



Anthroposophy worldwide

What is happening in the Anthroposophical Society

6/19

■ ANTROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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Transformative qualities: courage, open-mindedness and forgiveness

Facing the underlying anxiety

Dear Members and Friends,

We live in a world dominated by fear and anxiety, either explicitly experienced in the face of danger and threat, or as the implicit underlying state of unease in the face of growing unpredictability in seasonal and environmental stability, social complexity, and economic security. This underlying tone of anxiety may manifest in many different guises, including states of paralysis and avoidance, denial of real-life situations, panic reactions, and aggression and violence towards self and others. Life circumstances continually demand that we recognize within ourselves how often we fall prey to the rulership of anxiety which so easily determines our perceptions and responses in our daily dealings.

Currently much attention is being directed to addressing the above through self-transformation for world-transformation. Three fundamental qualities can be identified in the call to face anxiety: courage, open-mindedness and forgiveness. What conditions allow these qualities to develop, and be put into practice?

By way of example, the international students conference at the Goetheanum in April, hosted by the Youth Section, engaged close on 700 learners in the exploration of what it means to have courage. A Youth Conference in Spring Valley in August will focus on 'Questions of Courage'. The summer conference staging the Four Mystery Dramas at the Goetheanum: 'Spirituality in Anxiety and Health' will focus on the central theme of anxiety as a doorway to health and spirituality, by awakening to self-transformation. The Social Initiative Forum, a growing network of organizations, initiatives and individuals working actively to transform discrimination, marginalization and inequality through developing open-mindedness, empathy and forgiveness, will host a seminar on 'Ethical Individualism: transforming self and society' at the Goetheanum in October. In addition, an extensive Forum on 'Unfolding Individual Potential for the Future' will be held in SEKEM, Egypt, in December.

We warmly invite you to participate in these and other events, with the intention of contributing to a courageous, open-minded future based on the transformative qualities of forgiveness and love. | *Joan Sleight, Goetheanum*

Image Developing courage: members of «Courage» youth conference in Basel

Rudolf Steiner

Vaccination

How should one handle this under the kind of difficult conditions in our area, with education and so on having such a negative influence?

Then you simply have to vaccinate. There's no other choice. I would be absolutely against opposing these things in a fanatical way, not for medical but for generally anthroposophical reasons. [...] I have always seen this as something I had to combat when with medical friends such as Dr Asch, for instance, who absolutely did not vaccinate. I would always fight against this. For if he does not vaccinate, someone else will. It is utterly absurd to be fanatical in particular situations.

Source Rudolf Steiner, *Physiology and Healing. Treatment, Therapy and Hygiene*, Forest Row 2013, tr. A. Meuss, p. 239.

See Georg Soldner's contribution on p. 6.

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■ PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

Dealing with the digital world

Warmth, strength and technology

When Laura Scappaticci wrote this contribution, she was using her laptop computer at a coffee shop, a prevalent picture in us society today. Technology is with us whether we are interested or not. Why should we be interested? How can we use it as a tool to create a connection with anthroposophy and each other?

The Anthroposophical Society in America is using technology to establish a learning space, and a place of connection. We've created webinars – interactive online classes – on anthroposophical topics such as economics, meditation, and health. We use technological platforms for national branch meetings where branch members from across the country come together to share challenges and innovations. We have a podcast (similar to a radio show) that features interviews with anthroposophists around the globe.

Does all this replace the gifted speaker who offers an in-person workshop? It will never do that. However, what it does is encourage listeners to explore a topic in live time or a convenient time in a way that is easy to access, affordable, and ecologically appropriate. Our members are thanking us for our online content, mentioning their limited mobility or the lack of an anthroposophical community in their area.

Strengthening the forces of the soul

These days it seems that the destiny path of human beings is accompanied by technology. The Google search can be the question Steiner told us to wait for. When someone types in, «What is anthroposophy?» we must respond with a warm, welcoming hello that offers them a path to human connection and wisdom.

At the same time, we must be awake to the forces we are working with and against. Rudolf Steiner states in *Art as Seen in the Light of Mystery Wisdom*, Lecture 1, 28/12/1914: «It would be the worst possible mistake to say that we should resist what technology has brought into modern life, that we should protect ourselves from Ahriman by cutting ourselves off from modern life. In a certain sense this would be spiritual cowardice. The real remedy for this is not to let the forces of the modern soul weaken and cut themselves off from modern life, but to make the forces of the soul strong so that they can stand up to modern life. A courageous approach to modern life is necessitated by world karma, and that is why true spiritual science possesses the characteristic of requiring an effort of the soul, a really hard effort.»



Sense of community

What must be present in our online work is warmth and connection. We cannot approach technology and let it remain cold. If technology has the potential to isolate us, we must use it to counteract that anti-social force. We must strive to create something warm together; a mood of welcome, a sense of community. In our online classes we ask participants where they are joining us from, we use their names, we integrate drawing and writing activities. It is not possible for everyone to attend face-to-face events, though we know that at those gatherings we create something powerful and deep that lives within us for days, months, years. We need both the accessibility of online gatherings and in-person experiences to reach all those seeking deeper meaning in life.

Technology is a tool, and we can use it, or it can use us. If we greet it with open-mindedness and strength, it can be a positive experience used for humanity's growth, and we can redeem it together. | *Laura Scappaticci, Placerville (CA/US)*

Web www.anthroposophy.org

Laura Scappaticci is the Director of Programs for the Anthroposophical Society in America. Using her background in adult education and event planning, Laura creates accessible educational opportunities for anyone interested in anthroposophy. She lives in California with her husband and three children.

General Anthroposophical Society

Letter from Justus Wittich

*Dear Members of
the Anthroposophical Society,*

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you most warmly for the trust you placed in me and for your agreement to my continued position on the Executive Council as treasurer of the General Anthroposophical Society. The Goetheanum staff members clearly also agreed with this decision and I take both these votes very seriously.

It was a busy lead-up to the AGM and the Annual Conference of the global Anthroposophical Society, with additional meetings of the representatives from 30 countries. The Goetheanum was 'buzzing', particularly because directly after the AGM, more than 1100 early childhood educators from all over the world came together here, followed by 700 Waldorf students, all filling the buildings and the campus with vibrant life. These events, which were part of the Waldorf 100 celebrations, showed the Goetheanum as the heart of a strong, future-oriented movement.

Affirming the evolving human being

My Executive Council colleagues Joan Sleigh (for the English-speaking world), Constanza Kaliks (also Youth Section leader) and Matthias Girke (also Medical Section leader) and I, together with the other Section leaders at the Goetheanum, feel supported and encouraged in the direction we have taken on behalf of the Anthroposophical Society.

«In the Heartbeat of the Time» is our motto this year and this motto is linked to the question as to the effectiveness of Anthroposophy in its forthcoming second century. How are we shaping the social life? How do we meet the future in our actions? How do we affirm the evolving human being? The concrete examples from all over the world of how spiritual knowledge is put into living practice were impressive and inspiring. Such achievements require an Anthroposophical Society! The task before us is to transform the image of the Anthroposophical Society where you are, in your situation, with your initiative and active engagement, and to make the Society visible. This is something we can only achieve together.

We therefore call, above all, on all members of the School of Spiritual Science! We need your active commitment as representatives of the «anthroposophical cause», in the branches or groups, locally, regionally and nationally. Take



the experience and expertise in areas that connect you with the School of Spiritual Science, but also yourself – on a purely human level – into the anthroposophical work in your area. Only then can the School become the «soul of the Anthroposophical Society» (Rudolf Steiner) and contribute to meeting the challenges of our time.

If you are working in an anthroposophically oriented institution or enterprise it is worthwhile finding out whether it has already signed up to the charter of our World Goetheanum Association and can therefore work actively out of anthroposophical impulses within this global alliance. Call people's attention to the interesting World Goetheanum Forum at Michaelmas 2019 (www.worldgoetheanum.org).

Freedom of choice under threat

And finally, it is important to take action to defend the individual freedom of choice that is presently under threat even in the Scandinavian countries, which are usually seen as liberal, for instance when it comes to the use of anthroposophic or complementary therapies and medicines. The introduction of mandatory vaccinations or the digitalization of schools are similar concerns. Many civil society initiatives and alliances could grow from the conscious search for knowledge and deepening within the context of the Anthroposophical Society.

If this can be achieved, the Anthroposophical Society will be able to make the effectiveness and healing influence of spiritual science visible wherever it is applied in practice – an endeavour that could also be attractive to the younger generation.

The Leadership and staff at the Goetheanum, together with the country representatives worldwide, look forward to working with you in the year leading up to the next annual conference in the first week of April 2020. | *Justus Wittich, Goetheanum*



Young members' initiative

A sympathetic ear

Since the Annual General Meeting in 2018 more than twelve members under the age of 35 (most of them students) have been working together on the contents of the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924.

At the last AGM of the General Anthroposophical Society new ways of collaboration between members and the Vorstand came about. We, a group of young members, that came into being in order to study the Christmas Conference, were given the chance to put into practice some of what we worked on. It turned out that the rhythms of the Foundation Stone and the beautiful content of the Christmas Conference prepare us to meet in a respectful way in spite of different opinions.

Trust in one another

This kind of sticking together will continue to be our guideline. It also motivated our Open Space during the AGM, where the Vorstand gave us the trust to openly invite members to speak out their concerns. Carried by trust in one another a lot of quite controversial discussions could take place and will continue through the year by personal invitation to our group. A sympathetic ear for other members' views on how the Christmas Conference has developed over time will be our next focus. To work on a common ideal might help to overcome the mistrust around our Society. | *Michael Sölch, Bern (CH)*

Added designation

Why ‘General’ Anthroposophical Society?

Uwe Werner explains why the designation ‘general’ is essential in the name of the Society that was established at the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924. He also refers to motion 7, which was submitted on 15 February 2019 by Eva Lohmann Heck and Thomas Heck (cf. *Anthroposophy Worldwide* 3/2019 and www.anthroposophie.org).

A closer look at the roots of the Society reveals why the name «General Anthroposophical Society» is significant. It is true that Rudolf Steiner’s initial references to the Society appear to be ambivalent: in the title of the Newsletter, which was decided upon at the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924, it says ‘What is happening in the Anthroposophical Society’, while the title of Rudolf Steiner’s account of 13 January 1924 was «The Foundation of the General Anthroposophical Society at the Christmas Meeting, 1923». That account starts with the sentence «The purpose of the Christmas gathering that has come to an end now was to give the Anthroposophical Society the form most suitable for the development of the anthroposophical movement.»

Inner space and form

Rudolf Steiner clearly wrote ‘General Anthroposophical Society’. Why, then, did he refer to it as the ‘Anthroposophical Society’ in the very next sentence as well as in the title of the Newsletter, throughout the Statutes and on the membership cards? The name does, of course, also belong to the form of the Society, but when the ‘anthroposophical’ nature of the Society is meant – its inner space – the statutes determine the form, and the fact that it is a ‘general’ society becomes less important. At the founding meeting of the English Society on 2 September 1923, Rudolf Steiner characterized such an inner space, when he said that the Society had to be constituted in such a way that «a kind of vacuum is created, an empty, free space, in which it truly unfolds.» (GA 259)

When Rudolf Steiner attended the foundations of societies in other countries in 1923, he pointed out that, at Christmas 1923, the national societies would become the International Anthroposophical Society (GA 259). The programme of the invitation for the Christmas Conference still reflected this intention (GA 260). On 24 December 1923, at the very beginning of the conference, Rudolf Steiner then said explicitly in his opening lecture that the designation ‘international’ had to be replaced by ‘general’ (GA 260). This transition was already tangible on 2 September 1923, when Rudolf Steiner said at the founding of the English Society, «We could

simply call it an occult law that any truly viable and fruitful spiritual movement is universally human, that it is what one would trivially call ‘international.’» He then continued, «This does, of course, not mean that it cannot do justice to individual groups or associations. One can do justice to one’s own nation as much as to all others. Each nation has, without doubt, its important impulses to bring to humanity as a whole. The belief that being international implies any disregard for the individual nation is entirely unjustified. It is especially within the international context that the own national characteristics can be valued and presented in the right light.» (GA 259)

A federative gesture

In Steiner’s view, the ‘international’ – that is, the ‘general’ – aspect will not eliminate the national or specific aspects when it comes to what is generally [or universally] human, but accommodate it within the overall Society. The founding of Societies always started at the national – or specific – level and the national societies together then formed the joint ‘general’ Society – from the periphery, and not the other way round. It is a federative gesture. The Goetheanum Leadership’s proposal to form an advisory organ of national representatives within the Society therefore seems to me to be a sensible further development of the Christmas Conference Statute.

In my view the significance of the fact that, at the Christmas Conference, the designation ‘general’ was added to the name of the Society must not be underestimated. | *Uwe Werner, Malaucène (FR)*

cf. Motion 7, which was submitted on 15 February 2019 by Eva Lohmann Heck and Thomas Heck *Anthroposophy Worldwide* 3/2019 and www.anthroposophie.org

France

In three places

For the first time, the Anthroposophical Society in France invited its members to meetings that took place in three places at the same time – and three times as many people came.

The Anthroposophical Society in France wanted to make it easier for its members to meet face to face and its Council therefore invited all members to come together on 23 February 2019 at meetings that took place in three places at the same time. For decades, the branch and group leaders in France met twice a year in Paris. These gatherings were usually attended by thirty to fifty (out of 1220) members on average. This year almost 150 members came together in Colmar, Avignon and Paris in order to share their views on the question of «What should the future of the Anthroposophical Society be like and what can I contribute to it?»

The rich moments of exchange alone, the plenary sessions and work groups, the meetings in the intervals, the chance of getting to know new people, make us wish that this kind of initiative will be repeated.

And there was another premiere: technology made it possible for us to take part in what happened in the three different places. We were able to listen to the lively and competent report of the treasurer, Marc Brosier, who presented the financial situation as comprehensibly, interestingly and engagingly as other aspects of the anthroposophical life.

Warmth, light and life

Many members experienced this day as filled with warmth, light and life and felt encouraged and enthused by it. Thanks to the wider participation, a space was created at all three venues that is now available to receive Anthroposophy.

The seeds planted here bode well for the future of the Anthroposophical Society as it approaches its hundredth anniversary, in need of a metamorphosis that allows it to implement its impulses into the present time. | *René Becker, representative of the Anthroposophical Society in France*

Web www.anthroposophie.fr



Germany

Leaves growing from branches

In 2018 a «Branch Newsletter» was initiated with thoughts, quotes and tips for events. It comes out irregularly, whenever enough contributions have come together.

The newsletter, called *Zweigblatt*¹, was started in 2018 by Franziska Bücklers, who finds it important that people are in contact and that the «organism of the Anthroposophical Society is brought to life» through this publication. Her guiding questions are: How can we support each other, know of each other and promote anthroposophy without complaining about and criticizing each other? How can free will and selfless support within the Society grow from the active engagement of «lone fighters» (with all possible intermediate stages)? And lastly: Do we live in a parallel society as anthroposophists? Which is the «real» life? To what extent do we manage to integrate anthroposophy in our daily life?

Inspiring inner deepening

The contributions to this newsletter are printed in different colours and include information provided by the editor, articles, reports from branches, information regarding initiatives, as well as memoirs and quotations by Rudolf Steiner and others, such as Elisabeth Vreede. Topics addressed so far include co-existence, the hundred-year rhythm, threefolding, and the relationship between the Anthroposophical Society and the Christian Community. The quotations inspire inner deepening, for instance Adelheid Petersen's recollection of a statement by Rudolf Steiner that working for many years on a character weakness «brings you much further than listening to a hundred lectures or even knowing all the cycles by heart».

Zweigblatt is presently published in German and French. | *Sebastian Jüngel*

¹ The title is a play on words: «Zweig» is the German word for branch, «Blatt» can mean leaf or newspaper **Contact** franziskabuecklers@gmail.com **Image** *Zweigblatt*: cover of Issue 9



Goetheanum Leadership

Understanding Christ

The Goetheanum Leadership contemplates approaches to Christ, the situation of anthroposophy and the requirements of the Sections.

Over the past year the Goetheanum Leadership has studied the Foundation Stone Meditation in depth. Now it is contemplating the Christ impulse as a universally human phenomenon. What is special about looking at Christ from a non-confessional point of view is that one can leave behind any local or cultural ties and see in Christ a force that is at work in all of humanity and on all continents. This question is also particularly relevant because anthroposophy is increasingly practised in non-Christian cultures. However, all present members of the Goetheanum Leadership have a Western Christian background and have therefore the wish to look more closely at certain conventions.

In recent months, the Goetheanum Leadership has also considered the situation of anthroposophy and of anthroposophical institutions in various countries. Their wish is to gain a better understanding of these situations in order to be better able to work together on common tasks. What, for instance, do the British requirements for safety and safeguarding and the way the Waldorf Schools there respond to these requirements mean for the Goetheanum Leadership? How is it dealing with this question?

Within the School of Spiritual Science, new leaders need to be appointed for the General Anthroposophical Section, the Visual Arts Section and the Natural Science Section. As part of these discussions the Goetheanum Leadership is also reviewing all the other Sections and their leadership. | *Sebastian Jüngel*

Image Goetheanum Leadership and guests

Stage

Fear and health

At the forthcoming summer conference at the Goetheanum, from 29 July to 4 August, on Spirituality, Fear and Health the Goetheanum Stage will perform Rudolf Steiner's Mystery Dramas.

«What I experience inside has increasingly an immediate effect on the outside – there is no buffer or protective zone in between», says Gioia Falk, who is the artistic director in the present production of Rudolf Steiner's Mystery Dramas at the Goetheanum. Mystery Dramas project inner processes outside. In these dramas Rudolf Steiner presents human beings as they experience inner challenges in their encounters with each other and try to work together in their lives. The one succeeds, the other fails.

The impact of spiritual experiences

Through spiritual realism and in the personalities of the protagonists we encounter our own existential questions. Stefan Hasler, director of the Goetheanum Stage, says, «Fear and disorientation are an expression of how we experience the impact of spiritual experiences. The images of the Mystery Dramas can help us relate our own vulnerable soul situation to the experience of standing at the abyss». Gioia Falk adds another aspect, «When I participate in the outside world as it is, I may well hear my conscience speaking and in my actions I take responsibility.»

The General Anthroposophical Section, the Medical Section and the Youth Section at the Goetheanum complement the performance of the four Dramas at the Summer Festival week by embedding them in a programme that focuses on the «Fear and Health». Joan Sleight of the General Anthroposophical Section says, «The Mystery Dramas allow us to engage with a spirituality that does not deny fear but encourages us to find our own strength by approaching it consciously.» | *Sebastian Jüngel*

Performances (in German) Four Mystery Dramas by Rudolf Steiner, Goetheanum Stage

Conference (lectures and work groups in German and English) Spirituality – Fear and Health. Challenges for Individuals and Society, 29 July–4 August 2019, Goetheanum

Web www.mysteriendramen.goetheanum.org

Limited special offer for under 355: 250 CHF (incl. meals and accommodation), www.youth-section.org/event/mystery-dramas-2019-at-the-goetheanum-youth-offer



Medical Section

What is our global attitude to vaccinating?

On 15 April 2019 the Medical Section and the International Association of Anthroposophical Medical Societies (IVAA) responded to multiple requests from anthroposophic physicians and published a statement on the question of vaccination. Georg Soldner, deputy head of the Medical Section, explains the circumstances of this statement.

In the global vaccination campaigns anthroposophic physicians are often vilified as «anti-vaxxers» and, using this accusation as a pretext, efforts are even being made to ban Anthroposophic Medicine altogether. On the other hand, there are one-sided campaigns that oppose vaccination indiscriminately.

Given this situation, the attempt has been made to keep the discussion factual and protect Anthroposophic Medicine against one-sided attacks and generalizations. It soon became evident that, in some countries, the statement was very important for the public image of Anthroposophic Medicine and that it was welcomed accordingly. Others expressed clear criticism, often based on misunderstandings. I will therefore explain the joint statement, paragraph by paragraph.

The need to differentiate

«Vaccines, together with health education, hygiene and adequate nutrition, are essential tools for preventing infectious diseases. Vaccines have saved countless lives over the last century, for example, they allowed the eradication of small pox and are currently allowing the world to approach the elimination of polio.»

Good communication requires, in the first instance, recognition and positivity where they are

due. Our colleagues in India, for instance, emphasize how much some vaccinations have contributed to reducing child mortality in their country.

«Anthroposophic medicine fully appreciates the contribution of vaccines to global health and firmly supports vaccination as an important measure to prevent life-threatening diseases. Anthroposophic Medicine is not anti-vaccine and does not support anti-vaccine movements.»

This says clearly that we are talking about vaccinations for life-threatening diseases, in which mumps and chicken pox are not necessarily included, while – in the global context – the measles jab has saved the lives of many children.

The statement clearly rejects any indiscriminate anti-vaccine movements. While many believe in and disseminate the view that the Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) vaccination has caused an epidemic increase in autistic disorders, there are no personal experiences or scientific data that would support such an assumption. This does not mean, however, that there is sufficient evidence of this vaccine being totally safe. Because the measles vaccine is a live vaccine it can contribute to the positive maturation of the immune system (in poor countries it also reduces the mortality rates of other diseases).

National recommendations

«Physicians who are trained in Anthroposophic Medicine are expected to act in accordance with national legislation and to carefully advise patients (or their caregivers) to help them understand the relevant scientific information and national vaccination recommendations. In countries where vaccination is not mandatory and informed consent is needed, this may include coming to an agreement with the patient (or the caregiver) about an individualized vaccination schedule, for example by adapting the timing of the vaccination during infancy.»

This paragraph refers to national vaccination recommendations as well as scientific information. The latter may well contradict the national vaccination recommendations, which differ from one country to the next. After several deaths have occurred, France, for instance, no longer recommends to vaccinate babies against diarrhoea (rotavirus) – unlike Germany, where not one (of more than a hundred) daily newspapers reported on these fatalities (own research) even though the complications are known to German scientists.

It has been criticized that the statement does not clearly condemn mandatory vaccinations. There are two reasons for this: firstly, the statement is a global one. There are regions in the world where child mortality is high, along with poverty levels, and there are situations in the context of major refugee movements, where mandatory vaccinations against life-threatening pathogens seem to be justified. But even in countries where mandatory vaccination has been introduced without sufficient cause (as in Italy or Hungary), it is not necessarily helpful to publish a global statement on Anthroposophic Medicine that includes views on questions of vaccination. This does not mean that the statement defends mandatory vaccinations. The opposite is the case.

The statement explicitly mentions the informed consent of parents or patients and emphasizes their right to make an informed decision not only regarding vaccination itself but particularly also regarding the time when it should be given. Scientifically speaking, vaccinating children under the age of one against measles – as recommended in Switzerland (from the age of nine months) – will have the effect that many will no longer be protected as adults.

Aluminium-containing «dead» vaccines – against tetanus and diphtheria for instance – are suspected to increase the risk of asthma and the susceptibility to infections if given in early infancy, in very poor countries they are even suspected to increase the overall mortality from infections.

Pro-science

«Taking into account ongoing research, local infectious disease patterns and socioeconomic

risk factors, individual anthroposophic physicians engage at times in the scientific discussion on specific vaccines and appropriate vaccination schedules. Anthroposophic Medicine is pro-science and continued scientific debate is more important than ever in today's polarized discourse on vaccination.»

The statement emphasizes that vaccinations have to be judged against the background of the actual health challenges in the individual case (climate, poverty, crowded living, malnutrition etc.). Anthroposophic physicians and their patients enhance their chances of being listened to by the civil society, health authorities and politicians, if they express differentiated and informed views on questions of vaccination. A polarizing debate, on the other hand, where powerful economic interests and a certain fanaticism play into each other's hands, destroys the foundations of a freedom that is rooted in the free spiritual life and that needs to be defended in the sphere of rights, in the civil society.

Asking about the meaning of illness

The question that remains is that of the meaning of illness – a question that is rarely asked today. Acute febrile illnesses are certainly important for the maturation of the child's immune system and we can support this by not giving antipyretic drugs or unnecessary antibiotics, by providing an appropriate diet and competent nursing and medical care. Anthroposophic physicians support such an approach and are increasingly listened to by experts. Fever helps children not only to overcome an infectious disease but also to individualize their organism.

It is a fact that measles are globally considered today to be too dangerous. But there are many febrile infectious diseases that can be well controlled medically. A healthy child development is possible without measles if children grow up surrounded by love, good food, sunlight, and if they receive appropriate care and treatment when they develop a fever. | *Georg Soldner, Goetheanum*

Web www.medsektion-goetheanum.org,
www.individuelle-impfentscheidung.de,
www.gaed.de/informationen/merkblaetter/masern.html

Web declaration www.ivaa.info/latest-news/article/article/anthroposophic-medicine-statement-on-vaccination,

Image Supporting a differentiated approach to vaccinations



Medical Section

Anthroposophic Medicine in Lucerne

At the beginning of this year, Anthroposophic Medicine and eurythmy therapy were introduced on the rehabilitation ward of Lucerne's St Urban Hospital.

After completing medical training in Arlesheim (CH), the physician Thomas Glinz introduced Anthroposophic Medicine on specialist wards at Lucerne's St Urban Hospital. In addition to conventional forms of psychiatric treatment, patients on these wards can now also benefit from anthroposophic medicines and eurythmy therapy. Eurythmy therapists find ways of reaching patients that are not necessarily accessible to other approaches. In the summer, the nurses will begin to use compresses and poultices. Training has been provided thanks to the organization Lucerne Psychiatry, the Paracelsus Hospital and Soleo, the Swiss Academy for Nursing.

The new methods have been very positively received by staff and patients and any fears that complementary medicine might be rejected proved unfounded. Leaving behind the world of manuals and guidelines and entering a medical universe where comprehension can be a fleeting phenomenon is challenging but also enriching. First successes with treatments have been encouraging and Thomas Glinz is gathering experiences with basic therapies. Strengthening the life forces and general wellbeing has a positive effect on the underlying illnesses and everyone involved is happy that these new steps have been taken. | *Thomas Glinz, St. Urban (ch)*

Thomas Glinz, M.D., is deputy consultant and head physician of the specialist wards at St Urban Hospital in Lucerne, Switzerland

Web www.lups.ch

Image Thomas Glinz and Noëmi Böken

Council for Inclusive Social Development

New newsletter

In addition to its journal *Seelenpflege* and its website, the Anthroposophic Council for Inclusive Social Development now also plans to introduce a newsletter for passing on information.

The Anthroposophic Council for Inclusive Social Development (formerly Curative Education and Social Therapy Council) is planning to use a quarterly newsletter to inform readers about its own activities and those of the international movement for anthroposophic special needs education, social therapy, special education and social work. Anybody interested can subscribe to this newsletter and read it online. The Council (Jan Göschel, Bart Vanmechelen, Sonja Zausch) will use the newsletter to pass on information on research, past events as well as publications and forthcoming colloquia and conferences.

You can read there, for instance, that Bernd Kalwitz has initiated a long-term study at Alanus University in Alfter (DE) on ways of dealing with self-harming behaviours; that the Department for Anthroposophic Healthcare at Leiden University (NL), under the direction of Eric Baars, is planning quantitative and qualitative studies on the outcomes, values and practices of long-term anthroposophic nursing; or that scientists at the University of Botswana are cooperating with the Camphill Community Trust in Botswana on evaluating means of support for people on the autism spectrum.

Supporting young co-workers

«Work forms and formats of encounter» is another area that is being addressed. The «Young Co-workers» work group seeks to set up a network that connects and supports trainees, students and young co-workers and includes them in the international curative education and social therapy movement. As a first result, a paper has been made available as a basis for conversations with co-workers. In addition, the young medics have founded an interdisciplinary work group for medical and therapeutic professions in curative education and social therapy. In accordance with the Council's international orientation, its journal *Seelenpflege* will be developed into a bilingual organ (English and German). | *Sebastian Jüngel*

Web (German, English)
www.inclusivesocial.org

Autumn conference «Practice Spirit-Beholding», 3 to 5 October 2019 inclusivesocial.org/event/offene-hochschultagung/?lang=en

■ SCHOOL OF SPIRITUAL SCIENCE



Youth Section

Acting from the heart

«Courage» was the theme and title of an international student conference at the Goetheanum from 23 to 27 April. Around 650 students from more than thirty countries shared their thoughts on courage in various contexts, including a public performance on Basel's Münsterplatz.

Question 1: what is courage? In what kind of situations are you courageous and where does this courage come from? What is the role of courage for us young people today? How do courage and fear affect intercultural encounters and personal or social developments?

In her opening lecture Constanza Kaliks, head of the Youth Section at the Goetheanum, spoke of the origin of the word «courage» which, literally translated, means «acting from the heart» - a definition that resonated strongly with the audience.

In the Foyer, the students could write their answers to the various questions on large placards and some of these answers were read out the next morning. Two examples of answers to the first question were: «Courage is breaking with norms» and «Courage is the absence of fear».

Choice and decision

Fear was also at the centre of questions that were asked on the next day. Question 2: How do you experience fear and recklessness within yourself and in the world? Where are the boundaries between courage, recklessness and fear? Are there situations where fear and recklessness can be useful? Marina Helou, a state representative from São Paulo (BR), explained that, for her, courage had to do with an impulse that comes from the heart but that is then weighed up by the head. If there is no choice first of all, followed by a commitment to a particular decision or action, one cannot really speak of courage, because the person in question acts either out of fear or recklessly.

Here are some of the responses to question 2: «Recklessness is born from insecurity, insecurity

comes from fear.» «I feel reckless or fearful when I lose control or when I feel alone.» «Fear is an instinct, courage a decision».

Question 3: What would the world be like if what lives in you became reality and what would you do to make this happen? We asked ourselves this question, which was inspired by a question once posed by Rudolf Steiner, on the third day. A research project on this question is being conducted by the Youth Section at the Goetheanum (see page 12).

Helmy Abouleish (CEO at Sekem, EG) spoke in his lecture of two future streams, Futurum and Adventus. Futurum means looking towards the future from the past and seeing the future as a series of logical consequences. Adventus means looking at our task from the future or looking at what wants to come towards us. Some of the answers to questions 3 were: «A place of balance between giving and taking». «A world where one can love oneself unconditionally». «Can we create a shared utopia? Could my utopia be another person's dystopia [pessimistic image of the future]?»

A challenging freedom

Working on these topics together brought us to question 4: the question of personal and shared identity. What is identity? What do we identify with and why? How can we develop an understanding of our self that no longer requires us to identify with external, mostly excluding, circumstances such as culture or being a Waldorf pupil? What is left to us as a young generation that has grown up with the quite challenging freedom of not having to obey social or religious

norms and rules, when we let go of everything that allows a «We» and «You» to emerge?

The question as to what identity means in relation to a group also featured in the «Creative Intervention» that was performed in Basel. Participants were invited to observe themselves as part of a group in relation to those outside the group. A great openness and warmth, noticeable from within and without, was emanating from the group. An unspoken conclusion could be that it is possible to be part of a clearly defined group and yet enrich the life of those outside the group; that it is possible to have warmth within and carry this warmth outside, so that the question of inside and outside becomes irrelevant.

The musician and journalist André Stern then spoke of freedom in child development, raising the question as to whether formal learning and educational institutions prevent this freedom. How do education and learning influence the way children find their own identity?

The day ended with group performances by students from different countries. One student from Brazil expressed her gratitude for Waldorf Education and for having the chance to unfold her potential freely in her school in Brazil.

Fighting for one's goals

On the last day we returned to question 1: what is courage? After five days of discussion, some students presented the essence of what had lived at this conference. Lorena Carazo from Spain said how important it was to critically question one's inner attitude towards the world: if hatred of other people's mistakes is the driving force behind my actions, the message of my actions can't be one of love.

Pedro Munizaga Sgombich, a student from Chile, concluded the presentations with the encouragement to fight for one's goals even in times of darkness and to see the darkness as a necessary counterpart of light and as a chance for oneself and for the world to develop further. Some answers to the question were: «Courage is taking a chance in order to bring about change», «Courage is trust in yourself and in the world», «Courage needs love and love needs courage».

The question we gave everyone to take along with them was «Can courage lead to freedom?» | Ronja Eis and Till Höffner, Youth Section co-workers and main organizers of the conference «Courage»

Image «Trust your heart. It can't be wrong!»
Words sung on the Münsterplatz in Basel

■ WORLD



Section for the Performing Arts

Thomastik violin

On 4, 12 and 19 May the Goetheanum presented three concerts played by the Basel violinist Volker Biesenbender on a Thomastik violin.

With these concerts the Section for the Performing Arts at the Goetheanum supported the endeavours to re-enliven and continue the reform impulse introduced by the Vienna violin maker Franz Thomastik (1883–1951). In 1910 Thomastik took out a patent for a new violin model. Rudolf Steiner visited his workshop in 1922 and 1923 and gave him advice on how to develop his idea further. Thomastik's workshop and most of his instruments were destroyed in a bomb attack in World War II. Only seven Thomastik violins are known to exist today. The instrument made available to Volker Biesenbender was bequeathed to the Goetheanum by Renate Schmidt in 2014.

Further development

Following a period of several decades during which the instruments and design of Thomastik's pupil and co-worker Karl Weidler (1901–1987) received more attention, Thomastik's original ideas and concepts are now again coming to the fore. After his death they were rarely taken up or researched. Presently the violin maker Arthur Bay (DE) and the violinist Adolf Zinsstag of the Himmelsbach Foundation in Basel (CH) are most active in this respect.

At the end of the second of these concerts, which featured works for solo violin by Johann Sebastian Bach and Georg Philipp Telemann, there was opportunity to compare the Thomastik violin directly with the violin played by the young Yehudi Menuhin. The instrument in question was made by Carlo Ferdinando Landolfi (1714–1787) during the «golden age of Italian instrument making». After listening to these instruments, it seemed clear that it was worthwhile to urgently and actively promote the research and further development of the Thomastik instruments. | *Felix Lindenmaier, Goetheanum (CH)*

Web Arthur Bay, www.geigenbaumeister.de
Web Adolf Zinsstag, www.stiftungehs.ch
Pictured Instrument No 62 of 1924

Switzerland

Meaning and purpose

A book on the meaning and purpose of the School of Spiritual Science discusses the public effectiveness that Rudolf Steiner envisaged for the School.

The Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland dedicates its annual conferences to the «understanding and future effectiveness of the Christmas Conference of 1922/1923». With the exception of a few Class Lessons, the 2017 annual conference was open to the general public. The organizers hoped to demonstrate how important the cooperation of Class members is for the effectiveness of the work that is being done within the School of Spiritual Science.

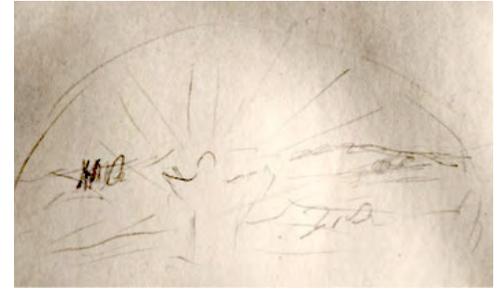
Serving all of humanity

It was Rudolf Steiner's wish that the work of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum should serve the cultural life of humanity as a whole. He even thought that it would contribute considerably to its salvation. By establishing the First Class he created the School's esoteric centre; its path of inner development was for him an absolute condition for its effectiveness. While there are particular conditions for becoming a First Class member, membership is open to anyone who is prepared to take responsibility for anthroposophy on earth and decides freely and consciously that they want to belong to the Michael community. The contributions to the conference, which are included in this book, illustrate how Rudolf Steiner founded the School of Spiritual Science with the intention of creating «a solid foundation for the effectiveness of anthroposophy».

Why must the fruits of the path of inner development not be restricted to the purposes of a small inner circle? Why must, and can, they be made available for the development of all of humanity? These are important and highly relevant questions that this publication addresses. | *Andrea Meyer Jeserich, Dornach (CH)*

Peter Selg/Marc Desales (eds): Die Freie Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft. Ihre Bedeutung und ihr Ziel. With contributions by Peter Selg, Marc Desales, Mario Betti, Matthias Girke, Tomas Bonek, Stefano Gasperi, Johannes Greiner, Johannes Kühl and Thomas Meyer, Verlag des Ita-Wegman-Instituts, 2018. **An English translation is anticipated in winter 2019/2020** (Title: The School for Spiritual Science. Its Meaning and Purpose)

Web www.wegman-verlag.de



Russia

Spiritual ecology

The summer week on «Spiritual Ecology» is about light and shadow over the White Sea, sound space and the stream of time, and about the Nordic mysteries.

Between Karelia, the land of the Kalevala, in the west and the Russian Arkhangelsk region in the east lie the mysterious Solovetsky Islands with their enigmatic stone labyrinths. The ancient Greeks spoke of them: from there – from the land of the Hyperboreans – the sun god Apollo travelled every spring to Delos and Delphi. Humans accompanied his journey on ships, bearing offerings across the Baltic Sea, the Dnieper River and the Black Sea. Druids guarded the hidden Drotten mysteries here.

Rudolf Steiner associates this archipelago with Skythianos, the teacher of humanity. In this place, where the purest sun forces prevailed, nature's clairvoyance was to be preserved in its purest form: through the darkening of Atlantis, the Kali Yuga and the intellectual age - until a future time when cultural ties can evolve between Europe and Siberia. The first Gulag labour camp was established on these islands under Lenin and Stalin, its dark shadows still tangible today.

Because of this multifaceted past, a small group of geomancers will carry out some «energetic tidying up» on the islands. This will be followed by a St. John's festival under the midnight sun, with new musical instruments. The retreat will include perception exercises and excursions. This gathering is about the dialogue with the life forces through the deepened observation of nature, and about research into generative forces and the use of biodynamic preparations and mistletoe-blossom-essences for healing the landscape. Will the unification of druidic schooling and modern natural science – assisted by angels and elemental beings – succeed? | *Raphael Kleimann, Vinterbro (NO)*

Contact post@baldron.com

Web www.summerweek.baldron.org,
www.spiritualecology.de

Image From the work in 2018: Mysteries in North and West

■ FORUM

To the meeting of group leaders and the AGM

After the «cardiac arrest» experienced by some members at the AGM in 2018, the response was quite different this year. There was a noticeable will to look towards the future, cautious optimism and a lack of the kind of emotional reactions that were so prevalent last year.

At the meeting of group leaders, conversations were held about the most diverse forms of approaches to the work of the branches work. One question that seemed to gain ever more urgency was how we deal with oppositional views. Do I have to tell others «the truth»? And how do I tell it without hurting them? Or do I try to develop tolerance for the other's way of looking at the world?

«What you understand with inner tolerance in the least of your fellow human beings, even if they are mistaken, you have understood of me, and I will let you overcome these prejudices when you seek to attenuate them by entering with tolerance into the thinking and feelings of others.» (GA189, lecture of 16 February 1919) This question was described and evaluated variously by the participants – in the end it was left open without giving in to the urge to find consensus.

The next meeting of group leaders in November will be on the topic of «Practising a culture of conversation». There will be a facilitator who will practise this with the group leaders.

The AGM, with its inspiring presentation of initiatives in the various countries and the solid support for Justus Wittich as an Executive Council member, has made many members feel more optimistic and enhanced the impression that the Anthroposophical Society can be strengthened when the membership and the

Executive Council work together.

Looking at the flood of motions, on the other hand, dampens some of this enthusiasm. What lies behind these motions? Every year, so many motions are submitted.

- In 2018, there was, for instance, a motion that the Goetheanum journal should have one page with texts by Rudolf Steiner every week. The vote on this motion received a majority in the Auditorium.
- The 2018 motion that Executive Council members should be affirmed with a two-thirds majority was withdrawn in 2019.
- In 2018 and 2019 there were requests to evaluate the balance sheet differently. This proposal assumed that everyone present was capable of carrying out highly demanding accounting tasks in their head and expected them to grasp and assess everything that was said within minutes.
- And the question as to the salaries of retired Executive Council members that had been answered by the Council in writing but was nevertheless discussed again in detail in front of a large audience.

Why is this happening? It is clearly not only about the personal quest for answers. What are the motions about?

How can the motions and those who submit them, the membership and the Executive Council contribute to a situation where we are working together on the future while being aware that a living being stands behind the Anthroposophical Society? These are unresolved questions that should be worked on in some form because they have such a strong impact. | *Heike Oberschelp, Hanover (DE)*

■ ANTROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

100th birthday

Traute Lafrenz Page M.D.

Traute Page could celebrate her 100th birthday on 3 May. She is in good health in every sense. During the Third Reich she was a member of the student group "The White Rose", of which she alone survives. On her 100th birthday she was awarded Germany's First Class Order of Merit. The German Foreign Office wrote on Twitter, «She is among the few who had the courage to stand up against the crimes of the National Socialists.»

In 1947 she moved from Germany to San Francisco to continue her medical training, later to Chicago.

Calmness, insight, experience

Traute Page spread warmth, human understanding and often humour in many circumstances. She made significant contributions during a time of transformation in the Anthroposophical Society in America. As of the late 1970s the work in America was divided into three regions. Each region formed a council: east, middle-west, west. The regional councils led to forming a national council of each region: for the West Rene Querido and Virginia Sease; Mid-West TrautePage and Werner Glas; East Dietrich von Asten, Henry Barnes and Carlo Pietzner.

The seven representatives met in February 1981 at the Center of the Anthroposophical Society in New York City. The first agenda item was crucial: the city of New York withdrew the taxexempt status of the building; taxation would be \$ 20'000 yearly. The Council decided that the center of the Society would need to be sold! In this situation Traute Page contributed calmness, insight into the feelings of the members and experience with government regulations.

This difficult decision was placed before the membership at the Annual General Meeting in May 1981 and the Council invited the Vorstand to participate in this meeting and the conference "Hearts are Beginning to Have Thoughts". The Goetheanum



Vorstand came. Prior to the meeting both Council and Vorstand met concerning the future of Anthroposophy in the western part of the world. Today, only Traute Page and this contributor still are alive and could follow the significant developments and metamorphoses in the anthroposophical work from this pivotal moment 38 years ago.

Traute Page's tasks for the Society also include her time as Co-General Secretary at the end of the 1980s into the next decade. Until recently she visited the Goetheanum regularly and remains aware of the work world-wide.

Present at crucial turning points

This short retrospect also wishes to thank her for her work with the First Class of the School of Spiritual Science which inspired many people - young and old. It is a deep pleasure to extend heart-felt birthday greetings and good wishes to a special person whose life encompasses crucial turning points in the 20th century and into the 21st century. | *Virginia Sease, Emerita Member Executive Council, General Anthroposophical Society, Goetheanum, Dornach*

1. See "being human", ed. John Beck, quarterly publication of the Anthroposophical Society in America, Spring issue 2019

Image Traute Page

Source: printed with permission of the German Foreign Office/ Amy Weaver

30 April 1946 • 12 March 2019

Jaime Padró

Jaime Padró devoted his life to Anthroposophia. It was his ideal to make the working of this being experienceable through inner practice. He wanted to make it possible for everyone to find their individual access to Rudolf Steiner. He studied thinking and perception, seeking to bring both together – as the seed of reality.

Overcoming national egotisms

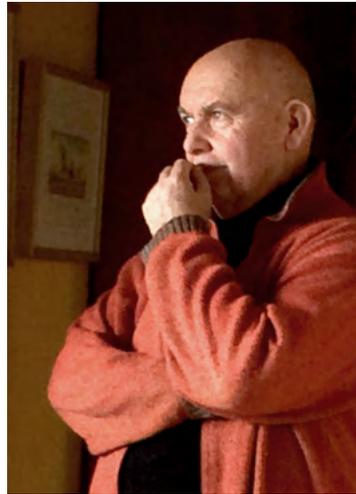
As a pioneer of the anthroposophical movement in Spain he decided against a secure existence and devoted himself to the spiritual world, to love and to the studies required to understand them. One of his foremost concerns was a spiritually and culturally united Europe and he therefore set out to explore the relationships between the folk souls. In his book on the spiritual evolution of the Spanish culture¹ he wrote, «The Spanish folk spirit wants to give Europe the spiritual fruits of its work. Its future shape will evolve from a long path towards human brotherhood. Europe will accept this gift if it comprehends that, once the national egotisms have been overcome, a time will begin when the spiritual and the practical life go towards the future together.»

All his life, Jaime Padró sought to deepen the theory of knowledge as the key and leitmotif in the search for truth. Based on this solid foundation, Jaime Padró gave many seminars on the theory of the senses, in which he pursued the building up of the resurrection body described by his teacher Friedrich Benesch.

As a master of community building and the reverse cult, Jaime Padró discovered again and again images from the non-sensory world which he passed on to his companions in order to prepare them for the task of bringing the other side of the threshold closer to the earth.

Experiencing the other

His friends often say, «My life is divided in the time before and the time after I met Jaime». A column of



light in his soul enhanced his work of nurturing what is good, of nurturing love. This light quality was always visible in his eyes.

A few days before he passed away, he quoted enthusiastically from Rudolf Steiner's book *The Threshold of the Spiritual World* (GA 17), «Love is experiencing the other in one's own soul. [...] Love is for us the most important result of our living in the sensory world. If we penetrate the essence of love, of compassion, we will find that it is the expression of the spiritual reality in the sensory world. [...] We must also say that love awakens the spirit in the sensory world».

Twenty years ago, Jaime Padró founded the Foundation for the Social Arts (Fundación Círculo de Arte Social). He intended this foundation as a living organism, a school of perception, awareness and meditation. It was his way of working towards conscious community building. |*Marta Arahuetes, Jesús Atencia, Marta Garbayo (es)*

1. Jaime Padró: El devenir espiritual de la cultura española : el método goetheano en la integración de Europa

We have been informed that the following 48 members have crossed the threshold of death. In their remembrance we are providing this information for their friends. | Membership Office at the Goetheanum

Sonja Zimmermann Radebeul (DE) 8 October 2017
Helen Holloran Rochester/NY (US) 30 November 2017
Jánosné Földes Budapest (HU) in 2017
Dorothea Pollok Überlingen (DE) 16 December 2018
Marilou Coats Chattanooga/TN (US) 17 December 2018
Martina Polo Treviso (IT) 11 January 2019
Anneke Wijnbergh Zeist (NL) 13 January 2019
Greet Crum Maarssen (NL) 17 January 2019
Christoph Schenk Wesenberg (DE) 18 January 2018
Rian Lapré Son (NL) 25 January 2019
Timothy Mowrey Dallas/TX (US) 28 January 2019
Juske Manssen Leersum (NL) 2 February 2019
Ine Krijgsman Nieuwekerk aan den IJssel (NL) 7 Feb. 2019
Nelly Gravestein Sneek (NL) 8 February 2019
Jacobus Gelaudie Haarlem (NL) 11 February 2019
Boudewijn Wilmar Nuenen (NL) 18 February 2019
Euphemia te Riele Beverwijk (NL) 24 February 2019
Hans Neumann Berlin (DE) 5 March 2019
Mária Scherák Budapest (HU) 12. March 2019
Irmgard Mertens Dörverden (DE) 20 March 2019
Monika Vonarburg Oberwil (CH) 29 March 2019
Inger Carlsen Frederiksberg (DK) 2 April 2019
Frieda Stauffacher Weggis (CH) 3 April 2019
Edeltraud Nietz Kassel (DE) 9 April 2019
Irene Schalk Nuremberg (DE) 9 April 2019
Elisabeth Allenbach Matten-Interlaken (CH) 11 April 2019
Tim Gibbons Hebden Bridge (GB) 11 April 2019
Hanni Sommer Binningen (CH) 11 April 2019
Helmut Hoffmann Mesekenhagen (DE) 13 April 2019
Gustaaf Claes Capelle a/d IJssel (NL) 15 April 2019
Hans Haberl Vienna (AT) 15 April 2019
Hiltrud Werner Stuttgart (DE) 15 April 2019
Mairis Wittkowsky Überlingen (DE) 16 April 2019
Ingo Craubner Munich (DE) 17 April 2019
Carlo Portner Haldenstein (CH) 17 April 2019
Ingo Hackel Spardorf (DE) 18 April 2019
Volker Kurz Gundelfingen (DE) 20 April 2019
Mona Jacobi Stuttgart (DE) 22 April 2019
Elisabeth Oswald St. Gallen (CH) 26 April 2019
Gisela Krämer Griesheim (DE) 28 April 2019
Paul Schweizer Riehen (CH) 28 April 2019
Donna Martin Thornhill (CA) 29 April 2019
Peter Matthiessen Herdecke (DE) 30 April 2019
Volker Zielonka Bautzen (DE) 30 April 2019
Maria Schütz Vienna (AT) 2 May 2019
Erdmute Gustafsson Tumba (SE) 2 May 2019
Annemarie König Kilkeel (GB) 3 May 2019
Yarlan De Carvalho Piment Vignate (MI) (IT) 3 May 2019

The Membership Office registered 76 new members in April 2019. 45 people left the Society between 13 April and 10 May 2019.

■ FEATURE



Social Study «(Re)Search» on the spiritual striving of youth

Always developing

Since 2017, a team of young researchers has put this question to their generation peers: **What would the world look like in 2030 if what lives within you becomes a reality? What will you do to make it happen?** A first report based on the answers of young people from 23 different countries has now been published.

One of the objectives of this study is to learn about youth's experiences of reality. For this, young researchers carried out in-depth interviews that allow participants to reflect upon life experiences and wishes and hopes for the future with a peer.

The first phase of the research consisted of 40 interviews with people aged 18–35 from 23 countries and a variety of cultural backgrounds. During interviews, it was up to the young people to choose the topics of discussion. In the resulting dialogues we identified some universal themes appearing across interviewees' testimonies: origins, education, profession, spirituality and relationships.

Space for our own questions

One of the first observations is that these young people perceive life as an ever-changing, transformative experience that requires constant awareness of self and others, as well as constant questioning and dialogue with self and the environment before taking action. We called this a state of «Conscious Becoming»: «I think I'm really conscious that a human being, as a whole, is developing; and always developing», said a 21-year-old woman from Germany.

Interviewees said that they thrive in environments where there is potential for change and becoming, but reject situations where they are asked to perform finite tasks determined by another, and where there is no space for their own questions to be posed. In a world that is perceived to be in constant transformation, how can one generate stability and security? «If everything is moving – and that is OK –, then I have to understand what I need in order to navigate through that», said a 29-year-old participant from England.

For these young people, reality asks us to confront a world of polarities, differences and multiculturalism. To meet this request, they start by looking at their own national, cultural and ancestral heritage. In most interviews, personal origins are explored and described with lightness and acceptance, even in those cases where challenging origins are present. It is clear that young people are actively enquiring and seeking for an understanding of their **origins** and how these have contributed to their identity building. This is even more apparent amongst those with mixed nationalities. «I don't define myself as if I were from a specific part of the world because I feel from the whole world», said an 18 year-old Bolivian woman.

Being seen and understood

With regard to **education**, some interviewees linked a positive educational experience with the feeling of being «seen» and understood by teachers as an individuality. Particularly (though not exclusively) amongst the interviewees coming from Asian countries, it was possible to observe the challenge that arises when young people experience a tension between what is expected of them by family members in terms of educational and career choices, and what they long for themselves.

In their **profession** often they described situations that do not allow them to fully unfold their interests and potentials, or that do not ensure that they receive the financial compensation needed in order to be financially independent from others (family or the state). There is «no-tolerance» for a professional setting with a lack of ethics, or where meaningful relationships cannot be formed. They speak also of the difficulty of combining one's own vocation to their professional reality.

The great majority of interviewees were critical of religious practices which they linked to ideas of oppression and experiences of institutionally-imposed morality. Nevertheless, young people speak often of a relationship to God, divinity or **spirituality**, as something that has meaning for them. On the search for a deeper knowledge of oneself they have engaged in activities such as specific spiritual paths, meditations, rituals and even substance use. According to them, experiences of this sort offer a space for self-reflection and questions about the nature of life, humanity, and human relationships.

Integrating pluralities and differences

Interviewees spoke of relationships as one, if not the most, significant aspect of their present reality. This includes their relationship to themselves, which according to interviewees, influences the way in which they connect with others. A strong sense of togetherness arises when relationships based on the sharing of ideas, questions and aspects relating to all of human nature.

They often maintain a reflective attitude towards their relationships, as if seeking to constantly learn through trial and error. This leads them to form ever evolving bonds with the people they share experiences with. The values which they identified to be vital for meaningful relationships include authenticity, honesty and transparency, all of which lead to good communication, which for them is at the base of meaningful relationships. They also seek to learn ways to integrate pluralities and differences as they strive for acceptance out of the understanding of the «otherness». A strong sense of togetherness arises when relationships are able to be based on the sharing of ideas, questions and aspects relating to all of human nature.

Participants were not interested in ready-made solutions or quick fixes to personal and world-problems; instead, they expressed a need for tools that will enable their thinking to encounter the challenges that come to meet them. What lives within these young people is a strong longing to generate life-conditions where it is possible for humanity to act from a place of awareness and deep knowledge of all the factors involved in the challenges we face. For interviewees, it all starts with individual action. | *Andrea de la Cruz Barral, Goetheanum*

«(Re)Search» Team Andrea de la Cruz Barral and Ioana Viscrianu. **Mentors** Constanza Kaliks, Pepa and Luis Miguel Barral. **Allies** Alina Fessler, Janna De Vries, Johannes Kronenberg, Nahuel Waroquiers and Sibel Caliskan. **Web** www.youthsection.org/research **Images** Essential in life: relationships – sharing of views for the (Re)Search Project