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Dear colleagues,

The death of our dear and highly esteemed Heinz Zimmermann has deeply affected and moved us. The thoughts of colleagues were with him in many teachers' and faculty meetings. In this edition you will find two articles, by Jon McAlice and Florian Osswald, which are dedicated to his memory. A sketch of his biography written by his successor Christof Wiechert will be published later.

The ninth World Teachers' Conference

Two articles will look ahead to the World Teachers' Conference. Christof Wiechert elaborates on the I and its importance right into the practical teaching. Michael Zech writes about the significance of the seven-year periods today.

Official Carrier



Here is some information on the conferences which will take place in April 2012:

Online registration will open on 3 October 2011. See our homepage for information and to fill in the online application form:

www.paedagogik-goetheanum.ch

When you have registered you will be sent a booking confirmation from the Goetheanum Reception and, later on, the Pedagogical Section will confirm your accommodation with details of your lodging and costs involved.

We thought it was important to be able to explain the work groups and artistic courses on offer in advance which is why we chose this method.

You should have received the conference flyer and poster in your schools. We hope that one colleague from each school worldwide will be able to come to Dornach which, according to our calculations, would fill the main auditorium at the Goetheanum.

It helps us if you register as soon as possible and also submit applications for financial support if required. We would also ask for donations in order to be able to give that support. We would appreciate if as many schools as possible paid the sponsoring fee as that will allow colleagues from countries with weak currencies to afford the conference ticket and basic accommodation.

You can also pay a donation into the Pedagogical Section's special account with the *Freunde der Erziehungskunst* ('Projektkonto 2410') to help with the funding of travel costs:

Donation from foreign countries

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Thank you for your support!

A report from Chengdu in China takes us further afield in our worldwide movement. When the International Forum of Steiner Waldorf Schools, or The Hague Circle, meets twice a year, representatives of that global movement come together. You will find a report of the last meeting in Aarhus, Denmark, in this issue. These are meetings where the differences of the various cultures and the varying conditions of the schools or regions become apparent. That these factors need to be taken into account in the accompaniment and mentoring of a school is shown by the last article of this issue where a young colleague describes his experience and thoughts on the topic.

We hope to find many interested readers and send our best wishes for your continued good school work!

The Pedagogical Section

Dear Colleagues! Dear Friends!



The earthly path of our dear friend and revered colleague Heinz Zimmermann came to a sudden end on Tuesday, September 6, 2011 in Rostock, Germany. It is characteristic that at the time of his death he was in Rostock to work with the faculty of the Waldorf School there. His last conversation, which took place over dinner with three colleagues from the school, focused on questions concerning the “right will”, the spiritual will. His passing came at a time when Heinz was full of joyous energy and hope, heartened by the quality of the work with class members in Denmark from which he had just come. He was 73 years old.

Heinz Zimmermann’s connection with Rudolf Steiner’s pedagogical impulse began as a child. He attended the Rudolf Steiner School in Basel, Switzerland, between 1944 and 1953. In 1968 he returned to the school as a high school teacher after completing his studies at the University of Basel with a doctoral thesis on the typology of spontaneous conversation, followed by an assistant’s job. He was a gifted teacher, full of interest for the children, lively, with a wonderful balance of playfulness and earnestness. In addition to high school humanities (History and German), he taught movement and religion, as well as leading summer camps in the mountains. He was a profoundly religious person and was deeply connected with the Children’s Service, the Offering Service and the Youth Service which he was involved in for many years. His ability to engage his students in the learning process was soon recognized by his colleagues. This led to his becoming involved in the Dornach Teachers’ Seminar, as well as to a growing number of courses both at home and abroad. He became the head of the seminar in 1982. In 1988, he became a member of the Executive Council of the General Anthroposophical Society, in 1989, he took over leadership of the Pedagogical Section from Jürgen Smit, and in 1992 he took on responsibility for the then orphaned Youth Section. In the context of the work for these two, intimately related sections, and in conjunction with his responsibilities as a member of the Executive Council, he travelled throughout the world, entering into a lively dialogue with colleagues and young people in many different countries. These encounters brought him a deep sense of joy – the love he had experienced for the children came to new expression in his meetings and work with those for whom this sacred task was a living reality.

These encounters led to a wealth of new working relationships, some of which continued for years. Originating from Elementary Anthroposophical Studies at the Goetheanum, he tried to pave the way for young people who were seeking individual professional training. He later expanded the possibilities of tuition and further education in many ways.

As a teacher, Heinz had the ability to awaken in the student individual striving. When one worked with him, if one was able to enter into the stream of his thinking, (something he helped one do through his mastery of language, example and imagination) one could experience how his inner, self-directed spiritual activity awakened something in oneself. The mystery of this inner relationship, the new social gesture that lay seed-like in this striving was one of the central themes of Heinz's life. It came to expression in his work with colleagues throughout the world and became one of the most important foci of the Pedagogical Section. His lifelong interest in the nature and possibilities of dialogue must be seen in this context. In the shared dialogical striving to open new realms of understanding lies the possibility of a completely new form of community – a community of spiritual activity.

Heinz was an incredibly productive individual. He made important contributions to a number of different fields. Yet in many ways it seems that if we are to discover the core inner gesture of his biography, we must not seek it in *what* he did, but rather in *how* he was. Heinz was in the best sense of the word a seeker; he practiced the anthroposophical path of inner transformation with a deep earnestness and, at the same time, an artistic flair. This inner practice, which he approached in much the same way a musician does his instrument, came to expression in the authenticity of his presence, the genuine, endless good will he brought to every task, however small, his love of initiative and the light-filled quality of idealism which accompanied everything he did.

There was always a bit of the radical in Heinz; he was by nature something of an anarchist. He had a revolutionary's relationship to individual freedom and took a spirited stand against anything, whether in the school movement, the Anthroposophical Society or modern civilization that threatened it. On the other hand, he knew from his own inner work, his work with his students and his experiences in self-governance that all true change must come from within. He rarely spoke about social or organizational structures. New social forms cannot be conceptualized then implemented; they can only grow out of ever more consciously crafted social encounters. One can characterize the conditions necessary for a spiritually genuine social encounter, but the outcome of such encounters must be left within the evolving individual's realm of freedom. Heinz struggled to ever better grasp the organic, spiritual nature of social change; he was an evolutionary revolutionary!

On September 13, 2011 almost a thousand friends from around the world gathered at the Goetheanum to bid farewell to this man who touched so many people's lives. The mood in the hall was festive; beside the deep sense of sorrow there was a feeling of optimism and gratitude. Four people spoke of their encounters and work with Heinz. Through all four there was a common thread: Heinz practiced in his daily life a sacramental relationship to his fellow human beings, a relationship within which one can sense the presence of the Christ. We will miss his gentle wit, his cordial friendliness, his simplicity, his insightful questions, his ability to listen and the light-filled earnestness of his presence, and we are deeply thankful for the seeds for the future he planted through his work. These are his true legacy.

*In gratitude,
Jon McAlice, Florian Osswald
translated also with the help of Karin Smith*

Motifs for the World Teachers' Conference 2012 at the Goetheanum in Dornach

How the I lives itself into the physical organisation and the significance of education within that process.

*'We must be conscious down to the very foundation of what we do.'*¹

Preamble I

Before speaking about this topic we must gain clarity about our relationship as teachers to anthroposophy and our understanding of education.

Anthroposophy is not conviction, religion or anything cast in stone for us; it is a source of inspiration that can infinitely expand today's limited view of the world and of the human being.

Anthroposophy is the extension of human perception and cognition in all fields of life.

Anthroposophy does not limit or narrow down this perception. Anybody who considers that to be the case thinks and acts outside its intentions.

We need to bear in mind that anthroposophy can overcome Kant's view of restricted cognition.²

1 Rudolf Steiner, 21 August 1919; in: *The Foundations of Human Experience* (formerly: Study of Man), Hudson N.Y. 1996, tr. N. Whittaker, R. Lathe

2 Rudolf Steiner: *Goethe's Theory of Knowledge*, GA 2, Great Barrington MA 2008, tr. P. Clemm

Preamble II

What is our notion of Steiner's art of education? Do we identify Waldorf or Steiner Schools with this art of education?

We could say these schools are committed to Steiner's art of education and have, so far, been the schools that come closest to the art of education.

Rudolf Steiner's art of education is in itself a new educational paradigm. It is an education that transforms the potentially damaging education of our time (discrimination through selection; outcome-oriented learning as the goal to be achieved by rational didactic methods with teachers as conveyors of knowledge) into a healing education that promotes development and fosters forces that last for life.

Unlike the anthroposophical medical movement that was intended by Steiner as an 'extension' of the mainstream art of healing, his art of education does not build on an existing pedagogical system. It is an entirely new creation, as is shown by its original development.³

Its methods are derived from an understanding of the developing human being and it uses an artistic-creative approach to teaching in which the teacher is responsible both for the learning process and the development of the child in this process.

Introduction

From the very beginning of Steiner's newly created art of education he underlines the fundamental extension of the teachers' tasks.⁴

He begins the first lecture of *The Foundations of Human Experience* with the words: "We can accomplish our work only if we do not see it as simply a matter of intellect or feeling but, in the highest sense, as a moral spiritual task."

This opening sentence entails the entire programme of what follows. Steiner adds to the tasks that fall to the teacher at the soul level of thinking and feeling a spiritual and moral aspect. What does that mean?

Let us look at the spiritual aspect first. Can the study of the human being be understood in a purely intellectual way? It certainly can. But if we do not go beyond that intellectual understanding it will not have the intended effect.

The knowledge of the human being is a science of the 'in between', it is knowledge that wants to become a competence in between the spiritual and the physical reality. According to Steiner all earthly reality originates in the sphere of soul and spirit. He shows how soul and spirit work in the physical realm and how our earthly experiences affect the spiritual.

In order to transform this knowledge into competence, we must constantly be able to change our point of view; we must practise flexible thinking and move

3 See introduction to *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner*, CW 300a, Great Barrington MA 1998, tr. R. Lathe, N. Whittaker

4 Lecture 1, Stuttgart, 21 August 1919, in CW 293; see note 23

away from fixed ideas and thought patterns. If you try this you will find that the moment comes when anthroposophy turns into a nurturing source: we become creative in our understanding and in our teaching.

What about the moral aspect?

We best understand what is meant by this if we look at the third of the teacher's virtues: 'Sharpen your feeling for responsibility of soul.'⁵

This sentence from the very end of *The Foundations of Human Experience* shows how new this art of education is: from conveyor of knowledge to companion. This companion bears the responsibility 'until the king attains majority and is able to govern (himself)'. We have fulfilled our moral task and can step back in reverence for what has developed. As in a prelude, the upper and the lower person of the teacher is addressed here: spirit-soul and physical body.

The upper and the lower person in education

In the very first lecture Steiner, unusually, arrives at a definition when he speaks about the spiritual dimension of education. The following statement from the introductory lecture points to the impetus of the new paradigm: "It is the spiritual task of education to bring soul and spirit into harmony with the physical body." Then he explains: "They must be brought into harmony, they must be tuned to one another, because they do not yet go together well when the child is born into the physical world."⁶

We realize that the task of the teacher is the same as that of the educational process itself: to bring about harmony.

As teachers we must find harmony by adding a spiritual-moral dimension to our intellectual-emotional life. Education has the task of bringing the upper and the lower person into harmony.

The dual meaning of the word 'self-education' becomes apparent.

'Spirit soul' meant for Steiner the connection between the trinity of spirit human being, life spirit and spirit self with the trinity of spiritual soul (or: consciousness soul), intellectual soul and sentient soul. When the human soul descends to earth this trinity unites with that of sentient body (astral body), ether body and physical body.

It is the task of teaching and educating to bring about the right relationship between these elements. Out of this grows the pedagogical task: "we must first develop ourselves so that an inner spiritual connection can live between the teacher and the children."⁷

5 Stuttgart, 5 September 1919, in CW 293; see note 23

6 Stuttgart, 21 August 1919, in CW 293; see note 23

7 *ibid.*

(We can see from what has been said so far that there is a difference between approaching this complex situation purely intellectually or approaching it with a thinking that is free and flexible: in the former case education remains theory, in the latter it becomes living experience.

That means that, as teachers, we must bring the contents of our teaching to life within ourselves for, as Steiner pointed out, the way we think has an effect on our relationship with the pupils.

Steiner described such enlivened thinking ‘between the worlds’ as a fruitful way of overcoming personality-based teaching.

If a teacher, for instance, experiences a child in class one or two only as sanguine and lively without looking at what else might be moving this child, he will be stuck with the concept and understand the child as little as if he had not established the child’s sanguinity.)

The I in Education

We have as yet not mentioned the I.

This is understandable as the Theosophy refers to the I as the soul essence between spiritual (or consciousness) soul, intellectual soul and sentient soul.⁸

The fourfoldness of I, astral body, ether body and physical body, as applied to the four temperaments, for instance, is a frequently used concept in our pedagogical study of the human being;⁹ for example when we say that sculpting, drawing and painting work on the ether body while music works on the astral body and language on the I.¹⁰ We must refer to the plasticity of Steiner’s conceptualization here, because he brings the above-mentioned introductory lecture to the almost prophetic conclusion: “We must be aware that, in bringing this or that lesson content to children, we help to draw the spirit-soul into the physical body on the one hand, while we draw the physical more into the spirit-soul on the other.”¹¹

In the lecture course that Steiner gave a year later as a continuation to *The Foundations of Human Experience*, he spoke of the subjects that draw the ‘I’ into the body and those that tend to detach the I from the body.¹²

The following important detail needs to be born in mind: In educating towards freedom (an essential part of Steiner’s educational paradigm) we must always remember that we must not touch the I, the eternal human entelechy. The I can only be educated by itself and not by others. That is a fact.

What we talk about here is the relationship of the spirit soul (the I) to the

8 Rudolf Steiner: *Theosophy*, CW 9, from chapter ‘*The Nature of Man*’, Body, Soul and Spirit

9 Rudolf Steiner: *Discussions with Teachers*, Lecture given in Stuttgart on 22 August 1919; CW 295

10 Rudolf Steiner: *The Roots of Education*, Bern, 3rd lecture given on 15 April 1924, CW 309

11 see note 23

12 Rudolf Steiner: *Balance in Teaching*, Lectures given in Stuttgart in September 1919; CW 302a

physical body, or that of the physical body to the I. Much depends on this if we want to educate for life.

We therefore need to consider the following:

We cannot speak of a relationship of the I to the body when we first begin to educate. In the first seven years body, soul and spirit are one in the child. We can see this from the way children express themselves: when they are happy their whole being is filled with happiness, they shout for joy and kick their little legs. It is the same when something hurts them. We are all instinctively gentle in our words, gestures, even thoughts when we deal with very young children. Even the gaze of an adult can be a morally effective “gesture”.

There is an important difference here that comes to expression in the sustainable effect of education.

In young children of kindergarten age body, soul and spirit are one. Everything that affects the soul life will immediately affect the body as well. If the soul is affected particularly strongly there will also be consequences at the soul level in later life.

If the impact is unconscious it will affect the physical body, but this effect is extended seven times due to the emancipation of the physical body. A one-sided impact on the soul in kindergarten, at around the sixth year, will manifest in the person’s health 6x7 years later.

A loving environment, a caring mother, a feeling of security that envelops the young child, a wealth of stories, play and opportunities for imitation during the kindergarten years are the best foundation for a healthy constitution in the middle of life, between the 35th and 42nd year.¹³

(Steiner illustrates these complex facts by pointing out how a strongly expressed one-sided temperament in young children can affect the physical body. This does not only apply to kindergarten age but also to the first years of formal schooling. Depending on the time of origin (in kindergarten or rather during the lower school years) he characterized later effects that represent a kind of negative sustainability:

one-sided choleric influence	→	circulatory disorders
one-sided melancholic influence	→	digestive disorders
one-sided phlegmatic influence	→	intellectual weakness, dullness
one-sided sanguine influence	→	lack of life forces ¹⁴

In another presentation from around the same time the following effects are described:

13 Rudolf Steiner: *The Roots of Education*, CW 309; Bern, 2nd lecture given on 14 April 1924

14 See note 35, 1st lecture given on 13 April 1924, CW 309

one-sided choleric influence	→	metabolic disorders
one-sided melancholic influence	→	respiratory, circulatory disorders
one-sided phlegmatic influence	→	nervousness, neurasthenia
one-sided sanguine influence	→	lack of life forces ¹⁵

During the lower school years body, soul and spirit begin to emancipate themselves from each other, a process that will only be completed at the end of the upper school, when the adolescent enters adulthood.

What does this emancipatory process signify? It means that children, especially after the ninth year, are exposed to external influences that touch on these three parts of their organisation, that tear them apart or hold them together, depending on the child's individual development.

The content of our teaching works on exactly these dynamics. Steiner spoke of binding the I to or loosening it from the physical body.¹⁶

This relationship is characterized by two aspects.

The first has to do with the relationship as such, that is, whether it is too tight or too loose. The second relates to its flexibility, because when we sleep the relationship between body and I (soul spirit and physical body) is always loosened, while they are brought together again when we wake up.

We also need to consider that the relationship is partly dependent on whether it is a male or female body.¹⁷ Due to cultural influences the I of boys tends to be more deeply integrated in the body, while that of girls tends to be looser. (We need to keep in mind that these are generalizations which we must individualize in perception).

In conclusion we also need to point out that heredity (as with the temperaments) plays an important part in the relationship of upper and lower human being.

What does this mean for life? What has it got to do with education?

These questions have to do with the long-term effect.

If the I is drawn too deeply into the physical body, becoming its prisoner, as it were, it will in the end be the bodily needs that dictate the goals in life. We can imagine what that means.

In the opposite case, a person might have grand and idealist aims in life, but the I is unable to bring them to realization because it is not rooted enough in its physical foundation. This does not refer to the time at school but to the time for which we teach, that is, to the entire future life.

Steiner pointed out that the lesson content as such, independently of how it is taught, has an effect on the relationship of I and body.

15 Rudolf Steiner: *The Essentials of Education*, CW 308, Stuttgart, 1st lecture given on 8 April 1924

16 Rudolf Steiner: *Balance in Teaching*, Stuttgart, CW 302a ; 4th lecture given on 22 September 1920

17 Rudolf Steiner: *Education for Adolescence*, CW 302, Stuttgart, 5th lecture given on 16 June 1921

Everything that stimulates thinking in the widest sense, everything that is mathematical and imaginative in lessons has the tendency to draw the I in. The same is true for music and language. They work in a way that makes the I feel at home in the physical and ether bodies.

Everything pictorial such as painting and drawing in lessons loosens the I from the body.

These indications really refer to practical teaching and Steiner endorses them with numerous examples.

If we reflect on these examples we realize the truth of the statement that we referred to when we announced the theme of the forthcoming conference: “We must be conscious down to the very foundation of what we do.”¹⁸

Take a geometry main lesson in class seven. We construct, draw and paint. The results are beautiful. If that were all, the I might easily become loosened. But if we penetrate geometry with the thinking as well, if we understand and work out proofs, laws and angles, we draw in the I.

Or consider a history main lesson in class six or eight. The children receive much in terms of narration and images. We want to move away from that, we feel it is too much. If we introduce a thought or activity, for example, by asking “What do you think Theoderic the Great was like?”, or if we refer to dates that relate to particular events and processes, or describe the growing industrialisation in the nineteenth century, the intellectual activity moves to the foreground and I (soul) and body become more firmly connected.

If we write and paint with young children most of the morning we must sing a song before finishing with the story as singing is the exact opposite activity to writing and painting. But if we do number work in the morning we do not need music to end with; the story will introduce just the right balance.

This balancing, which could also be described as ‘breathing’, as a teaching that allows children to breathe, also takes place as a wider gesture.

Geography as a subject tends to have a widening, connecting quality. We could say that one can lose oneself in its contents. In class six, Rudolf Steiner introduced climatic conditions through differences of altitude and, as part of the upper school curriculum, the ‘superfluous’ mathematical geography (surveying). These are all breathing gestures: losing oneself (exhaling) and finding oneself again (inhaling) in the more intellectual activity.

In eurythmy we allow the students to breathe by letting them create their own forms to a poem (breathing in) and, as a next step, put it into practice.

In his curriculum references and pedagogical lectures Steiner recommends

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emphatically that writing and reading should be developed from drawing. Drawing loosens, painting awakens the ‘sleeper’ in us simply through the activity. Then we observe, we reflect, encourage reading: inner concentration. This principle is applied even when we write: the activity itself and looking at what has been written.

Some colleagues have the commendable habit of looking with the pupils at the paintings after the lesson, encouraging them to say something factual (not judgemental) about each picture.

Our colleague Heinz Zimmermann used to begin his German lessons in class 9 with a thinking exercise – something students love doing. The thinking activity helped them begin the (school) day. Every morning he asked them to be ready with pen and paper. He would then show them an object (every morning a different one) and ask the students to describe it – a pair of scissors, for instance – in as few sentences as possible, but without calling it by its name, so that the reader knew what it was. If they are then asked to write a poem they enter into the opposite activity.

All teaching, whether in main lesson or subject lessons, should have this ‘breathing quality’.

They are subtle processes, but if they are applied in the right way they enliven the lessons and they make sure that the teaching is not too tiring.

Yet, if we had to ask ourselves with each transition “what next?” our teaching would be rather wooden and jumpy. While that is something that cannot be helped at the beginning, it should be acquired, as Steiner said, like a professional instinct. Instinct, is, as we know, the lowest level of intuition, that means: doing the right thing ‘intuitively’.

What has been described here is part of the teaching method that works on the relationship between I and physical body. We exert an influence through the way we teach based on the sculptural-musical knowledge of the human being.

It should also be pointed out that these methodical indications refer to existing constitutions.

Steiner explained that it shows mostly in the pupils’ thinking if their I is drawn in too deeply. We could say that these pupils are brutally rational and insensitive to feelings and emotions. Their thinking is purely brain-based. They find imaginative thinking awful, writing poetry pointless and eurythmy totally superfluous. Often (not always!) these pupils have a certain heaviness in their outer appearance and behaviour which can manifest more strongly in times of transition.

The opposite is imagination that is not grounded. The developing of important thoughts that remain without effect. Excellent essays that lack foundation, fantasy that borders on the fantastic. Good skills that make it difficult to decide for one thing, a wealth of possibilities and attempts. This also manifests in the students’ behaviour and outer appearance.

It belongs to the art of education, that we develop the sensitivity to meet these one-sided manifestations with methods that work homeopathically on the students. Which pupil do I help with a beautiful, precise geometric construction? Which pupil is helped with an extra sequence of painting exercises? Which pupil benefits from an extra maths exercise over a longer period of time? And for which pupils is it not helpful?

There are many schools where teachers are not keen on main lesson books simply because they have become tradition. And indeed, a degree of variation might prove beneficial. At the same time we can also learn that main lesson books are particularly useful for achieving a balance between breathing in and breathing out. What is developed actively in the lesson is worked through again and a balance is established. The difference lies in knowing why we do something as opposed to doing it because “it is done at my school”.

We therefore find confirmed what has been said at the beginning: anthroposophy can only become practice if we study it in order to make our thinking flexible. Out of this flexibility we will then be able to develop the right enthusiasm for practical application.

Christof Wiechert
translated by Margot M. Saar

“Seven-year Periods” as heuristic tools – or: Why Waldorf Education works

Essay on Steiner’s developmental concept

Steiner first introduced his concept of human development in seven-year periods in a small book published in 1907 under the title *The Education of the Child in the Light of Spiritual Science*.¹⁹ The concept derives from the theosophical-anthroposophical view that we incarnate gradually into the different levels of our organization and is based on the ancient idea of human development proceeding in hebdomadal (= seven-year) steps.²⁰ In that publication Steiner set out the following ideal-typical development: at birth

19 Rudolf Steiner: *The Education of the Child in the Light of Spiritual Science*.

20 The ancient hebdomadal tradition was known in Jewish and Greek culture. Cf. Wilhelm Heinrich Roscher: *Die Hebdomadenlehren der griechischen Philosophen und Ärzte*. Südwestdeutscher Verlag für Hochschulschriften. ISBN 978-3-86932-168-4, Paperback, 252 pages.

we emancipate from the maternal body; at the age of seven imaginative thinking is set free from the body-centred life forces or formative forces (birth of the ether body); at the age of fourteen, with puberty, when the ether body is fully incarnated and the soul life integrated in the physical organism, our soul organism connects to the thinking and can form the foundation for independent judgment (birth of the soul or astral body) and I- maturity; and finally, at the age of 21, we achieve conscious awareness of our physical and mental processes and actions (birth of the I). Steiner's image of the fourfold birth describes not only the ideal-typical development of our individual foundation at body, life, soul and mind level, but also the progressive emancipation of those four levels from each other that forms the foundation of self-awareness and self-control.

In his lectures on education Steiner further differentiates the ideal-typical maturation process by subdividing each seven-year period into three phases. After the physical birth mostly unconscious processes prevail as the organism is built up and motor and perceptual skills develop through imitation. During that phase learning is unreflective and will-based. With the ability to remember that children acquire in their third year events turn into experiences that are increasingly penetrated by cognition from the fifth year.

In the second seven-year period, when learning is mostly based on the child's emotional relationship with the lesson content and the individuality of the teacher, we can also discern three phases. The initially more unconscious process of learning through (joyfully) joining in and doing changes in the tenth year with the emergence of the subject-object relationship that has also been described by Piaget: children are now more conscious of their separateness from the world around them and differentiate between inner experiences and outer perception. A keen interest in discovery arises as well as the need for contextualization of the multiple perceptions and creative learning processes. From the age of twelve the child's imaginative powers recede with the growing need to grasp hold of the world and its causal connections through thinking. Experiences and discoveries are now cognitively permeated and worked through. Piaget referred to this change as the transition from concrete operational to formal operational thinking.

The main aspect of adolescence is, according to Steiner, the development of the power of independent judgement. Again, we can distinguish different phases in the course of which the power of judgment becomes more reflective because it is decreasingly informed by subjective and idealist naivety and increasingly by wider aspects and the readiness to take on responsibility.

will	feeling	thinking	will	feeling	thinking	will	feeling	thinking
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0 2 1/3 4 2/3 7 9 1/3 11 2/3 14 16 1/3 18 2/3 21

„Rubicon“

physical
birth

birth of
life body

birth of
soul body

birth of
“I”

WILL

FEELING

KNOWLEDGE

learning based on
imitation

learning based on authority
(rhythm and aesthetics)

forming independent
judgments and concepts

As learning in adolescence (and analogously in the first two seven-year periods) proceeds ideal-typically from body-related processes to conscious knowledge, an emancipation from the affective ties to the body takes place and, at the same time, the self incarnates and, with the independent thinking that marks the coming of age, truly self-directed actions become possible. We could therefore add to the development that proceeds (three times) from will through feeling to thinking, a movement in the opposite direction during which the I gains the capacity of self-directed action. This movement is the expression of the gradual incarnation of the individuality from which we derive the stages of school maturity, the beginning of adolescence and coming of age.

It is often overlooked, even within the Waldorf movement, that Steiner added a second concept to the platonic ideal-typical developmental concept which he never envisaged to be a description of actual reality. That second concept makes each development individual, as Steiner pointed out. In a lecture given in Berlin in 1913²¹ he described how the ideal-typical (cosmic) hebdomadal cycles of body-based development are intersected and individualized by the emerging self-awareness that accounts for the fact that we do not refer to ourselves as “I” only when we are 21 but at the age of two or three. Steiner referred to the processes that are related to our awakening self-awareness as “Luciferic” anticipation. Due to those processes human development not only proceeds along biological lines but is subjected to considerable mental and cultural influences. Individual consciousness does not evolve with chronological regularity but under the influence of its inherent biographical intentions.

Steiner’s first concept characterizes the bodily foundation of human

21 Rudolf Steiner: Das Leben zwischen dem Tode und einer neuen Geburt im Verhältnis zu den kosmischen Tatsachen. GA 141 (Lecture given in Berlin on 14 January 1913), p. 116-118. Published in English as *Life Between Death and Rebirth*.

development in evolutionary, that is, generally human terms. His second concept refers to the incarnation of the human individuality, which Steiner sees as an entity of soul and spirit that existed before birth and has experienced repeated incarnations. According to Steiner we cannot educate this individuality or self. It manifests early, in the third year, as verbally pronounced self-awareness and, in incarnating, it individualizes the bodily development outlined above. (That development acquires greater specificity due to cultural and environmental influences which need to be systematically interpreted). In Steiner's view education should aim to establish conditions for the body's development that will allow the individuality to realize itself within and through that foundation. Education therefore facilitates individuation if learning and self-realization can take place in the dialogue between the foundation provided by general human evolution and the individual self.²²

Contrary to the naïve view that sees in the hebdomadal concept temporal or qualitative development targets or even an account of actual processes of human development or maturation, Steiner – in my view – intended his ideal-typical schematic model, on the one hand, as an experiential tool for the description or diagnosis of individual development (which does not mean that development is only right if it follows this model). On the other hand, he saw it as the fundamental principle of an education where all learning-based processes take place in the dialogue between the physical, psychological and mental potential and the approaching self of the growing person. In allocating to each phase of maturation typical latent questions that education has to respond to, Steiner's concept corresponds to that of the 'developmental tasks' used in today's developmental psychology. These tasks, or latent questions, are motivated by anthropological and psychosocial preconditions (maturation) and, at the same time, they constitute educational aims in that they have to create these preconditions. In other words: an education that focuses on stages of maturation promotes *and* presupposes development: depending on the maturity and pedagogical progress achieved it can either build on particular preconditions or it has to first create them. According to Steiner such an education is effective because it focuses on principles that underlie every biography even though the developmental processes differ in each individual case.

If we educate on the basis of Steiner's concept we 'cultivate' in the above sense rather than focus on actual biological phases. These phases – and that was the case also in Steiner's time – can be deferred or the various levels (of physical, psychological and mental development) can diverge, which means that development on these levels or the differentiated maturation of physical body, ether body, astral body and I are not in synchrony. If we teach the various ages, in content and methods, according to Steiner's concept we facilitate development.

22 Cf. Rudolf Steiner: *Erfahrungen des Übersinnlichen. Die drei Wege der Seele zu Christus*. GA 143 (Lecture given in Stockholm on 16 April 1912), p. 119

And if, as Waldorf education requests, we educate to support individuation, we must not systematically focus on these phases, but analyse and interpret the situation we find in a class or in the individual pupil on the basis of that concept. We can only derive appropriate teaching contents and methods from the concept if we apply it heuristically, acknowledging each individual situation for what it is. Only then will our teaching truly address the growing child or adolescent.

The obvious objection that the Waldorf concept of developmental psychology tries to make individual maturation processes fit into a general scheme is justified if the concept is not applied in dialogue with the reality of the individuation process. The human individuality, on the other hand, will be better able to take hold of the bodily foundation, according to Steiner, if we consider bodily development in educating, because individuation, that is, the incarnation of the self into its bodily foundation, can then proceed in the best possible way. Steiner identifies two possible obstacles that can hinder the unfolding individuality: either the self remains ineffective, which means that decisions and intentions are not put into practice because the connection between the self's intentions and the bodily foundation has not been established or fostered, or, the body is predominant because the self cannot consciously emancipate itself from its natural foundation. We need to consider this dual threat to individual freedom for Steiner's educational intention to become apparent. By establishing a relationship between the human individuality and the universally (i.e. cognitively) interpreted principle of evolution we can create a sustainable basis for individuation.

A concept like "Rubicon crisis," which is the technical term in Waldorf education for the transition of the individual to a more consciously experienced subject-object relationship that occurs – ideal-typically – in the child's tenth year (Piaget refers to it as the entrance into the phase of concrete operational thinking), does not serve to justify a rigid curriculum. It serves rather as a differentiated analyzing tool that can be used to describe an aspect of maturation from which we can derive whether the learning process can build on a particular capacity and/or whether it has to facilitate or bring about a particular developmental step. If we therefore apply an approach to teaching that differentiates the phenomena of the world, in the study of animals or plants for instance, it will work "age-appropriately" if the relevant physical and mental preconditions have been prepared by development and education. And it will constitute a challenge if it encourages children to change the way they learn and experience the world. As teachers we can only achieve the balance between a collective and individualized approach if we relate the ideal-typical concept to actual individual situations. It is this – and not the postulation of a development in seven-year periods which does not exist in real life – that forms the foundation of autonomy, competence and responsibility in teaching.

*M. Michael Zech
translated by Margot M. Saar*

Report of the China Waldorf Forum in Chengdu July 2011

Waldorf education in China is now seven years old. The first school opened in Chengdu in September 2004 with five children in the kindergarten and a home schooling primary class for three of the teachers' children. It completed its seventh year at the beginning of July with six kindergarten groups (plus a waiting list of 200 children), and classes up to grade 7.

Across China there are now (at the most recent count) more than 120 aspiring Waldorf kindergartens and nine grade school initiatives and there may be as many as eighteen when the school year resumes in September! Added to this are five 3-year part-time teacher training courses which draw an average of about 75 people each module, and a plethora of shorter seminars and workshops in different places.

Everything happens fast in China, as the world knows well, and it has become necessary to ensure that quality accompanies quantity in the new schools. To this end, a small group – now called the Working Group of the China Waldorf Forum (CWF) – was set up in Chengdu last September at a gathering of representatives from Chinese Waldorf schools, with the help of Claus-Peter Roeh from the Pedagogical Section in Dornach and Nana Goebel from the Friends of Rudolf Steiner's Art of Education in Berlin.

In early July this year a larger group of eighty people, active in Waldorf school initiatives around the country, came together in Chengdu again, to review what has been achieved so far and set a direction for the coming few years. It was a momentous event. Within the Chengdu school for those few days were gathered most of the people whom destiny has chosen to carry and care for this birthing task of a new education in China. Not only did Claus-Peter Roeh and Nana Goebel come again, but also two teachers from Taiwan who have had a long experience of Anthroposophy and several of the foreign teachers who do trainings in China and who were able to be present at the time.

Our theme was *The Nature of China in Body, Soul and Spirit*. Behind it was the central question how best the true spirit of Waldorf education can find roots here and how it can grow and develop in a healthy way. What, after all, is this place we call China (or, more accurately, Middle Kingdom) and why has the Waldorf movement grown so quickly?

In the early gatherings seven years ago, it was largely educational techniques that people wanted and their questions came thickly and fast. Most came to

Waldorf through Montessori and it took time for them to clarify the differences. Year by year this has changed, however. Behind the initial more superficial outburst of curiosity is what can truly be called a hunger – and a gratitude – for the spirit. One can speak more and more openly, as the questions penetrate more deeply.

So in our July gathering it became possible to look in some depth at the Folk Souls both of Middle Europe and the Middle Kingdom. Each day we were guided by the presenters into the cultural background of Europe which prepared the way for the founding of the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart in September 1919 and also into the geography, ecology, language, culture, history and identity of China. Morning talks and interactive sessions wove together with artistic activities, pedagogical workshops and interest group discussions. Central too was the review and forward planning of the Working Group of CWF which had organized the event and which has the task, not only of lifting the quality of our work as teachers, but of helping people work more actively together.

The daily counterpoise between the cultural backgrounds of Middle Europe and China had a powerful affect on many who were present – typified, for example, by the contrast between Nana Goebel's depiction of some of the profound soul experiences of Goethe's Faust, who can be seen as a kind of representative of modern human striving, and the joyful sharing by Du Wenren from Taiwan of the correspondences with Anthroposophy he has uncovered in the work of ancient philosophers, such as Confucius.

This brought into the foreground the oft-spoken motif of the relationship between this new education and the ancient teachings of China. Having been cut off for so long from their cultural roots, many Chinese people today are seeking to plant them anew in modern life, sometimes gratefully and sometimes with a fervour that can bring about a polarization between the old wisdom, seen as belonging to the East, and Anthroposophy, which is perceived as Western.

How different it is when people go beyond this time-worn rivalry and recognize that neither can be owned by anyone and that both are gifts for the world! Illumined by this more open global awareness, the work of Rudolf Steiner, far from being in competition with the heritage of Chinese knowledge, can be seen as a new expression of it, as it is of many ancient cultures and religions.

A key for understanding this is the concept of metamorphosis. One can ask: If Confucius is on the earth today, is he just repeating what he did two and a half millenia ago or is what he carries showing itself in a new form appropriate to this age and to the soul development he himself has gone through since ancient times?

Cultures come to birth, flourish and eventually decline, like everything else which has life. In the conference we were given an example of this in one of the presentations about Chinese culture over the past two centuries. Just as in Europe the mayhem of the First World War was the precursor for the birth of the first Waldorf School, so in China the cultural desecration of the past centuries has cleared a space in which something new, which at the same resonates with the essence of the old wisdom, can be born.

In subtle ways perhaps such thoughts became woven into the tapestry of the Chengdu event.

As teachers we learn to internalize the research we make for our lessons and it was suggested that a similar process is needed to bridge the divide between the ancient and the new. First one must get to know both elements as richly as one can and make them a part of one's life, so that little by little, out of their meeting within the soul, we can give birth to something fresh and new. It is not a question simply of cutting and pasting, of deleting one part of the curriculum and substituting another, but of the mysterious process of metamorphosis which happens when we take different elements into our own depths.

What matters then is who one is as a modern striving human being. Seeing so many glowing faces at the conference, one could easily wonder who these people are, many of them in their twenties and thirties or just entering their forties, who carry the Waldorf impulse in China with such courage and freshness. What has been their preparation in the spiritual world before they entered this life? Many of course have found their way to Waldorf education as parents and one can wonder too what is germinating for the future within the souls of the children.

Clearly present in the conference was the thought that there is a spirit of this education, a world spirit, which belongs to the time in which we are living now. In each part of the world it has to find an appropriate home in which to live and grow. Through our meeting a process has been initiated, which hopefully will continue in diverse ways in the coming years, of getting to know that world spirit, along with the soul and body of the Middle Kingdom, into which it is little by little being received.

Behind the huge events that have shaken China over the past century has been a longing for community. It was this longing that drew many of the volunteers from different parts of the country to the Chengdu Waldorf School at its beginning and a similar impulse draws groups together in other places too. Now a new community of small but vibrant schools is taking its first steps and it will be the task of all of us who are involved to help it grow healthily.

Fifteen years ago, even ten – even five, maybe – it could not have happened. A door into the second seven-year chapter has been opened, one through which the social networking between the various initiatives will be as important perhaps as what prevails between colleagues in each school.

*Ben Cherry
On behalf of the Working Group of the China Waldorf Forum*

Hague Circle Meets in Denmark

For 4 days in June, 35 Waldorf people from around the world met in Aarhus, Denmark



The Hague Circle/International Forum of Waldorf/Steiner Schools met in Århus, Denmark, June 2-5.

The Steiner School in Aarhus, where we met, is housed on a sprawling campus just across the road from the shore. Our meetings coincided with a gathering of some 200 high school students from Steiner Schools all over Denmark celebrating their “High School Students’ Festival.” Denmark, which is slightly less than twice the size of Massachusetts, has 15 Steiner schools, of which half a

dozen have high schools. Also on view while we were there was an exhibition of outdoor sculpture, “Sculpture by the Sea.” Many of us strolled through this series of inventive shapes and constructions during our breaks, or after our meetings. There was plenty of time to see the sculpture at night; I never did get used to nights without darkness.

Once again, the joy of people coming together from all corners of the world to strengthen their work for Waldorf Education was palpable. The representation of countries was expanded as we welcomed Dusan Plestil from the Czech Republic. A particular feature of this meeting was the conspicuous absence of Christof Wiechert, who, having stepped back from his position as Leader of the Pedagogical Section, also “passed the gavel” of these meetings to his successors, Claus- Peter Röh and Florian Oswald.

Traditionally, our opening presentations are on “**Symptoms of the Times.**” Gilad Goldschmidt of Israel addressed the theme Thursday evening; Frans Lutters of Holland followed on Friday morning.

Gilad Goldshmidt’s presentation considered two main themes: 1) the mission of the Hague Circle itself and 2) the way Waldorf has to navigate the current climate in conventional education. To bring the latter into focus, Gilad brought out three main features. He spoke about the “Culture of Testing” predicated on the “Programme for International Student Assessment” known as PISA. This worldwide evaluation of 15-year-old school pupils’ scholastic performances was performed first in 2000 and is repeated every three years. It is coordinated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), with a view to improving educational policies and outcomes, and it has had a powerful trickle-down influence into all reaches of education. In some countries, state school authorities now mandate literacy in kindergarten. Gilad reported that the Israeli authorities have agreed with the Waldorf position that testing before high school is not necessary. Nevertheless, this “culture of testing” is having its effect even within our own Waldorf movement. Next, Gilad characterized what he called “center and periphery” or “core and shell.” He was talking about the source of Waldorf – anthroposophy – which is the center, and, what can easily become a mere method, a shell. Much discussion was generated by this topic. Finally, Gilad spoke about the children. He asked, “Are the children really different from the way they were 100 years ago, or is it only the times which have changed?” Again, much discussion was provoked by the question.

On Friday morning, Frans Lutters of Holland continued the “Symptoms of Our Times” with a presentation he called “The Future is Now.” His presentation touched on several far-ranging themes to do with the mysteries of the will, the School of Chartres, the Grail Mystery, and the relationship of the Lily to the Rose. Fundamentally, his presentation grappled with the question of how Waldorf can address both the individual in every child, and humanity as a whole. Fruitful conversation also followed his presentation.

After the coffee break (fabulous snacks and lunches at this conference! and one astonishing feast – see below under Audonicon), Florian Osswald, one of our 2 new Section leaders, chaired a discussion of the present and future tasks of the Hague Circle.

In light of the center/periphery questions raised by Gilad’s presentation, how can our Circle perceive the periphery; can we perceive it truly? Do we support it enough? The Circle has changed a great deal in the 40 years of its existence. It is now bigger than ever, and will continue to expand as other countries join us. How can we ensure that the Hague Circle continues to work out of the “center” – i.e. anthroposophy, in all its depths – while at the same time staying in touch with the “periphery” – i.e. the school movements world-wide as well as the cultures in which these school movements exist? These are big questions, which gave rise to lively conversation.

The afternoon session consisted of **reports from the countries**. We had been asked to prepare a 3-minute statement on how, as individuals in the Hague Circle, we represented the Hague Circle to our countries. This question addressed the perception, voiced at our previous meeting last November in Dornach, that the Hague Circle (now transitioning into a new name, The International Forum of Steiner/Waldorf Schools) was little known by the average Waldorf teacher worldwide. The round of presentations included: Sweden, Argentina, Holland, Switzerland, France, Czech Republic, Belgium, Ukraine, Chile, Peru, Brazil, Spain (a first school is just starting in Portugal), England, East Africa (especially Kenya), Italy, India, Austria, Germany, USA, Hungary. In many countries the Federation (Association) of Waldorf Schools and the Pedagogical Section are the main channels for making the Hague Circle better known. In addition there are written articles, both hard copy and electronic; and there are organizations representing Waldorf internationally, such as the Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners <http://www.freunde-waldorf.de/en/>, and the European Council of Steiner Waldorf Education <http://www.ecswe.org/>. All agreed that the upcoming World Kindergarten Teachers’ Conference, April 1 – 5, 2012 and the World Teachers’ Conference, April 9 – 14, 2012 which are being carried by the Hague Circle and the Pedagogical Section in Dornach, will be excellent occasions to get the word out about the Circle.

Friday evening Bernd Ruf of **Pedagogical Emergency Help (Pädagogische Nothilfe)** gave a riveting report of the group’s work in the aftermath of the recent Tsunami in Japan.

Bernd introduced the facts on the ground with an analysis of trauma. He compared trauma of the soul to trauma of the physical body; he described steps in the development of trauma; the symptoms of trauma; the results of trauma; and finally, how Waldorf insights can be applied to children traumatized by acts

of war or natural disasters. Begun in 2006, the group has engaged in emergency action in 10 projects including Lebanon, Gaza, Haiti, Indonesia, Szechuan, and Japan. The key Waldorf ingredients of rhythm, movement, art, and play help traumatized children (and their teachers and parents) to find a way back to normalcy. Because of the complications caused by the nuclear problems in Japan, it took six and a half weeks for the group of 8 people from Germany and New Zealand to join with 15 people in the affected areas to build the response team. They were able to take up 300 cases involving mostly children, but also some parents and teachers.

The next report came from Nana Goebel, head of the **Freunde der Erziehungskunst**.

67 million Euros has been raised for the Waldorf Movement in the 40 years of this organization's existence. These monies support projects in the kindergarten movement, the schools' movement, and the curative/therapeutic work. This past May 4th the Asia Teachers' Conference took place in Hyderabad, India. Over 300 teachers from throughout the far east attended. Nana reported that a 1st school started in Taiwan with 96 children, and now has over 600 enrolled. It is successfully supported by the State. China is seeing a tremendous interest in Waldorf education. There are over 100 kindergartens spread throughout the country.

Christopher Clouder then reported on the **European Council of Steiner Waldorf Education**. Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe 2011, volume 2 is a new publication, just out; Christopher gave each of us a copy. It is an impressive volume with 7 strongly researched and documented contributions by recognized authorities in the field. Copies can be ordered through our bookstore or directly from ecwe2@gmail.com. Christopher pointed out that the European Council now represents Waldorf not just in central Europe but includes also Latvia, Estonia and Armenia.

The final report came from **The International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE)**, and was given jointly by its two representatives on the Hague Circle, Brigitte Goldman and Philip Reubke. At a recent conference, the "burning question" was Japan. How can cooperation amongst the early childhood centers be increased, especially in the aftermath of the recent catastrophe; how do we work with the esoteric underpinnings of Waldorf education?

Our topic for the Saturday morning's meetings was the upcoming **World Early Childhood Conference**, and the **World Teachers' Conference**, both to take place in April, 2012. Both conferences are taking shape, though some details are still to be determined. The shared theme of the two conferences will be "Der Weg des Ichs ins Leben" – which can be translated as, "The Path of the Self into Life." Full details for both conferences are expected to be available by early fall.

On Saturday after lunch Nana again took the helm, directing our attention to the ongoing issues around the **World List**. This list of "recognized" Waldorf

Steiner schools and early childhood centers is controversial because there is not always agreement about whether an institution is recognized. For example, it is possible for a well-established and well-credentialed school to be omitted from the list of a national Waldorf federation/association, but yet still be legitimately listed in the World List. Nana mentioned Korea, China, Spain, Israel and Taiwan as countries where questions exist about Waldorf institutions and whether they should or should not be on an official World List. Currently there are approximately 1050 schools on that list, if you include various small but thriving schools. In addition there are about 1600 early childhood centers.

Nana then took us through the complex legal issues surrounding the ongoing question of which legal body shall be in charge of the **trademark** “Waldorf” or “Steiner.” The upshot of this long discussion was that the committee of 3 from the Hague Circle working on this issue was given a year’s extension to continue working with members of the German Bund, who currently hold the legal authority to confer the name, i.e. to determine what is and what is not a Waldorf or Steiner School.

After discussion around these somewhat thorny questions, it was refreshing to hear about what is going on in East Africa. Victor Mwai reported on the countries comprising his region.

Victor gave a brief overview of the complex history of the region. Kenya consists of 54 different languages, each spoken in an autonomous culture. “I can walk 10 minutes from my home and be in a language and culture I don’t understand,” said Victor. He then described the influence of Colonial Britain’s impact on the region’s school system, both the past and present aspects. In short, Waldorf is welcomed by many parents seeking a less rigid, less intellectual, less fragmented education for their children. The Rudolf Steiner School in Mbagathi, Nairobi, which started 21 years ago, now has 400 children. Because Nairobi has a very international population, 58 nationalities are represented. The kindergartens are full. The school’s enrollment covers financial needs. Four years ago an Association of East African Waldorf Schools was formed, and there are now 2 schools from each of 3 countries represented.

A field trip to the Audonicon, the teacher training center, followed.

Sunday morning Claus-Peter Röh gave a free rendering of the 6th Class Lesson. The presentation was followed by conversation. After the morning coffee break, some final pieces of business, including a review of the situation in Italy; a quick reference to the Portfolio Project; a review of the meetings just finishing; and a look ahead at possible venues for the May, 2012 meetings concluded this June session of the International Forum of Waldorf/Steiner Schools (Hague Circle).

Dorit Winter

Motivating instead of Directing

– Reporting on Experience in Tanzania

Brilliant light, bright and gleaming. Air, which is so humid that you believe you have run into a soaking sponge; joyful children looking bashful, and laughing faces with shining white teeth; yellow-green grass and spotless streets. These are the first impressions that surround you when you come out of the airport in Dar-es-Salaam, in Tanzania, in high summer.

Not far away, in the middle of an industrial area, the Hekima Waldorf School is situated. This is the school to which life has led my partner and myself for a year. The Hekima School has seven classes and approx. 160 pupils, of whom 50 are orphans. In these initially unfamiliar surroundings I was to take care of the project with orphans and teach English, mathematics and the artistic subjects as well as to mentor the class two teacher. We had barely settled in before we were left to our own devices and thus I got to know the school and the surroundings in the first few weeks. I was greeted everywhere by friendly, open and curious people; always rather bashful to begin with, but soon laughing and eager to help. Thus it presented no problem to find my way about and soon I could manage my first words of Kiswahili and I found out how to cope without regular water and electricity, how to wash all laundry by hand and what sort of poisonous and non-poisonous insects there are that like to frequent your spaces there.

Working with the children was a great pleasure. I was stunned time and again by the incredible amount of curiosity which they showed. They leapt around full of joy and wanted to know everything. If you told them a story then they would listen raptly; their mouths opened wide and they could not get over their amazement. However, I soon began to notice some initial differences. Some of the teachers seemed to me to be somehow uninterested in the lessons or appeared weary and lacking in initiative. Artistic subjects were not taught very much. If you enquired cautiously, you received hesitant answers; I thought to myself that as a German I would actually see it far too dramatically.

Soon afterwards another European, a woman, appeared at the school and I learnt that she had come to mentor. Soon after this another Waldorf teacher came to mentor and later on another one. Gradually it turned out that there were six mentors altogether, from Germany, Holland, South Africa and England. They all came at different times, often only for a few days or a few weeks. Sometimes they contradicted one another and quite possibly left a completely confused indigenous teacher behind.

So I began to wonder how one must feel as an indigenous teacher to be confronted with a form of education which is new to oneself and with western customs and manners; these have only been spreading in Tanzania in roughly the last twenty years. Probably one would feel insecure and irritated. They carried out what the mentors told them but after a certain length of time the

approaches went to sleep again and were partly forgotten. Thus I wondered, why are the methods, the substance and educational approach heeded when a mentor or white visitor is there, and, nevertheless, set aside again when the visitor is gone? Maybe because it is not their own thing that they are learning? Maybe because they themselves have quite different questions from what they are taught? After a year in Tanzania I think that it is not a matter of indifference, but rather of a profound insecurity and a 'lack of comprehension' towards the content offered them.

So I began to wonder why an experienced Waldorf teacher from Europe can hold the opinion the lower school classes of the Waldorf School in Tanzania would need indoor shoes in order to be able to spend the time in the classroom properly shod. Has European thinking been transferred to Africa as it stands? When people required the children to wear indoor shoes did they really take a look at Africa? When I look around in Tanzania, then I see a predominantly bare-footed culture; a culture, where people wear flip flops, if anything at all. When you leave the classroom, you are not in a corridor inside the school building as in Germany, but outside in the dust; when it rains, in mud and sludge. The classroom has to be swept through two to three times a day, as it is so dusty and there are no window panes. Are indoor shoes appropriate or are they false constructs of a wrongly interpreted pedagogy?

Moreover, some teachers of the western world see to it that the three-fold division of the main lesson into the rhythmical part, the main part and the storytelling is strictly adhered to. Have people ever asked whether this is appropriate here in Africa? Do we perhaps need to turn the order around, invent new elements, and leave other things out? Some children get up at four in the morning and first walk for two hours over mountains and valleys, past dead beasts, drunken people, begging, crawling, ragged people and past enormous burning rubbish heaps, cross ravines and not until then do they reach the place where the school bus picks them up. Only after another two hours do they reach the school. And all that with no breakfast and with flip flops or torn, worn-down shoes. Do these children need a rhythmical part as the first thing? Must they stand for at least half an hour in the classroom during the rhythmical part before they are permitted to sit down? I have often seen how children were leaning wearily over their desks. Particularly the orphan children could sometimes barely stand upright and it sometimes occurred to me that the rhythmical part no longer had any enlivening effect but rather made them limp and exhausted. Perhaps breakfast would be more appropriate or else the story part could actually be set at the beginning? How about letting the children quieten down again, enveloping them and protecting them from all the things which they have already seen on their long journey to school? Would not the mentor have to be constantly searching for new viewpoints which would be more relevant to such a completely different culture? Would he not have to question what he has learnt so far, attempt and try out something new? Is not a different spiritual attitude called for?

These questions would no longer let go of me. As I was mentoring a class two teacher, I started to question myself and my methods and to try out some new things. Some things worked and others did not, but suddenly I had the feeling that simply through trying to go new ways I had gone a step in the right direction. I endeavoured to always be free of my own wishes and ideas. No longer was my own cultural and societal background to be the basis for appraising a foreign culture and society. Anthroposophy and Waldorf education have arisen as a spiritual task in central Europe in a specific cultural setting in a specific society. In Africa, which is an essential member of the whole global organism, this impulse should appear in a different form, so to speak, in a different dialect.

Just as parents take their small child by the hand, when they cross the street, I endeavoured to take the class two teacher by the hand and to show him the way. However, I do not have to tell him where the traffic lights are, what red and green mean and how many lanes the street has ...

I believe people have to find this out for themselves, for only then will it be retained. I often had the impression that things that are passed on restrict and hinder others from making it their own. It can only become your own if you have experienced and felt it yourself. Thus, I endeavoured not to make guidelines, but only to pick up things in which there was interest. I told myself time and again my goal should not be to “make a great Waldorf school” or “to teach Waldorf education” but rather I should attempt to give opportunities and create space for someone to develop themselves. And suddenly I was richly rewarded. After three quarters of a year the class two teacher suddenly started to develop ideas of his own. He displayed humour, eagerness and creativity which stunned me and moved me most deeply. Thus the year here in Tanzania developed into a year full of questions, with highs and lows and with the certainty of being right at the beginning of a long journey. The bright eyes and sparkling white teeth of the orphan children will accompany me for a long time, as I leave them full of admiration when I now return home.

Jacinto Denjean
translated by John Weedon

Agenda

Forthcoming Pedagogical Section Conferences and Events at the Goetheanum, 2011

2011

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|------------------------------|--|
| October 21 – 23, 2011 | Individualität-unmittelbar erlebt. Von der Kunst der Begegnung mit heutigen Kindern. (in German) |
| October 30 – November 2 2011 | Wege zur mathematischen Vorstellungsbildung (Förderlehrertagung) (in german) |

2012

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| January 20 – 21, 2012 | Conference for Swiss Teachers
(in German and French) |
| April 1 – 5, 2012 | World Early Childhood Conference |
| April 9 – 14, 2012 | World Teachers' Conference |