



■ GOETHEANUM



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Goetheanum

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2018 Annual Conference and
Annual General Meeting**

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Goetheanum Leadership

Letter to the Members

Dear Members,

What is the situation at the Goetheanum? And what happens after the eventful Annual General Meeting of the Anthroposophical Society in the week before Palm Sunday in Dornach? What are the consequences of the further terms of office of the executive members, Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato, not having been confirmed by the General Assembly?

These questions concern many members. A large number of messages from all over the world have reached us in the Executive Council and the Goetheanum Leadership. We are touched by the intense participation and concern. The human involvement in the events of the Anthroposophical Society has suddenly become warmed and condensed. The intentions envisaged by the Executive Council and the Goetheanum Leadership must now be mandated anew. What could become possible in this newly created situation? We want to approach this situation

Goetheanum Leadership during the transition period up to the June retreat (not in the picture: Matthias Girke)

openly and make the processes more transparent for you as members. We see this as the best way forward to address the development of isolated factions, the legitimate concerns about the further development in the Society and the rumours/suspensions of various kinds which are unfortunately spreading rapidly.

Sober stocktaking

After the intense and dramatic Easter event at the Goetheanum (see below), there were naturally great expectations directed towards the first session of the Goetheanum Leadership (Executive Council and Section Leaders). In the protracted meetings on 10 April, it was our task to draw the first conclusions from the events and to realign our work together.

As a first step, we took a sober look at what was expressed through the outcome of the voting at the General Assembly. What mistakes and omissions have we made and

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where have we not correctly assessed developments? Where are deficits in the communication with the members? Where were processes incomprehensible? We want to deepen this diagnosis even further. Against this background, what is the common will in the Society, to take forward the initiated process of re-defining the Anthroposophical Society, the tasks of the School of Spiritual Science and the undertaking "Goetheanum in Development"? Are our procedures and structures still suitable for an anthroposophically inspired world movement?

As a result of the discussions on 10 April, we can state: of course, the Executive Council and the Goetheanum Leadership accept the outcome of the vote. Thus we are faced with the fact that three members of the Executive Council, since Seija Zimmermann also retired, have simultaneously left their office (on one day). The will of the Goetheanum Leadership, comprising since 2012 of equally responsible members of the Executive Council and Section Leaders, to work together is not affected by this loss. We will attempt in every way possible to integrate as many concerns of Society members as possible in the intentions carried by the Goetheanum.

Limited transition period

In the interest of the diverse workings of the School of Spiritual Science, the Anthroposophical Society and the Goetheanum operation, with its accompanying organizations, we now envisage a limited transitional period in order to facilitate the reorganiz-

The decisions made in short form:

1. Since 25 March 2018, the responsibilities of the Executive Council lie exclusively with Justus Wittich, Joan Sleigh, Constanza Kaliks and Matthias Girke
2. Constanza Kaliks has taken up the chairmanship of the Goetheanum Leadership in 2018/2019 with Oliver Conradt.
3. Until the retreat on 11 and 12 June 2018, there will be a transitional period for all other mandates and tasks.
4. All responsibilities, mandates and delegations will be reassigned at the June retreat.
5. Paul Mackay will continue to represent the Anthroposophical Society on the Board of Directors of Weleda AG.

ing of responsibilities. The actual Council responsibilities of Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato (as well as Seija Zimmermann) ended on 24 March 2018. Since then they have been taken over by the four current board members (Justus Wittich, Joan Sleigh, Constanza Kaliks and Matthias Girke). The role of spokesperson for the Goetheanum Leadership, intended for Paul Mackay and designated for one year, was taken over by Constanza Kaliks and Oliver Conradt.

The many tasks and mandates within the running of the Goetheanum operation in projects, in planned conferences and working contexts, which were delegated to Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato by the Goetheanum Leadership for three years, according to our Rules of Procedure, will continue until 11 and 12 June 2018. These will then be reassessed and reassigned as part of a reorganization of all mandates, a regular procedure due in December 2018, which will be brought forward to June 2018. We would like to carefully consider and prepare this process in the coming weeks.

The mandate to Paul Mackay to continue representing the Anthroposophical Society

on the Board of Directors of Weleda was confirmed by the Executive Council on 10 April.

«Goetheanum in development» continues

At Michaelmas 2016 the Goetheanum Leadership hosted the World Conference at the Goetheanum. From this the work stream "Goetheanum in development" has emerged. Over the next three years, the intention is to strengthen the School of Spiritual Science, the Anthroposophical Society and the vocational fields worldwide and bring them into a fruitful collaboration. The projects that are underway to reach this goal will continue. In particular, this includes the aim of achieving a balanced financial budget for the Goetheanum by 2020. The future of Anthroposophy in the world and at the Goetheanum continues to be the core task and heart-felt concern of the Goetheanum Leadership.

How the work at the Goetheanum continued without interruption immediately after the dramatic events of the General Assembly, both publically and in the area of the School of Spiritual Science, can be seen in two impressive events: The new format "Easter at the Goetheanum" brought in addition to lectures and introductions, the concert performance of the Act 3 of Wagner's *Parzival* by the Basel Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Mark Elder, and Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* with the Zurich Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Heinz Bähler. Both concerts were a great artistic event in the meeting of public cultural achievement with the Goetheanum, which attracted many interested people to the almost sold out hall. This was followed by the International Conference of the professions of Eurythmy, Artistic Speech and Eurythmy Therapy, organized by three Sections of the School of Spiritual Science, and attended by up to 800 participants from 40 countries worldwide. It enlivened the Goetheanum Campus with joyful encounters and many inspiring examples of artistic-educational-therapeutic work being undertaken in the world.

We hope to continue our work in this direction, with your support and involvement, to stimulate and strengthen the effective working of Anthroposophy from the Goetheanum into the world. | *Justus Wittich and Ueli Hurter for the Goetheanum Leadership. English by Joan Sleigh*

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Worldwide

International responses to the AGM

The general secretaries and representatives were asked to report on how the decision at the AGM not to reaffirm Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato has been received in their countries. Some replies illustrate that it is too early for such an echo.

South Africa

Unexpected winter

Dornach still lay asleep when in the early hours I trudged up the hill from the tram. Winter had returned, the ground was icy, each twig was crowned with tufts of snow. Arriving from the warm African summer, the unexpected frost was cutting.

Soon though the warmth of the Goetheanum enveloped me. On four days of meetings, in earnest collegial deliberations, we concerned ourselves with new objectives and looked ahead to 2023. We followed reports from working groups and from the worldwide Society. Palpable was the level of understanding and trust arising from these yearly meetings of Goetheanum Leadership, General Secretaries and country representatives, this year coming from 30 Societies on all 6 continents, plus some members of country society executives joining us later. Some of us came to also say farewell, but had already brought along a successor.

Participating from afar

Quite organically an intention arose from this experience of the strength of our meetings, to deliberate in future more often than just in this week before the AGM, and also to no longer differentiate between General Secretaries (nominated by larger country societies and endorsed by the Dornach executive) and country representatives (sent by the smaller country societies). The practical implications of such intention will still need to be considered. Modern media could make it possible to converse without all having to travel to Dornach. The aim is to uphold together our ever-larger edifice. It started to sound at the Goetheanum World Conference at Michaelmas 2016, this awareness of a worldwide 'greater Goetheanum', and this we now want to help realize.

At the weekend then followed the Annual General Meeting. With fulsome tributes to Elisabeth Vreede and Ita Wegman and their complete rehabilitation, our society showed the will to correct past mistakes. We further engaged with the concerns

about the current and future financial basis of the work of the Goetheanum. But then the mood changed, it became political. The renewal of Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato's mandates on the executive came up for discussion. – The outcome of the vote then was cutting. Significant questions now arise: How did we ever get into a situation where our General Meeting turns into something like a court session, with accusations being levelled, but without responding defence? How can we be a world society when a bare 1% of membership, managing to come to Dornach, can enforce such a drastic incision to which 98% were not in a position to give either their yea or nay? On the other hand, is it at all in the spirit of our Society to resolve fundamental questions by ballot? As one of my South African colleagues put it succinctly: The process cannot prove that the outcome was right. How then to proceed differently in future?

Societal ethos

We are now challenged to clarify before 2023 from what societal ethos we wish to work, and how we see ourselves as a world society in the 21st century, for instance built on the trust that has already been created amongst country society representatives and Goetheanum Leadership.

The result of the AGM is stirring debate, also in our Society in South Africa. What will it mean for the Goetheanum Leadership and co-workers, and for the understanding underlying the ongoing work worldwide? Through our many links we will gladly engage in addressing such questions. | *Wilfried Bohm (sa), writing as a private individual*

Norway

Briefly informed

Ingrid Reistad has informed the members briefly and will give an in-depth report at their annual assembly on 22 April. | *Sebastian Jünger*

Finland

Calmly received

In Finland the news from the AGM and the voting on the various motions was received calmly and with focus on the work that needs to be done now. As with the generational change in the Finnish society, the members in Finland feel and think that with bigger changes there is also always a possibility for new positive impulses to be born. | *Henri Murto, general secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Finland*

Sweden

Wish for participation

On 14 April we had the AGM of the Swedish Society and it was the first occasion where we could report and exchange thoughts concerning the events of the AGM of the General Anthroposophical Society last month at the Goetheanum.

There were many voices that underlined what we had expressed as concern from the Nordic Societies, that it is essential to have a new arrangement as to how the members of the whole world society can take part in important, decisive questions. Now «only» a minority took part in the decisions. So, what we can experience from Swedish members is a wish for reforms that would move the AGM to be more participative, so that it represents the will of all members worldwide. | *Mats-Ola Ohlsson, general secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Sweden*

Netherlands

It is too early

The outcome of the rehabilitation and the voting on the next term of Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato was directly published on our website. It is still too early to give anything more than a few haphazard, sometimes emotional opinions as reactions from members in Holland. They go in quite different directions. We are still in the communicating process with the members via

our journal and our general meeting is only in May, at which occasion we shall address the situation. By then, we will have a clearer picture. | Jaap Sijmons, *general secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Netherlands*

Japan

Great astonishment

The content and ballot results of the Annual Conference and AGM at the Goetheanum were received with great astonishment in Japan. It was all entirely unexpected. We will only report this to our members at our Annual Conference on 23 and 24 June. | Juji Agematsu, *general secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Japan*

Argentina

Wish for participation

For us the reinstatement of Elisabeth Vreede and Ita Wegman was definitely a positive result. That at the same time Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato were not reaffirmed in office was conspicuous, to say the least. Many of our members wish they could participate from afar. | Horacio Müller, *representative of the Anthroposophical Society in Argentina*

Finding new forms?

After Rudolf Steiner's death the Anthroposophical Society took a direction that led into an acute crisis from which it has never really recovered. The «affiliated institutions» have kept growing and spreading, while the Society itself has become noticeably weaker; and now a situation has arisen where two members of the Executive Council were not confirmed in office. This happens at a time when Elisabeth Vreede and Ita Wegman are reintegrated into the Anthroposophical Society after being excluded for a longer period of time (1935-2018), and at a time when there is a noticeable indifference of the members towards the Society and a – not unrelated – financial crisis.

Could it be time for our dear and much needed Anthroposophical Society to find a new form? | Aldo Di Stilio, *vice-chairman of the Council*

Postal vote

Since it is possible to vote on paper and by ballot, I propose the introduction of postal votes. This is how the Italians who live here in Buenos Aires elect their government in Italy. And I have to use that method from time to time to vote in Belgium. In the physicians' group here in San Isidro we also vote in this way. There is no doubt that the outcome of the vote at the AGM would have been very different in that case, but now we need to think of the future as well. | Minoe Ryckeboer, *former Council member*

Balanced relationship

The idea, which is good in principle, of asking for the members of the Executive Council to be reaffirmed after seven years in office has occasioned an unexpected and clearly also undesired result.

In my view this is a dilemma of «centre» (Goetheanum, Executive Council, Section leaders) and «periphery» (the members worldwide, anthroposophy applied in practice in the world). The members wish, and are expected, to be active; the centre has the difficult task of giving impulses whilst being totally receptive at the same time. Who is nourishing, strengthening, maintaining whom? We need to find the way and have the courage for a balanced mutual relationship. | Rosa Körte, *deputy secretary and Council member*

Dignified responses

This crisis offers us the opportunity to examine where we are and to work towards a more participatory system by using the media. I imagine that such a change is not easy. But it would be something new and a new impulse would be given; it would also be more transparent and fairer. One should always make sure, however, that no feelings get hurt and keep an eye on the Society's wellbeing and progress.

The persons who were not reaffirmed now should have the possibility to be re-elected in the future, and they should be able to continue working in another position, with less stress and responsibility. ... They should not feel dismissed, but the gratitude for their efforts and the value of their work should always be in the foreground. We need to keep the image of cen-

tre and periphery in mind, an image that is breathing and where one moves in and out depending on one's abilities, qualifications and responsibility. | Marisa Lienhard, *Council member*

Spiritual thread

We have been able recently to gain information – through the reports on the Michaelmas Congress in 2016 and the fruitful visit of Constanza Kaliks in September 2016 – on the dynamics, the projects and the work of the Executive Council and its cooperation with the section leaders of the School of Spiritual Science. It sounded harmonious and hopeful. Now the fact of this non-affirmation has occurred. I only hope that the Executive Council will publish a report that de-dramatizes the situation and that can identify the spiritual thread, because that alone can lead to an objective view.

I would like to express my trust that Anthroposophia and Rudolf Steiner will continue to stand by us and shine a light on our centre and on our periphery, so that «good may become what from our hearts we would found». | Cristina Etchegaray, *secretary and Council member*

New Zealand

First reflections from New Zealand

Whether or not you were interested in the motions, the changes made at the AGM are relevant to the world. A number of you met Bodo von Plato in 2017 when he visited New Zealand, Paul Mackay visited earlier, his last visit was in 2006. Paul has been on the Executive for 22 years and Bodo 17 years. The events that transpired will have their positive and negative aspects. The experience at the AGM was that from the members present those who were opposed to Paul and Bodo continuing on the executive held an overwhelming voice.

Strong emotions

A wave of shock rippled through the room when the votes were declared. Emotions were mixed and strong, for some the outcome brought relief while others felt a

deep sense of grief and loss. It is too early to speak to the consequence of the decision; the reality of what it brings will evolve over the coming months and years. Paul and Bodo responded with real dignity, speaking only of gratitude to those who have supported them, as they acknowledged the vote before leaving the stage.

It is no easy task, to lose the knowledge and years of experience that Paul and Bodo carry in one sweep. It is good that in recent years, the section leaders have worked closely with the Executive, developing a strengthened leadership team. I am sure they will do all in their power to actively support and work with them.

A wake-up call

Such moments can work deeply divisively, the removal of Ita Wegman and Elizabeth Vreede from the Executive in 1935 led to a major schism in the Society. It is a strange twist of destiny that in the same AGM where the two were rehabilitated, the majority vote led to the removal of two active Executive members. The present situation is a real wake up call.

As long as there are factions, cliques or divisive groups we open the doors to destructive forces. It is not a question of right or wrong, every person at the AGM made their decision and each carries responsibility for their decision. The question that occupies me is, what is now asked of us and how can we bring healing to the Society?

Divisive forces

It seems to me that we stand on a world stage: on the one hand the experience at the AGM is unique and on the other we see the effect of a binding vote with Brexit. Look locally and it is not difficult to see forces at work that work divisively in our organisations and relationships. On reflection I would like to share a request from Gerald Häfner, leader of the Social Science Section, «Can we learn to work for instead of against?» | *Sue Simpson, general secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in New Zealand*

Excerpt from a report on the homepage of the Anthroposophical Society in New Zealand: www.anthroposophy.org.nz/2018/04/05/a-week-in-dornach



Motion 12

Key to effectiveness

Anthroposophy Worldwide asked the members who submitted the motion to project an image of the Representative of Humanity onto the Goetheanum stage during a break of the Annual General Meeting on 25 March 2018 to write something about this experience.

The Representative of Humanity on stage: projected to the place where Rudolf Steiner had envisaged it for the first Goetheanum. Here it could be experienced in an image, neither rigidly insisting on its own opinion, nor being torn to and fro by majorities or opinion leaders – continuously establishing the free space in between the two – listening, empathetic and future-forming.

Being present on stage is the key to its effectivity. Soon the Christmas Conference of 1923-24 will have been effective for three times 33 years; facing the challenges of the time across all the differences; a living example of a human culture of encounters.

Can we imagine the Representative of Humanity on stage at the 2022 Christmas Conference? | *Karin Lanz, Basel (CH), Frank Spaan, Dornach (CH), Christoph Moritz, Weil am Rhein (DE)*

■ ANTROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY



Sharing of views during the Annual Conference

Letters to the editor

Members' voices

Soon after the 2018 Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting some members described their impressions to the editors of *Anthroposophy Worldwide*; they will be documented here. The letters speak of consternation about the non-affirmation and concerns regarding the future of the Anthroposophical Society.

Source of life

Far away from Central Europe, numerous members like me will be sitting wondering at the reports of this year's AGM. Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato no longer have the trust of the membership – but why? Since I and thousands of others were not present, this is a mystery to us. It would be desirable for all members to be able to participate in the AGM via Skype or other digital channels. We have this possibility today!

I got to know Bodo von Plato in recent years at Class meetings at the Goetheanum; I know him as an unusually modest person, a good listener, and a «breath of fresh air», an important part of what I experience as a new, positive, future-oriented and fresh growth rising from the old anthroposophical roots at the Goetheanum. This is why I was really unhappy to hear that he will be leaving the Executive Council.

New developments always involve sacrifices

On the other hand I also see the destructive new struggles being fought in Dornach, with antipathies and strong emotions. Maybe we should think: this is the price we have to pay for the lessons we are learning. The form of the Anthroposophical Society was conceived in and for a different time. Its form and needs are no longer appropriate today. What is happening now can help us to work out new forms which are better

suited to our time. And new developments always involve sacrifices. Without sacrifices there can be no evolution.

Let us aim at promoting and advancing the good that has evolved in recent years. I think that the new co-workers can bring new impulses.

The great physical distance to the Goetheanum as an administrative and inspirational centre is a problem for all members outside Central Europe. This must be recognized. I see the following (radical) solution, which requires much Michaelic courage:

- a new, decentralized structure for the Society
- the old hierarchical «esoteric» model has to go. The ideal of the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924 having an esoteric core can be retained if the representatives of the School of Spiritual Science are also part of many local leaderships.
- The Goetheanum building could be an ideal foundation that finances the building and its activities with public and private funds. It can be a building for theatre, concerts, conferences, not only for anthroposophical activities, but for any spiritually striving group.

Rudolf Steiner and his work are a source of life for all of us. This is why it is so precious to us, and we are worried when the wolves are howling – fear leads to conflicts and a

mutual tearing apart. But we must never forget that it is with anthroposophy as it is with life: it must be understood, translated, lived and loved differently from one age to the next, from one person to the next, and from one continent to the next.

Within the School of Spiritual Science in Dornach I have met wonderful, healthy reverence, openness and trust. We should build on that. If we cannot trust that spirit and truth have the power to germinate, the Ahrimanic forces of fear will dominate us – and that is harmful. We must learn to trust that people wish for the good; they wish to develop inner peace and enter into a listening conversation. Then we will find the way forward together.

Anthroposophy contains truths about our being human, and this humanity is indestructible. This is why Rudolf Steiner's work will continue to be here and inspire us. | *Lilleberta Sandved, Haugesund (no)*

From meetings to encounters

It seemed inevitable that the recommendations arising from the consultations between the Executive Council, the School, the Goetheanum Leadership and the general secretaries would not be heard now, in March. People neither listened to the reports on these consultations nor to the urgent reminder from members of the Youth Section that it was almost impossible for young people to join a society whose members were at loggerheads. Matters that should have been observed, discussed, deliberated at the soul-spirit level, were dragged down to the level of administrative bickering, at times becoming political, with people calling out, unrest etc. I had already come across this unhelpful mood in February, at the Swiss meeting and conference where it emerged, and deeply shocked me, in the form of criticism, hatefulness, untruths.

So we brought about – simultaneously with the impulse (for which I am very grateful) to heal an old and tragic separation – a new division with a majority vote – although the term «vote» is not really appropriate. A looking back and forward had been planned, a perceiving of what

had and had not been achieved, with the possibility of presenting future directions and impulses.

What has been gained by this non-affirmation? I see only loss; a shameful process.

That the Swiss Society favoured this non-affirmation I find deeply saddening. I don't agree with it. I am never in favour of separation or division.

Do we, as a Society, not learn from the past and from former conflicts? Can we move forward? Can we develop «spirit contemplation in equanimity of soul» into the trust without which no social organism can live? Did we absorb this sufficiently at the conference, when the second verse of the Foundation Stone Meditation was demonstrated in eurythmy? The unhealthy criticizing should disappear; meetings should become encounters again, with positive inspirations, with much of the global breath from all the countries where anthroposophy is effective. This is what one would like to hear more of. Then one could be happy again to be a member. | *Annelies Heinzlmann, St. Gallen (CH)*

The problems of spiritual aspiration and democracy

Anthroposophically speaking, seven year periods are magical units in biographical and social development. After seven years something old comes to an end and space for new things is made. A new phenomenon arose at the last Annual General Meeting: old scars are being cosmetically removed from the surface of the Society's skin, while new injuries are being created at the same time.

In my own biography it has happened that, due to my long-standing connection with the Goetheanum, several years spent in Dornach (CH) and my life-long work in social therapy in Switzerland and abroad, a kind of point and circle vision has evolved with regard to the global Anthroposophical Society.

The persons who step forward to take on a task in the Dornach Executive Council expose themselves, personally as well as professionally, and to an extreme extent, to a local and international public. This has become apparent in a history that goes back almost a hundred years. In Dornach they are being perceived, aside from their spiri-

tual responsibility for the anthroposophical cause and the international Society, as employers and experts in administration. The latter is hardly visible to members in the world – and therefore secondary. (Will the end of the next seven-year term in office again result in non-confirmations? Who, under these circumstances, will be prepared at all to stand for this office?)

From the point of view of the General Anthroposophical Society's global periphery the non-affirmation of Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato may seem like the result of internal scheming and «anthro-political» lobbying. Yes, the Faust production was a fiasco, the finances are problematic. And much could and would no doubt have to be administered more successfully. But: these personalities are also perceived as connectors, not only as administrators, this is a perception that hardly anyone has in Dornach itself – and it is therefore secondary there.

The members in the world were not able to participate in the vote on the reaffirmation and extension of terms in office. It would be interesting to find out how many of the votes against came from people abroad, how many from north of the Alps. But the vote was secret, as it often is with spiritual matters. Of around 44,000 members worldwide, less than 500 have released two people from the Executive Council. After a seven-year period. At the same time they reinstated two members who died a long time ago. Something old is made good – something new inaugurated.

This is really a sad picture of a Society whose members set out to foster an awareness of karmic relationships: when – seemingly pseudo-democratic – processes take place, trailing behind them an odd resonance. | *Udi Levy, Dinhard (CH)*

The spiritual life subjugated to the life of rights

What have we done? We «rehabilitated» two people who were thrown out of the Executive Council in 1935 by a membership led astray by a smear campaign. In the same hour we threw out two members of the present Executive Council and maybe in 80 years' time someone will be able to make their mark by starting an initiative to put things «right» again.

With the decision made we not only interfered with the karma of many people, changing it considerably in some respects, but above all we have ignored the clearly expressed will for the continuation of these mandates by the majority of the members of the global Society, represented by the general secretaries and representatives, and enforced as the will of the whole Society the will of around 600 or 700 members who were also led astray by a smear campaign (hopefully that, rather than guided by bad intentions).

We had to deal with a flood of motions, with many of them on the wrong spiritual level. The time we took was divided very unequally and standards were often questionable. Anthroposophy is pure spiritual life that can have an effect on the legal and economic life but not vice versa.

Pretending that we have to protect Rudolf Steiner's legacy, we have disregarded and trampled on his teachings on the freedom of the spirit and karma which he entrusted to us in the final year of his life. I only hope that Faust will prevail here, too, where it says, «I am a part of the force that intends evil but achieves good.»

Anthroposophy and our Society will only thrive in the world once we no longer subjugate the spiritual life to the life of rights. My sadness about the work that has been destroyed is immense. It is only surpassed by the pain about our inability to do better after more than a hundred years. | *Judith Peier, Männedorf (CH)*

Absurd majority decisions

Why can't we see how absurd majority decisions are? The same Annual General Meeting rescinds, by majority decision, a previous majority decision in order to make it clear that the earlier majority decision to exclude two members of the Executive Council was absurd. And then members of the present Executive Council are again excluded by a majority decision. When will they be included again by majority vote? What does a majority vote say about what is true and right? It has long become apparent everywhere in the world how wrong and destructive majority decisions can be. | *Edgar Spittler, Bolzano (IT)*

Switzerland

The dignity of the Society

During the 2018 AGM at the Goetheanum Marc Desaulles explained the views of the Swiss Anthroposophical Society's council with regard to the reaffirmation of Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato. Peter Selg, who is a member of the Swiss council, has accepted the offer to describe his experience of the Annual General Meeting in *Anthroposophy Worldwide*.

I was pleased with the progress made by the initiative to rescind the resolutions against Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede, with the contributions to this motion and the result of the subsequent vote: only three votes against and 17 abstentions with more than 900 votes in favour! In my evening lecture I quoted from a letter by Ita Wegman: «There is no other way but doing what needs to be done in a community: bear the mistakes together whilst trying together to make amends.» I think this can be an important message for the future of the Society and the School of Spiritual Science. This was and is not about the dignity of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede but about the dignity of the Society.

No comparison

The resonance after the AGM I found rather disconcerting, however, because the motion I referred to above is hardly ever mentioned now. Everything is dominated by the fact that the Executive Council members Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato were not reaffirmed. That both these events are thoughtlessly bracketed together and accompanied by violent emotions is tragic and does not stand up to any factual scrutiny. Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede did not come up for reaffirmation by a general meeting; this tool did not yet exist in 1935. They were defamed and excluded against their will by a general meeting after a targeted campaign was launched against them.

In 2011, on the other hand, at the request of the Executive Council, it was decided with statutory effect that Executive Council members needed to be reaffirmed so as to give greater responsibility to the members of the Society. Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato, who were instrumental in promoting the reaffirmation clause, have been active at the Goetheanum for 22 and 17 years respectively. If the practice of reaffirmation is to be continued and if the members are to be asked for their opinion in the fu-

ture, it is, in my view, essential that the Executive Council members in question provide a detailed report on their term in office, including all their activities, as well as a clear description of their future tasks. This process should be kept free of advertising; it should be factual and lead directly to the ballot without any speeches «in favour» or «against». The members of the Anthroposophical Society are able to judge for themselves, certainly those who intensively follow the development of the Goetheanum and the work of the Executive Council. There is no need to keep talking to people trying to convince them one way or another. It would be better to «await calmly the wishes of the members» (Ita Wegman), once they have been sufficiently informed. The Main Auditorium – we have learned this in the past – is no arena.

Dangers of collective opinion formation

In this respect I was rather disconcerted by the vehement arguments put forward in the course of the debate by some general secretaries and representatives. While I understood that they wished to continue working with the colleagues mentioned, because they appreciate them, are friends with and owe much to them, I felt that pressure was exerted on the members present, who were made to feel that a non-confirmation would spell the end of the anthroposophical cause, the worst case scenario for the anthroposophical movement.

I also asked myself on whose behalf the general secretaries and country representatives are speaking? Can they really claim to speak for all the members in their country? Through my international activities I know anthroposophists in many countries, including Society members who think quite differently from their general secretaries, about this question too. The general secretaries and representatives ultimately speak for themselves, on the basis of their personal experiences, which are

not at all identical with the experiences of all their members.

If this is the case, how can one claim in all seriousness – as happened at the AGM – that 44,000 members, as opposed to a few local troublemakers, support the reaffirmation? This created a field of tension between the people in the auditorium (who had in fact come from more than 30 countries) and a fictitious «world»: a field of tension that does not actually exist. Any tendencies towards collective opinion forming and a society of functionaries instead of a society of members are dangerous. For me this, and only this, bears any similarity with 1935.

Wish for change

The Council of the Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland, of which I am a member, was also asked by the Executive Council at the Goetheanum how we think about extending the mandates. We did not advise this step – there was no resentment involved – but advocated a new start. We never told our members how they should vote; we only spoke for ourselves and we think our members are able to make up their own minds. At our Swiss AGM in February at the Goetheanum, which was attended by almost 400 people, the subject never even came up. The vote of the AGM is certainly not a Swiss vote, although views to that effect have been disseminated widely since.

My advice would be to accept the vote, which was initiated by the Executive Council itself, to try to understand it for what it is and to fully implement it. Those who are geographically closer to the Goetheanum and were able to attend the AGM, many at great personal expense and from various countries, have their specific experiences which cannot just be discredited as personal aversions. The majority of these members did not wish for a continuation but voted for change.

It will remain, I think, one of the challenges of the future to inform the members of the Anthroposophical Society worldwide in depth of all aspects of the Goetheanum's development and to enable them to form their own judgement. Now it is important to turn to the problems and immense conflicts in the real world, whilst keeping Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede in mind. | *Peter Selg, member of the council of the Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland*

■ GOETHEANUM

Goetheanum Leadership

World Goetheanum Association

At the 2018 Annual General Meeting the members were informed in writing, and also verbally by Georg Soldner, about the development of the World Goetheanum Association. As part of this information an invitation was extended for the World Goetheanum Forum which will take place from 28 to 30 September 2018 at the Goetheanum.

Dear friends,

In 2017, the Goetheanum leadership took the initiative to establish a World Goetheanum Association. Preparations for its foundation are underway. Today we would like to inform you again about the basic idea of the project and at the same time warmly invite you to the first public event of the association at Michaelmas 2018 – especially if you wish to participate as an entrepreneur with experience in institutions, companies or self-employment or if you are interested in a dialogue with other entrepreneurs in all spheres of life.

Establishing partnerships

Why do we wish to found the World Goetheanum Association? If we aim at developing anthroposophical impulses within businesses, institutions and independent initiatives, and at facilitating a similar development for the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum with its sections, it is very important to establish partnerships or mutually beneficial connections. In the past few decades a large number of organizations have been founded and realities created in all walks of life – enterprises such as agricultural companies, banks, pharmaceutical manufacturers, institutions such as schools, social therapeutic institutions etc. – all of them demonstrate that anthroposophical ideas and impulses are practical, fruitful and effective.

The number of these institutions and organizations has grown by about 7-10% each year. In 1923/1924, the General Anthroposophical Society had 12,000 members, while the number of organizations and institutions was less than ten. Today, as the membership of the General Anthroposophical Society has grown to over 40,000, this ratio is getting closer to 1 to 1.

From these considerations emerge such questions as:

- How will these enterprises, organizations and individually active people form a connection with the «small Goetheanum» in Dornach as the heart of the General Anthroposophical Society and of the work of the School of Spiritual Science worldwide? Can and would they come together in a spirit of partnership in order to form an association that can help to support this heart function of the Goetheanum and thereby also provide it with new impulses?

Can the networking and collaboration amongst these enterprises, institutions and self-employed individuals be fostered in the form of an international and «interdisciplinary» association?

- With respect to the School of Spiritual Science, what do enterprises, institutions and freelance individuals need for their own anthroposophically oriented progress and for fostering their future generations?
- How can we, as co-workers in the «large» (worldwide) Goetheanum, perceive and act in a mutually beneficial way so as to support and foster both the development of enterprises, institutions and self-employed individuals and the work and development of the School of Spiritual Science?

From these considerations arose the impulse to found such an association and, as a direct consequence of this, the initiative for a *joint international forum* was formed. The first such forum is scheduled to take place on the weekend of 28 to 30 September 2018 (see preliminary information below) and will provide the opportunity

- to make contributions and have discussions on current questions that are relevant to all associative partners.
- to present one's own institution or individual activity to the public, in particular to the younger generation.
- to meet and strengthen contacts; to share experiences in separate rooms/work groups – in order to learn from one another about specific developments and achievements that might also be of



A place to meet: the Goetheanum

interest to others; to consult with one another on immediate challenges one might be facing. The founding of this association is supported by an initiative group consisting of entrepreneurs, members of the Goetheanum Leadership and Goetheanum staff members. On 17 and 18 May we will discuss with invited partners the possibility of a joint charter for the foundation of the Association. The signing of this charter will mark the beginning of the World Goetheanum Association's concrete development.

Question of funding

How are the activities for the foundation of Association funded? So far, the project for 2018 has been financed entirely by funds raised from foundations and donations made for this purpose, in particular from our Dutch friends. We are grateful for any further donations!

The members of the initiative group are Rembert Biemond, Fabio Brescacin, Gerald Häfner, Ueli Hurter, Paul Mackay, Alexander Schwedler, Georg Soldner, Armin Steuernagel, Ioana Viscrianu, Verena Wahl and Justus Wittich. | *Georg Soldner, project leader of the initiative group*

World Goetheanum Forum Entrepreneurship for People, Planet, Purpose, 28 to 30 September 2018 at the Goetheanum, with key note speeches by Haci Bayram, Peter Blom, Fabio Brescacin, Petra Derksen, Thomas Jorberg and Georg Soldner; a lecture by Gerald Häfner; a panel discussion with Helmy Abouleish, Ha Vinh Tho, Katrin Kaeufer and Ueli Hurter.

Information Sonja Schöler, phone +41 61 706 43 29, association@goetheanum.ch

Finland: new general secretary Henri Murto

Listening as the foundation stone of dialogue

Henri Murto is the new general secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Finland. He is a biodynamic gardener, farmer and trainer. Rekola is the oldest biodynamic farm in Finland. Henri Murto finds it important to face the ecological and social challenges with positivity and courage.

Sebastian Jüngel At the Goetheanum you spoke of the silence in Finland. The opposite of that is called «quatschen» (nattering) in Berlin (where I grew up). How does it feel for a Finn when people talk a lot?

Henri Murto Well, it feels just brilliant! If someone speaks from the heart and with good intentions, it is not relevant whether he or she speaks a lot. If a Finn is with people who speak maybe more than we, then it is always a good opportunity to learn the art and science of listening. And if one can master the art of listening, the words also have more value and creative meaning when we use them.

Old and young souls working together

Jüngel Seija Zimmermann retired from the Executive Council, not least because of the challenges of Anthroposophic Medicine in Finland. What is the current situation of anthroposophy in Finland? And what are the reasons for this situation?

Murto In many ways we see positive change in Finland's Anthroposophical Society and in the different anthroposophically inspired spheres of life. Of course one of our big challenges is (as in Central Europe) the high average age of our members. Personally I think that only by understanding that the future is met consciously from the past, we can meet the challenges of our time. I mean that we need different generations to work together; we need to understand very deeply the concept of old and young souls working together and this we can achieve by developing the listening mood as a foundation stone of our dialogue. Finland is a very technologically orientated country; it is a big challenge to awaken logical thinking that comes from the heart rather than the head.

Jüngel What can the Anthroposophical Society in Finland do change this situation?

Murto In Finland one is always between the polarities, and in a field of tension. Our physical space is ruled by extreme rhythmic polarities (from midsummer's night-less nights to midwinter's darkness and cold); therefore Finnish people are naturally inclined to

«stand in the middle» with difficult issues. I think this is also the task of Finland's Anthroposophical Society: to be able to express and inspire the «mood of standing in the middle», without being passive or neutral. If we can awaken the ability in people to listen with their hearts, then we can also meet the challenges of our technological era and also understand (transform) materialism.

New life, new rhythms

Jüngel What is your role as general secretary?

Murto I see my role as between the generations. I come from a non-anthroposophical background, but with a deep connection to anthroposophy and Rosicrucianism; and with this biography, I can also move between the exoteric and esoteric planes quite naturally. My work as a biodynamic gardener also allows me to work very practically in my daily life, which strengthens the will. If I can convey to the young generation the work and dedication of the previous generations who have created stable structures, maybe the young people can find their way to the Anthroposophical Society and «root» themselves. This will bring new life and new rhythms to the structures, without destroying them or losing the spiritual core.

Jüngel What is one of the most important achievements of anthroposophy – for you personally?

Murto For me personally one of the biggest revelations was when I read Rudolf Steiner's Agriculture Course, lecture 3, which is basically very deep alchemy, expressed for the first time this publically (with words) in the history of humankind. As we are living in the era of the consciousness soul, it is extremely important that we also understand evil, and that we recognize evil in order to transform it. It needs the wisdom of understanding the human I, and how we can transform materialism and evil, if we first recognize the forces and beings that are behind the phenomena and substances of our materialistic world. This knowledge is the gem of anthroposophy that would be very important to understand deeply in other spiritual streams



Sees his task between the generations: Henry Murto

and in our society. Without this knowledge we can't really understand our materialistic times and meet the ecological and sociological challenges with positive courage.

Hearing the voice of conscience

Jüngel As a student I learnt (from a Finnish fellow student) that German folk tales and folk songs are very popular in Finland. Provided that is true: could this be a key to the Finnish silence? Inner images say a lot (they are meaningful) even without words.

Murto Indeed! As Steiner pointed out in his lectures in Helsinki in 1913, Finnish people have the very unique ability to experience (or hear) the voice of conscience through and from the landscape. The majestic natural phenomena of our four seasons and the old mystery wisdom of the Kalevala have certainly influenced and developed the ability to experience the inner voice of conscience very naturally. I think this is also something new that the Nordic countries can offer Central Europe: the ability to speak from the heart and with the right words, combined with Central Europe's quality of clear thinking: that would be a truly new Michaelic impulse which would reflect the old mysteries of Ephesus.

Jüngel Do you know an anecdote, or a joke, that conveys an essential aspect of life in Finland?

Murto Well, Finnish people are very much aware of the private physical space (because of the landscape we have and the huge distances between habitations etc.), or we could say that we experience the etheric bodies of others naturally so that we value the «space in between humans». There is a very funny picture at bus stops in Helsinki, where there are about 10 people waiting at the bus stop but there is a distance of at least 5-10 metres between them. ●

Argentina: New representative Horacio Müller

A two-way bridge to the Goetheanum

Horacio Müller has been the representative of the Anthroposophical Society in Argentina since January 2018. He studied economics in Germany and has been in charge of a small family business in Buenos Aires (AR) since the 1980s, selling and providing advice on welding materials.

Sebastian Jüngel When you come to the Goetheanum: what reminds you of Argentina, and where are the differences?

Horacio Müller Whenever I meet like-minded people I see many characteristics that remind me of certain people in our country, not only outwardly but also in the way they behave.

There are differences in climate; the snow-covered Goetheanum hill in minus temperatures is something wonderful, if one is not used to it. In Buenos Aires it is hardly ever that cold, which means that we experience the annual cycle in connection with the Christian festivals differently. There lies an important task for anthroposophy. It is different with the Calendar of the Soul – of course we have to adapt the weekly verses to our seasons. On the southern hemisphere the contrast between summer and winter is less pronounced, and the formative forces are less strong. The ether geography is different. On the one hand we have more of the watery element, the chemical ether, but also of the earthly, the life ether.

Stronger electromagnetic forces

In addition, our geographical region has the strongest influence on the double: on what streams up from below; most mountain ranges do not stretch from west to east, but mainly from north to south, a fact that is connected with these forces: the north and south poles are not interrupted by mountain ranges. The electromagnetic forces are therefore stronger – and they are luciferic-ahrimanic. We need to draw from our inner life in order to achieve something. This is another area where much research is waiting to be done.

Jüngel Which spiritual impulses in Argentina are close to anthroposophy?

Müller We have people in almost all known spheres of life arising from anthroposophy. And therefore there is a connection. Not least because many section leaders and Executive Council members come to visit: in medicine we are grateful to Michaela Glöckler for her unceasing commitment, in

education to Florian Oswald, in agriculture Ueli Hurter; to Martina Maria Sam, the former leader of the Humanities Section, and Georg Glöckler for the geometry courses. From the Executive Council Sergei Prokofiev came (he had the largest audience: around 800 people), Seija Zimmermann, and most recently Constanza Kaliks; 29 years ago Virginia Sease visited with Manfred Schmidt-Brabant, and many others who did not come directly from the Goetheanum. We are grateful to all of them.

We have regular class lessons, too, with a preparation meeting on the preceding evening, similar to a freely held class lesson. More and more people are enthusiastic about the annual themes; they provide an immediate point of reference.

Jüngel Are there any obstacles that make life difficult for the anthroposophical impulse?

Müller As in many other countries, the obstacles for many of us consist in conflicts that are opening the doors to the oppositional forces which can weaken us. Maybe our *«I's»* are too strong or maybe not far enough developed yet. Sometimes one could ask *«Where is the call for the Christ Sun that is to warm our hearts and enlighten our heads?»*

Jüngel Is there something like a typical Argentinian approach to anthroposophy?

Müller More at the level of feeling, in the rhythm. This makes it conceivable that a contribution to the second part of the Foundation Stone Meditation could come from here.

Bringing people together

Jüngel What do you see when you look at yourself – as from the outside?

Müller Apart from my shortcomings, which I don't want to describe now – due to lack of space among other things – I would see myself as someone who is striving to bring people together who have chosen the path of anthroposophy, despite their differences, so that together we will not lose sight of everything that unites us, our common goal, and so that *«good may become what from our hearts we would found and from our*



Bringing people together: Horacio Müller

heads direct with single purpose.»

Jüngel How significant is the role of representative in your country?

Müller For many who are active with and through anthroposophy in the various spheres of life, the work of the representative provides access to the Goetheanum and helps them feel more connected with, and responsible for, what is going on in the anthroposophical movement worldwide.

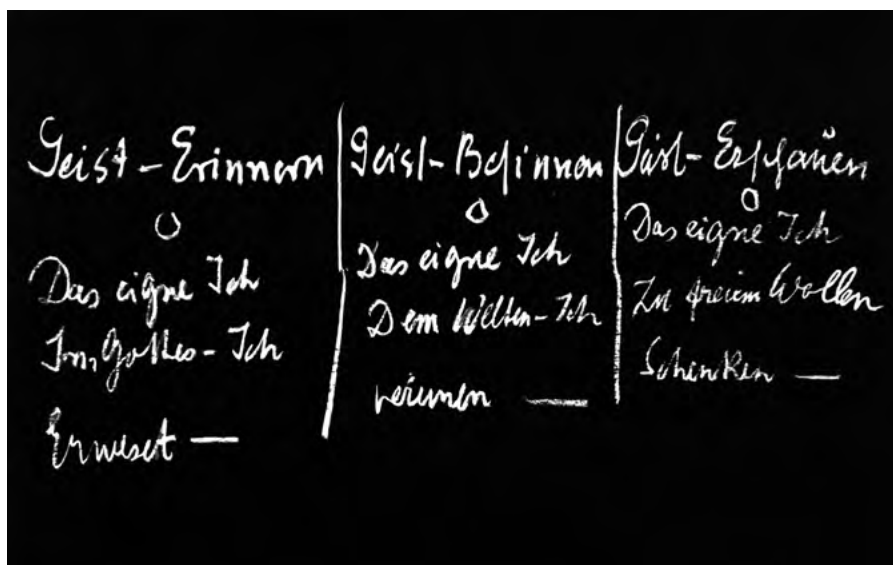
Jüngel What would you like to achieve in this role as representative?

Müller My wish is to build a two-way bridge to the Goetheanum, on which spiritual impulses can meet and mutually enhance each other.

A source of life for society

Jüngel Is there an anecdote that sums up the Argentinian mentality in a nutshell?

Müller Argentina is a multicultural country with immense social difference; this makes it difficult to sum up its mentality. We also have egoistical people who adapt well to the competitive society and we have those who have an inflated self-image. When Argentinians make fun of themselves they say, *«Good money could be made by buying an Argentinian for what he's worth and selling him for what he thinks he's worth.»* Luckily we also have selfless people, with a sense for solidarity, who stand up for others and who are a healing source of life for society. ●



*Spirit Recalling / Spirit Awareness /
Spirit Beholding: the first rhythm
(in: Rudolf Steiner, GA 260)⁵*

The Anthroposophical Society's Annual Motif for 2018/2019

Rhythm and movement

The second verse of the Foundation Stone Meditation is at the centre of the Anthroposophical Society's new working year (Anthroposophy Worldwide 3/2018). This verse refers us to the human middle, the feeling and the element of time, and it is related to the Christ being. Up until Christmas 2018, various authors will make contributions regarding the «rhythms» of the Foundation Stone Meditation which were developed by Rudolf Steiner. This is how the initiative group in charge would like to prepare the 2018 Christmas Conference on the «Foundation Stone Meditation as a transformative force for the individual and the Society» (in German and English).

Sphere of feeling and cosmic rhythm

The second verse of the Foundation Stone Meditation takes us into the element of rhythm and movement. Living in rhythm, we find ourselves placed into a wider cosmic context described by Rudolf Steiner as the «wonderful enigma prevailing between the lungs and the heart». What happens within us, microcosmically, has its equivalent in the macrocosm, where we experience «how the cosmic rhythms are active through the millennia, through the aeons of time, how they powerfully enter into the rhythm of our pulse and blood and awaken in us an ensouled experience of the world.»¹ The number of breaths we take in a day (around 25,920) corresponds to the number of years of one great solar cycle in the Platonic world year.²

What an exciting thought – that as we breathe we resonate with the rhythms of the cosmos and that we are even enlivened by these rhythms! In the cosmic rhythms «the Christ will encircling us holds sway». It is this will that bestows grace on our souls and creates life out of death. It loosens from

the west the formative forces that have become rigid and enkindles the souls and spirits from the east.

The rhythms of the Foundation Stone Meditation

Rudolf Steiner advised to work with the Foundation Stone Meditation by focusing on a different line or passage every day of the week. He speaks of «rhythms», meaning that we emphasize individual elements by separating them from their wider context; of short contemplations which he began to present on the second day of the Christmas Foundation Conference.

Based on the rhythmic element, we can therefore interpret the rhythms as a culture of practising inspired by the second verse. The altogether seven «rhythms» correspond to the seven days of the week and have therefore also a connection with the planetary forces. We can compare them to pathways which lead to the same sanctuary but present each a different view of the whole. As we practise, we experience increasingly how all of anthroposophy is condensed

in this meditation as one organism. The rhythmic element also relates to Michael, the spirit of our time, who has «made the rhythmic world his habitation».³

Rudolf Steiner begins his contemplation with a reference to the rhythmic element and its significance, «We can work rightly with such verses that have been heard spoken from the Cosmic Word, if we arrange them in our own soul so that they cannot leave us. And they can be arranged in this way if you, from all that has resounded, first single out the part that gives you the rhythm.»⁴

The verse can then become a living organism in your soul. This is an important process, because it means that we can integrate the Foundation Stone Meditation – which resounded from the Cosmic Word and therefore originates in a realm outside of time – into the stream of time through our daily changing practice.

The first Foundation Stone rhythm

The first Foundation Stone rhythm was given on a Wednesday, the day of Mercury. It opens the round of seven rhythms. The words chosen here are fundamental and simple; they are taken from the first part of the first three verses (see illustration above).

The illustration reveals at a glance that it can be read in two directions: horizontally or vertically. Depending on the direction I choose, I pursue a different meaning. If I read horizontally my thoughts focus on the three appeals to practise spirit recalling, spirit awareness and spirit beholding. I can ponder on the qualities expressed by the three attributes added to the noun «spirit» – recalling, awareness, beholding. The preceding noun – «spirit» – gives me the direction I am meant to move in with the three activities.

Silent reflection

We notice that it needs inner activity to make the individual words reveal themselves to our soul in a way that lies outside our everyday understanding. We need to question the concepts we have already formed of the individual words and transform them into silent, expectant reflection. How can I engender a soul mood of humble

expectation that is so subtle and receptive that it can receive the word and allow it to reveal its essence to me? No previous knowledge or understanding should bar the way, but there should only be an openness to listen for what strives to speak within me. Then I can experience how the comprehension of the word, which occurs primarily within myself, is gradually transformed into something higher, which I receive out of the periphery, more out of element of sound.

The inner gestures of the words Recalling, Awareness, Beholding can be experienced. Recalling implies a resorting to my inner experience. In conjunction with the word «spirit» it raises me above my personal memories and places me into a much wider context.

Awareness requires me to pause in a stream that is rushing forward. Something is made to stop and questioned as to its essence. If it is joined to the word «spirit» we hear something like a call: Soul, be aware of the spirit!

The third appeal speaks to me as a beholder, opening up the possibility of beholding the spirit, an activity that, «in stillness of thought», provides a view of the «gods' eternal aims».

The «I» as the centre of the rhythm

We come to the centre of this rhythm – the «I». This motif now comes towards us, like an echo of the three appeals to practise. Three times your «own I» is mentioned as if the soul needed particular confirmation that «your own «I»» is really meant.

The «I» now enters into three kinds of relationship which are more clearly defined by the three verbs. First we experience an aspect of time in the three relationships. «Your own «I» in the «I» of God comes into being» refers to our origin, the act of creation, our coming from the past. If your «own «I»»

is to unite with the «I of the World», some kind of activity is required.

We look to the future when on our own «I» is bestowed, as a gift out of the deepening stillness of thought, «the light of cosmic being for free and active willing». Again, as in the first verse, the divine touch can be experienced.

Let us, lastly, look at the qualities of the verbs, by trying to think and feel their meaning. The verb in the first verse is «erwaset» in the original German: a new word formation by Rudolf Steiner which signifies coming into being. The prefix «er-» implies a looking back, in this case to the act of creation through the Father. The second verb, unite («vereinen» in German) is, rather surprisingly, not spelt with a capital on this blackboard. Two beings that were originally divided are united, made into one: your own «I» and the «I» of the World.

If we were not aware of the Meditation in its entirety, we might derive from the dynamic of the three verbs that the third step, which follows after the uniting with a being, implied that «your own «I»» was bestowing a gift – because in Steiner's illustration of the rhythm the subject case is used, not the object case as in the Meditation itself (in German «das eigene Ich» rather than «dem eigenen Ich»: «your own «I»» rather than «on your own «I»»).

We see how the rhythms themselves assume the quality of interpretations and even suggest a different meaning, keeping our souls flexible as we make this spiritual effort: in this case we have the perspective of the third hierarchy in the actual Foundation Stone Meditation and, in the illustration of the rhythm, that of our own «I» which is enabled through its spiritual activity to give something back to creation. | *Christiane Haid, Foundation Stone initiative group*

Recommended reading

Rudolf Steiner: The Christmas Conference for the Foundation of the General Anthroposophical Society 1923/1924: The Laying of the Foundation Stone, Lectures and Addresses, Discussion of the Statutes, Dornach, 24 December 1923 to 1 January 1924, from GA 260; Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven: The Foundation Stone; Sergei O. Prokofieff: The Foundation Stone Meditation

1. Rudolf Steiner: Die Weihnachtstagung zur Begründung der Allgemeinen Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft 1923/24 (GA 260), Dornach 1985, p. 62.

2. For more details cf. Hermann Poppebaum: Beiträge zum Verstehen der Grundsteinsprüche 1923, in: Sergei O. Prokofieff (ed): Die Grundsteinmeditation als Schulungsweg. Das Wirken der Weihnachtstagung in 80 Jahren, Dornach 2017, p. 62.

3. Rudolf Steiner: Anthroposophische Leitsätze. Wo ist der Mensch als denkendes und sich erinnerndes Wesen? (GA 26), Dornach 1962, p. 222.

In one of the next issues of Anthroposophy Worldwide there will be a contribution on the connection between the Foundation Stone Meditation and a future Michael Festival.

4. Rudolf Steiner: Die Weihnachtstagung zur Begründung der Allgemeinen Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft 1923/24 (GA 260), Dornach 1985, p. 95.

5. Translator's note: the first rhythm in the Foundation Stone Meditation (as in Rudolf Steiner's blackboard drawing, without consideration being given here to grammar or syntax):

Spirit Recalling / Your own I / In the I of God / Comes into being –

Spirit Awareness / Your own I / With the I of the world / unite –

Spirit Beholding / Your own I / For free and active willing / Bestow –



Anthroposophie jede Woche neu

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■ FORUM

Appeal

Thomastik instruments

On 7 April the Weidler Orchestra Dornach, which was founded in 2017, presented its programme at the Goetheanum. The programme was developed under the direction of Kees Paasen, Christian Ginat and Adolf Zinsstag. Some of the musicians came across or played these instruments for the first time. What was particularly special was that two original Thomastik violins could be heard for the first time. The solo part from Arvo Pärt's *Fratres* was played on violin number 44 (1922), brought to the Goetheanum by Renate Schmidt.

By way of introduction, Arthur Bay spoke of his more than 40 years as a violin maker and his experiences with this impulse. He is convinced that Franz Thomastik did not derive his violins from the Chrotta or any other instrument, but was aiming at an entirely new approach.

The most noticeable feature is the scroll. All his violins, violas and cellos have the «remarkable» elongation which he had patented.

Where are the instruments?

Of over a hundred Thomastik instruments (violins, violas, cellos) only six are known, three of them I have had the opportunity to play. The master's hand is immediately recognizable, but the first tone that resounds shows that this is not enough. Such prototypes not only need to be played regularly, they also need maintenance, fine-tuning of the partly huge bass bars, bridge and sound post, as well as the right choice of strings.

We are grateful for any news of further Thomastik instruments for our research and documentation – over a hundred

instruments can't possibly have simply disappeared after all! | *Adolf Zinsstag, Basel (CH)*

Contact zinsstag@hotmail.com, phone +41 79 520 04 91 (Adolf Zinsstag)

Appeal

Eliant petition for a more human-focused education

The pact made between those in charge of education, politicians and the IT industries puts any free spiritual life into danger: children are now expected to familiarize themselves with tablets and smartphones from a very early age, even in day-care nurseries, with the result that the most important human faculties – independent thinking and judgement-forming – are being neglected.

The human brain needs fifteen or sixteen years before independent thinking becomes possible, and this will only happen if children and adolescents have had the chance to be physically and mentally active.

Of course, we live in a world that is becoming increasingly digitalized. The question is how competent and self-determined we move around in this world. The European alliance of initiatives of applied anthroposophy (Eliant) has joined forces with scientists supporting a more humane education in order to initiate a citizens' movement, start a petition addressed to those in charge of education in Europe and collect signatures also outside Europe, because the problem is a global one.

Who helps collecting signatures?

In the first three weeks we have found 7000 supporters from Europe, the United States, India, Korea and Taiwan. We aim at a million signatures by 30 March 2019 and will be successful if hundreds, even thousands join us in actively collecting signatures. Please visit our website with research information and advice for parents wishing to establish screen-free zones and times in their homes.

We thank all those who are actively taking part. This also is a contribution to the hundredth anniversary of Waldorf Education in 2019! | *Michaela Glöckler, emerita leader of the Medical Section*

Information and petition:
www.eliant.eu

Ascension Conference initiative in Germany and Switzerland

In 2011 I met the anthroposophists and musicians Steffen Hartmann and Torben Maiwald. We decided to do something for the future of the anthroposophical movement and the Anthroposophical Society, in a way that would make it possible to work in a healing way on the past and at the same time connect with the present activity of the being Anthroposophia. From the beginning we included Anton Kimpfner from Freiburg (DE) as an adviser.

In 2013 we began with the first Ascension Conference. We intend to continue these conferences until 2033 at least; so far they have been held in Hamburg (DE), at the Goetheanum in Dornach (CH) and in Kassel (DE).

An organic way of finding a theme

We try to develop the theme of each conference out of the impulses of the preceding one. After a kind of stocktaking in the anthroposophical and the «wider» world, looking at far-reaching perspectives, we went on to the healing of karmic divisions. Subsequent themes included the common spiritual temple of those who strive for the spirit and the question as to the wholesome cooperation of Aristotelians and Platonists, for instance, as well as threefoldness in practice. The most recent conference was entitled «Walking towards the future. Coping with individual and joint enmeshments with the double.» The forthcoming conference, which will take place at the Anthroposophical Centre in Kassel (DE) from 11 to 13 May, will focus on the topic «Between social creativity and destructiveness». Among the contributors will be Gerold Aregger, Ruben Bollmann, Corinna Gleide, Steffen Hartmann, Jens Göken, Anton Kimpfner, Gunhild von Kries, Annemarie Richards and Harrie Salman. One of the artistic highlights will be a eurythmy performance of the Saturn Evolution according to Annemarie Dubach and Lili Reinitzer with music by Josef Gunzinger. | *Johannes Greiner, member of the Council of the Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland (CH)*

Registration Werkstatt für Anthroposophie, Mittelweg 11–12, DE-20148 Hamburg, phone +49 40 41 33 16 30, info@rudolf-steinerhaus.de

Corrections

Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting. One attentive attendant of the 2018 AGM pointed out that the second last paragraph of the minutes (Anthroposophy Worldwide 4/2018, page 6) should read «Almost all general secretaries and representatives ...» rather than «All general secretaries and representatives...». Thank you for pointing this out. The minutes have herewith been amended.

In the treasurer's written financial report in Anthroposophy Worldwide 3/2018, pages 4 to 7, some notes in the tables are not positioned correctly, and in the 2017 balance a minus sign is missing for free equity as of 1 January 2017. Both errors were corrected in the copy of the finance report printed in the pink booklet for the 2018 Annual General Meeting (pages 21 to 24). Cf. www.goetheanum.org/en/aag/generalversammlung-2018/pink-booklet. | *Minute taker: Oliver Conradt; chair of meeting: Justus Wittich*

In her contribution to Anthroposophy Worldwide 4/2018 (Travel Log) Joan Sleight wrote about her journeys. The Mbaga-thi Rudolf Steiner School has 328 students, of which 120 are boarding and «lovingly cared for.» They are mostly from the surrounding poorer parts of town.

Picture credits

page 1: S. Jüngel | p. 5: Thomáš Udatny | p. 9: S. Jüngel | p. 10: z.V.g. | p. 11: z.V.g. | p. 16: Juan Bottero

We have been informed that the following 72 members have crossed the threshold of death. In their remembrance we are providing this information for their friends. | The Membership Office at the Goetheanum

Willem Busscher Marburg (DE), 27 May 2016
Priscilla Coe Cape Elizabeth/ME (us), 2 October 2016
Jacob van Veen Hendrik Ido Ambacht (NL), 11 January 2017
Rosemarie Range Murrhardt (DE), 28 May 2017
Anita Lucas New London/MN (MN), 3 August 2017
Stefan Schwabe Nelson (CA), 23 September 2017
Gerharda van der Staal Doorn (NL), 3 November 2017
Stephanie Sugars Walnut Creek/CA (us), Nov 2017
Silvia Rein Göppingen (DE), 11 December 2017
Günter Gerlinger Ludwigsburg (DE), 25 Dec 2017
Herbert Marmelstein Halle (DE), 26 December 2017
Annemarie Jeschonek Wuppertal (DE), 29 December 2017
Elisabeth Schelling Baiersbronn (DE), 30 Dec 2017
Natasha Wood Asheville/NC (us), 2 January 2018
Herr A. Fonds Zeist (NL), 7 January 2018
Hannu Korkeamäki Lapua (FI), 17 January 2018
Angelika Jolles Ochtrup Langenhorst (DE), 21 January 2018
Richard Aldred Stourbridge (GB), January 2018
Viera Oravská Bratislava (sk), 7 February 2018
Maria Leussink Oldenzaal (NL), 11 February 2018
Ulrike Hodrus Stuttgart (DE), 15 February 2018
Gerhard Roither Berlin (DE), 15 February 2018
Leonie Gosselink-van Hagen Emmen (NL), 23 February 2018
Siegfried Seibold Kempten (DE), 24 February 2018
Hans Bleicher Deggingen (DE), 25 February 2018
Angelika-Johanne Funk Dresden (DE), 25 February 2018
Maria Gracanin Cincinnati/OH(us), 28. February 2018
Franziska Bertha Stuttgart (DE), 5 March 2018
Ellen Strand Esbjerg Ø (DK), 5 March 2018
Gregor Schömig Schweinfurt (DE), 6 March 2018
John Frost Porirua (NZ), 7 March 2018
Paulus Brouwer Warnsveld (NL), 8 March 2018
Regula Wehlte Ansbach (DE), 8 March 2018
Wolfgang Steudle Adelsheim (DE), 9 March 2018
Waltraud Hörning Borchon (DE), 12. March 2018
Thea Zürrer Zurich (CH), 13 March 2018
Friedhelm Roeller Dortmund (DE), 14 March 2018
Armand Bacchetta Arlesheim (CH), 16 March 2018
Anne Frodeau Domme (FR), 17 March 2018
Fritz Harzmann Erlangen (DE), 17. March 2018
Wolfgang Joerges Essen (DE), 17 March 2018
Christa Carlberg Hamburg (DE), 18 March 2018
Adelheid Niewind Wuppertal (DE), 18 March 2018
Jürgen Kramer Tübingen (DE), 20 March 2018
Walter Sturm Freiburg (DE), 20 March 2018
Johannes Zwiauer Vienna (AT), 21 March 2018

Wolfgang Kirschner Marburg (DE), 21 March 2018
Henk Gerbrands Arnhem (NL), 22 March 2018
Hilde Reifschneider Dortmund (DE), 22 March 2018
Jacob Broekman Holwerd (NL), 23 March 2018
Marcelle Thommen Liestal (CH), 25 March 2018
Roberto Casarin Mestre (IT), 26. March 2018
Silvio Vignali Ferrara (IT), 26 March 2018
Harald Andersen Stuttgart (DE), 27 March 2018
Elfriede Troelenberg Stuttgart (DE), 30 March 2018
Christa Manz Stuttgart (DE), 31 March 2018
Jutta Rohrwacher Göppingen (DE), 31 March 2018
Martin Britsch Reutlingen (DE), 1 April 2018
Carla Badaracco Lugano (CH), 2 April 2018
Inkeri Ranto Tampere (FI), 2 April 2018
Edeltraut Schmidt Vienna (AT), 3 April 2018
Käte Ungeheuer Friesenheim (DE), 3 April 2018
Mrs Ch. Bos Schoorl (NL), 5 April 2018
Elisabeth-Charlotte Brandes Hanover (DE), 5 April 2018
Elisabeth Reymann Bad Reichenhall (DE), 5 April 2018
Rosemarie Siegrist Dornach (CH), 5 April 2018
Hans Wessels Giessen (DE), 6 April 2018
Eckhard Behrens Heidelberg (DE), 7 April 2018
Uta Höntzsch Salzburg (AT), 8 April 2018
Ruth Mühleise Hanover (DE), 10 April 2018
Reinald Witters Lahti (FI), 10 April 2018
Vrene Ballmer Liestal (CH), in 2018

From 20 March to 16 April 2018 the Society welcomed 105 new members; 256 are no longer registered as members (resignations, lost, and corrections by country Societies).

■ FEATURE



Putting ideas into practice through art:
Akio Hizume's work group

Social Initiative Forum Japan

Knowing your self through others: empathy

The Social Initiative Forum (SIF) was founded by anthroposophical social workers in order to create a network of support for spiritually minded social organizations. From 31 March to 2 April, more than 300 people came to Gotemba (JP) to the Forum 'Recognizing the self through others: empathy'.

The impulse for this gathering was born out of Daisuke Onuki's interest in uniting anthroposophical groups in Japan to undertake common approaches to work on the issue of cultural diversity in Asia, where often one can experience an insular attitude towards foreign communities, such as those surrounding Korean and Brazilian schools. This is a key question when it comes to education in particular, since currently the development of free schools like Waldorf schools, which bring together students from the international communities, is not really supported in Japan as a legitimate mode of education.

Self-knowledge and self-development

Thanks to the participation of individuals from a great variety of nationalities, ages and professions, the event became a true celebration of diversity. Attendees included high school pupils from Waldorf, international and traditional schools; social workers from Thailand, South Africa, USA, Germany and Brazil; artists, teachers, professors and economists were also present.

During workshops, lectures and group activities, participants could explore self-knowledge and self-development as a first step for becoming agents of change in the places where transformation is most needed in our societies today.

Overcoming obstacles to be yourself

At a pre-forum event in Minobusan University, spiritual solutions to present social challenges were discussed. Joan Sleight and Ute Craemer brought attention to the necessity of taking on responsibility in the uncertainty and chaotic nature of our present times, with Rudolf Steiner's spiritual scientific approach as a guiding impulse in this task. Joan Sleight asked the following questions at Minobusan University: «We may not be able to say that we have left the Darwinian jungle behind, but can we say that we are waking up to the need of empathy? Can we take up this chaotic world and live amidst it? This chaos is a place of potential, creativity, where something new can come about. Can we recognize the complexity of the human being as described by Rudolf Steiner?»

Joan Sleight invited the public to consider human beings as free agents of the solutions that can solve the devastation that has been caused in places around the world, and empathy – understood as the state and ability of heartfelt openness towards others -, as one of humankind's driving forces that can guide this process of healing.

Ute Craemer, who held a conversation with Chief Priest Iwama of the Nichiren Buddhist sect, described the importance of the development of the «I» in connec-

tion with others, «I was happy to see that Nichiren also contemplated that transformation has to do with the evil that comes to meet us. I think this is also similar to Anthroposophy, because to be yourself you have to overcome obstacles – another person, a language, a situation. [...] It's really a temptation to ignore that the Buddha can live in the other. In Anthroposophy we could say that it's not too easy to see in the other person their higher self. The question is - what is this higher self?»

Putting ideas into practice through art

Nicanor Perlas focussed on the impact that Artificial Intelligence (AI) will have in the areas of education and the job market. His emphasis on the need for scientists and technologists to develop a new spiritual conception of reality, as opposed to the current materialism permeating scientific and technological developments, raised awareness about the importance of developing Spiritual Science in particular for the younger generations, who will have to deal with these [emerging] challenges in the next couple of decades.

Artistic practice was a key aspect of the Forum, allowing participants to put into practice ideas and theories around empathy, transformation and identity, with social eurythmy exercises opening most lectures. Akio Hizume, a Geometrical Artist inspired by Rudolf Steiner's *Ways to a New Style in Architecture* (GA 286) delivered bamboo art exploring pentagons, the Fibonacci Sequence, the Golden Ratio and architectural designs of a proposed third Goetheanum. Other activities included Social Painting (Yumiko Abe), Phenomena Based Science (Henry Saphir), Capoeira (Nelson Avella) and Mapamundi, an exploration of national identity led by the Goetheanum's Youth Section team. | *Andrea de la Cruz Barral, Dornach (CH)*

A more detailed report will be published in the next months; see: www.socialinitiativeforum.org

Next Social Initiative Forum (in cooperation with volunteers from Friends of Rudolf Steiner Education): 19–21 October 2018 at the Goetheanum. **Information:** www.socialinitiativeforum.org