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Tel.: 0041 61 706 43 15
Tel.: 0041 61 706 43 73
Fax: 0041 61 706 44 74
E-Mail: paed.sektion@goetheanum.ch
Homepage: www.paedagogik-goetheanum.ch

Editors: Florian Osswald, Dorothee Prange, Claus-Peter Röh

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Foreword

Dear Colleagues,

We are now starting to look back on a year with many events, impressions and tasks for those of us involved in education in Steiner Waldorf Schools.

As ever we are most grateful to colleagues across the world who work daily with young human beings of all ages, full of joy and energy, in early years centres, kindergartens and schools, rooting their educational work in anthroposophy. It is the task of the Pedagogical Section to pick up on the concerns and questions of those working within our pedagogy and to offer support wherever possible. There are always questions and these require responses which need to be adapted to given situations.

How are our colleagues? What can we do to strengthen them for the tasks at this challenging time? How can we meet government requirements in our own way without losing too much of what makes Steiner Waldorf Schools so different? Are we able to solve the riddles brought to us by the children and young people in order to help them develop through the way we teach, making them want to learn with joy? How do we find an appropriate structure for working together as colleagues? Are our training courses successful in enabling new teachers to meet their tasks to individualise them?

Many of these questions were discussed at the last two meetings of the International Forum. Nana Goebel's article about the meeting in Israel in November is included in this edition. Following the meeting in Israel Tomáš Zdražil penned his contribution about education in the old and the new age of

Abraham. The German version of this is published in this booklet. The translation into English will be included in Journal No 54. Specific features of a Steiner Waldorf School were discussed and agreed on in Israel. The aim of these is to provide a common ground for all countries where there are Steiner Waldorf Schools. It is important that each country or region now translates these into their own language and complements them with regional and cultural characteristics.

The question of the significance of the class teacher principle is again addressed in an article in German by Christof Wiechert (the English version will be published in Journal No 54). It comes with a request for everybody to send any articles, essays or theses on the subject of the class teacher to the Free University (Freie Hochschule) in Stuttgart for a database on this topic to be set up. Florian Osswald is concerned with the question of teacher training and points to the ENASTE congress and the teacher trainer conference. Two more articles round off this edition. With a view to lesson preparation, Florian Osswald makes a mention of the website by the International Forum (www.waldorf-resources.org) and Christian Michaelis-Braun presents his report on the work done by the Internal College in Mülheim/Deutschland with a view to supporting the social cohesion of colleagues within a school.

We have been focusing hard on the preparation of the 10th World Teachers' Conference 2016 at the Goetheanum in Dornach. Steiner Waldorf education continues to place us at a crossroads. Where are we going in the fu-

ture? This is something we must focus on in the present. We need courage to face what is presented to us at this moment. Are we really able to accept the human being? Are we managing to address the whole human being? This could result in the following working title:

Courage to be Human
– *Presence of the ,I' in its Entirety*
Steiner Waldorf Education at a Crossroads:
Creating the Future in the Present

Claus-Peter Röh has also started to develop some thoughts on this topic and these will be continued in future journals. We shall continue working on this topic and hope to publish the final title and more information on our website soon.

Please find below a reminder of the other two international conferences planned for the Goetheanum in Dornach over the next year:

Transitions in Childhood from Birth to 14 Years
Significance, Challenges, Consequences
30th March – 3rd April 2015

International Conference for Teachers of
Mathematics
5th – 9th October 2015

We wish all our colleagues across the world a peaceful Christmas period and a Happy New Year!

Your
Pedagogical Section
translated by Steffi Cook

International Forum Meeting in Israel

Nana Goebel

translated by Jennifer Kleinfischer

Anyone travelling to Israel these days – even if “only” for a conference – is necessarily confronted with the essential challenges of our times. Even if life in a city like Tel Aviv can seem lighthearted, the full cafés, clear blue skies, and bustling marketplaces throw but a thin veil of gauze over the existential challenges of people’s lives here.

This summer, all the children had to spend five weeks playing in bunkers, missing most of the gorgeous sunshine. Despite having just concluded this experience, the children met us with so much health and strength that it was an absolute joy to see. Before the actual meeting of the International Forum, we had the pleasure of visiting Waldorf schools in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and a few of the schools in Galilee, which gave us a good impression of life at Waldorf schools in Israel.

The Waldorf Schools and Waldorf Kindergartens in Israel

The first Waldorf School in Israel was founded in the north in 1989. Gilad Goldshmidt, who studied in Dornach, and Michal Ben Shalom, who studied at Emerson College, built up the school at Kibbutz Harduf, which was founded in 1982 with the vision of creating an anthroposophical farm and cultural center. Within ten years, two further schools were founded: the Adam Waldorf School in Jerusalem in 1993, and the Shaked Waldorf School in Kiryat Tivon in 1995. Today, these three schools, along with the Zomer Waldorf School in Ramat Gan (Tel Aviv) are the largest schools, including both elementary and high school. The high school in Harduf now has two classes at each grade

level, integrating students coming from the Oded Waldorf School in Yodfat and other schools in the area. The past ten years have brought about a continuous wave of new schools being founded. This is, of course, in part an expression of the frustration which many parents belonging to the educated and liberal middle class feel with respect to the public education system. Of the 18 Waldorf schools, a number are still in their early years, and need to fight to maintain their existence. While the “older” schools are recognized public schools (receiving 100% of the same funding as other public schools), most of the newly founded schools have not yet received federal funding. Eligibility for federal funding is tied to the needs of the community and the interests of the local mayors, whose support is necessary in order to receive funding. Parents at the small new schools are, however, highly motivated to do whatever they can to enable their children to attend a Waldorf School.

The Waldorf Schools work together in the “Israel National Forum”, which was founded in recent years, and is currently headed by Gilad Goldshmidt. So far, any Waldorf School can become a member as soon as they have four classes completed. Agreements with regard to teacher education requirements are also decided in this forum. There are currently four teacher education institutes for Waldorf Teachers; they are either integrated within solid public teacher education programs with good reputations, or they are affiliated with one of the larger Waldorf Schools. In Jerusalem, the Waldorf teacher and kindergarten teacher education program

takes place at the "Hebrew Institute for Teachers" (founded in 1913) at David Yellin College, where they are currently working on creating a special Masters program for Waldorf teachers.

The Waldorf kindergarten movement is even bigger. Of the 100 groups, a number are nursery schools for very young children. There are kindergarten classes at all the Waldorf Schools, but also many kindergartens which operate independently of schools. Stefanie Allon is one of the founding kindergarten teachers. She coordinates the Israeli kindergarten movement along with three colleagues. They are currently working on an overview of the qualitative challenges being faced, as well as on a simple list of all existing kindergartens.

In kindergartens and in schools, all of us were struck by how well the development of children we met suited their actual age. The small ones were children, and not mini-adults. They have rosy cheeks and strong temperaments; they play with deep intensity and act – as children do. The high school students, on the other hand, seemed far more mature than those in Europe. They asked deep and complex questions. Through the political situation, which bears great influence on their life goals, they have become wide awake to everything going on, both inwardly and outwardly.

Meeting of the International Forum

"Our times are, in many respects, a revival of the times which ensued partially through the Mystery of Golgotha, partially through what happened in 333, and partially through what happened in 666." This statement made by Rudolf Steiner on October 16, 1918 (GA 182) was inspiring for our discussions of current events – particularly in the Middle East. Being in Israel was the natural impetus for

the Forum to give thought to the **situation in the Middle East**, most particularly with the increasing fundamentalism of various decrees and with the current role of political Islam. In that this is a much too multifaceted and complicated theme to address in this context, another quote should suffice to stimulate further study on this issue: "Without knowing the essential nature of the Academy of Gondishapur, which was founded upon the works left behind by the ancient scholars, it is not possible to understand **anything** of the entire development of modern humanity".

The aim of this meeting was to prepare for the **next World Teachers' Conference**, and to narrow its thematic focus. In the course of our conversations, it became clear that much work has been done to realize the pedagogical aims of Waldorf schools, but the corresponding societal transformations is an area which has remained underdeveloped. This includes a commitment to the development of a free system of education. In contrast to Rudolf Steiner's times, today it is the "dictatorship" of the economy which causes the most restrictions within the educational system. Where is the courage to really fight for Waldorf pedagogy? Where is the courage to swim against the current, rather than to orient oneself toward the mainstream? Where is the courage to radically support the development of the individual? Rather than swimming along with the mainstream, people who want Waldorf schools need to understand themselves as part of a resistance movement with the intention of protecting childhood. In the realm of education which is aimed to enable freedom and responsibility – an aim which goes against the mainstream – social renewal and a transformation of educational policy are as relevant as are other pedagogical challenges, such as the role of a class teacher.

A further theme which we have been working on for a while is the pedagogical reasoning behind the **idea of a class teacher** in contemporary Waldorf schools. Tomáš Zdražil has already published an overview regarding the role of the class teacher in various countries. Christof Wiechert and Tomáš Zdražil have both been working on this topic, and will be publishing further essays in the Journal of the Section. If any readers know of research already done on this theme, it would be helpful if you would kindly let them know.

We were happy to receive the new and expanded edition of 'Towards the Deepening of Waldorf Education', published by the Pedagogical Section at the request of the International Forum. We hope that many, many teachers will make good use of this book. The new title is in German: 'Zur meditativen Vertiefung des Lehrer- und Erzieherberufes'. It still needs to be translated into a number of different languages.

A new description of the **essential characteristics of a Waldorf School**, based on a paper by Christof Wiechert, was drafted in preparation for our meeting, with a new section on "Waldorf-inspired schools". A similar description was written by the International Forum in 2009. The European Council of

Steiner Waldorf Schools and a number of national school movements have also followed similar initiatives. This newest model was approved, and can be read in this Journal. Now it is important that the Waldorf community does not just have another piece of paper that we can confidently lay aside, but that the professional intentions and mindset described are also put into practice. All meeting participants were in agreement that it is increasingly important that the international Waldorf school movement work on defining its own identity in a highly professional manner. The rapid growth of the Waldorf movement, both kindergartens and schools, makes it all the more important that we work even more intensively on defining this inner identity, so that it can shine through each individual teacher's work in classrooms worldwide.

We were extremely thankful for the chance to meet the Waldorf movement in Israel – a movement carried by great idealism – as well as the opportunity to see a few performances which gave us an impression of the artistic and musical energy of students there. So I conclude this letter with a great "thank you" to our Israeli colleagues, who made both our meeting and our visits to Tel Aviv and Harduf possible.

10th World Teachers' Conference

Claus-Peter Röh

translated by Alec Templeton

During the recent International Forum meeting in Israel we worked intensively on how to give shape to the 10th World Teachers' Conference at the Goetheanum in Dornach in 2016. With regard to current world events we were faced with the question as to what future challenges we are likely to meet within the Waldorf Movement.

Those who are prepared to take on educational tasks as Waldorf teachers need courage and resolution to achieve a presence in accord with the spiritual totality of man. Where the 'I' can unfold, realize itself in such a double gesture of presence and totality, strength and efficacy mutually reinforce each other. In this light, a truly pedagogical quality of presence can come into being where we are ready to take up the existential challenge of fields of tension, of polar opposites:

- between the immediate giving of a simple lesson and the simultaneous awareness of the effectiveness and load-bearing capacity of inner spiritual strength: This is where pedagogical attentiveness to the vigour of the 'I' is formed;
- between the destabilisation and fragmentation as experienced by children growing up today and real possibility for a new connectedness with helping, benevolent spiritual forces: This is where

the teacher's individuality becomes manifest in its complete humanity;

- between the qualities of what has become in the past and a quality of a newness that is as yet unknown lies the impulse towards creativity;
- between the too-early and the too-late of a particular lesson lies the point of acting in proper measure and choosing the right moment
- between the challenges we face in our everyday school work and the inner understanding of necessary transformations lies the source of the quality of initiative that arises from the 'I'

At the tenth World Teachers' Conference we would like to consider and develop these double gestures of the human 'I' and its anchor in the sheaths under the following provisional titles:

Courage to Be a Human – Presence of the 'I' in Its Totality – Waldorf Education at the Crossroads: Shaping the Future in the Here and Now

In the following numbers of the Journal further perspectives and viewpoints on these topics will be developed.

Essential Characteristics of Waldorf/Steiner Early Childhood Education – May 2014

IASWECE: International Association of Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education

The future development of each individual child and of humanity as a whole depends on health-giving experiences in the first seven years of life. An atmosphere of loving warmth and guidance that promotes joy, wonder, and reverence supports such healthy development. The most essential aspect of the work with the little child is the inner attitude of the educator, who provides the example for the child's imitation. Therefore the work of the Waldorf educator demands an ongoing process of research and self-education including anthroposophical study, meditative practice, artistic and practical activity.

In Waldorf nursery-kindergartens, home care programs, childcare centers, parent-child programs and other settings, foundations are laid for later learning and healthy development, including life-long physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual growth. This education, based on an understanding of the development of human individuality, offers protection and respect for the dignity of childhood. It includes an understanding of the unfolding development of the child from pre-birth to seven, including the unique significance of the development of walking, speaking and thinking in the first three years of life.

Activities in Waldorf early childhood education take into consideration the age-specific developmental needs of young children, from a focus on will-oriented physical activity in the first three years, then on imaginative play in the middle years of early childhood, and later a more cognitive approach to learning after the child enters school.

Educational Principles

Waldorf based programs may differ according to geography, culture, group size, age-range, and the individual teaching approach. Granting these differences, Waldorf programs share certain fundamental characteristics:

- Loving interest in and acceptance of each child
- Opportunities for self-initiated play with simple play materials as the essential activity for young children.
- This is the young child's work and makes it possible for them to digest and understand their experiences.
- Awareness that young children learn through imitation, through the experience of diverse sensory impressions, and through movement. Their natural inclination is to actively explore their physical and social environment. The surroundings offer limits, structure and protection, as well as the possibility to take risks and meet challenges.
- A focus on real rather than virtual experiences to support the child in forming a healthy relationship to the world.
- Artistic activities such as storytelling, music, drawing and painting, rhythmic games, and modeling that foster the healthy development of imagination and creativity.
- Meaningful practical work such as cooking, baking, gardening, handwork and do-

mestic activity that provide opportunities to develop unfolding human capacities. Here the emphasis is on the processes of life rather than on learning outcomes.

- Predictable rhythms through the day, week and year that provide security and a sense of the interrelationships and wholeness of life. Seasonal and other festivals are celebrated according to the cultural and geographical surroundings.

We recognize that healthy child development unfolds most fully in the context of a community with healthy social relationships among parents, teachers and children. Waldorf educators strive to create such conscious, collaborative communities around the children in their care and see their activity as part of a worldwide cultural impulse.

The International Forum of Waldorf/ Steiner Schools (Hague Circle) within the Pedagogical Section

At its meeting in Harduf/Israel on 14 November 2014, the International Forum of Waldorf/Steiner Schools established and passed guidelines defining the essential characteristics of Waldorf Education. The characteristics are expressed in general terms and can be amended by criteria that are specific to the various countries. They can be translated into the relevant languages any time. They are meant as guidelines for a better understanding of Waldorf Education within the global school movement and are in addition to the characteristics defined in 2009.

Characteristics of a Waldorf/Steiner School

Preface

When Waldorf schools or Rudolf Steiner schools are to be recognised as such, they require a description of characteristics and essential elements in order to ascertain if they are indeed Waldorf/Steiner schools.

If such recognition occurs for a particular school, this will be evident through its inclusion in the World List of Waldorf Schools.

The features described below have been broadly formulated, and do not constitute a checklist, but are rather a characterisation of how the International Forum defines Waldorf/Steiner schools. As this understanding is in the process of development, these features will be replaced by others over time. The basics of the educational philosophy, however, remain the same.

This text can serve the purpose of both a self-evaluation process as well as an accreditation procedure for the recognition of a Waldorf/Steiner school.

Characteristics of a Waldorf/Steiner School include:

Interconnectedness

Such a school is in contact with existing Waldorf/Steiner schools. Members of the school

communities know each other and maintain mutual relations. The school community endeavours to engage in networking. A shared awareness of one another within a region or in the same country strengthens a school's own work. This idea of knowing one another can be expressed on an international level as well, for example through partnerships with other schools in other countries or through the support of young Waldorf initiatives or schools in need. The participation of colleagues at further training courses and conferences organised on a regional, national and international level is also part of this.

This knowledge of one another creates an inner sense of interconnectedness. Being isolated and working alone is not characteristic of a Waldorf/Steiner School. Apart from this, such a school strives for integration into the social context of the place where it is located and endeavours to participate in public life and to avoid a niche existence.

The identity of the school

Each school is unmistakably individual. Merely through the simple fact of its existence, it has its own identity with all its peculiarities, advantages and development opportunities. These arise out of the school's historical development, its location and environment, as well as its founding parents and

teachers. This is like a human body. In addition, the school has a second identity which consists of the realisation of the art of education initiated by Rudolf Steiner. To what extent does the school succeed in putting into practice the art of education as outlined and described by Steiner? By this we mean whether the application of the art of education is discernible in the classrooms and in the work of colleagues. More specifically, it refers to the pedagogy (i.e. how colleagues relate to the children and students), it refers to teaching, how colleagues deal with the content and transfer of the subject matter, how the fundamental themes of the art of education are applied and finally it refers to whether the methodology of the art of education is applied in a way appropriate to the child's stage of development in accordance with the understanding of the human being. Is it possible at such a school to discern a creative approach taking place with regards to these three areas?

This will account for a large part of the school's identity. This will be completed through what can be perceived as an *inner meaning* in each individual colleague and within the community of teachers. Does one find an inner attitude in the majority of colleagues an inner attitude which corresponds to the striving for knowledge and self-education with the help of anthroposophy? Is the striving for knowledge of the human being as a basis of pedagogy noticeable and perceptible alongside the joy of the profession?

These things make up the individual mood of each school and are the soul-wise expression of what is generally perceived as the spirit of the school.

The curriculum

Since the curriculum strengthens the development of children and students through

mirroring this development, which anybody who applies the curriculum can experience, it is not an arbitrary part of the art of education, but rather an absolutely constituent element. Nevertheless, the curriculum is subject to change, mainly due to three reasons: space, time and development.

Each school is located in a cultural, geographical and political space which has its effect on the curriculum, in the same way that the colour-specifications for the classrooms, which were developed by Steiner, were based on the specific space of each different school.

Each school also exists in a stream of time. Each region or country has its history, which characterises world history from its own vantage point. This too will have its effect on the curriculum.

Each school relates in some way to the demands of the state authorities responsible for education, attempting to have a greater or lesser influence on the curriculum guidelines.

Examples: What do the Class 7 history lessons look like in non-European countries?

What does the different narrative material look like? Can the course of development still succeed if, for example, Norse mythology is replaced by the myth of a specific country or culture without losing the pedagogical impact of the original myths? What changes must be made to the teaching of foreign languages in multi-ethnic countries where four languages are already being spoken? It is an area full of movement and dynamism, and yet, through the effect they have, the original indications of Steiner are still the criteria for understanding.

In many countries the educational authorities have a strong impact on the curriculum, which as a rule is not conducive to child development, but rather, for reasons of state, conforms to set stipulations. (For example, through diverse manifold forms of premature academic learning at an age that is, according to our criteria of development, inappropriate.)

How a school conducts itself in these three areas of tension will express a fair amount about the school. Does it succeed in bringing about fruitful consensus between possibility and ideal and in working in a creatively productive way? Is the picture of the child's development maintained, mirrored and fostered through the curriculum?

These questions will have to be looked at.

The Relationship between Teacher and Pupil, and their Relationship to the World

Child development and all that is learnt at school are realised in a relationship borne of the child's trust in the teachers, in their general environment and in an awareness of the world. Waldorf teachers bear a special responsibility for the vibrant forms of this relationship.

In adolescence this relationship changes, for now the students are to stimulate their own forming of opinions, empathy and independent activity in their encounters and in their attempts to come to terms with the world from the perspective of the subjects. Do high school teachers, besides their professional qualifications, bring the ability to meet the young people in such a way that they discover their self-expression and develop the courage to orientate their biographies accordingly?

Does the teaching awaken further questions in the students? Are the students bored in

school or do they show interest in their fellow human beings and the world? Does Waldorf education nevertheless take place despite the pressure to prepare for final examinations in order to obtain good grades?

Art and the Teaching of Art

One of the objectives of a Waldorf school is the attempt to break the pre-eminence of intellectualism (not of the "intellect"), at least in teaching, in order that education is once again concerned with life and not just with cognition. One will do justice to the task of education only when an inclination towards basic humanity lives in the graduating student through strong thinking, feeling and will. How these abilities engage in relation to one another will make a difference as to whether or not the human being can walk his own path.

Whether and how these abilities are integrated within the "I" of the human being will have an effect on his or her independence.

One of the most important instruments for this is the artistic lessons. There are four aspects to be understood:

- 1) The teacher nurtures his/her own relationship to art in some form; he is to endeavour to cultivate something artistic in his own being.
- 2) He uses artistic materials in her lessons (painting, drawing, recitation, music and the like).
- 3) His lesson itself, however, is artistic in the sense of originality, imagery and through structuring the flow of time in rhythm with the breathing of the children. This is actually the essential aspect.
- 4) Finally, the teachers strive for an appropriate aesthetic environment of the school, for this has its effects on the unconscious moods of the students.

The path is the goal. That means the artistic lesson as a finished result will not exist, for then art is 'frozen'. Far more, there is a visible striving for that. This striving comes to expression among other things through the extent to which the teacher is free of prefabricated methods.

This is observed and acknowledged during the process of recognition.

At the same time it must be assessed whether the artistic activities are used as an end in themselves, or for pedagogical reasons. This distinction is of increasing significance, for artistic activities are also to be found outside Waldorf/Steiner schools.

The Forms: Shaping the School and the Lessons

In the conception of the Waldorf/Steiner schools, Steiner gave us little in the way of forms that would provide a founding identity. They are all founded in the knowledge of the human being and by the social mission of the schools.

They are the following:

- 1) Student groups comprise groups of like age and different levels of proficiency. Classes are arranged according to age, not ability.
- 2) *Alongside* this subject-specific proficiency groups are possible.
- 3) The class teacher accompanies the class for many years.
- 4) The Main lesson takes place in the morning. *Thereafter* the subject lessons.
- 5) There is a pre-school stage without academic objective.
- 6) The school is an all-inclusive school, from pre-school age to young adulthood.
- 7) There is an individual accompanying of students within the class community.
- 8) The school is co-educational.

The following 'forms' apply to the teachers:

- 1) Each colleague is fully and jointly responsible for the school as a whole living organism.
- 2) One maintains an inner and outer connection through regular joint faculty meetings, and engages thereby in further training.
- 3) The management of the school is not handed over to any outside control.
- 4) Parents and teachers form a community that takes responsibility for the school.
- 5) The teachers search for and find forms to develop quality.
- 6) Each teacher is responsible for his lessons on the basis of the study of the human being, the relationship to the students and his social and specialist competencies.

The Justification for its Existence: Entrepreneurial Health

Each school initiative needs development and growth. It is quite evident that an initiative which remains (too) small will one day have to ask the question, whether it is still doing justice to its educational and social tasks. If a primary (lower) school grows in an organic way, the question of high school will surface. Many schools understandably tend to start a high school too early. That often brings with it an existential crisis, which in turn puts the school as a whole into question.

Is the school in a position to establish a reasonably good balance between development and growth, so that the educational task remains intact?

To what extent is the school crisis-prone, crisis-ridden or permanently in crisis?

Crises do not have to be a feature of a school!

The same applies to the finances of the school. On the one hand, they reflect the

'health' of an institution, on the other hand, they are very sensitive to fluctuations, which can come as much from outside as from inside. Does the school have a reasonably healthy financial basis? Or does it need assistance in this area?

Living Together: Social Aspects

The basis for Waldorf/Steiner schools is human interaction. Parents encounter human beings, not officials, in the school. All co-operation and working together are identified by humanity and human dignity.

It is here that significant forms of the working together of teachers, parents and other interested parties can develop. Personal or institutional power should not be a determining factor. In all processes of the school – externally and internally – there is a striving for transparency and a comprehensive picture. This is also the way in which decisions are reached. This quality engenders much goodwill. The question arises as to whether this goodwill can be discerned in the periphery of the school. Encounters between teachers and parents (parent's evenings, consultations, discussions, child studies) need the greatest possible care on the part of the teachers; always considered from the standpoint of 'universal humanity'.

If such striving can be discerned at a school it also gains a profile as an institution which is aware of its social responsibility.

School Leadership

Against the background of the threefold social order which came into being at the same time as the Waldorf school, Rudolf Steiner called upon the colleagues to take the leadership of the school into their own hands. What does this mean? To lead the school means to have the task and mission of the Waldorf school ever clearer in one's con-

sciousness and to constantly work at it. This is only possible through studying together the anthroposophical fundamentals of this pedagogy. So school leadership, founded in the unifying spirit of the Waldorf school, emerges in that colleagues and parents work with the fundamentals – penetrating them with an ever better knowledge.

On this foundation the management of the school, the shaping of the organisation of the school, the finances, administration, etc. can be carried out in the most varied of ways. The old principle of "self-governance" (in the sense of everyone doing everything) no longer functions in many schools. In many places it is being replaced by the most varied forms of delegation of work and responsibility – always seeking consensus with the mission of the school and the people involved.

How the school organises itself in questions of leadership, whether it seeks cohesion of the entity in all things, or whether leadership no longer belongs to the operation of the school – this will form part of the assessment.

Concluding Remarks

If we can summarise what has been outlined here, we can say a Waldorf/Steiner school is one where a majority of the teachers live by an igniting spirit. This spirit makes light and easy what is heavy and hard, it makes the impossible possible and illumines the darkness.

Waldorf-Inspired Schools

Preface

Under the term "Waldorf-Inspired schools" various forms of schooling can be understood.

- It can be about an existing school in mainstream education, which makes use of elements of the Waldorf/Steiner school and wants to apply these.
- It can be about new schools that are on the way to receiving accreditation as a Waldorf school in the (near) future, but still need time to attain this.
- It can be schools which would like as much as possible to realise Waldorf/Steiner education, but are in a legal or religious or cultural context in which this is only possible to a limited extent.
- It can be schools that apply Waldorf/Steiner education within a state teaching system, insofar as this is possible within the existing system.

Then there are also school forms of other kinds which also aspire to Waldorf/Steiner education.

- Those are the very small, quite 'free' schools, such as are found within the context of farming communities.
- To that belong a quickly growing number of home schools. Here we have to distinguish between home schools that are preparing to be regular schools and those which as a matter of principle always want to remain home schools, because all other school forms are rejected.

With these schools various Waldorf elements can be found:

Narrative material is given.

Music is played.

Teaching is in Main Lesson blocks and Main Lesson books are produced.

Lessons are given by the class teachers.

The curriculum is applied.

A hygienic timetable is put into practice.

Eurythmy lessons take place.

(Additional) foreign languages are taught.

There is painting, and form drawings are systematically practised.

The teachers come together for weekly faculty meetings.

The teacher ethos described above is striven for.

The teachers take part in further training for Waldorf teachers.

There is a deepening of the anthropology the school is founded on (Anthroposophy).

In assessing whether a school can be called Waldorf-inspired, it will depend on how many of these elements exist and of what quality.

The Relationship to the Accredited Waldorf Schools

It is important that these schools striving for Waldorf pedagogy are seen and acknowledged. One could envisage a second list of schools in which the Waldorf-inspired schools are listed.

Concluding Remarks

We should avoid these various types of schools becoming invisible in their striving for the art of education.

If Steiner's principle still applies, namely that Anthroposophy should never be permitted to

be separated from its initiator, then an important task lies here: to perceive these forms of schooling as striving for Waldorf education and through this perception to acknowledging their right to exist. Then we have to deal with a second stream of school forms alongside the typical Waldorf/Steiner schools that are acknowledged as such.

In this way a fruitful educational Mesopotamia can become possible.

translated by Michaël Merle

Passed by the International Forum of Waldorf/ Steiner Schools (Hague Circle) on 14 November 2014 in Harduf, Israel

The International Forum of Waldorf/Steiner Schools (Hague Circle) can be contacted via the

**Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum
Postfach 1**

CH-4143 Dornach

Phone 0041 (0)61 706 43 15

Fax 0041 (0)61 706 44 74

Email paed.sektion@goetheanum.ch

Appeal 'Articles about Class Teacher's Work'

translated by Simon Kuttner

Dear Colleagues

At the International Forum the initiative of collecting articles, written works by students / scientific articles and research projects in English or German that relate to the "Class Teacher" theme has arisen. This initiative has emerged from the International Forum as part of the effort to strengthen the concept of the Class Teacher. The focus can be on school placement reports, reflection on methodology in different subjects, general observations of class teacher activi-

ties etc. A data bank of all the information can then be set up and made accessible for everyone.

In order to make this project a success, we would be delighted if colleagues from the schools and in particular colleagues from the teacher training seminars could send us their work electronically to the following email address.

On behalf of the International Forum of the Waldorf School Movement.

Class Teacher in a Waldorf School – An Appeal

Claus-Peter Röh, Robert Thomas, Christof Wiechert, Tomáš Zdražil
For the International Forum of the Waldorf School movement
translated by Sue Simpson

Over the last two years the International Forum (Hague Circle) has addressed the question of how the concept of the class teacher as indicated by Rudolf Steiner can be understood within the current timeframe. The enduring concept being that the one who takes on the task of the class teacher does so from Class one to eight, or as long as is possible.

Rudolf Steiner always approached pedagogical questions with the greatest spiritual economy. One person remaining with a class over a number of years is consistent with this economy: Overview, grounded understanding of the students, real steps taken over the years, formulating records of learning over years and the 'soul-spiritual growth' along with the students are only some of the advantages. The specific role of the class teacher was regarded from the very beginning as an integral feature of the Waldorf Schools.

Today the reality in schools is different. It has been found that some teachers reach the limits of their pedagogical skills. For some time it has been recognised that people want tasks which allow for an easier overview and that the flexibility to develop along with the students over eight years is not there. This range of issues has also been backed by studies.

The result is a number of explanations of the various forms that have evolved, including discarding the class teacher principle altogether, which has simply arisen out of every day practice, or it was perhaps even intended.

These facts raise the following questions: Is the concept of the class teacher part of the Waldorf idea? Or can it be exchanged with other forms of teacher-student relationships without damaging the idea of the Waldorf School?

In my opinion this question is of greatest importance for the International Forum, specifically in regards to identity. We asked the colleagues at the various schools to give their response to this question.

To activate a process for answering these questions, an investigation took place into what concepts, pictures and theories lived within Rudolf Steiner which enabled the class teacher profession to become part of his art of education. The results were published in the Journal of the Pedagogical Section.

Later the results of a survey, that was scientifically supported, with the help of the International Forum, was published in the Journal. The results were more qualitative descriptions on the question of how the class teacher idea is managed today.

We want to present the advantages of the class teacher for Waldorf Schools today, despite the very real challenges or concerns, based on the simple observation that the art of education was intended not only for the 20th century.

Paramount is the hope that these three articles in the Journal of the Pedagogical

Section¹ may activate discussions in the schools and that they will stimulate colleagues to grapple with this central theme.

Naturally each author will respond to their presentation, written in the spirit of the conversation within the International Forum.

1 Zdražil, T.: Having Class Teachers for Eight Years. Rudolf Steiner's Viewpoints on the Span of the Class Teacher's Work. In: *Journal of the Pedagogical Section Michaelmas 2013*, 52-61
Wiechert, C.: A new Image for Waldorf Teachers. In: *Journal of the Pedagogical Section Michaelmas 2013*, 62-70
Kindt, R. & Zdražil, T.: The Situation of Class Teachers Worldwide. In: *Journal of the Pedagogical Section Easter 2014*, 9-10

International Teacher Trainers' Conference and ENASTE Congress

Florian Osswald

The training of early childhood educators and teachers for all age groups is one of the most important tasks in today's world of education. Worldwide there is a range of training centres serving the needs of the local community.

In recent years the exchange between these institutions has become increasingly significant. We have found that everyone benefits from such "neighbourly help".

With the following two conferences we are hoping to set down new points of reference in the field of education. We trust that the innovative spirit of Rudolf Steiner's pedagogical impulse will spread further into the field of teacher training.

ENASTE Congress:

"Transformations. Education in a rapidly-changing world"

We are convinced that the manifold and fast social, cultural, technological, economical and demographic changes of the last few years repeatedly present educational establishments (kindergartens, schools, high schools and universities) with new challenges, but are also a chance for a far-sighted kind of education, such as Waldorf education. The international ENASTE congress therefore wants to reflect on these developments and their significance for childhood and adolescence, for education, kindergartens, schools and teacher training. As Waldorf teacher trainers we permanently face the challenge of creating contempo-

rary and forward-looking teacher training in cooperation with our students. It should be a training which develops and encourages interest in the child and interest in the world – in all its complexities; a task which will also be explored in the International Teacher Trainers' Conference. We hope that the lectures held at the ENASTE congress will contribute some ideas and suggestions to the debate.

One of the main aims of ENASTE, the European Network for Academic Steiner Education, is to position and establish Waldorf education within the framework of academic discussion. It is therefore also an important aim of the congress to intensify the dialogue between Waldorf education and (educational) science. Consequently, it is important for us that Waldorf education, as well as other types of education, are represented by the congress' lecturers. We are convinced that a perception of the quality and variety of Waldorf research by the representatives of academic (educational) science can be significantly increased through discussions among professionals.

Furthermore, there is a chance to hear about and discuss a variety of research and thoughts, particularly in connection with current changes in society and their significance for pedagogy. The exchange among professionals enables a new understanding of contemporary issues and, through dialogue, to further develop personal beliefs.

The chosen positioning of the congress within the framework of scientific discourse includes certain formal requirements such as

the five main lectures as well as some focus groups. Within these, researchers will have the opportunity to briefly present their research (ca. 20 mins.) and to discuss it with their listeners.

The international Teacher Trainers' Conference will focus on the following question:

How can teachers and educators discover for themselves the source and conditions which enable transformation?

It is a question which demands openness, interest and self reflection. Openness and interest enable an encounter with new territory which can call into question the way one has taught so far. Not only teaching content and educational aims, but also the personal characteristics which qualify one as a teacher, might be questioned and examined anew. Education and teaching have to be created anew from moment to moment without faltering in the face of contemporary life. Janus Korczak expressed this succinctly:

"Know yourself before you begin to analyse children. Become aware of your own strengths before you begin to lecture children about their rights and duties. You are yourself a child amongst children. First and foremost you have to understand, educate and teach the child within yourself." (Janusz Korczak, *How to Love a Child*)

In 1919, Rudolf Steiner, in the essay *"The Educational Foundation of the Waldorf School"*,

explained that Waldorf education tries to connect young people to current issues out of a sense of duty towards contemporary challenges. He points to an education of teachers which is not reduced to mere subject knowledge but which is *"part of all aspects of life. Such a college of teachers will make it possible to awaken in the young person a sense of the spiritual aspects of life and also an understanding of life's practical aspects."*

Steiner mentions only teachers here because there were no Waldorf kindergartens at that time; it is obvious that today we include kindergarten teachers and early childhood educators.

The topics *Openness, Interest, Self Reflection and the Challenges for Waldorf Teachers* will be introduced and outlined in the conference lectures. We are pleased to have Ann Sharfman, Centre of Creative Education, South Africa, Douglas Gerwin, Antioch, USA and Jost Schieren, Alanus Hochschule, Germany with us. The topics will be further explored in the workshops following the lectures.

Additionally, we also hope to continue what we began at the first teacher educators' conference in 2013: encounters and dialogues between various teacher education institutions, so that richer, more varied and new forms of cooperation may arise.

On behalf of the preparatory group:
Anne-Kathrin Hantel, Leonhard Weiss, Carlo Willmann, Tobias Richter, Florian Osswald, Michael Zech

Waldorf Resources: A Project of the International Forum for Steiner Waldorf Education

www.waldorf-resources.org

On behalf of the editors: Florian Osswald

Rudolf Steiner's educational impulse can be found all over the world. Today, there are Steiner Waldorf schools and kindergartens on every continent, focusing on the child and its education. However, the motives expressed by Steiner at the onset of the school movement and the methodology of teaching call for contemporary and culture-specific renewal and adaptation.

On our homepage we want to provide a sweeping landscape of preparation material and connect the pebbles by the wayside with the cosmos.

The choice of this online medium dictates its form; however, we are dedicated to our core tasks, particularly on focused self-development which enables people to become creative teachers and educators.

Education is not science but art; it always happens in the present moment. Education is always an encounter with the individual in need of encouragement. The art of education starts with direct human contact.

Lesson preparation, in this sense, also includes a review. We cannot plan exactly what will happen in the actual moment, therefore we need to look back after the event and study it with hindsight.

The Project

Waldorf Resources wants to support the teacher's process of individual lesson prepara-

tion which is not bound to any cultural or national conventions.

We have chosen to create a homepage because it is easily accessible worldwide. A homepage is a platform for exchange, but it cannot replace conferences or face to face discussions. The page wants to encourage the reader's individual initiative and educational ideas.

We will help to find more suitable forms for any topics which go beyond the scope of a website.

The site is offered in Spanish, English and German and contains the following elements:

- **Forums**

The site is designed for people who work with Rudolf Steiner's educational impulse in a contemporary setting; this includes contact and dialogue with likeminded people. The forums offer the possibility to get in touch with each other after conferences or in specific interest groups.

- **Texts and Papers**

The published articles and essays are individual and do not offer any recipes but aim to encourage holistic thinking processes. They relate to various school subjects, age groups and further topics.

- **Links**

The homepage focuses on its core tasks; therefore, we are offering a list of links to websites which take you further afield.

- Calendar of Events

Here, you will find information about international meetings, conferences and further education held in more than one language for participants from various countries. For national events please refer to the relevant national associations or training centres.

We hope that this new homepage meets the needs of teachers, educators and other education professionals worldwide. The editors are happy to receive any feedback such as questions, critical thoughts or ideas.

How our "Internal College Meetings" at the Freie Waldorfschule in Mülheim on the Ruhr have evolved over the years

Christian Michaelis-Braun
translated by Steffi Cook

Soon after the Freie Waldorfschule in Mülheim an der Ruhr came into being in August 1993, the weekly "internal college" was implemented with the aim of running the school.

All founding members became members of this group and together they determined personnel matters and an overall vision for the school. Once a year these meetings would have a particularly "festive" mood when new teachers were welcomed into the circle. The focus at that point was the early part of the "Study of Man" which, according to Rudolf Steiner, was like a prayer. Rudolf Steiner describes, at this specific moment in 1919, the relationship of founding members with the third hierarchy, the angels, archangels and archai: and how they imbue us with strength, courage and light. After being welcomed, the new members would be asked to give a personal presentation of how they viewed their position in our school and their responsibility for the whole school moving forward in a positive way, which, by joining the school management group, they were now taking on.

And there had been another tradition in our school: our founding teacher, Frau Anna Sophia Bäuerle, used to invite all College members to her house, usually on Epiphany or another day late in the Christmas holidays. After reading a passage by Rudolf Steiner containing some current impulses, we tried to have a conversation, separate from school business, about how we felt about the situation in the world and in our school, and in anthroposophy in general. What noteworthy

events had taken place in the past year, and what aspects were flowing into our work together for the year to come and beyond?

After Frau Bäuerle left and the internal college had been dissolved as part of a new approach to teacher self-administration, several attempts were made to pick up the threads from the events described above and their aims in a different way. The core aim was to find a contemporary structure for caring for the spiritual foundations for the work in our school and for keeping in mind the connection with spiritual wisdom and forces. How are we going to be able to grasp the connections with the spiritual world and its beings, as described by Rudolf Steiner at the time of the foundation of the Waldorf School in 1919, in such a way that we receive strength, courage and light, which we so urgently need for the tasks facing us? Or, to put it differently: How can we make the esoteric real in a Steiner Waldorf School in a manner appropriate to our times?

It is surely not enough to read out or recite texts given to us by Rudolf Steiner or his pupils. How can we prepare appropriate conversations on esoteric themes? How do we generate the right mood, separate from the day-to-day activity, but not elevated, theatrical or dogmatic?

The esoteric path will lead each one of us to our deepest self – it is a path to be practised. Are we able to share our experiences with each other, even if these are still very much initial and incomplete? How can we have

meaningful conversations about the teacher meditations given to us by Rudolf Steiner?

Here we have developed the following structure over time to help us transform what was intended: between once and three times per year we will hold a particularly festive meeting which we call "internal college meeting". We tend to choose the first meeting day after the holidays. If possible we will try not to have any other meetings that day. We use a different room and we decorate it with a candle and some flowers. There will be some music and a verse at the beginning and at the end. In the first part we may have a presentation on a theme as suggested in the book "Towards the Deepening of Waldorf Education", or an introduction leading into a conversation. Last time we shared our personal sources of strength with each other.

A College member will then give us a personal presentation in the second part. We usually approach those teachers who have either only been with us a few years, or those who have been here 10, 20 or 25 years. The subject is: "What is my personal relationship with the school and how did I arrive here?"

This requires a sensitive approach: How personal will I make my contribution to allow it to remain meaningful in its connection to the school and not deviate too far into the private sphere? Will the listeners succeed in creating an attentive and open atmosphere to allow the speaker to address both joyful aspects but also share concerns?

These personal presentations have become a much appreciated "jewel" in the life of our college. The community experiences the presentations as a gift, and the speaker feels gratitude for the way this gift has been received. Such moments create a wonderful experience of a community with a joint destiny and help us to tackle our many wonderful but also challenging tasks. While we feel that we have found a good permanent structure for the second part of the meeting, the first part, cultivating the esoteric aspects, is still very much work in progress. We have to be very focused to keep searching because every day, school life presents us with many an obstacle to this work. However, we are able to sense a strong spirit in our school imbuing us with powerful impulses for our search.

Agenda

2015

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| February 13 – 15 | Meditative Praxis (only in German) |
| March 30 – April 3 | Transitions in Childhood from Birth to 14 Years:
Significance, Challenges, Consequences
Tasks for Educators and Teachers
(different languages) |
| May 29 – 31 | Conference for Religion Teachers
(also in English) |
| May 31 – June 4 | Training Course for Religion Teachers
(only in German) |
| October 5 – 9 | International Conference for Mathematic
Teachers |
| November 1 – 4 | Conference for Educational Support Teachers
(also in English and Spanish) |

2016

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| March 28 – April 2 | 10 th World Teachers' Conference
(different languages) |
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