



# Life in the Anthroposophical Society

Anthroposophy Worldwide

No. 10 • December 2000



International Conferences

Michaelmas Conference  
in Japan

Right to Childhood  
in Belgium

pages 3-5



Expansion  
of Executive Council

New Leader for the  
Agriculture Department

page 7

Markus Jermann Discusses  
Goetheanum Finances

page 9

What Is so Bad about Genetic Engineering?

page 11

Forum: Spiritual Experiences  
Anthroposophy in the World  
Anthroposophical Society  
School of Spiritual Science  
Feature

2  
3  
7  
10  
11

OUR NEXT ISSUE WILL APPEAR IN FEBRUARY 2001

## Freedom and Community

As a human being, I have been shaped partly by nature (heredity) and partly by society (education), but I am also striving in varying degrees to be free, to be "original" rather than "typical." The reality of life, however, is that I am always linked to others. How can my path and another's path toward freedom be harmonised while remaining free?

One common element in a community can be shared ideals. I experienced such a community at Emerson College in England, a centre for adults based on the work of Rudolf Steiner, where I taught for twelve years. At no time did I feel there was one "leader" with a number of "followers." We were colleagues, and there was always a space for initiative to come from anyone in the circle. None of us had a syllabus to follow or a program to carry out. Anything we did came from our own imagination, inspiration or intuition, and we were responsible for it.

At Emerson College, the student community changed every year (although not completely). The staff, together with the students, was striving ever anew for a "free" running of the College. This included day to day cleaning and maintenance and also regular "soul care" and human contact between staff and students. A central feature of College life was the cycle of yearly festivals which staff and students created together. All in all, it was the task in this community to meet together with heart and will, as well as with understanding. One ideal was not to lose sight of the individual in our concern for the community, especially as many students went through significant life changes while at the College.

Already in 1924, Rudolf Steiner spoke of souls coming to earth in order to form "voluntary communities of Michael." Michael is pointing the human being to the same place where free spiritual deeds may be accomplished on earth. Have we not all come to participate in the free creating and transforming of ourselves and earthly life? Are anthroposophical initiatives and institutions attracting and meeting Michaelic spirits? Our anthroposophical groups, however modestly, have the possibility to be "practice grounds" for the interchange of soul and spirit in an atmosphere where freedom would be nurtured.

*Julian Pook, New Zealand*

## Exchanging Spiritual Experiences

Now we know! Anthroposophists *can* talk about their spiritual experiences with each other. I had heard all kinds of things in years past. As recently as November 1998 Professor Wolfgang Schad said to me, "When you start to talk about your spiritual experiences in anthroposophical circles, you get only two kinds of reactions. Either you are considered to be no longer quite sound of mind or people say, "He seems to think he is Rudolf Steiner." At that time Schad saw little likelihood of this working. Others had similar experiences. In 1996 a member of the Executive Council lamented the lack of a forum in which people could speak of their own spiritual experiences. Now, however, the climate seems to be changing.

Nodar Belkania and I offered a discussion group called "Exchange of Spiritual Experiences" as our contribution to the Michaelmas conference. We planned to restrict the group to 10 participants because of the requirement that every person speak. Yet even with about 16 participants the group proved capable of working. We found a working modus very soon; indeed, some of the participants already had experience in leading such groups.

Nothart Rohlf was there, who had introduced me to this way of working; Philip Martyn, who was a member of the Council of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain for many years, has led such groups in London; Armin Scheffler, a

pharmacist from Pforzheim, Germany, has repeatedly described his own approach to spiritual research. Two scientists from France (Christine Ballivet and Jean-Paul Hornecker) also contributed, along with Wolfgang Garvelmann, Andreas Heertsch, Rudi Lissau, Rodica-Liana Paxino, Edwin Hübner, Ernst Katz and others.

The goal of such a group is not to discuss each other's research results. Everything depends on recovering states of knowing in such a way that the others can participate in them. You need to speak from the experience in such a way that the listener himself has a kind of encounter with reality. Julija Dobrovolska, from Latvia, helped us to do this for example, when she quite simply and without fanfare described the spiritual guidance that had led her to anthroposophy in the Soviet Union.

In such a community, people "lend" their spiritual organs – which are as yet open only for particular experiences – to each other. When this process succeeds (joining the individuals to a larger organ) then a community arises that is similar to the connectedness of brothers and sisters. A way of knowing unfolds in this mutual sphere that is simultaneously love.

You do not achieve this state as long as you are trying to pack what the other person is telling you into what you already know, that is, into concepts stored in memory. Anything that comes from memory shuts the

spiritual experience out. So does well-remembered anthroposophy.

We succeeded in reaching a partially memory-free discourse quite soon. This is not so surprising. Once you have some experience with living anthroposophy you quickly notice (at least after a few pointers) what memory does and how memory-free experience of knowledge works.

People who had never spoken with each other before entered into exact phenomenological conversations about their seemingly inexpressible impressions of folk spirits, double demons, falsely interpreted memories of incarnations, etc. There was never enough time (six 75-minute sessions were definitely too short). However, at the end we agreed on one outcome of the Michaelmas Conference. It is possible to speak about spiritual experiences and to appraise and appropriate them together.

Martin Barkhoff, Germany

**Corrections:** *Anthroposophy Worldwide* no. 8/2000, page 3, 1st paragraph should read "4 times 12 people."

*Anthroposophy Worldwide* no. 9/2000, page 9, first verse of poem, should read, "Where a man in worlds / lived the Spirit of Man."

## Anthroposophy Worldwide

"Life in the Anthroposophical Society – Anthroposophy Worldwide" is published monthly. It is distributed by the regional Anthroposophical Societies – in some cases augmented with independently edited news and articles. It also appears as a supplement to the weekly paper "Das Goetheanum".

### Publisher:

General Anthroposophical Society, represented by Paul Mackay

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We expressly wish for active support and collaboration.

To receive *Anthroposophy Worldwide*, please apply to the Anthroposophical Society in your country. If questions with the distribution arise, only the subscribers to "Das Goetheanum" should contact the address below. For all others the address is the address of the Anthroposophical Society in your country.

Address: Weekly Paper "Das Goetheanum", Box, CH-4143 Dornach 1, Switzerland, fax +41/61/706 44 65  
e-mail: wochenschrift@goetheanum.ch

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Printing by J.W. Arrowsmith Ltd. Bristol

## Our Activities Are Not "Better" than Theirs

*In Anthroposophy Worldwide* no. 8/2000 Jan Bouzek drew attention to the fact that anthroposophy lives differently in different regions of the world. In the following issue Traute Starke then wrote of the importance of perceiving each other. Here, Suzanne Brodersen reminds us of the need to value the artistic, creative work of everyone, whether or not they are anthroposophists.

One of many things I think we must concern ourselves with in the Anthroposophical Society and thus also in a newsletter is to stress that no activities are "more anthroposophical" than others. I have been in this work since 1952 when I first arrived at Michael Hall, England! Now I am a teacher at our kindergarten seminar here in Copenhagen, after many years of having been a Steiner kindergarten leader, and before that 15 years as a teacher in a State school! I have friends in both groups.

A matter that has always struck me is the attitude that art done by anthroposophists is "better" than other art! This is perhaps not intended, but somehow we must be aware of all the many

others around the world – not that we should make African or Eastern art ourselves – but we too easily talk about art as if only "the German approach" is the right one! Sometimes it would be wonderful to read about people who have an artistic approach to their work. We must not give the impression that if people are not actively doing art they are "second-hand." I know many people who have an ordinary job, but who have an artistic way of dealing with it – people who in their spare time go about their gardening, reading or cooking, etc., in a wonderful, artistic way! We must not forget to see how artistic scientists actually are! Often creating new theories out of nothing...

Suzanne Brodersen, Denmark

## Creating a Vessel with Willing Hearts

**Impressions from the 5th Anthroposophical Asia Pacific Conference, November 2–5, 2000 in Japan**



The conference venue Yama no mura

After visiting the National Museum and Tokyo Steiner School, our group of overseas participants arrived at the conference centre in the dark and were received warmly by the organizing committee members and by those who had come by train or car from as far away as the northern island of Hokkaido or the southern tip of Kagoshima. This conference was a memorable opportunity for Japanese and for friends from Asia and the Pacific region who were visiting Japan for the first time to meet each other. As Japanese we were not unaware of the experience and the feeling of our neighbours through the conflicts in the recent history of Asia. For many Asian people Japan was something of an enigma.

In quiet anticipation, the conference began. Yuko Okada, a Japanese from California, chaired it with a sunny smile. Tomie Ando, who resides in the United Kingdom, recited the foundation stone meditation in Japanese and English against the noise of the rain, which was pounding on the tin roof of the building. Hiroko Oba recited the Michael Imagination. For many of us it was the first time to hear these powerful words in Japanese, but I felt the strong presence of spirit in the words. It gave substance to our time together.

Although the centre was located in the foothills of Mt. Fuji, we saw nothing of it for the first days, as the passing typhoon changed its direction and brought heavy rainfall. We were confined in the main hall most of the day, but this was a blessing for it gave us plenty of time to be together and to get to know each other. I found an old friend, Denis Pillaud – a French biodynamic farmer who had been in Japan for nearly 20 years. I was also reunited with new friends whom I had come to know during the first part of my trip. Sachiko Yamasaki, for example, an active member of the organising committee, had met me at Kansai airport at the beginning of my trip 3

*When Fumiko Chikami heard about the first Asia Pacific Conference in the Philippines a few years ago, she would have liked to attend. Two years ago she learned that a conference was planned in Thailand, and again, she very much wanted to be there. This autumn, finally, she was able to participate in the 5th Asia-Pacific Conference held at the foot of Mt. Fuji in Japan, her country of origin.*

*This was the first Michaelmas Conference in Japan and the concluding event of the Michaelmas conferences 2000. It was the first international conference which brought together over 60 participants from 20 countries and more than 120 new and old students of anthroposophy from all over Japan. Employees in Japan have only 10 days vacation a year, which some participants used to attend this conference and the roundtable on Waldorf education which followed it (see box on the next page).*

weeks earlier. I met Hiroko Nakashima and Masami Kanda, who were part of the translation team that had the brilliant idea of raising funds by translating and selling a booklet, *Waldorf Education, Questions and Answers* by Alan Howard. They were successful in raising funds to help overseas participants come to Japan. Reiko Shimada, by then a familiar face and voice, introduced me to Masashi Satoh and Yoshihiro Kondo, who had brought this conference to Japan in the first place. The three of them had worked hard during the past two years, supported by many others.

The theme of the conference was “The Mystery of Freedom.” As speakers from the East and West addressed the theme from a different angle each day, the complex and mysterious nature of freedom emerged. Alongside the main theme, Yuji Agematsu, the Chairman of the Anthroposophical Society in Japan, showed the parallel process of the development of consciousness in the West and in Japan, which he has researched. Benjamin Cherry, who has lived and travelled extensively in Asia, further developed the theme with the reference to Zen and his study of *The Philosophy of Freedom*. In so doing he made clear the link between freedom and love.

Another Japanese speaker, Ryuhan Nishikawa, a Buddhist monk and anthroposophist, spoke of ego consciousness and its connection to freedom from the Eastern religious and philosophical perspective. In anthroposophy he sees an integration of the Eastern and the Western mystery streams. Terry Boardman, an Englishman who lived in Japan and knows it intimately, examined the concept of freedom which is spread throughout today's world. It first took root in the English folk soul and was developed from the 17th century onwards, becoming the basic value of materialism in Western civilisation. He asked if it is

not time to consider the freedom of the folk spirit and he pointed out a common task facing Japan and the United Kingdom – to overcome our insularity and create a freer relationship with the continent as well as with America.

Nicanor Perlas from the Philippines touched on the relationship between freedom and the threefold social order. He showed how our threefold social initiative could balance the opposite stream of materialism of our present-day world. Masao



Photos: Toshio Takahashi

Naka, who works in the field of curative education in Germany and Japan, approached the theme of freedom by sharing his experience with mothers whose children had been born with multiple difficulties. He witnessed, in the mothers' despair and struggle, a process of transformation that led them to light and freedom.

Rolf Kerler, who is treasurer at the Goetheanum, introduced the relationship between money and freedom. He pointed explicitly to where money touches freedom – in the deed of giving. By giving or investing money in the development of others, we liberate ourselves from the boundary of egoism. Lastly, Paul Mackay, also from the Goetheanum, spoke of freedom in the Anthroposophical Society, referring to three archetypal dramas in our souls in the context of our time. It is the destiny of our time and we all go through this process of transformation to reach

our full humanity. As a member of the Anthroposophical Society, whether from the East or from the West, we can go through this process consciously when we choose to be active in the development of our soul forces out of our own free will. This is a task of our time.

The content of the lectures was rich and deep. Equally rich were the small group sessions we undertook between lectures. The programme included eurythmy, watercolour painting, religion, biodynamic farming, spatial dynamics, the Japanese art of knot tying, education, social problems, ethical individualism, biography work, and Article 9 on peace in the Japanese constitution in connection with the *Philosophy of Freedom*.

The evening was the time for cultural exchange. A piece of nature was created in the hall in the art of Ikebana by the experienced hands of Yuriko J. Omata, and a Buddhist's prayer by Christlieb Yuho Jobst accompanied the ancient art of tea ceremony by Yuriko. The elegant dancing and the joyous singing by Asian friends touched my heart and brought up the old question, "Why destroy such beauty?" with the military power in the past and with the economic power at present.

As the days went by, the space and the time were filled with warmth and joy – through being together and sharing the thoughts and experiences that each of us brought from a different part of the world – not only from Asia and the Pacific region but also from Europe. Towards the end of the conference, we were able to see Mt. Fuji against the clear blue autumn sky, very near, just above the bright red and yellow leaves of the surrounding woods. After such a time together, our parting from friends was not easy.

I brought home many precious memories of special moments that I experienced at various points of the conference. The most unforgettable of all is the selfless service and commitment that the large group of staff had given to support the conference. In their giving gesture, I felt the beauty of the human spirit expressed fully in giving so willingly and conscientiously. The foundation stone meditation sounded clear each day in the vessel thus created by so many willing hearts.

In our meeting and working together, I found something of the answer to the question I had been carrying within me for some time. *How can anthroposophy, which was born in the West in its historical process of evolution, live in the East?* Through common spiritual endeavour we can reach the same deep root which knows no boundaries.

Fumiko Chikami, Great Britain

## The Human I in East Asian Cultures

### Waldorf Roundtable Discussion in Asia

*The fourth roundtable discussion on Waldorf education in Asia was held November 6-7, 2000 in Japan. Representatives of Waldorf schools and kindergartens from China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam gathered to discuss current developments and problems. Thorough reports from each country dealt with both the general political situation for education and with the special needs of Waldorf initiatives.*

One question that concerns all of us is the protection of the labels "Waldorf" and "Rudolf Steiner." Nowhere else is the inclination so great to seize and market an upcoming fashion. We can already recognize the signs. Looking to our own work, we are concerned with the criteria for quality that a school or kindergarten must fulfill to justify the name "Waldorf school." We will need to continue working with this question and with ensuring quality.

This year we concentrated on the first three years of school. Helen Cock from the Waldorf training seminar in Melbourne, Australia and Tine Bruinsma from the Sloka School in Hyderabad, India introduced our discussions. Through her colorful report of the school in Hyderabad (a school which has children from seven religions and thirteen mother tongues) and through

contributions from the teachers of the Tokyo Rudolf Steiner School, we gained vivid insight into how totally different conditions for education are in Southeast and East Asia, compared with Europe. Central to our discussion was the view of the human I in East Asian cultures.

What exactly is the task of education in a country whose language always mentions the I in its relation to its natural or human surroundings? In Vietnamese for example, there are more than thirty ways of saying "I." This is a field of research that must be taken up in view of the growing Waldorf movement. It has a direct influence on the educational goals of Asian Waldorf schools.

The meeting brought great joy to all of us, strengthening the feeling of solidarity in this still quite young kindergarten and Waldorf school movement.

Nana Göbel, Germany

## Denmark

### We Don't Repeat Childhood

#### 50 Years Waldorf Education in Denmark

*To commemorate the 50th anniversary of Waldorf education in Denmark, an exhibit was staged in Copenhagen, "We Don't Repeat Childhood." The public was treated to a live parallel program of workshops, student performances, class demonstrations and much more, attended by a total of 5500 people. Fourteen Danish schools accepted responsibility for the costs (also providing 150 kroner per student), to secure the budget of 800,000 kroner.*

"Modern society is subject to increasingly rapid change. Cultural and social opposites will clash dramatically, calling for a high degree of humanity. Only education which has roots in the human being's deepest needs and which has a view to future developments can produce children and young people who can face these challenges with courage, love and new ideas." Thus did the exhibit brochure formulate the current task of education.

With their program of workshops, student performances, classes at work, eurythmy demonstrations and much else, the Waldorf children and adults created a very special mood, a fruitful social environment. The students showed their activities in a very open and hearty way; they did not let the audience bother them. To

the contrary – the audience was drawn in! The exhibit elicited a positive response. Several television stations reported on it during prime time.

Interest in early childhood education has been very great over the years. Waldorf early childhood education is known to very many educators in the country thanks to the kindergarten teacher-training seminar. Many educational impulses have certainly been taken up in many places. About 2000 people have taken these courses.

The training center Audonicon has been having financial problems for some time now, so the Steiner schools have taken responsibility for training teachers there. Students who take the courses are eligible for government funds.

Marianne Møller-Nielsen, Denmark

# Something Sacred Occurs in Play

International Alliance for Childhood Conference , 11-14 October 2000 in Brussels

*It is relatively new in the history of humanity that a differentiation is made between childhood and adulthood. The child has not always been perceived as a being in its own right, having its own needs. Until the 17th or 18th centuries the child was considered a "not yet."*

*However, even now in the 21st century, the rights of the child have not reached full consciousness. Even in regions where children are more protected and cared for, they are subject to the dangers of the electronic media, the hectic of traffic, and teaching methods unsuited to children, in which too little and too much is demanded of them simultaneously. Another threat is sexual abuse – throughout all segments of society.*

Photo: Werner Covaerts



*Hundreds of dedicated parents, teachers, youth counselors, child psychologists, educators and jurists from around the world met for the conference, "Rights to children – a bridge for the future." Alliance for Childhood arranged the conference with support from the Waldorf School Association, the International Association of Waldorf Kindergartens, and others. The kindergarten teacher Klaar Aarts (of the initiative group in Belgium) and the Rudolf Steiner Academy (Antwerp, Belgium) helped with the organization. Christine Gruwez spoke with Hans Arnoot, who works at the Rudolf Steiner Academy and in the Federation of Steiner Schools in Belgium.*

*Who is the Alliance for Childhood?*

That is not easy to answer! Anyone who shares our concern about the right to childhood and who wants to do something about it can join the Alliance. Important is a total readiness to cross boundaries.

*Why was the conference held in Brussels?*

Because of "Witte Mars," the day on which more than 300,000 people demonstrated in Brussels, after they had heard about a terrible crime against children in Belgium. One reason many of them protested was because the picture of childhood itself had been violated.

*But isn't Brussels a center in Europe?*

It is in the sense that many European institutions are seated in Brussels. For me, a European center would have broader dimensions. What does Europe mean with regard to the right to childhood? What could be the specific contribution of Europe? And what could the idea of childhood (in its deepest sense) contribute to an authentic Europe?

*Was the conference noticed worldwide?*

Yes. Participants came from Russia, Brazil, Japan, South Africa, New Zealand, the U.S.A. and the Philippines. However, most were from Western Europe.

*Isn't it difficult to agree on these matters? Isn't the situation of a child in "wealthy" Belgium totally different from the situation of a child in a poverty-stricken ghetto somewhere in South America?*

Although their living conditions are totally different, the surprising thing is that the essential question remains one and the same: Are we capable of responding to the child as an autonomous being? A child is not a small grown-up or – worse – a consumer to target or something one can own. The child belongs only to itself.

A child is quite simply a child. It is a being with its very own world and this world cannot be streamlined into conformity with any other world. We can observe this best when children play (when they are still allowed to play!). In play the child develops its independent being. This is similar across the world, even if children's toys differ.

*Play as a human right?*

Precisely! Incidentally, O. Fred Donaldson, the "Play Man," stressed this most emphatically. Children want to play. That is their cosmopolitan trait. The universal human reveals itself in play; the child reveals what it means to be human. This is why we as grownups can learn so much from children. Perhaps they carry more humanness within them, which we grownups need to seek. That is why Donaldson says, "Something sacred occurs in play."

*Do children of industrialized societies tend to be more disadvantaged in this respect?*

You could say so. In the West, adults arrange to keep children occupied and amused. But play is something fundamentally different. At the conference it was important to see how a general understanding of this basic human element is growing among professionals in the field.

*Many words have been spoken. But did a mutual project arise? A strategy? Initially we had the deep conviction that we must do something. Themes such as violence, the media and computers are very high on our agenda. We had planned an initial summary of ideas and viewpoints for the last day of the conference, but we could not manage it anymore because of the many viewpoints that fortunately found space. I am thinking of a kind of "Declaration of Brussels" that would be publicized later.*

*What impressed you most?*

Much! Very much! Perhaps it was the

experience of how dedicated people from the most diverse backgrounds found each other at the conference. I was deeply touched by what connected people so closely who did not know each other before. Connected them immediately. The quiet restraint that can accompany the question, "Is he or she an anthroposophist or...?" disappeared from the first moment onwards. We were quite simply people gathered around the idea of the child. This is what determines the spiritual quality of a task – not whether everyone belongs to the Waldorf school movement. Perhaps individual new initiatives will arise from these encounters.

*Such as?*

We have had initial discussions towards starting some kind of collaboration between Belgium and the Netherlands regarding the small child. Or information networks on certain themes such as the media and computers. Also, there were positive reactions in Flemish newspapers. This might make it possible to discuss the theme of computers in Belgian education in a less prejudiced way. The newspaper articles have awakened interest.

*And how will you go on from here?*

The Alliance will document the entire conference. We already have an agreement with Hawthorn Press (Great Britain). But this is only a first step. Children need strong initiatives worldwide. The Alliance would like to provide a framework for such initiatives. But a network depends on the people who use it and enliven it!

*An appeal, therefore?*  
Definitely.

Interview by Christine Gruwez, who also translated it from the Flemish into German. This translation is based on the German version.  
Contact: Internationale Vereinigung der Waldorfschulen, Heubergstr. 11/18, DE-70188 Stuttgart, Germany; tel. +49/711/268 44 70; fax 26 84 47 44.

## Groups of Women as National Treasures

### Life Worth Living – A Travel Report

*Kenya has many small farm projects in addition to the huge monocultures of the American company Del Monte. The small farm projects encourage a responsible, independent use of resources, opening up fresh opportunities. A four-year project that is funded 75% by the German government will benefit 1560 farmers in 52 groups. Sustainable Agriculture Community Development, an NGO, oversees the project in Kenya, collaborating with the Development Fund of GLS Community Bank (i.e., the "Gemeinnützige Treuhandstelle" in Bochum, Germany).*

Pineapple monocultures as far as the eye can see. This pineapple country belongs to the American company Del Monte. Tractors clatter day and night. We get out of the way of a huge plowing machine on the worn-out road. Not only planting and harvesting, but also watering is done by machines, guaranteeing yields despite the aridity. Other export products come from the coffee plantations and giant greenhouses for roses. A Kenyan day laborer earns about three German marks a day.

Suddenly the landscape changes. The small farms are situated on steeper land. We see the thoroughly weather-beaten, unfruitful red earth. The road resembles a washed-out streambed in places. Yet only a little water is trickling at the bottom of the valley. Barefoot women and children are hauling canisters of water from the floor of the valley up the steep, narrow paths – sometimes several hundred meters – to their mud homes. The slopes are divided into small plots usually bearing only sparse coffee shrubs or corn.

We stop before a small farm and are immediately surrounded by a swarm of excited children. A group of farmers is waiting to welcome us. Here, high banana bushes, an avocado tree and papaya plants create a pleasant, half-shady atmosphere. Growing beneath them, on terraced, mulched beds, are a variety of vegetables, native tubers and flowers. Hardly a patch of earth goes unused. The steep slopes of the planted terraces are secured with elephant grass (cattle feed) and lemon-grass (used to make a delicious tea). The boundaries between the neighbors' plots are formed by fast-growing hedges, which provide feed for the dairy goats and a basis for nutritive, nitrogenous liquid fertilizer.

After a prayer and mutual introductions, the female president and treasurer of the group reports on their project, which has brought fresh prospects into their lives. In this tropical region with its often limited rainy season, their water tank is a source of life. The group mixes cement by hand and stamps it into corrugated iron molds with sticks. An iron reinforce-



Photo supplied by Gemeinnützige Treuhandstelle

ment secures stability. The carefully collected water from the roofs of the houses during the next rainy season will flow through gutters to an opening in the top of the tank.

After closer observation I discover further measures to use the destructive force of the strong tropical rains in a life-giving, constructive way. The down-rushing water on the steep paths is directed via small canals around the beds and into the large, compost-filled planting holes of the trees. This enables a banana bush to last through several months of

draught. One of the farmers proudly shows us his compost pit and how he has learned to enliven his earth. One of the women stresses that meals no longer consist in merely filling up on corn or tubers. Now protein from the goat milk and a wide variety of vegetables are important. The simple goat stalls are built so that they can be kept clean in spite of a small run; the goat dung can easily be collected for compost. Even the corrugated iron roofs are covered with straw, to provide insulation against heat.

Every group of farmers receives advice on organic farming from an agricultural engineer once a week for 18 months. The advisor is someone who grew up with the Kihugu dialect. The farms, which average half a hectare in size, act as "classrooms." However, only every third member of a group receives material to build a water tank, and a dairy goat to cross-breed with the usual goats. All profits go into a group fund from which the others can then purchase tanks and dairy goats.

The farmers repeatedly expressed their thankfulness to the people who are helping them through donations and with knowledge of organic farming, which has given them new prospects.

The expression on the faces of these people, which radiates meaning, self awareness and joy in the hard but successful work, makes a strong impression on me, leaving me with the unspoken question, "Would I have such trust in life, such strength, such contentment in such a situation?"

*Hildegard Brauner, Germany*

*Contact: Gemeinnützige Treuhandstelle, Postfach 100829, DE-44708 Bochum, Germany; tel. +49/234/579 71 24.*

## Germany

### Bread and Water

#### From the Work of the Demeter Bakeries

Our daily bread is no longer just a foodstuff. Advanced technology is applied to seed preparation, mixing and baking.

Demeter bakers are among those seeking to improve quality. In Germany they are experimenting with water processing procedures. Gebhard Bader-Donner, a water specialist in Chiemgau, Germany, reports that the enlivening effect of swirled water results in especially light products with a longer shelf life.

Cultivation and the careful processing of ingredients are important if "not only the stomach is to be filled, but the whole human being with body, soul and spirit," explains the nutrition expert Jasmin Peschke.

These qualities cannot be tapped via protein, fat, carbohydrates, vitamins or minerals. Even if you carefully analyze an apple and then mix together the necessary ingredients, you will not get an apple. Biodynamic preparations activate enlivening forces that cannot be measured by ordinary analysis.

Demeter professionals are developing innovative products that can be helpful as dietary support in the case of nervousness or metabolic disturbances (e.g., colostrum, propolis and Kristdyn that is extracted from the whole grape vine). Further ingredients that are of interest to bakers are barley drink, *kwasz* or vitamin-rich grain sprouts.

*S.J.*

## Charter of Fundamental Rights

When the Council of Europe meets in Nice, France on 7–8 December, 2000 and proclaims the Charter of Fundamental Rights, a one-year process of debate will have preceded it. The task of creating a charter of fundamental rights for Europe began in October 1999 with a convention called by the Council of Europe (led by Roman Herzog, former Federal President of Germany). Public hearings solicited input from civil society. Among those who contributed were two German anthroposophy-orient-

ed initiatives devoted to threefolding – Network Threefolding (Stuttgart) and International Cultural Center in Achberg, whose EuroVision initiative lobbied for the inclusion of civil society. The two initiatives have sent out a call for action to all civil society initiatives.

In addition, various NGOs collaborated to discuss ways of securing fundamental freedom in education. National and international Waldorf associations were among them. This must have been the first time that

organizations spanning such diverse worldviews collaborated on a European level. Some results of the work on the charter with a threefold orientation were published in the respected journal for legal politics, *Zeitschrift für Rechtspolitik* (no. 9/2000). The authors were Gerald Häfner, Christoph Strawe and Robert Zuegg. S.J.

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## Landscape as a Task

"Of course this brings us close to an anthroposophical view of things. But don't worry. No one will be harmed by trying out such an approach to nature, to our landscape, just once," writes the editor of *natur und mensch* (a Swiss nature magazine), while explaining why she devoted the entire issue to a report of the recent landscape conference at the Goetheanum (6–9 September).

The conference theme, "The Culture of the European Landscape as a Task," might seem rather introspective at first. Yet the General Secretary of the Council of Europe, Walter

Schwimmer, chose to act as patron of the event, so it clearly had political relevance. This was also evident from the participation of responsible federal authorities from Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

The participants from 12 European countries worked to create a Dornach Landscape Document, which they presented to Riccardo Priore (among others). Priore can be considered the "father" of the European Landscape Convention, which was signed by 18 countries in Florence on 20 October and which represents an epochal mutual goal. Priore announced that he would include the content of the Dornach

Landscape Document in the continuing work on the Landscape Convention.

Interest has not ebbed. Since the conference, the Science Section has been responding to a constant stream of inquiries, for example from German universities and associations. There have also been regular discussions with officials in the Council of Europe. S.J.

*Note:* The Dornach Landscape Document is documented in English and German under [www.goetheanum.ch/sektion/nws/landschaft.htm](http://www.goetheanum.ch/sektion/nws/landschaft.htm). The special edition of *natur und mensch* can be ordered from the Science Section, Goetheanum, CH-4143 Dornach 1, Switzerland; tel. +41/61/706 42 10; fax 706 42 15; e-mail h.c.zehnter@goetheanum.ch.

# Anthroposophical Society

## GENERAL ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

### Changes in the Executive Council

#### Enlargement and Retirement

After consultation with the Collegium of the School of Spiritual Science and a meeting with the General Secretaries, the Executive Council would like to let you know that we have decided to invite three individuals to join us in our work on the Executive Council:

*Cornelius Pietzner*, 43 years old, from Philadelphia, U.S.A. He developed a Camphill home for the handicapped there (Soltane). He was president of the Camphill Association North America and is a member of the Council of the Anthroposophical Society in America.

*Bodo von Plato*, 42 years old, from Heidelberg, Germany. At one time a Waldorf teacher in France, now back in Germany for many years, he has been researching the history of time and consciousness in the 20th century. He manages a research

center, Kulturimpuls, which he will continue to do.

*Sergej Prokofieff*, 46 years old, originally from Russia, co-founder of the Anthroposophical Society in Russia. He is known as the author of many books and as a lecturer. One emphasis of his work is the inner substantiation of the General Anthroposophical Society. Sergej Prokofieff will bring an Eastern European background to the Executive Council, which has been lacking until now.

Only afterwards did we realize that with these three personalities we had gained one person from the European East, one from the Center, and one from the West.

We are aware that it would be appropriate to improve the parity of men and women on our Council. We hope that this can happen later.



Cornelius  
Pietzner



Bodo  
von Plato



Sergej  
Prokofieff



The three people named here have accepted their nominations. Sergej Prokoffief and Bodo von Plato will begin at Easter 2001, and Cornelius Pietzner at Easter 2002. The next step is to ask the coming two Annual General Meetings to agree to this.

One reason for this enlargement of the Executive Council is the fact that two members will retire within two to three years:

*Rolf Kerler* has decided to place the work of treasurer into younger

hands (*Cornelius Pietzner* has been asked to take this on) and leave the Executive Council within two years. He will continue with the task of seeking financing for the Goetheanum in an international context, particularly with the help of the Evidence Society and in collaboration with foundations and trusts, etc.

*Heinz Zimmermann* would like to withdraw from the daily responsibilities of working on the Executive Council within two to three years, so

that he can devote himself to the general anthroposophical training of younger people at the Goetheanum (foundation year, independent studies, advanced courses, etc.).

*Rolf Kerler* and *Heinz Zimmermann* will thus remain connected with the Goetheanum.

The Executive Council at the Goetheanum

*Manfred Schmidt-Brabant,  
Virginia Sease, Heinz Zimmermann,  
Rolf Kerler, Paul Mackay*



## Christmas Appeal

"The gift he receives in the higher regions of the supersensible world is nothing that comes to him, but only something that flows from him, that is, love for the world and for others."  
*Rudolf Steiner: Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*

*Dear Members*

A strange contradiction: What you receive... flows from yourself! Within this contradiction lies the living thought of love for the world, for the environment. Out of this love rises the question: What does the world lack? What does the world need?

At the Goetheanum we ask ourselves such questions. What are the tasks of the Goetheanum in the light of the necessities of our time? What does it mean in practice for the Goetheanum to become a heart organ, a perceptive organ for important occurrences in the world, and to render what is needed?

Many personal remarks during and after the Michaelmas Conference 2000 confirmed how important such a heart organ is. And it is of the same importance to do what is possible in an every-day practical way so that this heart organ can work in a healthy manner, on an international level and with universal human perspectives.

There are many concrete tasks through which the Goetheanum can become even more such a heart organ. I would like to name three tasks which lie ahead of us and which reinforce the gesture going out from the Goetheanum – for others.

1. One thousand members from 46 countries around the world attended the Michaelmas Conference. Many of them were not able to finance their travel costs and so received a contribution from the Goetheanum. The number of participants who need financial help to attend section conferences has also been growing and will increase further. This is why we want to establish an international travel fund from which we can support meetings and collaboration.

The Michaelmas Conference also showed how important it is, in view of the international work of the Anthroposophical Society, that participants can follow the meetings in a language that they are familiar with. We provided every participant with earphones for simultaneous translation. Most of those earphones had to be rented, however. Our wish would be to augment our equipment with further earphones and interpreter cubicles, so that the Goetheanum would have access to its own basic conference equipment.

2. Apart from the Michaelmas Conference, quite a number of international conferences took place during this year with the following themes: Doing Anthroposophy; The Culture of the European Landscape as a Task; The Esoteric Streams in the World Religions; Transformative Architecture; Spirituality in the Care of Patients; Impulses for Renewal in Biodynamic Farming and more. Over 5000 friends attended these conferences. Many of them received financial support from the Goetheanum. Unfortunately, conference fees do not come close to covering the costs incurred by the Goetheanum, but the work is fruitful and it reaches into the future.

3. The work of the sections of the School of Spiritual Science is

becoming more and more our main emphasis among the tasks linking the Goetheanum with the world. Development projects emanating from the set tasks and from the needs of our time can only be tackled in an effective way and worked at together with the institutions around the world if we have an adequate organisation with active co-workers available at the basis. The necessary reinforcement with regard to personnel in several Sections (Section for the Spiritual Striving of Youth; Section for the Arts of Eurythmy, Speech, Drama and Music; Section for the Literary Arts and Humanities) requires substantial financial means.

With these things in mind we send out an appeal for help to all members, asking: Do you see a possibility of supporting the Goetheanum so that we may go into the new year with much courage and increased strength?

We thank you cordially and in advance for your Christmas donation and we wish you a peaceful and contemplative festive season.

With sincere greetings,  
Yours  
*Rolf Kerler*

### *Ways of Making a Donation*

Please send checks to:

Goetheanum, Finance Office, Box, CH-4143 Dornach 1, Switzerland

Credit card users please call +41/61/706 43 40

Cash may be handed in at the Main Cashier's Desk, Goetheanum (Carpentry Building)

Bank transfers to:

Anthroposophische Gesellschaft in Deutschland, GLS Gemeinschaftsbank in Stuttgart,

acct. no. 10 084 510, bank no. 430 609 67, marked "Goetheanum/Christmas Donation."

General Anthroposophical Society, acct. no. 10 AA 108 862 00, Raiffeisenbank in CH-

9001 St. Gallen, Swiftcode Raifch 22.

Please indicate "Goetheanum /Christmas Donation"!



# Our "Product," the Supersensible Human Being

## Interview with Markus Jermann, Manager of Finances at the Goetheanum

*The Goetheanum's finances currently thrive on a fortunate symbiosis. While Rolf Kerler, the treasurer, is responsible for the finances of the General Anthroposophical Society and has been concerning himself primarily with supra-regional financial questions since summer 2000, Markus Jermann manages the finances of the Goetheanum itself. This task encompasses accounting, bookkeeping, controlling, contact*

*with the various departments and sections (regarding finances), contributions from members and institutions, and the administration of donations. Jermann is also active in local government and for some time he helped organize and chair the monthly co-worker meetings at the Goetheanum. When we became aware of some of his innovative ideas we decided to ask about his views on the Goetheanum finances.*

*There is currently much talk of the service sector and also of the Goetheanum as a service provider. Will we be able to describe the Goetheanum as a service provider in the future?*

The Goetheanum already is a service provider. It is a meeting venue for the worldwide membership and for professional groups. A substantial part of the costs of these meetings is carried by the Goetheanum budget. Another example is the archive. Thanks to the work of Uwe Werner we have achieved a high level of service there. Now we can more easily justify charging fees. We have different fees for members and non-members. Incidentally, the Trustees of Rudolf Steiner's Estate have adopted our rate structure. This is an example of how the professionalization of our services can lead to transparency and cost-coverage in the budget.

*Does this also apply to the sections?*

We have recently taken steps in this direction with three sections – the pedagogical, medical, and science sections. These three sections no longer primarily assert the right to have the Goetheanum cover their costs. Instead we speak of specific projects and services. We calculate costs accordingly and seek ways of financing them with other partners. This has caused a change in attitude that has already born fruit. We have succeeded in obtaining more help from foundations and elsewhere for specific projects. Of course we continue to guarantee a certain sum to cover the basic costs of the sections.

More difficult to approach in this way is the work of the Section for Mathematics and Astronomy, for example, or the Art Section and Literary Arts Section. Yet there, too, we are seeking new approaches.

This whole effort is very important because we have set ourselves the goal of meeting our regular expenses without using donations or legacies by the year 2002.

*Which services can best be offered in Dornach and which services are better offered elsewhere?*



*"I could imagine handling a future production of Faust in a similar way to the renovation of the auditorium."*

There is no question that Dornach is currently the seat of the sections and of the General Anthroposophical Society. So our main task is to create and maintain networks and work opportunities. We must not imagine that this is being done here only. The special thing about Dornach, however, is its world-encompassing orientation.

Another area concerns the buildings on the Goetheanum grounds. If we do not take certain measures to maintain them now, we will leave a considerable burden to coming generations. We are obligated to preserve these buildings for coming generations. Another task would be to make Rudolf Steiner's artistic estate accessible to the anthroposophical movement and to the public in an adequate form.

*And the Goetheanum stage?*

Our stage is unique from the point of view of its history and dimensions. One question is whether the Goetheanum might increasingly become a place where artists from around the world can gather to realize specific projects. However, when we consider *Faust*, Rudolf Steiner's Mystery Dramas and other productions, there are many good reasons for continuing to maintain a permanent core group of artists here. Incidentally, our main auditorium is becoming known for its acoustics – musicians value it as a place to give concerts.

How we finance our next speech, eurythmy and music projects will depend on the artistic impulses that arise. I could imagine handling a future production of *Faust* in a similar way to the renovation of the auditorium. This

would mean that we would have a community of artists that carries out a project that is supported by our movement. This would be my personal ideal.

*What are the qualities of the ideal treasurer?*

The essential thing is a capacity for perception, including international relations. Certainly we have major financial tasks here in Dornach, but also in many other places. So our responsibility is international. The treasurer should build bridges, bridges between banks, foundations, national societies, private donors, members, institutions and the Goetheanum. He also needs to build bridges within the Goetheanum. Here the treasurer needs to ensure that clarity reigns between all concerned and that budget agreements are being met.

In this respect our collaboration is very good at the moment. Our financial consciousness has increased considerably. We make clear agreements and if we cannot meet them we discuss this well in advance. This is working well. Our building budget, for example, is met 100% (in contrast to what used to happen). We hope to be able to contribute something to the development of the Society through our financial efforts and the questions that arise from them.

*One main source of income comes from members' contributions. What can we do there?*

The national societies have let us know that we cannot expect rising contributions. We must accept that this area is stagnating. So if we work well, at best the members' contributions will not fall.

It would be very important to launch a membership campaign from the Goetheanum. The Executive Council should start an initiative regarding the question of future membership. We could learn from the U.S. society, for example. In the U.S. Council, new ideas for cultivating membership have a high priority. I expect the number of members in the U.S. to overtake the number in the Netherlands and Switzerland. We must definitely invest time and effort in this whole area.

*What else can we learn from the national societies?*

How they work. Many national societies are gaining in importance because they are expanding and strengthening their work. The Goetheanum is not receiving less contribution money because the national societies are "bad" but because any payments to us stand next to activities within the countries themselves. This applies also to the regional section work.

It is very important that we do not see each other as rivals fighting for limited resources. We are partners because we are working together on the same tasks. This calls for a high degree of cooperation from all of us. It is also becoming obvious that our treasurers can no longer solve their problems alone, they require partners in banking, foundations, business, etc.

*How would you describe members' contributions as a quality?*

Contributions constitute the financial pillar of the idea of the Anthroposophical Society's ability to incarnate. Contributions are an advance demonstration of trust in those who then work with the funds on behalf of the Society. This is a very sensitive, living social structure. It is a fundamental question of trust in the idea of the Goetheanum, independent of whether you happen to like the people currently working there. The Goetheanum is a picture for an idea. We do not know how this idea will unfold in the

future. I sometimes do not agree with the leadership or with other people here at all, but that has nothing to do with whether I give my contribution or not. This is true for any association. You contribute something basic to an idea. This money serves to secure the idea's basic existence and development.

*So it is not merely a matter of providing services?*

No. This is even clearer with regard to contributions from institutions. Do contributions from institutions imply a claim on the sections, which should then provide something in return and be able to compete on the free market? Take addiction counseling, for example. Does the Social Science Section have a better concept than other addiction approaches? Or do institutions contribute because they are primarily concerned with staying in contact with the Goetheanum, with contributing to its fruitfulness? – Does the Goetheanum have anything fruitful to offer?

There are several institutions that provide us with contributions that are not tied to results. They are pioneers! However, since there are many more institutions that think differently, the Goetheanum must ask itself – why do they contribute nothing? When asked, they say that they have never had any real contact with the Goetheanum. The section work means nothing to them. People in Dornach live in an

abstract framework. They do not understand the needs of entrepreneurs, etc. – Are we prepared to listen to this and change something?

*Are you going to develop a new fundraising idea?*

Many dream of fundraising because they think it will solve their financial problems. This is a very short-term view, however – at least for us. We need to ask, What is our "product," what do we have to offer? What is the Goetheanum's "product" or anthroposophy's "product," apart from services we can name? Can we speak of a product at all?

This is difficult to answer because our "product" is in constant development. And what is development? What is development in a student, a teacher or a school? How can we portray it? We can arrive at the realization that our actual "product" is the supersensible human being; we encourage people to work on their relationships to their surroundings and themselves, to their outer and their inner worlds. This sparks processes of development.

Is this a marketable product? However, there is an aspect of fundraising that we can use – communication. Do we have clean, transparent and ongoing relationships with our donors, members and friends? This is something we are specifically addressing, in all areas of financing.

Falk Zientz spoke with Markus Jermann in September 2000.

## School of Spiritual Science

### SCIENCE SECTION, AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

#### Nikolai Fuchs to Take Over from Manfred Klett

Manfred Klett will retire from the leadership of the Agriculture Department of the Science Section in summer 2001 when he has completed his 68th year, handing the task to Nikolai Fuchs. The agricultural movement and the Science Section are connected like Siamese twins, Rudolf Steiner once said, so it was logical that a two-fold section leadership evolved, having grown since the 1970s from the actual circumstances in both fields. Nikolai Fuchs will thus work closely with Johannes Kühl as an independent section leader for the concerns of agriculture.

Nikolai Fuchs, born 1963 in Korbach, Germany, studied agriculture in



Photo supplied by Die Drei

Bonn after doing an apprenticeship in agriculture. He then managed a conservation project, became a biodynamic advisor, became the manager of the Biodynamic Working Community of North Rhine-Westphalia and finally the manager of the

Research Ring for Ways of Doing Business in Biodynamic Agriculture (in Darmstadt, Germany). During a transition period Nikolai Fuchs will have to continue with his responsibilities in the Research Ring. Manfred Klett will continue to serve the biodynamic movement where he is asked and as strength allows.

*Manfred Klett, Johannes Kühl*

### SOCIAL SCIENCE SECTION

#### Paul Mackay Now Leader

On 19 November, during the annual fall meeting, the leadership of the Social Science Section passed from Manfred Schmidt-Brabant to Paul Mackay. In his inaugural address Paul Mackay gave an outline of the work of the section. It involves researching relationships between people. We need to understand and form our relationships in a differentiated way. In cultural life we act as beings with capacities; in the sphere of rights, as eligible adults; in economic life, as beings with needs. In the age of the consciousness soul we need to compensate natural antisocial tendencies by consciously creating social impulses. The starting point for such compensation is our interest in each other. S.J.

## What Is so Bad About Genetic Engineering?

### Questions to Biologist Craig Holdrege

*Developments in genetic research are moving swiftly. Human and animal cells are being combined to create chimeras. We can be fascinated by the results and by the speed, which is breathtaking, but also alarming. There is fear that life itself will be used for life-threatening purposes. The biologist Craig Holdrege (U.S.A) has concerned himself with the question of genetic engineering. His very readable book on the subject, *The Forgotten Context*, is also acclaimed by professionals. We asked him what is so unsettling about genetic engineering.*

*How effective is cloning technology? Are the problems that have caused failures in cloning of a fundamental nature or will they be solved?*

Compared to four years ago, cloning technology is advanced – there are cloned sheep, mice, cattle, goats, and most recently pigs. But scientists are a long way from realizing their goal of producing identical, ready-made animals that automatically produce substances to be used for pharmaceutical purposes. The techniques are still very inefficient. Most of the experiments don't succeed, many of the cloned animals die early or have malformities. Many fetuses, for example, are too big and have to be delivered by cesarean section. Cloning techniques don't take into account that development is a living and complex process with continual and subtle interactions occurring between mother and fetus on the one hand and mother and her environment on the other. Scientists can control fairly well what they do in the lab in the way of genetic alterations, but everything that happens in the organism or between organisms and environment is not immediately controllable. Of course the techniques will improve. Beyond the genetic control, scientists will need to increase the standardization of the environment in order to get replicable results. But this standardization brings impoverishment, which shows itself in negative effects on the animal's health. The animal as such is not really taken into account in genetic and cloning technology until it makes itself known through ill health. In the end scientists can't get around the fact that animals are living beings that have their own integrity.

*Are the fears people have about cloning related to the underlying sentiment that as human beings we are more than the expression of bodily processes, that we are beings who have freedom, a biography and some form of immortality?*

That's surely the case. Every one of us feels that we are ourselves and no one else. The thought that there could be another being who is a copy of one's self is abhorrent to this deep-seated feeling of individuality. Individuality



Craig Holdrege has taught biology in Waldorf schools for 20 years and is also active in teacher training. He has been the director of the Nature Institute in Ghent, New York since 1998. The Nature Institute aims to reach a wide public, particularly via publications and by drawing attention to the wealth of true phenomena.

always rises up when you try to negate it. In addition, I think that many people feel that a huge gulf yawns between present-day technological prowess and our ability to actually fathom the nature and depth of life. Technology may march on, but that doesn't mean we know what we're doing – that is an unsettling perception.

*How will cloning change our picture of the human being?*

In biology today nature is seen as a set of mechanisms that should be understood and can be manipulated to our advantage. The human being is not an exception. We are the consequence of the same biological mechanisms that have brought forth all other forms of life. Why should we be treated differently? Scientists are inconsistent if they make the human being an exception. This inconsistency stems from strong, but "unscientific" sentiments that most of us still have. But the more society gets used to manipulation – the more cloning of animals succeeds and can be portrayed as "humane" – the less inhibition people will have about human cloning. One scientist stated a couple of years ago that if we would educate people better, there would be less

public resistance to human genetic manipulation.<sup>1</sup> Implicitly he's saying that the more we educate people to be good materialists, the easier it will be for them to believe that purely materialistic manipulations are the answer to problems.

*But shouldn't we welcome the ability to heal disease?*

When scientists need the best possible justification for their actions, they say: this technique will heal disease or save people from starvation. How could anyone possibly be against that? I'm sure many scientists have altruistic motives mixed in with all their other reasons and desires. But the real problem is that such general justifications are exceedingly abstract and have as a rule very little connection to the actual problem at hand.<sup>2</sup> Genetic techniques will continue to be developed that bring advances in medical treatment. But we need to be aware that every mere technical advance entails at the same time, from a spiritual perspective, a step backwards. Why? Because technology allows us to avoid certain challenges. We gain something but we lose something as well. The more a machine or technique takes the place of the interaction between patient and doctor, the less of a healing, therapeutic relation can be established between patient and doctor. Healing is always something individual and concrete that involves an unpredictable process and outcome. It must be lived through. Proponents of genetic technologies would have us believe that genetic manipulations will be able to provide automatic healing (which is described as "repair of defects"). But that's an illusion.

*What alternative can anthroposophy offer to genetic engineering?*

Through the study of anthroposophy and meditative practice, we can change the way we think, feel, and act as individuals. That's what is essential, not that we have an anthroposophical program or solution to combat genetics. Such a solution would probably end up being just as abstract any other general program or answer. A geneticist might, for example, accept the idea of reincarnation as a possible personal belief, but if she is confronted with this idea as an "anthroposophical teaching" that calls into question genetic engineering of human beings, it will leave her cold and she can simply relegate it to the category of unscientific dogmatism.

<sup>1</sup> In *Engineering the Human Germline*, published by Gregory Stock and John Campbell, New York 2000.

<sup>2</sup> "Golden Genes and World Hunger," Craig Holdrege and Steve Talbott, *Netfuture* Bd. 108, 6 July 2000, pg 2–11. ([www.netfuture.org/2000/Jul0600\\_108html](http://www.netfuture.org/2000/Jul0600_108html)).

I believe that anthroposophy today can be effective only inasmuch as it becomes completely part of the individual and is not taken as a teaching, which always has something external to it. We can't say, "Anthroposophy teaches such and such, therefore..."; we can only make a

statement like "I see and judge the matter in this way..." Our society is guided by illusions and driven by technology. Anthroposophists can help overcome these powers by developing and contributing what is otherwise direly lacking today: a middle path between illusion and power

that stems from the ability to view and take hold of problems in an individual, flexible, and concrete – which means spirit-filled – way.

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## MEDICAL SECTION

### Healing through Speech

#### The Five Forms of Illness and their Consequences for Diagnosis and Therapy

*For the past five years, research seminars with participants from Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands have been studying the five forms of illness mentioned by Rudolf Steiner.\* Rudolf Steiner's relatively little known characterizations have proved to be extraordinarily fruitful to research because the connection between illness and the various parts of the human organism can be applied directly to therapeutic practice. It is all the more surprising that this work has received so little attention within the anthroposophical movement. Actually, non-anthroposophical institutions have sometimes shown more interest.*

Rudolf Steiner speaks of five forms of illness that result from five specific irregularities within the corresponding aspect of the human being. Since every irregularity is connected with a disturbance of rhythm, and since speech is based on the rhythmic relation between heart and lung (blood and breath), we can relate predisposition pathology to disturbed breathing processes. When disturbances are reflected in the way a person speaks, they can also be therapied via speech.

Speech irregularities arise from the interaction between two separate aspects of the human being. Too little vividness or plasticity in the etheric body can lead to weakness of the immune system in the physical body (infections), for example. We can relate this to Rudolf Steiner's comment that every word that we speak without plasticity is an inner cause of illness. In our discussions we found that the plasticity and color of the pictures of sound and concept spoken on the out-breath correspond to being able to hold one's own in the outer world (i.e., the air); plasticity strengthens the immune system.

Glandular illnesses arise when the astral body gives impulses to the etheric body that are either too weak or too strong. Our work showed a correspondence with the voice here, because the voice (similar to a glandular process) involves pouring and liquefaction on the etheric/astral plane. "To speak vowels is to pour one's inner life as something fluid."

Acute illnesses arise when the I does not sufficiently control and

order the astral processes, leaving the astral body to its own devices. Since speech impulses arise in the "astral body modified by the I," we find correspondences here, too. Particularly significant with this form of illness is the impulsification of the in-breath (the "reaching upward") whereas in the case of the two previously mentioned forms of illness we work with forming or releasing forces on the out-breath. Rudolf Steiner's indication that "the I enters the blood via the lung" can be experienced by both speech therapists and patients alike.

Chronic illnesses of the blood and the so-called hereditary diseases arise when the I does not sufficiently orient its incarnation impulses from the spirit. Rudolf Steiner indicates that by far the most illnesses today arise from an I that receives too little impulse from the spirit. In speech therapy the human being learns to guide his in-breath according to a higher principle – language.

It is interesting that Rudolf Steiner especially recommended psychological treatments for the last two forms of illness mentioned, which are connected with the in-breath from a therapeutic point of view. He recommended medicinal treatment only for disturbed etheric and physical processes. The approximately 70 participants in the seminar agreed that speech therapy should be considered one of the psychological treatments, because in speech therapy, we work upon the etheric and physical bodies via the astral body (i.e., the breath).

The fifth form of illness, karmic illness, raises still deeper questions relating to all of the areas of illness mentioned above and to accidents,

epidemics and certain mental illnesses. We have broad experience showing that the karmic illnesses, too, are connected with breath and with rhythmic processes in a special way. In this sense we developed an ever clearer understanding of the connection between speech/breath habitus and regular or irregular working of the aspects of the human being in all areas. So, as a prerequisite for future therapeutic approaches, there was a call for a continuation of this kind of anthropology that is oriented to, or arises from, speech and breath. This would clearly be a future-oriented, long overdue research project. Unfortunately only a few doctors have shown any interest in this approach over the years. Attempts were made to report on our research by organizing "Doctor Days," but the initiative was discontinued due to the participants' lack of time.

Very interesting and inspiring is the combination of art, religion and science. This is an approach that is very fruitful for questions of anthropology. It seems to be increasingly important to draw together Rudolf Steiner's indications on various themes, and to evaluate and test them in practice. In this way it will be possible to follow the traces of spiritual, creative activity right into physiology.

In various plenum discussions participants have expressed regret at how little true interest is shown in their work within the anthroposophical movement. Sometimes non-anthroposophical institutions have shown more interest in questions of speech therapy than have Waldorf schools or anthroposophical clinics, for example. Since we can look back on years of well-founded experience, we may hope that our efforts to gain a new understanding of speech and breath will gradually find resonance.

Barbara Denjean-von Stryk,  
Germany

*Note:* This report refers to five years of research that were completed at Whitsun 2000 in Untertengenhardt, Germany. The subject was studied within the framework of decades of annual speech therapy workshops for doctors and creative speech artists organized by Christa Slezak-Schindler (Institute for Speech Formation and Creative Speech Therapy in Germany).

Contact: Institut für Sprachgestaltung, Max-Ackermann-Strasse 5, DE-75378 Bad Liebenzell, Germany; tel. +49/7052/93 49 07; fax 934 42 33.

\* In *The Being of Man and His Future Evolution*, Rudolf Steiner Press 1981, GA 107