger of further escalation leading to incalculable economic and collateral social damage including violence, hunger and destitution in many countries and regions that we are also sending this newsletter to the responsible members of the European Parliament with the request that alongside sanctions and the supply of weapons, they do everything in their power to create the conditions for a peaceful resolution. After all even if the war goes on for many years it will one day be necessary to sign a peace treaty. Why not decide to work on this now at all levels? The rhetoric of war pedalled by the mainstream media needs to be countered with equally determined diplomatic efforts to secure peace using mediation and de-escalation techniques.

Why wait until the suffering has grown so great that we can do nothing else in the ruins but negotiate a peaceful future?

We are delighted that the internationally acclaimed conflict mediator from Austria Prof. Friedrich Glasl, has been able to advise us in our efforts to promote peace. He also co-signs this letter.



Creating Our Future Now

Benjamin Cherry, Ilan, Taiwan

*All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their exits and their entrances
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages...*

-- William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*¹



Photo: Threefold Educational Foundation

It is not just history that is playing itself out in front of our eyes and ears today. It is a battle for the future, on this earth *and beyond*. What we are witnessing, as more and more shocking truths become revealed, are not only unprecedented crimes against humanity, but an on-going assault on the whole of existence, a plan to reset not only our entire world economy, but the entirety of life on this planet.²

I do not expect readers to take my word for this. Each of us is being called upon to do our own research and make sense of what is happening to the best of our ability, but we can also share our own outer and inner research. And that is what I am wishing to do now.

Whereas, five centuries ago, plays were being enacted in the small Globe Theatre in London about every kind of human trait and personality, from radiantly good to almost unbelievably evil, now the stage is indeed the whole world. And we are not only spectators, but playwrights, actors, judges and even designers and builders of the 'theatre' for the mighty drama of humanity's next step in evolution. Moreover, as Shakespeare knew well, all kinds of different beings – elemental, ghostly, lofty, tricky, helpful and mean-spirited – also have their parts to play in this divine-human comedy of errors and tragedy of monumental proportions.³

A Synopsis of the Main Drama

The mighty source of wisdom that once pervaded ancient cultures and still reveals itself in its last traces within indigenous groups around the world has dried up. Through the long, hard

process of individuation and the development of the rational mind spanning many centuries, we have broken loose from past traditions and the need for spiritual or earthly authorities telling us what to think and do, or not do. And yet, during these last two years, we have been witnessing an extraordinary reversion of this hard-won autonomy. How could this happen?

It is a process that has been evolving since the time of the European world empires, especially those of France and Britain, along with the irreversible changes in human society and consciousness brought about since the Industrial Revolution. And this has resulted now in unimaginably vast wealth and power being concentrated in a minuscule minority of the world population, allied with a technology of mind control that would have been impossible on such a world scale even a short time ago.

What began two and a half centuries ago with the industrial conversion of fossil fuels, minerals, metals, water, air and forests into the energy and material substances for an entirely new global society, has been expanded, during the last fifty years or so, into an exploitation and ever-increasing genetic modification of plants and animal species on this earth. And now, in recent decades, with growing speed and ever-expanding financial and technological resources, the focus is being directed on the modification and ‘farming’ of humanity itself.⁴

The openly stated goal of the people behind the doctrine of transhumanism, for example, is none other than the ‘resetting’ of the human genome and of humanity becoming a race of cyborgs, of human robots – and robotic humans – created and directed by the central controllers of this ‘trans-material’ technology. *Their* dream is assumed to be *our* dream and it is being imposed on the world.

For all this to happen, however, two things at least are essential. The first is the complicity of human populations everywhere in being led into this new world order, essentially through a kind of mass psychosis, and secondly, through the global economy collapsing and then being reset on the basis of a centralized, digital currency, controlled through artificial technology.⁵

Why are comparatively few people willing to become aware of this? I can suggest certain reasons that seem to stand out most clearly.

One is that this is a result of how most of us have been educated, in a system obsessed with competition, outer results and the idea that to every question there can only be *one right answer!* Add to this the expectation of submission to authority, along with the emphasis, from as young an age as possible, on intellectual explanations that bypass the heart’s intelligence.⁶

Another reason is the pollution each of us encounters in body and soul through toxic particles in air, water and food and the ever-growing electro-magnetic frequencies in the earth’s atmosphere.

Yet a third factor, perhaps the least recognized of all, is the systemic denial of *spirit* as an integral aspect of all existence. Through this, one’s capacity to acknowledge the reality of

Good and Evil is greatly weakened. And here we come closer to the root of the problems we are facing. For in denying the objective reality of the Good, we weaken our will for moral striving, and in closing the mind to Evil, we lay ourselves open to every kind of deception and mind control.



The Faith that Moves Mountains

How much faith we need at this time! We must have faith, not simply in a religion but in the human future and in our capacity as individuals, working together, to create a world that is worthy of our *intrinsically good* humanity. This can be no blind faith, for it calls on the participation of one’s entire being, including the conscious mind. It is the “faith that moves mountains.”⁷

Such a faith can only be born out of freedom. Imitation and social duty are not strong enough to sustain it through the huge challenges it will face. It is a faith without ‘ifs’ or ‘buts’, an idea, belief, and prayer that becomes an act of pure will. In other words, an act of love, *unconditional love*, for the great possibility of humanity’s evolving towards a higher and deeper, more universal and selfless level of being.

Just as evil, in its many forms, creates its spiderweb of intrigue and manipulation, so does faith become a force for a very different future that begins – as has all creation, including even modern technology – in the spirit. And that will only reveal its full potential within the stream of time.⁸

The possibility of a future created out of our highest moral striving is a long way away and many obstructions lie ahead. This faith, therefore, is inseparable from patience. Indeed, as more and more people are realizing, challenges are an essential part of the journey towards any moral goal, for they test one’s commitment and strength and the willingness to change. I do not pretend to myself that we will experience that ‘new age’ in my lifetime, but I can see how the will for it is being ignited through the scale of the wrong-doing and suffering that is taking place now.

The dawning of that period of future possibility, in which a true brother-sisterhood will be woven into the fabric of society, is known in anthroposophical spiritual science as the

time of the Sixth Epoch since the ending of the last Ice Age. According to Steiner's far-ranging spiritual-scientific research, we are now in the Fifth of these 'Post-Atlantean' Epochs, and it came to birth in the dynamic shift of consciousness we call the Renaissance. The Sixth Epoch will only reveal its earthly reality some 1500 years from now.⁹

Though we are familiar with huge time spans in geological evolution, this comparatively short time into the future can seem very abstract today. This is because, in one's normal thoughts, one confines oneself to this one life, in this particular body and cultural heritage, at this particular time. One can say, as many do, that we need to make changes for the sake of future generations and I agree. But how much more real this process of visioning the future becomes when one opens oneself to the thought that we have been on this earth numerous times and will return repeatedly, after longer or shorter periods in the spiritual world.

Our vocabularies are weak in this area and one is left to one's own resources to try to identify, through inner observation, what aspects of one's being could possibly endure beyond death and have had existence before birth.



Ted Mahle

Seeds Within for the Future Without

Two realizations (at least) can come from this knowledge quest. The first is that one must access a stronger level of thinking than is needed for processing ordinary sense perception. And secondly, that the conceptual reduction of reality to matter and the effective 'abolition' of the spirit, lull that thinking and its accompanying heart activity to sleep. It is a kind of hypnosis, similar, in a certain way, to how a spider paralyses the insect that has become ensnared in its web. We lose touch with what we actually are and can become.

It is only when one comes to clarity about the reality of the spirit, while here on the earth, that one becomes aware of a power within oneself from which one had previously been separated. A power, one could say, that is beyond space and time and therefore beyond the boundaries of physical birth and death, but can nevertheless be brought into this earthly

level of reality.

In my experience, the most direct way of coming to this in full clarity is through thinking and self-observation. Which brings one, of course, to the question of what thinking actually is. If it really is a kind of emanation from the brain, how then can it be an instrument for looking beyond what is material? And even for observing itself in its own, non-physical activity, which is an inherent aspect of the comparatively recent science of meta-cognition.¹⁰

Through this self-questioning, one can come to a remarkable realisation. Not only is thinking a spiritual activity, but the thought-process of materialism itself is also a spiritual power which, through its technology, is weaving a web of entrapment over humanity. So long as we allow the materialistic idea of the non-existence of spirit to take us over, we have no defence against this power.

But this web of falsehood goes further, for the spiritual activity of thinking can, of course, only be carried out by a spiritual entity (such as a human being) and not by a physical brain (which is simply reflecting that activity). Yet thinking is being used to deny its own existence. That is to say, humanity itself is denying its own existence and replacing it with an assumed existence as an animal (which has no capacity for the kind of thinking to which I am referring) or a machine (which cannot think, but only computes, in accordance with the instructions in its circuitry).

This is why, to justify the notion of the human being as an animal or machine, it is so necessary to fix the idea that we are controlled by our DNA and therefore that our thinking is just some kind of 'vapour' that hovers over that reality. The possibility of human self-determination evaporates into a mist and the scene is set for the kind of global control we are witnessing today. But the fact is, as anyone can find out today, there is nothing in our DNA that brings thinking into being, or indeed any other, intrinsically human, activity.

This self-denial is the 'tragic comedy' of our contemporary existence. Is it surprising, therefore, that we find ourselves in a world that is becoming increasingly dangerous and unstable? And which we are in the process of distorting and destroying, not simply through our actions but through the 'Ahrimanic' ways of thinking that spawn them.

Three decades ago, in my mid-forties, I went through a major crisis that was driven by the question as to whether there is anything in my soul that I can truly trust. My crisis lasted several years, but in staying with it, I began to access a more genuine basis for self-trust and, indeed, inner resilience and faith. All of which, I came to realize, are entirely non-physical human realities.

What became clear during that painful time was that only those aspects of the soul that I myself had developed or transformed out of my own volition actually belonged to me. At first it was a question of identifying certain emotions that were at times dominant in my life and of trying to discover what lay behind them from the past. Only in this way was I

then able to address the habits that had somehow congealed around those experiences.

It was work, as many readers will know from their own experience, that takes time and can only be achieved through a genuine seeking of truth concerning one's own character and weaknesses. The will to do this is neither pre-programmed nor automatic, and can only be sustained through one's own decision. But the fruit of this hard process is that one knows clearly how one has brought about such changes, and this not only brings inner strength, it even influences one's physical health. Moreover, the new qualities one has created, no matter how small, become a more enduring aspect of who one is than all that has been inherited genetically or culturally. It is a process of gradually re-creating oneself.

Through such crises, insight grows into the reality of the spirit, for one can 'see' it through its (that is to say, *one's own*) activity. I realized, too, that even though it is through having a body (and through one's connection with other embodied human beings) that one is brought into the life situations that reveal the need for change, the actual processes of self-change take place on a level that is independent of that body. They are soul-spiritual actions, carried out within time and space, but are, in themselves, independent of those limitations. In other words, they are not bound into the body's inevitable death.

Even the activity now, of 'revisiting' through memory what happened then, transcends physicality. And through similar acts of self-observation, one can also begin to gain a sense of how much one owes to others who have entered into one's life, seemingly 'by chance', and have stimulated one's own development in so many different ways. Ah, how busy is that convenient entity called 'chance'! For it can be called upon to explain away everything our stubborn, modern minds refuse to acknowledge as wisdom in the events that come to us along with the possibilities they bring for the redemption of past mistakes and for our future evolution.

All this changes when one opens the conscious, rational level of the soul to the thought of past and future lives on this earth. How many jewels light up, sparkling at us from our friendships *and* our difficult relationships, along with many other experiences that are only possible because one is here on the earth in a physical body, at this time. One's own characteristics begin to sort themselves out into those that have arisen from this specific life and the tendencies and qualities that seem to belong intrinsically to oneself and that one has somehow brought into this life.¹¹

Why am I sharing this? Because it leads to a clearer perspective on the reality of repeated earth lives. And this, in turn, strengthens one's acceptance of the role of time in human destiny and builds patience. One can realize, too, despite all the negativity attached to it today, the gift of growing old. For though the physical brain is slowly hardening and one may have lapses of short-term memory, one's thinking can become stronger and more incisive. It is a time for reflecting on the gifts one has received through the whole of life and preparing

more consciously for the transition that we all must experience into death.

One can also draw closer to those one knew in life who have already crossed that threshold and can realize that our prevailing quagmire of confusion is also strongly influencing the reality into which one enters after death - *and* what souls go through on their return journey 'downwards', into a new body for a new life on Earth. But that recognition has two sides. Not only do our fears and soul pollution influence the realms of our shared existence in the beyond, but so do our consciously created loving thoughts.



Rudolf Steiner's Mystery Drama

'By their deeds you shall know them'¹²

So let us return to our main theme – finding and creating a way forward through the colossal trials we are facing at this time. What I am suggesting, through what life has taught me and through working for a long time with the life-enhancing thoughts of anthroposophical spiritual science, is the following:

We cannot expect to solve all the existential problems that surround us in this one life-time. But one can learn through practice to have confidence that what takes place in one's thoughts and feelings and the deep impulses of the will has a spiritual effect.

Life on this earth is not just for the satisfaction of one's own worldly desires. It is an opportunity for learning what cannot be learnt in the spiritual world. Though each one of us has to face personally what comes into our own life, our development depends on our relationship with others.

Earth thereby becomes the Great School of Life, while the (usually) longer periods spent in spiritual levels of existence between earth lives enable us to experience the consequences *on others* of our past actions, in the presence of beings much more evolved than ourselves. One realizes that one's actions (and inactions) have consequences *that belong to oneself*.

Thoughts of past and future lives, therefore, do not need to be based on a self-centred craving for personal survival. On the contrary, they have far more potency when seen in connection with the whole of humanity. Different periods of humankind's long process of evolution bring different developmental pos-

sibilities. It is humanity itself that moves forward (or backward) in these waves of incarnations, and one's individual learning takes place within that, in all kinds of different settings.

Meanwhile, the torch of human progress on earth is handed over to the next generations. It is work in progress that can only happen on Earth. In other words, this mighty earth school is also a scientific laboratory, an artist's studio and a place of true decision.

We are granted the choice, therefore, of directing our will *either* towards a future in which the sufferings of others increasingly become one's own and in which one learns to perceive and honour the spiritual truth of each individual one encounters (as indeed of the whole of existence) *or* one in which one focuses on one's own lusts and ambitions on the slippery slope towards the dark recesses of criminality and an anti-human existence.

If one thinks this through, it leads to a horrifying realization of the splitting of humanity into, effectively, two different levels of being. When I read for the first time its elucidation in Steiner's seminal book *Esoteric Science*, it made no sense and I had no immediate interest in pursuing it further. Out of all the concepts I have received through anthroposophical spiritual science during the past 45 years, this has been the most challenging. Now events themselves are bringing my mind back to this shocking statement and I can begin to understand it in a new way.¹³

What I had not fully taken in before, because of my emotional response, was that the splitting will take place not out of any kind of pre-ordained spiritual plan but through the conscious intentions and actions of human beings. "By their deeds you shall know them". Those enigmatic words from 2,000 years ago take on new meaning in the light (and shocking bleakness) of this picture of separation.

The path of evil, of conscious torture, murder, lies and the infliction of spiritual damage on others – or indeed on any living being – is real, and will no doubt continue to grow, even if it is held at bay for a while by courageous human action, such as we are witnessing in many ways today. But the genuine search for truth and the long journey of transforming selfishness into love is no less real or powerful. And can one not also sense that the highest possibility of human destiny lies in the ultimate redemption of all that is evil?

If one follows these thoughts, it begins to make sense that the path one takes and co-creates with others – through many, many different life situations – will depend on our own decisions. One path being woven out of continuing moral striving and a growing sense of empathy, despite our failures and the huge suffering one will take on. The other being wrought out of an ever-hardening egotism, morphs from mere hypothesis into an actual way of leading one's life, right into the essence of the will.

Increasingly, and in myriad ways through many lifetimes, the choice will belong to each individual. But our time now is surely a first mighty step towards that separation. We are coming of age as creator beings.



Arild Rosenkrantz

The Dying and the Becoming

For the new to be born, the old must die, not only on a world scale, but within one's own life. And the events of our time are an essential part of this process.

The time is passing for standing on the beach and testing the waters of the future with our toes. It is a time for stepping into those waters and learning how to hold ourselves and each other within them. Many are warning of a breakdown, not only of the economy, but of world communications, delivery systems and everything we take for granted in our modern lives. If this is indeed what lies ahead, is it not time to practice communicating, not just by phone and computer but through thoughts and what lives in our hearts and will? Are we not being given the jolt to test the power of prayer – and even forgiveness – along with the capacity for carrying out all kinds of other practical and creative actions on this earth, with our hands as well as our hearts and heads?

No one can escape from the global process taking place now, even if one takes the shockingly lonely path of suicide. Once one recognises that death is not just an end, but a door into new possibilities, everything changes. One realizes we are in this together, for better or for worse. For one of many hard lessons in this school of death and new birth is to realise that, as Steiner makes clear, in the life after death in the spiritual realm we live with the consequences of our earthly actions and with the creating of impulses for future actions when we return here. But we cannot there transform what we have done here. That is something that can only happen here, which also means *now*.

If those, who seek world domination and the continuance of their own luxurious existence on earth (or in space) for eternity, achieve their goal, they will separate themselves from the most precious treasure in existence, bestowed on humanity through the events of 2000 years ago in Palestine. It is the dawning capacity to go into death, freely and consciously, and to transform it into a new level of life that could not come into being without it, something entirely new and unpredictable, a power, a substance, for a new way of being.¹⁴

Are we not being challenged to recognize our greatest and most unique capacity – the ability to change oneself? To *grow* through the dying and recognize the spark of new life within that dying, that has been imprinted into human destiny more intimately and lastingly than anything inscribed through evolution into our DNA.

Nature's dying calls up spectres of our own dying. What nature cannot do, however, humanity can, for we have been given a gift that is more valuable than all the treasures hoarded in the safes and secret accounts of the world's most powerful individuals and institutions. It is in standing before death that we recognize the value of life. And it is in accepting death that we find a key to that life.

Endnotes

1. Spoken by Jaques in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, Act II Scene VII Line 139.

2. For the clearest description of this 'from the horse's mouth' see the website of the World Economic Forum and the book co-authored by its founder Klaus Schwab, *The Great Reset*.

3. Classic examples, among many, are the nature beings in Shakespeare's 'A Mid-Summer Night's Dream' and the witches in his 'Macbeth', both of which were originally acted out in London's Globe Theatre.

4. There are many examples in the G-J Trial, especially on Days 2 & 5: www.grand-jury.net

5. For an analysis of the techniques of mass psychosis and their places of operation in the UK, see the evidence by Alex Thomson & Brian Gerrish from UK Column News and Debbie Evans, a retired nurse and investigative journalist, in the G-J Trial Day 2: www.grand-jury.net

6. A simple way to demonstrate this is to work with children, not only from parts to whole (e.g. 8+7=?) but from whole to parts (e.g. 15=?). Through this simple reversal, it is possible for each child to come up with a *different* correct answer! For example, 15 can be 1+14 or 60-45 or 3x6-3 and so on. This also encourages them to learn from each other. How different might the UN Assembly be, if that level of interest *in what others are saying* were to become common practice! How hollow the idea of the 'One Voice of Science' would become!

7. See *Matthew Gospel* Chapter 17, Verses 20-21.

8. All our creations are essentially the practical realization of ideas or inner pictures, which in themselves are non-material. Even modern matter-based technology.

9. See *Esoteric Science* (previously translated as *Occult Science*) by Rudolf Steiner, especially the last section (approximately 9 pages) of Chapter 5 (CW13). Published in 1909, this book essentially embraces the whole of Anthroposophy and gives an extraordinarily rich picture of human and cosmic evolution with respect, not only to matter, but life, soul and spirit. See also *Preparing for the Sixth Epoch* (CW159), a single lecture given to a group in Duesseldorf, Germany on 15 June 1915 - i.e. during

the First World War.

10. Though I am speaking from experience, I must add that I would not have achieved it without intensively working with Steiner's *Philosophy of Freedom*, most recently translated as *Intuitive Thinking as a Spiritual Path* (CW4). This book, published in 1894, was born out of his own solitary journey towards uniting earthly and spiritual experience as a young man. It is a path towards recognizing the *reality* of one's own spirit.

11. A shining example of this is that of William Shakespeare! Can the genius that worked through that man be ascribed simply to inheritance from his comparatively simple parents, who are thought to have been illiterate? So, too, with thousands of others, in whom a spirit has lived that outshone anything their ancestors could have achieved.

12. See *Matthew Gospel* Chapter 7, Verse 16. The Greek word 'καρποι' (karpoi) literally means 'fruits', but because the reference is to the fruits of one's deeds, that is how this word is often translated. Both images are equally relevant to what I am wishing to highlight. We are at a time of human development, I suggest, during which one needs to base one's judgments about each other on what we actually do (or choose not to do).

13. See Chapter 6 of *Esoteric Science*, in which Steiner projects his vision into a still distant, next stage of Earth's evolution. In Chapter 4 we are also given vivid pictures of the origins of the alternation between life on earth and in the spiritual world, a contrast which is also mirrored in our need to sleep. See also note 9 above. Steiner's perceptions were prefigured in the Bible where the separation of the sheep and the goats occurs in the parable of Jesus. Mathew 25:31-46

14. Steiner spoke and wrote extensively about the life, death and resurrection of Christ, not so as to found a new religion or perpetrate an existing one, but to place it clearly within the context of our *modern scientific capacity* for penetrating into the nature of reality. It is the goal of the anthroposophical spiritual science, which he initiated, to extend the field of scientific research beyond the boundaries that our materialistic assumptions create. Very much depends on our willingness to recognize this.

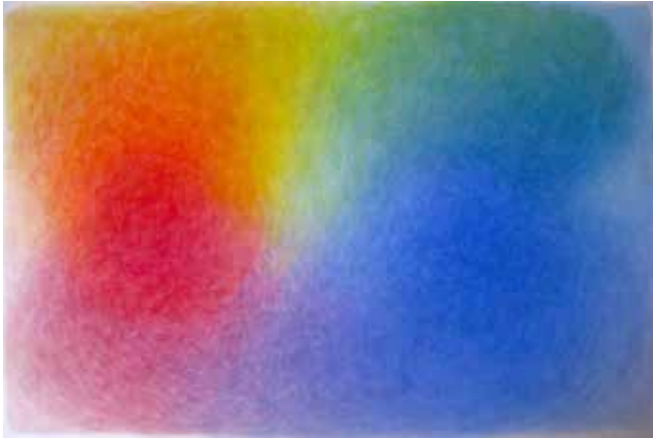


The Elements by Arild Rosenkrantz

Between and Beyond

Douglas Gerwin, Massachusetts, USA

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In a binary way of seeing, the world is comprehended in pairs of “either/or”. On this view, movement—both inner and outer—is accounted for in the logic of cause and effect. Once we shift from mineral and mechanical objects to living or organic beings, however, these laws of logic no longer provide an adequate account of the phenomena.

In a binary way of seeing, the world is comprehended in pairs of “either/or”. William Blake, in a letter to his friend Thomas Butt, identified this way of seeing as the approach of reductionist science, or what he famously called “Single vision & Newton’s sleep”. On this view, movement—both inner and outer—is accounted for in the logic of cause and effect, and indeed, purely physical events, like a rock falling to earth, can be adequately described by the laws of causality or statements that take the form of “if/then”. (Even Albert Einstein, with his theory of relativity, would agree that the earth is more the cause of attracting a falling rock than the rock would be the cause of attracting a rising earth.)

Once we shift from mineral and mechanical objects to living or organic beings, however, the laws of logic no longer provide an adequate account of the phenomena. Now we need an understanding based on relational “when-then” (sometimes called “both-and”) ways of thinking. Chaos theory, field theory, quantum theory, “flow” theory: all are attempts to comprehend the world in terms of “when-then” relationships rather than simply causal “if/then” connections. This approach shifts us away from the study of things as *objects* into a study of things as *processes*, and in so doing introduces an element of movement (for instance, “flow”) that is not essential to an understanding of material objects, even if they are set in motion. You don’t need to see a car in motion in order to understand how a car works. The same cannot be said of a river or a growing plant or

an animated worm. A river not in motion is no longer a river but rather a stagnant cesspool no longer able to do what a river is supposed to do; a plant that is not growing (or decaying) is a lifeless specimen, deprived of the essential characteristics of a living organism; a worm that is not able to wiggle is a sterile fossil — a noun, no longer a verb.

When we come to studying phenomena in their spiritual, metaphysical, or eschatological nature, we need to shift once more into a broader more all-encompassing form of understanding that needs what I will call tri-une thinking, which, to put it in its most abstract form, requires not simply two terms of “if/then” causality, nor even the relational terms of “when-then”, but rather three terms that have the relation of “when-and-when: THEN!” On this view, we study phenomena not only in terms of their polar complementary relationship (“when and when”), but we watch for a third term that arises out of these two terms as a new “...THEN!” that transcends both while embracing each.

Before considering some examples of this way of thinking and its relationship to the training of high school teachers, we need to be clear what is *not* meant by tri-une thinking. This mode of thinking is no additive model in which two or more elements are combined to yield some third element that simply contains aspects of both elements in a new configuration. For instance: it does not take tri-une thinking to say that a little white plus a little black yield a new shade called gray.

Nor is tri-une thinking meant to be a way of re-constituting an original whole that has been broken into its constituent parts. This is what was supposed to have happened for Humpty-Dumpty, but as we know, “all the king’s horses and all the king’s men” failed in their attempt to glue him back “together again.” As any child knows, Humpty-Dumpty is a living, fluid—indeed, a very oversized fluid—integrated organism, not a static lifeless mechanism of separate parts.

So, what is “tri” and what is “une” about tri-une thinking? The essentials of this way of thinking are dramatically captured in *Man on Wire*, a documentary film shot by the French tightrope walker Philippe Petit, who during the hazy dawn hours of 4 August 1974 unrolled a steel cable between what were then—a quarter-century before the events of 9/11—the unfinished Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan and then, carrying only a 50-foot long pole, proceeded to walk back and forth eight times across this swaying metal rope. At the high point of this film, *Man on Wire*, you see Petit setting off on his daring stunt by first gingerly stepping off the edge of one of the towers with an anxious, taut expression. After a few tentative steps, however, a new look comes over his face: his brow relaxes, his posture straightens, the hint of a radiant smile creeps across his countenance — and he is launched across the 200-foot-long wire strung between the towers roughly a quarter-mile up in the air. On both sides of him, to the left and to the right, lie the risks of a precipitous fall, but thanks to these polar complementary

forces (assisted by the long pole), a dynamic balance is created that allows him to glide with seeming effortlessness from one tower to the other. Notice again, that both immanent dangers, of falling to the left or falling to the right, are needed for this third direction—straight ahead—to open up. Petit does not wobble or lurch from left to right or right to left: his gait is confident, his step safe and steady, his destination ahead leading in a quite different third dimension of space.

Rudolf Steiner offers countless examples of this tri-une way of understanding, in a deeper way, all manner of polar phenomena: in the constitution of the human body (birth and death), in the working of the human soul (sympathy and antipathy), in the healthy operation of the threefold social organism, in the relationship of the good to two polar complementary principles of evil—at one pole what Aristotle calls the evil of “too much”; at the other what he calls the evil of “too little”—to say nothing of artistic practices including the art of healing and the art of education. In each of these examples, we are dealing with three elements, but the third arising from the first two is of a quite different order of being. Good is of a different order than the two forces of evil which it transcends; love represents the transcendence of both antipathy and sympathy; life embraces birth and growth as well as death and decay while transcending both.

And what about the “une” in tri-une? In reconciling opposite poles in a transcendent third term, we experience the overarching unity of this relationship. In the case of *Man on Wire*, Philippe Petit enters an entirely new yet fully encompassing universe when he sets out across the cable strung between the Twin Towers. In the examples supplied by Rudolf Steiner, “death” is subsumed under the overarching term “life” rather than being set in opposition to it, just as the “good” embraces rather than opposes “evil” in its double guise, and “love” includes the harsh gesture of antipathy—perhaps better known as “tough love”—along with the more commonly accepted gesture of gentle sympathy, as devoted parents must know when they release their children into free adulthood.

In the language of the Romantic poets (also of Rudolf Steiner), the practice of this kind of disciplined thinking is described as being the cultivation of imagination as a mode of cognition: that is, not as a flight of fancy but as a coherent way of knowing the lawful inwardness of things. Others call this practice metaphorical thinking or holistic thinking (by means of which a greater whole is perceived to transcend any of its parts) or holographic thinking (when that greater whole is revealed in each of its constituent members). Whatever its name, tri-une thinking bridges polar complements and, while retaining both poles, moves into a higher and more dynamic order of being.

However, it takes work—constant work—to think in this way, since it requires the exercise of imaginative inner activity that cannot be imposed from without; it can only arise as a free deed ignited from within. Like any worthy human endeavor, it proceeds in gradations of intensity.



The Purpose of Teaching

Ultimately, as high school teachers, we want our students to be alive in their thinking, sensitive in their feeling, responsive in their deeds. Develop in them a living, moving tri-une way of thinking and we promote in them these qualities of soul.

However, as educators we teach truly only what we have ourselves struggled to make our own to a certain level of proficiency (not to be confused with perfection). The teacher who has had to wrestle with the principles of mathematics in order to grasp them has gained an unfair advantage over a math genius; the experiment that a science teacher strains to unfold properly will be remembered more vividly than the flawless demonstration performed by a confident expert. So, too, the more a teacher takes up the arduous discipline of tri-une thinking, the more likely will this struggle inspire students to attempt this mode of cognition, either during their final years of high school or much later when they are adults.

With this mode of thinking we lift slightly the veil that normally conceals, on the one hand, the occult lawfulness of nature and, on the other, the hidden wisdom embedded in the events of society past and present, however dreadful or promising they may seem at first appearance. Seeing through the veil cast over life-in-nature and life-in-society by means of tri-une thinking bestows on us a renewed sense of confidence, since this cognitive practice discerns beyond the apparent randomness of life its lawful purpose and wise destiny.

This article is adapted from a contribution to a book by Torin Finser entitled *A Call to Teach: In Service of Waldorf Teacher Education and Lifelong Learning* (Hudson, NY: Waldorf Publications, 2020).

Sunrise to Sunset:

Exploring Rudolf Steiner's Nine Nature Mood Sketches after One Hundred Years

Van James



The Nine Nature Mood Training Sketches by Rudolf Steiner

*The sun with loving light,
Makes bright for me each day...*

*I look into the world
In which the sun is shining...*

-- Rudolf Steiner, opening lines of two Waldorf School morning verses

We live, often unaware, between many powerful contrasts and polarities. Between sunrise and sunset we experience our normal day-waking consciousness. Between moonrise and moonset, between summer and winter, we also experience periodic dream and sleep consciousness. Between waking and sleeping we are exposed to living and dying, waxing and waning forces. In *Knowledge of Higher Worlds* (pp. 39-40), Rudolf Steiner writes to the pupil of esoteric studies: "If the attention be frequently fixed on the phenomena of growing, blooming and flourishing, a feeling remotely allied to the sensation of a sunrise will ensue, while the phenomena of fading and decaying will produce an experience comparable, in the same way, to the slow rising of the moon on the horizon. Both these feelings are forces which, when duly cultivated and developed to ever increasing intensity, lead to the most significant spiritual results." Polarities and enhancements are signposts along the path of spiritual development.

Just as we function between all kinds of polarities, so between science and religion, stands art, "lifeblood of the soul." Between realism and abstraction, between impressionism and expressionism is the living realm of the elements as formative forces and color phenomena in the creative arts.

In 1922 Rudolf Steiner gave nine pastel sketches as indications for a training in painting. In 2022, one hundred years later, a group of 48 artists, teachers, doctors, therapists, counselors, eurythmists and homeschool educators, from a dozen countries including Australia, Canada, India, Japan, Nepal, Malaysia, the Philippines, Portugal, Thailand, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States, worked over several months with these training sketches converting them into watercolor paintings as recommended by Rudolf Steiner.

Henni Geck (1884-1951), the artist who asked Rudolf Steiner for painting suggestions and received these sketches, told her students the order in which they ought to copy the colors and forms. Unfortunately, these indications were not written down for posterity. However, the painter Gerard Wagner (1906-1999), a student of Geck, recorded the following:





Here are a few examples of *Sunrise 1* and *Sunset 1* by participants in the 2022 Nine Nature Moods workshop.

“Henni Geck had been present when each of the sketches was done. Following an indication of Rudolf Steiner, we were directed to paint the motifs given in pastel, in watercolour. In so doing we had to pay utmost attention to the forms and how they mutually balanced each other, down to the smallest detail. Henni Geck always gave us the sequence of colours. After nine months, due to tragic circumstances, the teaching in this form came to an end. Later, the sketches were housed in the Goetheanum, where they were accessible to students and others interested in them. But that short learning period has been of lasting value for all subsequent years.

“I had painted only the first three motifs: ‘Sunrise,’ ‘Sunset,’ and ‘Shining Moon.’ Through careful observation and feeling for the colours, lines, and forms of these prototypes, something came over one—a tremendous interest was awakened which could be expressed more or less in the words ‘Why, these are organisms! They are exact, as though without accident or arbitrariness in their formation. They do not depict any object of nature, but the details of their form and movement so support and determine each other, as only the members of a living organism do in which every part is necessarily related to the whole. They do not portray, they live.’ This was a constant feeling that only gradually became more conscious in the decades that followed.

“The instruction had left me with a great riddle. Rudolf Steiner always said that form should arise out of colour, as the work of colour. One can assume that this happened in his pictures. We had started the first three motifs by painting vermilion red—following the indication of the sketches; the first, in the form of a rising sun, the second a setting sun and the third three crescent moons. And a question arose in me: if we began three different motifs with the same colour (as a first step on white paper) then how can this be reconciled with the fact that form should come out of colour? I began to look for answers. I asked myself: if I was to change one colour slightly in the build-up of the motif how would the form change? In this I followed a suggestion of Rudolf Steiner’s to paint on coloured backgrounds, or, before painting, to imagine the paper as toned with a colour.” (A Life with Colour: Gerard Wagner, Caroline Chanter, 2021)

A poem written by a workshop participant reflecting upon an actual sunrise:

*Today the sun rose
Deeply swirling in frenzy
It's choleric red racing to catch the melancholic sky of the night.
It set ablaze with passion the power of its grace.
Riding on the waves of yellow...
It flashed open the morning, afresh to my gaze.— Deepa Dabhi Dahibavkar, India*

Comments by participants on the *Sunrise 1* and *Sunset 1* painting experience:

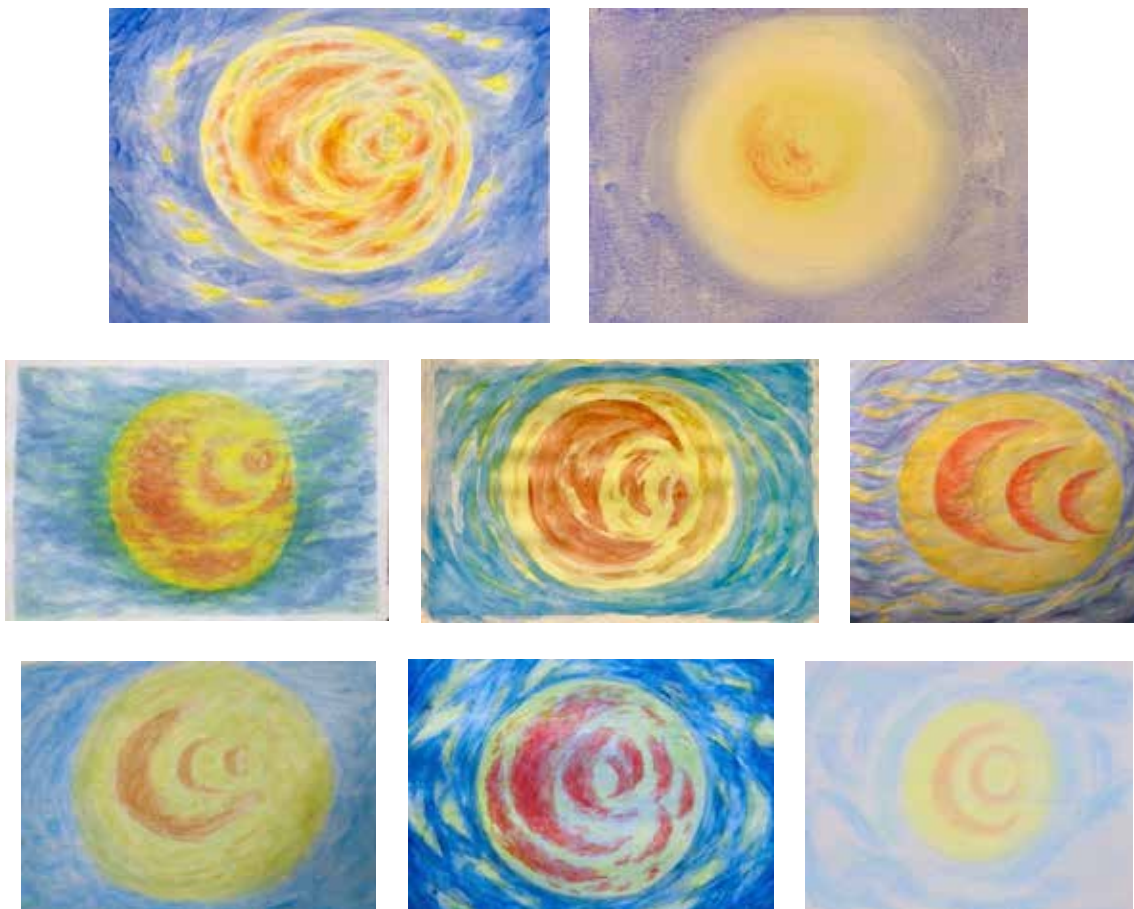
My experience of doing the sunrise motif was that of warmth, expansion, opening up. I was left with an uplifted mood. Sunset motif brought a sense of calming down, a feeling of bringing closure.—Rakhee Mathur, India

In the morning, after our painting day, I felt closer with the Sun. I look forward to the next class.—Napa Thamsongsana, Thailand

Sunrise: yellow light expanding, blazing red pushes darkness away. Sunset: red sinking to blue, darkness flows in, filling the void.—Lukas Ryan, Australia

These paintings made me think of the eurythmy movement of 'Light streams upwards. Weight bears downwards,' so I entered into the eurythmy activity to feel the sunrise and the sunset.—Marg Beard, Canada

The observations by Gerard Wagner are very helpful in understanding more of the “painting out of color” approach to the Nature Mood sketches, for they point to the importance of the colored page and the build-up of a specific color order. Steiner had said one must be able to “think in color” and “think in form.” This, together with the indication to “paint out of the color” is clearly the task of the painter in these motifs.



The *Shining Moon* is the third sketch of the Nine Nature Moods. Here are some participant watercolor paintings of this theme.

Comments from participants on the *Shining Moon* theme:

This motif has been staying as a question with me. Why a crescent in warm red colour? Why three crescents? This time, I think I am beginning to get an answer. I get those answers only when I am hearing from my heart and not merely my head. It felt like a conversation with colours. I could paint only when I followed the laws of colour. I am in the process of experimenting more with the same motif.— Rakhee Mathur, India

Enjoyed doing the moon motif, especially doing the blue was so fresh and the cool yellow image brought a dreamy, reflective quality. I was at home with blue, felt much calmer and quite inward, oneness and stillness within me I could feel. Also, doing the blue strokes were like a whirlpool, it gave me a feeling as if I am splashing and paddling in water.—Malar Vizhi, India

An experience of restriction on one side and of restraint on the other with yellow coming on to the blue and red bringing a natural feeling of strength.— Jyoti Pagdi, India

I decided to make [a second painting] and it came out much clearer. I noticed that the warmth of blue wanted to penetrate the movement of yellow.— Yvette Manotoc, Philippines

Rudolf Steiner made the rather daring declaration that artists have copied from nature long enough and need to take up what is actually “elemental and living.” In the Nature Mood sketches we have what appear as landscapes but are not copied from nature but are developed *out of color* dynamics, color qualities, and their formative forces. They are “organisms,” as Wagner characterized them, and color meditations.





Summer Trees are the fourth motif in the Nature Mood training sketches. Here are selected examples from the workshop.

Comment from a participant about the *Summer Trees* theme:

The inner mood was freedom for the summer trees and joy for the fruiting trees.— Malar Vizhi, India

It's nice to see others experiencing feelings through the painting. I have had a beautiful experience of joy through these motifs. Though I see much more work to be done in this painting as green is very strong in comparison to the background.—Jyoti Pagdi, India



Fruiting Trees is the fifth motif in the Nature Mood training sketches, here painted by workshop participants.

The Russian artist Assya Turgeniev cited Rudolf Steiner as saying: “The Impressionists have already had their say in art. In coloring, in *plein air*, open air color, they have achieved something new, but it was not enough—for they excluded man himself, and so their trend in art could not develop, could

not find its fulfillment. Expressionists build upon themselves alone, they do away with the world, and because of this they finally become completely abstract. They end up being able to only draw lines and geometrical figures. These people have already glimpses into the spiritual, but they are only fleeting glimpses, only brief moments. There is little artistic in these moments. The anthroposophical [universally human] style will lie just between these two tendencies.” (*The Goetheanum Windows*, Assia Turgenev, 1938). In this characterization Steiner points to the balancing function of art between the outer world (impressionism) and the inner world (expressionism).

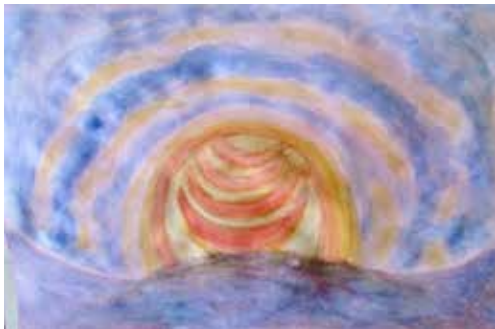


Here are just a few sample paintings of the *Moonrise* motif rendered into watercolor.

Comments from participants about the *Moonrise* and *Moonset* themes:

Doing the Moonrise was a peaceful experience. Doing the Moonset was more challenging as it was vibrant and felt more dramatic.— Malar Vizhi, India

A mood of freshness with brown and yellow. Brown giving an anchor and a feeling of grounding, yellow lifting from gravity, with red bringing an element of life. Then blue giving coolness to the whole picture has been a very soothing experience.— Jyoti Pagdi, India



The following watercolor renderings are examples of the *Moonset* sketch, seventh in the series.

Sunrise and sunset, moonrise and moonset, trees in summer and trees in autumn, point to vivid pictures drawn from nature that indicate processes allied and resonant within the human soul. The outer world and the inner world are in fact linked and united through the world of color. “Colour is the soul of nature and of the entire cosmos, and we participate in this soul when we experience colour.” (*Colour*, “The Creative Power of Colour,” Rudolf Steiner, 1935) But can we truly and deeply “experience colour” to the end that we can paint *out of* it and not just paint with it?





Sunrise 2 is the eighth sketch here painted in watercolor by participants.

Comments from participants upon completing *Sunrise 2* and *Sunset 2*:

This was an interesting exercise, but also confusing in several ways. Sunrise had the warm colours of vermillion and golden yellow. One would expect sunrise to have the cool colours. Sunset had cool colours, crimson red and lemon yellow, One would expect sunset to have warm colours. What is the purpose of doing two sets of sunrise and sunset pictures? Is one set for the Springtime? And one set for Fall? Would that be the difference in the reversal of warm colours for sunrise and cool for sunset?— Donna Smith, Canada

It was such a joy to do the Sunrise, especially the rising red gave a feeling of more strength and enthusiasm. Doing the Sunset was more calming and being settled in one's own inner self with a sort of being there for one's own self.— Malar Vizhi, India

I did the course to find direction and to develop an ongoing practice working with Steiner indications. I can see how I can go deeper into my art practice... I don't really have questions as it's in the doing I'm learning/discovering small realizations of what Art brings and the development of seeing afresh in each painting I spend time on.— Shirley Bell McLeod, Australia





Sunset 2 is the final motif in the series of training sketches for painters, known as the Nine Nature Moods. These are just a few examples by participants.

These visual meditation sketches are like Vedic chanting pictures, but utilizing a new *yoga of light*, a yoga of the senses, calling the world into being through colour. Arranged in hymn-like chapters or mandalas, they breathe in a cyclic expansion and contraction of hue, as a nine-fold being. Beginning with a sunrise and ending with a sunset, we awaken and go to rest with the Light of the World.

“When the soul begins to comprehend the wondrous nature of what cosmic wisdom has built up, when it attains to clarity (to light) about this, then the sun may appear to it as the most glorious symbol for expressing this inner awakening. Through the gates of the senses the soul sees into this outer world thanks to the fact that the sun illumines the things of the outer world. In reality what the human being sees in the outer world is the light of the sun reflected back. The sun awakens in the soul the strength to view the outside world. The awakening sun-soul, which begins to recognize cosmic thoughts in the seasons, is the soul that in the rising sun looks upon its liberator.” (Rudolf Steiner, 12/4/1907)

This 2022 Nine Nature Mood workshop demonstrated that we are just as much at a beginning of unlocking the mysteries of these sketches as the pupils of Henni Geck were one hundred years ago. Yet every beginning is an essential aspect of what it means to be being human, and is like yet another unique sunrise.

**“I bear my sorrows into the setting sun,
I lay all my cares into its shining lap,
Purified in light,
Transformed in love,
They will return as helping thoughts,
As strength for deeds,
Rejoicing in sacrifice.”**

–Rudolf Steiner, an evening verse





Photos by Trent Davis Bailey for The New York Times

By *Ruth Graham*

[First printed in *The New York Times*, May 18, 2022]

CRESTONE, Colo. — Philip Incao was about 6 years old when he asked his mother if it was true he would die. Yes, she replied. And what happens afterward? he asked.

“Nothing,” she said. “You just die, that’s all.”

It was a profoundly unsatisfying answer, and one that Dr. Incao later identified as the starting point for a lifetime of study.

He pursued a path that wound through medical school, training in holistic healing and devotion to the early 20th-century esoteric Rudolf Steiner, a polymath who theorized that the spiritual world could be explored through scientific methods.

Decades of searching led him all the way to an unconventional decision about what would happen to his body after his death.

Before Dr. Incao died of prostate cancer on Feb. 28 at age 81, he arranged for a cremation in his adopted hometown, Crestone, Colo., at the country’s only public open-air funeral pyre.

“All the old forms, all the old rituals, are being loosened up,” he explained in interviews in the months before his death. And through this type of cremation, he planned to be a part of that shift.

He knew his body would be wrapped into a simple shroud, carried on a wooden stretcher into an enclosure, and placed on a platform a few feet from the ground. His sons and his wife would light the fire and watch his body burn for several hours. The next day, they would collect the ashes. He had attended several cremations at the pyre, and he was ready.

About 70 people have been cremated at the pyre in Cres-



tone since it opened more than a decade ago. Its services are restricted to residents and landowners in Saguache County, with a population of less than 7,000 people spread across some 3,000 square miles.

Set inside a circular wooden fence a few miles out of town, with the Sangre de Cristo range of the Rocky Mountains looming in the background, the pyre itself is a utilitarian structure: two waist-high stuccoed concrete walls lined inside with firebrick, and spanned by a plain metal grate.

The simple design represents a defiant upending of American death rituals. Instead of a body being whisked away by a funeral home, it stays on view at home for several days. And rather than being chemically “preserved” and placed in a sealed coffin, it remains on ice, but otherwise in its natural state.

“Burial as a practice in the U.S. is basically designed so that the American family doesn’t have to deal with the dying,” Dr. Incao reflected in December. By then, he was mostly confined to his bed, where he rested, met with friends, sorted through his belongings, and read books about reincarnation and near-death experiences.

More than half of Americans are cremated after death, a remarkable change from the 20th century, when it was “completely against American sensibilities,” said Gary Laderman, a professor in the department of religion at Emory University. But Crestone’s approach goes even further, defying one of traditional cremation’s core promises, to make the body disappear quickly and invisibly. A body on the pyre turns into ash and smoke while friends and family keep vigil for hours under the open sky.

Community cremation sites are commonplace in some parts of India, but they remain taboo in the United States. A Buddhist retreat center in northern Colorado maintains a private pyre, but efforts to open public sites like Crestone’s

have faltered, running up against squeamish cultural sensibilities about death.

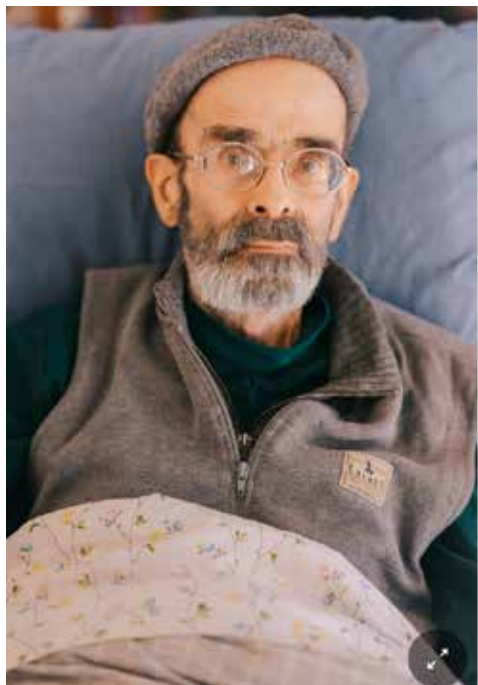
“Folks who haven’t had direct experience of open-air cremation, whether it’s in Colorado or in Asia, can have some pretty strange associations,” said Angela Lutzenberger, a hospice chaplain who bought 63 acres of land in Dresden, Maine, that she hopes to turn into a pyre site. “They build up creepy ideas about what it could be.”

It is not a coincidence that Crestone is the pyre’s home. About 200 miles south of Denver, the former gold mining town has attracted a population drawn to Eastern religious practices and wisdom traditions for decades. Its reputation solidified in the 1980s, when a Danish-born spiritual seeker and her oil magnate husband established a sprawling development just outside town that bills itself as the “largest intentional, inter-religious and sustainable living community in North America.”

The winding roads around that development — with street names like Serene Way and Jubilant Way — lead to several towering Buddhist shrines, retreat centers and a spiral ziggurat commissioned in the 1970s by the father of Jordan’s Queen Noor. Some locals refer to a “vortex” of energy in the area.

“There’s no other place quite like this in America,” said Dr. Incao’s son Sylvan, who visited his father there often over the years.

Sylvan had come to Crestone on a chilly week in March that would culminate in his father’s cremation. Fliers with information about the ceremony were posted at the health food store and the cafe next door, which function as the town’s social center. “Please carpool whenever possible,” the flier read. “Pyre lit at 8 AM.”



Photos by Trent Davis Bailey for The New York Times



Dr. Incao had moved to Crestone with his second wife, Jennifer, in 2006, after practicing “anthroposophic” medicine — a Steiner-inspired holistic approach that many mainstream physicians characterize as pseudoscience — in upstate New York and Denver.

Dr. Incao graduated from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City, but his career radically changed course when he was introduced to alternative medicine and Steiner’s work. Steiner lectured widely on topics including philosophy, Christianity, finance, architecture and art. His ideas about education led to the Waldorf school movement; his thinking on agriculture inspired biodynamic farming.

Steiner’s view of medicine was a revelation for Dr. Incao. He went on to spend his life exploring the teachings of Steiner, whose work guided not just his interest in philosophy and spirituality but his medical career.

He believed in reincarnation, which he felt gave a sense of purpose to life. And he was devoted to the idea of what he considered a “natural” approach to medicine.

For Dr. Incao, that meant choices that would seem extreme to many, even some members of his family. He strongly opposed vaccination, publishing articles and offering testimony against childhood vaccines and eventually opposing the Covid-19 shots. When he became sick, he declined traditional treatments for his cancer, including chemotherapy. He was at home in Crestone, where many residents are skeptical of traditional medicine.

Dr. Incao believed that the moment of death was just the beginning of “the process of separation of the human identity,” which he said took about three days.

And why be cremated outdoors? “You do it because it makes a lot more sense than the alternative, which is giving the body over to the undertaker,” he said. He decided on cremation after moving to Crestone, and officially signed up about four years ago.

Sylvan, 49, and his brother Sebastian, 47, supported their father's plans, which they saw as in keeping with his spiritual sensibility and nonconformist streak. "He loved nature," said Sebastian, an acupuncturist in New York. "It seemed like a very powerful way to liberate his spirit."



Their older brother, Quentin, 51, was not so sure. He knew his father was a nonconformist, but he was still shocked when Dr. Incao told him about his intentions, on one of Quentin's visits from his home in Montana. "It just didn't make sense to me, I couldn't understand it," he recalled. He had agreed to be a pallbearer, but he was dreading the action of physically placing his father's body on the pyre.

At a memorial service a few days before the cremation, the three brothers, their families and others gathered in Jennifer's backyard art studio for a ceremony and eulogy delivered by a priest from the Christian Community, a small religious movement inspired by Steiner.

Dr. Incao's body lay in repose at the front of the room,

with wreaths of fresh carnations and other flowers on his body. "Into the calm of soul being walks the soul of our dear Philip," the priest said, reading from a hand-transcribed book of sacred texts. "He is now on the other side of the threshold but his love has not stopped." At the small outdoor reception afterward, deer grazed in the yard.

"It's one of the most beautiful volunteer activities," said Fane Burman, who has assisted at about a dozen cremations, helping stack the wood and tending to it as it burns. The non-profit that operates the pyre, the Crestone End of Life Project, provides about a dozen local volunteers for each cremation. Although Mr. Burman does not always know the person who has died, "once the fire gets burning it brings tears to my eyes."

On a cool Saturday, the family gathered at 7 a.m. to accompany Dr. Incao's body from his home to the pyre about four miles west. A volunteer had wrapped the body in a shroud of sheets the night before and covered it in roses. The stretcher was carefully loaded into the back of Sylvan's black pickup truck, and Quentin and Sebastian rode in the back with their father — "our last moments with him," Quentin said. The truck slowly turned right at a small hand-painted sign reading "Pyre."



By 7:30 a.m., about 70 people lined the path into the pyre site. A volunteer rang a bell to signify the start of the ceremony,

and another played a tune on his handmade flute as the procession wound its way to the inside of the fence. The pallbearers laid the stretcher on the metal grate.

Dr. Incao's ceremony began with family members and friends laying juniper branches and flowers on the body. Incense burned in a terra cotta pot tended by a volunteer, while others added logs until they were piled above the rim of the pyre. Then Jennifer and Dr. Incao's sons lit large sticks in the incense pot and ignited the pyre together.

As the fire started to burn, Sylvan put his arm around Sebastian. A harpist played a tune as the flames crackled. Quentin wiped tears from his eyes, from smoke or emotion or both.

Smoke billowed thickly for about 10 minutes, and died down. By then, fire was putting off enough heat to warm the circle. Flaky ashes swirled in the air, which smelled of incense.

A "threshold choir," which specializes in singing for the dying, performed some of the tunes they had sung for Dr. Incao in his last few months. "Safe passage, pilgrim of the spirit," they sang. "We are all just walking each other home."

Sylvan spoke about how he had always teased his father about wearing so many layers, always being cold. "With the fire going, he's warm enough," he concluded with a smile. Another friend performed a "hallelujah" — another Steiner concept — in which she solemnly circled the pyre, lifting and lowering her arms, moving forward and backward.

Quentin, who had questioned his father's plans from the start, watched the ceremony quietly and intently. "It was almost like a weight lifted, to know he's moved on," he said later, as the crowd dispersed and the ashes smoldered.

He knew, in the end, it was what his father had wanted. "He was looking forward to being the smoke."



UPDATES

2022: Christian Community

East-West Congress: June 4-7 in Vienna;

New Year's Eve burning of the first Goetheanum (symbol not of the fire but of resurrection forces.)

2023: Christmas Conference, re-founding of the Anthroposophical

Society and the School of Spiritual Science

2024: Pastoral Medicine; BD Agriculture; Special Education;

Youth Course; Establishment of the First Class Lessons

2025: Anniversary of Rudolf Steiner's death, March 30.

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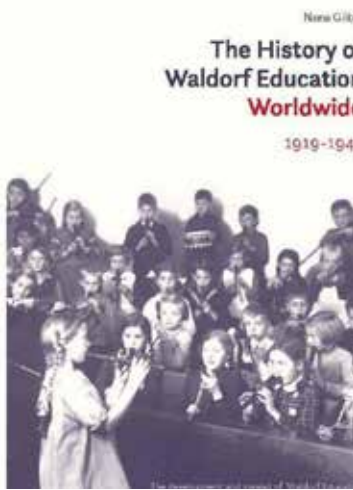
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Nana Goebel has written a comprehensive, compelling, and thorough history of Waldorf Education.

Executive Director of the Freunde der Erziehungskunst and a Waldorf Graduate, Nana has been an indefatigable supporter of Waldorf schools around the world since 1976. At the behest of the International Forum for Steiner/Waldorf Education (IFSWE—formerly

the Hague Circle), *The History of Waldorf Education Worldwide 1919-1945* is a remarkably broad and deep history of the building of Waldorf schools around the world.

This first volume covers the beginnings of Waldorf education from 1919 through WWII and notes the remarkable and rapid appearance of Waldorf schools throughout Europe, Britain, and North America. It gives a picture of how thirsty the world was (and is) for a new way to educate children, free from nationalism, narrowmindedness, and self-interest. Many recognized immediately how possible these lofty goals become with the Waldorf educational approach.

Nana Goebel captures the mood of the early days of Waldorf education, keeping her story warm and lively, even as she reports on the many factual details needed for such a thorough and deep exploration of the history of its history. The vision and dedication of those who established schools in the first half of the troubled twentieth century are illustrated clearly without romanticizing.

Goebel's steady, straightforward writing style is refreshing and compelling. Her devoted attention to the elements necessary to begin and sustain a Waldorf school pay ample tribute to her own life's work. The book is a tribute to the development of Waldorf education, 100 years in. *The History of Waldorf Education Worldwide 1919-1945* is filled with details that help readers understand the beginnings of Waldorf education. The foundation of her research and writing has also made Goebel a wonderful fundraiser, helping to make Waldorf education possible just about everywhere in the world. Nana is as powerful a writer as she is the leader of the Freunde der Erziehungskunst!

Those at Waldorf Publications (translator, Jan Kees, Douglas Gerwin, layout designer Ann Erwin, and editor, Patrice Maynard) have been much moved by what was accomplished by those pioneers, and the magnitude of what was wrought

with Waldorf's beginnings back in 1919. The mighty origins of our work today in Waldorf schools, celebrating now its century-long track record of success, couldn't be better gathered up and delivered than it is in this fine history by Nana Goebel. Get it! Read it! You will be grateful to do so.

The Research Institute for Waldorf Education (RIWE) has simultaneously completed a survey of its Waldorf High School Graduates from the last twenty-five years, *Into the World—How Waldorf Graduates Fare after High School*. The verification contained in this work, scheduled to be published simultaneously to Nana Goebel's *History of Waldorf Education Worldwide -1919 to 1945*, makes for irrefutably impressive documentation of the efficacy of Waldorf education in our deserving world!

<https://www.waldorfpublishings.org/products/the-history-of-waldorf-education-worldwide>

Waldorf Publications

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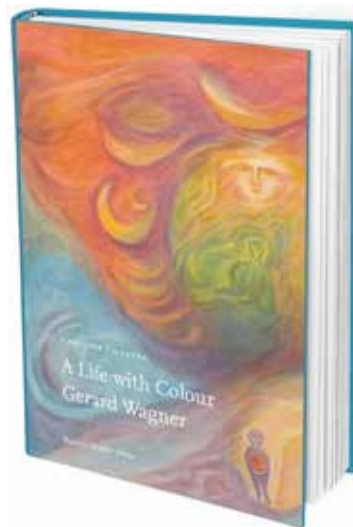
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A Life with Colour: Gerard Wagner

by Caroline Chanter

Rudolf Steiner Press

2022, 662 pages, \$38.94



Reviewed by Van James

Living almost the entire length of the twentieth century, Gerard Wagner (1906-1999), will no doubt eventually be remembered as one of the most significant painters of that colorful century. Picasso, Kandinsky, Pollock, Rothko and Warhol have had far more than their fifteen minutes of fame and are indelibly painted into art history textbooks for years to come. Although numerous books and catalogs have been published on the quietly transformative, even revolutionary, art of

Wagner, he has yet to find that remarkable mass media acclaim that his contemporary and fellow anthroposophist Hilma af Klint has recently received. However, that day of recognition will come, perhaps in some significant part due to the first thorough biography of the artist, *A Life with Colour: Gerard Wagner*, written by his former pupil, artist Caroline Chanter.

Thorough is perhaps an understatement, in light of the wealth of family background information, and insightful interviews with relatives, colleagues, and acquaintances. The anthroposophical underpinning of the artist's work (historical, philosophical, and practical), photographs, and the abundant collection of painting reproductions, give further depth and significance to this biography. The author had already started interviewing Wagner, when as a student, she saw the tremendous significance of his unique approach to painting. After his death, she visited all the places where he had lived and traveled during his lifetime. She talked with the surviving family and had in-depth conversations with fellow artists, with contemporaries of the artist and with his students of several decades. The nature and volume of the artist's work carried out over the century is staggering in its profound uniqueness of direction and its transformative deepening in working with color. The well-over 200 photographs and full-color, high quality reproductions give a substantial glimpse into the artist's life and the thousands of paintings he left for future recognition and admiration. As the author of *A Life with Colour: Gerard Wagner*, writes in her introduction: "In his paintings he has left posterity the message of his experiences for all who want to see and love them."

Peter Selg, MD, member of the executive council at the Goetheanum, has stated: "Caroline Chanter has not only accomplished a great and seminal study that illuminates the life and work of Gerard Wagner, but has done a great service also to the Goetheanum and the School of Spiritual Science." This service which the book accomplishes beyond a mere biography is the context and the underpinning of Gerard Wagner's work as spiritual scientific research in the realm of the visual arts. His "...whole being bowed before the mystery of colour in a loving, joyful yet serious way, full of devotion and dignity," Christian Hitsch, former leader of the Visual Art Section at the Goetheanum remarks. "His life and work itself became a living metaphor of the creative power of colour." According to the late Sergei O. Prokofieff, Gerard Wagner was: "...a soul which on earth was devoted so selflessly and in such purity to the beings that are revealed...in forms and colours. He helped them to utterance and manifestation in this world of ours."

It is only a matter of time until this recognition will more fully shine on the work of this remarkable 20th century artist. His life and innovative art of color are beautifully brought out in this book with a heartfelt understanding for the individuality of Gerard Wagner. *A Life with Colour: Gerard Wagner*, is highly recommended for anyone interested in anthroposophical culture and the arts.

The Power of Pictures: Teaching Adolescents the History of Art



People today have a tremendous hunger for pictures. This hunger is a symptom of the fact that humanity, through the destiny of our time, is being urged toward the sphere of imaginative perception. We satisfy this hunger creatively if we let eye and heart dwell in active contemplation on works of art which have themselves arisen out of some measure of imaginative perception, and which can thus help to prepare the soul for this same inner sight. So "looking at pictures" can help to meet a deep need peculiar to the present day.— Emil Bock¹

Aesthetics, the science of beauty, has to do with a heightened sense experience and the "ability to respond" to phenomena. When we engage with the world by means of refined sense perception we gain a greater richness and connection with the world. And when we have this enhanced response possibility, we likewise take on a greater responsibility (response ability) for what we respond to. A responsibility for the object of our perception is engendered today because we more and more experience the outer world as something that is not a part of us. This is where the value lies in teaching aesthetics through the history of art particularly for adolescents. It draws their interest at this powerful time of transformation in their lives away from themselves and directs it toward the world. Developing an interest and a caring responsibility for the world at this age can make all the difference for their later lives.

It is at this time of adolescence, suggests Rudolf Steiner the founder of Waldorf education, that it is important to balance the study of inorganic, lifeless elements in the natural sciences with that of art. "At the age when the child must realize that nature is ruled by abstract law to be grasped by reason, when s/he must learn in physics the link between cause and effect in given cases, we must promote an understanding of art as a necessary counterbalance. The child must realize how the several arts have developed in the

different periods of human history, how this or that motif in art plays its part in a particular epoch. Only in this way will those elements which a human being needs for all-around unfoldment of one's being can be truly stimulated. In this way too we can unfold the qualities which...are essential in moral instruction."²

This approach has recently been published in book form as *Teaching Art History: Engaging the Adolescent in Art Appreciation, Cultural History and the Evolution of Consciousness* thanks to Waldorf Publications. It includes an illustrated overview of historic painting and sculpture, background information and descriptions of these works, explanations of how and why one teaches this age group and many examples of student work. Suggestions for further study of art and the history of architecture are presented, poems for the history of art and a bibliography are also

included. The publication is now available through most book outlets or go to www.nurturerstudio.com.

A weekly online course given by the author beginning July 9 and running through September 18 will also be presented on this topic (see below). The eight Saturday evening (in US time zones), two-hour sessions will include illustrated lectures, demonstrations, discussions and guided artistic activities with pastel drawing and colored pencils. Beginner adults as well as experienced teachers, artists and parents are welcome.

Notes

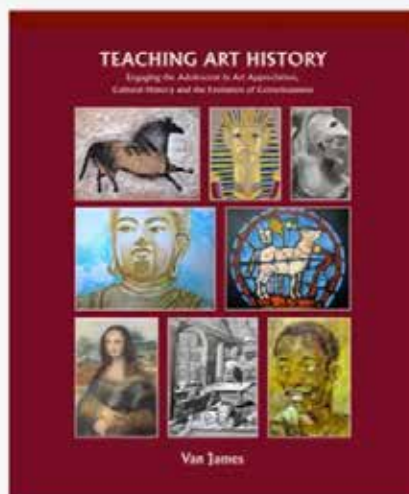
1. Bock, E. *The Apocalypse of St. John*.
2. Steiner cited in Stockmeyer, K. *Rudolf Steiner's Curriculum for Waldorf Schools*, p. 51.



Now Available from Waldorf Publications

Teaching Art History

Van James



A comprehensive study of a lively Art History block in a Waldorf School, this book describes the transformation possible in adolescents when surrounded by beauty. It offers awareness of the glorious history of human expression through art and the ages of culture. The presentation is diverse and comprehensive. Often called "History through Art," this block of four weeks of intensive study, most often in the ninth grade, gives a compelling picture of the drive of human beings to express themselves, create beautiful things, and mark history as it is made. In the young, uncertainty can fall away when engaged in viewing, appreciating, and understanding the incredible treasure trove of artistic endeavors through the ages of humankind. This is a bounty of illustrated information that carries anyone -- teacher, student, parent, curious individual, (anyone!) through the ages of time through the study of art. The author brings decades of experience to this treatise and

makes the whole process straightforward and enlivened. Even the nuts and bolts of developing the main lesson book as an accomplished textbook by the student is explained and used to illustrate the tremendous and rewarding task of bringing the young into a serious, joyful study of the arts. The students' artwork is breathtaking as an illustration of what young high schoolers can produce when inspired to record history through art.

List Price \$57.00



Teaching Art History

Engaging Our Inner Life with Art, Cultural History and
The Evolution of Consciousness



Live Dates & Times :

July 10, 17, 31 (Asia) = July 9, 16, 30 (USA)

August 7, 14, 21 (Asia) = August 6, 13, 20 (USA)

September 4, 18 (Asia) = September 3, 17 (USA)

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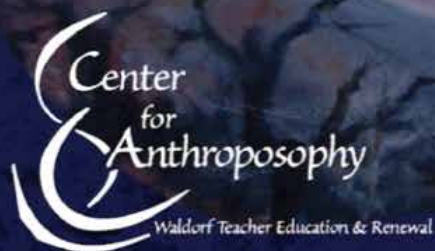
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Christiaan Boele trained at conservatories in the Netherlands and Germany and is the leading authority in the School of Uncovering the Voice method developed by Valborg Werbeck-Svardstrom. He has devoted his life to The School of Uncovering the Voice, performing, conducting and teaching courses around the world.



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<https://go.mystech.org/Conference-2022-Hawaii-Society>

Term 3 2022 PROGRAMME OUTLINE

Working with the Calendar of the Soul:
*a writing practice for deepening connection
with nature & the cosmos*

presented by Jill Whitfield

3 Saturday afternoons 1.30 – 4.30 pm
23 & 30 July, 6 August

Galileo Room, Perth Waldorf School, Bibra Lake
Cost: \$225 std / \$200 conc / \$250 pay-it-forward

Closing date for bookings: 16 July 2022
Contact Monika: monzie999@yahoo.de

<https://events.humanitix.com/working-with-the-calendar-of-the-soul>

Destiny Learning:
Karma, the Double & the Freer Deed
presented by Dale Irving

A weekend workshop 10.00 am – 4.00 pm
Saturday & Sunday 13 & 14 August

West Coast Steiner School, Nollamara
Cost: \$300 std / \$280 conc / \$320 pay-it-forward

Closing date for bookings: 6 August 2022
Contact Jill: jillw.rscperth@gmail.com

<https://events.humanitix.com/destiny-learning-karma-the-double-and-the-freer-deed>

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with Clay Work & Painting
presented by Lesley Cotter

Please contact Jill: jillw.rscperth@gmail.com to
register your interest.

SOUND MOVES ~ EURYTHMY

presented by Nicole Peterson

Poetry in Motion

Saturday 3 September 9.30 am – 12.30 pm

Music in Motion

Saturday 10 September 9.30 am – 12.30 pm

Williams Hall, Perth Waldorf School, Bibra Lake
Cost per workshop:

\$40 std / \$35 conc / \$45 pay-it-forward

Closing date for bookings: 28 August 2022
Contact Jill: jillw.rscperth@gmail.com

Workshop 1 Bookings:

<https://events.humanitix.com/sound-moves-eurythmy-poetry-in-motion>

Workshop 2 Bookings:

<https://events.humanitix.com/sound-moves-eurythmy-music-in-motion>

BIODYNAMICS

Cow Horn Preparations: 500 & 501 (Spring)

presented by Heidi Halter

Saturday 17 September 2.00 – 4.00 pm

Hilton Community Gardens, Rennie Cres, Hilton
Cost: \$40 std / \$35 conc / \$45 pay-it-forward

Closing date for bookings: 10 September 2022
Contact Monika: monzie999@yahoo.de

<https://events.humanitix.com/biodynamics-and-cow-horn-preparations-500-and-501-spring>

Closing Date for workshops is one week prior to start date to enable minimum numbers determination to be made. Minimum numbers required for workshops to proceed.

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Divine Wisdom (above) and *Infant Tondo* (below)
by Patrick Stolfo



Kawanui Farm has 2 New Grape videos to share!

We're so excited about how the Grape Project is progressing we just had to share this with you! Here are the links to two new Spring videos.

<https://youtu.be/hREv8mrzAfc>

<https://youtu.be/rbAeXclPg04>



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"Human races are as scattered as the climates. Human opinions are scattered all over the earth and there is no connecting link. But in the degree to which men begin to look through the earth into the sun by their inner power of vision, in the degree in which the "star" appears to them through the earth, their confessions will flow together to one great united Brotherhood."--**RUDOLF STEINER**