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Introduction to this Edition and a Personal Message

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to draw your attention to two short biographies in this edition, as well as several articles which we hope will be of interest to you.

This 40th Journal presents two portraits by Claus-Peter Röh and Florian Osswald. Both have been working in the Pedagogical Section since September. From 1 January 2011 these two colleagues will be taking on the leadership of the Section.

I am very grateful for this opportunity to appoint a double lead for the Section. In view of the multitude of tasks and the very make-up of collegial cooperation, which is after all at the heart of Waldorf pedagogy, we have opted for this formula rather than a hierarchical structure.

It is my hope and my plea to you now that the school movement, in the areas where it aims to work in close co-operation with the Pedagogical Section, will be as open and welcoming to these successors as it was to me ten years ago.

I would also like to use this opportunity to thank the international school movement most warmly, on behalf of the Section, for all your cooperation, consistent collegiality and support for our joint endeavours to help Rudolf Steiner's art of education to blossom.

Naturally, due to historic and geographic facts, special thanks must go to the German and Swiss school movement. The intensity of exchange and joint ventures, initiatives taken together in schools, at conferences, or within other frameworks, gave me the wings which I needed to tackle the tasks in hand.

It is my pleasure to commend my successors to you all. I am equally joyful to be able to confirm that the office of the Section will continue to be in the trusted and capable hands of Francesca Chiusano und Dorothee Prange.

On this note I extend my warmest greetings to colleagues in the worldwide school movement,

Christof Wiechert
translated by Steffi Cook

Snow in my pockets

Last winter, Christof Wiechert's request to me set an avalanche in motion, initially a purely inner one: after 27 years did I want to and could I loosen my ties with the vibrant school community in Flensburg that I knew so well? How could the two of us take on leadership of the Pedagogical Section and carry it forward together? I discussed it with my family, at the college meeting, the parents' evening; and then, next morning talked to my class 6. Out of the stunned silence one pupil spoke up: Herr Röh, we'll have to come to terms with this outside, in the snow!" The snowball fight that followed (29 against 1) is something I will never forget. That evening, my coat pockets were all still lined with snow.

I was born on December 15, 1955 in a small village in northern Schleswig-Holstein. My untroubled childhood was filled with games and wanderings in the neighbourhood. At the same time, we four siblings thought it quite natural to help with the animals, crops and horticulture on our parents' farm. After completing my Abitur (school-leaving exams) at the cathedral school in Schleswig, I originally thought I would study physics and electrical engineering in Kiel. My training as a radar technician with the German army was meant to lay the foundation for this, but ended following my successful fight to be relieved of military service and acknowledged as a "conscientious objector".

The desire to work with children instead ultimately led me to the teacher-training institute in Flensburg near the Danish border. As I studied the disciplines of maths, sport and music, I also started to search hard for new approaches: what form should a child-centred, humane, Christian and ecologically aware school of the future take? During those turbulent years in the 70s I saw, for instance, the first large fibreglass windmills in the alternative Tvindt Schools on the west coast of Denmark. I started to study the writings of Rudolf Steiner when I met a group of young people who wished to found a Waldorf school in Flensburg, and eventually decided to attend the two-year Waldorf teachers' seminar in Stuttgart after completing my state training. There, to my wonder and astonishment, I witnessed new possibilities of holistic thinking, for example in the Goethean approach, along with artistic challenges that were quite new for me. Immediately following this, I was asked to take on class 6, the oldest class at the time, when the new school in Flensburg started. Besides working as a class teacher, from then on I taught music to the lower and middle school, and free-Christian religion lessons, ethics and philosophy in the upper school.

Imbued with the will to work entirely out of the impulse of anthroposophy, our young college of teachers found strength and cohesion in facing the challenges and obstacles of those first years. Realizing that this impulse is also present at

every parents' evening and public presentation of the school, I soon decided to become a member of the Anthroposophical Society. Later, when School of Spiritual Science work started in Flensburg, I and a friend and colleague were asked to take responsibility for this as Class readers.

In those turbulent years, too, our family began: my wife also belonged to the founding college, and our children are now 17 and 23.

Over the past 27 years, my work as teacher has been imbued with the joy of the inner journey of discovery in getting to know each new class, and each individual child. Today's early-awoken and alert children challenged me to ask new questions and find new approaches. My sense that in artistic work the pupils' most intrinsic, individual nature comes to expression as incisively as the lesson theme/content itself, gave rise to my repeated attempts to write verses, poems and plays in a way that allowed each class to find itself in them. For one class, for instance, under the theme of "grammar on the stage", little dramatic scenes were devised to develop the children's language at each age. In music lessons, too, it gave me great pleasure to maintain an inner balance between forces of form on the one hand, and creative impulse on the other, by writing little songs and pieces of music.

Alongside work in the school, in the 90s I started to work as a guest lecturer for Waldorf education at the teacher-training institute in Flensburg. Courses, lectures and guest lecturing at various teachers' seminars and conferences in Germany and eastern Europe followed.

Collaborating for many years on the Pedagogical Section's German initiative group, and at Section working-group meetings in Dornach such as in the board of religion teachers, I was repeatedly struck by the strength that can flow from collegial work. Starting from a study of contemporary phenomena, we kept trying anew to draw fitting responses from anthroposophy and develop these. In recent years, in the regional Section working group for north German schools, our focus has been on "Research within daily school life". This has involved each person presenting to the other participants the issues which he/she has pondered over a longer period, and then working further together on these.

Since September, collaborative work has begun for me in the Pedagogical Section and the School of Spiritual Science Collegium in Dornach. Looking back, I am filled with deep gratitude for the many years of shared work and the full, rich school life in Flensburg. Looking ahead, at conferences this autumn all sorts of pressing issues have surfaced in my many discussions with colleagues. I have been particularly struck by a great willingness to work together to deepen understanding of the inner relationship between teacher, subject/theme and pupils.

Christof Wiechert and his predecessors succeeded – as it were in a great, breathing gesture – in creating a space of meeting and research between the Pedagogical Section and the wider school movement. Together with Florian Osswald and all our colleagues in the schools, I want to try to fill this space with further encounter, meeting and research, and thus expand it further.

Claus-Peter Röh
translated by Matthew Barton

Journey to the Goetheanum

A sunny day in the autumn of 2009. Christoph Wiechert had invited me to his office for a talk.

I entered rooms I already knew well – and as so often, Christof Wiechert came straight to the point. He launched into his idea about the future leadership of the section: two people who would collaborate as faculty, sharing the task between them. This was not because the directorate ought to consist of two people, but because he had two people in mind who would be able to work together in this way. I was one of them, he told me.

There are special moments in life, but rarely had one stood so clearly before me. My immediate question was: “Why me?” Why was I being asked to take on such a responsible position?

I grew up near Basle in Switzerland and, like all children there, went to school. We were a large extended family: including us seven children there were often twelve people sitting round the table for meals. It was a long way to school for our small legs, leading past large houses, a lonely park and the railway line – but this daily walk was the best thing about school. Later I moved schools and cycled there each day. Rarely did I feel pressure to learn anything: time passed like a dream.

Only when I started to train for a profession did a thirst for knowledge awaken in me – a very great thirst, so that after finishing my traineeship I pursued a course of academic studies. I became a chemical engineer. My first contacts with anthroposophy developed rather tentatively. My two maths professors both stood fully within anthroposophy. Departing from my chosen technical profession led me to an intensive encounter with anthroposophy: I went to

Scotland and worked in a Camphill village, and started to train for a new vocation. The in-service training offered there was exactly what I needed. I became a curative teacher; and because I always worked in the school at Camphill and, to my own surprise, found increasing delight in this work, I subsequently attended the teachers' seminar in Dornach. Alongside the range of subjects I studied, the encounters I had with people at both these places were decisive for me. In Camphill I witnessed the power that lies in encouragement. At the teachers' seminar I met people who showed me in exemplary form what it means to accompany and guide another. To this day they remain travelling companions on my journey into anthroposophy.

After completing my training, my 'wander years' as an apprentice teacher began. Responding to an invitation from the Rudolf Steiner School in Bern-Ittigen heralded a new phase in my life. I settled down, was fortunate to become the father of four children, taught maths and physics and accompanied several classes through the upper school as class guardian. Over time I came to know my school very well. However, a need awoke in me to grasp the different aspects of this educational impulse. As a delegate for my school I was able to take part in meetings of the Swiss Steiner Schools' association, gradually acquainting myself with all the schools in this country. A new door opened for me with a trip to New Zealand, where I likewise visited all the Steiner schools; and it opened still further when I was asked to give a lecture at the world conference for teachers and nursery teachers in 2004. This was the prelude to a never-ending sequence of requests from schools throughout the world.

Thus I became increasingly aware of the overall community of schools, extending to Asia, Africa and South America. Throughout these years one theme kept recurring: working together. In ombuds groups, parents' evenings, teachers' meetings, conflict situations and also in everyday life, this theme was ubiquitous and kept surfacing as a challenge.

At the same time as broadening my Waldorf School horizon, I increasingly collaborated with the Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum. My involvement in the Hague Circle and various study groups gave me the opportunity to see the kind of work this Section was accomplishing. Increasingly I was able to perceive the nature of the connection between the schools, the Pedagogical Section and the Goetheanum.

This brief account is naturally not sufficient to fully convey the crucial moment of Wiechert's question to me.

Since 1 October of this year, Claus-Peter Röh and I have been working together. By the end of the year the plan is for us to have completed our induction period,

having worked our way into the many diverse activities of the Pedagogical Section.

Our predecessors have done a great deal of development work, and we are taking over a well-equipped ship. We have been appointed its captains. We do not yet know how many people will be coming on board for the voyage. At present we are still in the 'welcome' phase, and will listen attentively to the concerns of our fellow voyagers – for new land is seldom discovered by the captains.

School is not a rigid entity. It is in a process of continual transformation, is a vessel for the individual's growth. The suggestions and stimulus that Rudolf Steiner gave are not programmatic. They have to be studied, individualized and managed in a situation-responsive way. They stimulate our capacities; and today we need capacities and faculties in the most diverse areas if we are to successfully meet the tasks which young people set us.

Florian Osswald
translated by Matthew Barton

Child Growth and Education

The work of the I organization in the physical body

1. Growth as a question of education

There is not one among Rudolf Steiner's main lecture cycles on education that does not mention or allude to the fact that the dynamics of children's growth depend on their experience of the lessons. This frequency of reference alone proves that the phenomenon was of particular importance to Rudolf Steiner.¹ Even if we consider the anthroposophical view of humans as beings of body, soul and spirit, the question of how it is possible that experiences at school have a physical effect that extends right into the growth processes remains a major challenge. This aspect is not as easily understood as it might seem at first glance. Even authors of secondary literature on Waldorf education have so far hardly ever addressed the problem. And there is little empirical research into how education

1 This is not a complete list but some examples of indications that relate to teaching and growth: GA 293, p. 168; GA 301, p. 198; GA 303, pp. 95; GA 304a, p. 133-137, pp. 150; GA 305, p. 103; GA 307, p. 211; GA 310, p. 125; GA 347, pp. 78.

affects the process of growth.² It is, however, an important and worthwhile topic in anthroposophical education that has primarily to do with the relationship between physical body and I-organisation. Based on anthroposophical sources, in particular one lecture by Rudolf Steiner³, I will attempt to throw some light on this question.

2. Two sides to how the I works in the physical body

Let us start with a fundamental law of human development. While we are incarnated on earth two polar opposite forces meet in our organisation and affect body, soul and spirit. Rudolf Steiner speaks of the “visible” and the “invisible human being” in us. Both share the same composition of active forces which means that in both of them the forces of the physical, etheric, astral and I-organisation are active to the same degree. In this respect they are comparable or equal. What differentiates them is the way in which the I-organisation works in the other three aspects.

We will first look at this activity in our “invisible being”: *“All the streams of forces in this invisible being proceed from the I-Organisation and flow through the astral and etheric organizations into the physical one, where they then spread out. ... After we are born this stream takes its course in the metabolism-limb system, in the forces of outer movement and those of inner movement that transport the food we have taken in through our whole organism even up into the brain”* (p. 71).

How are these forces different in our “visible being”? The I here works directly into the physical body, unmediated by the astral or etheric organisation. These influences take place in areas that support our conscious soul life which means they are *“strongest in the head where most sense organs are concentrated”* and they spread out along the nerve tracts: *“the nerve tract is the visible sign of this direct stream that flows from the I into our physical organism”*. (p. 72)

These are essential characteristics of the polarity of the metabolism-limb system and the neurosensory system in the threefold human organism.⁴ The I-activity of our “invisible being” passes through the metabolism-limb system, but it is animated and enlivened “along the way” in the astral and etheric organisations. It thus turns into a vitalising nutritional process with a configurative effect that manifests in the blood vessels.

2 To my knowledge there is one British study that finds evidence that tensions in the family can inhibit child growth. Children who experience frequent family conflicts are up to 10cm shorter than children from conflict-free families. (Montgomery, S. M., Bartley, M. J., Wilkinson, G.: Family conflicts and slow growth. In: Archives of Disease in Childhood 77, 1997, 326-330).

3 Lecture of 11 February 1923: “The Invisible Human Being Within Us”, from GA 221: *Earthly Knowledge and Heavenly Wisdom*. Tr. S. Seiler. Unless otherwise indicated, quotations with page numbers are taken from this lecture.

4 See Steiner, R. (1983): Von Seelenrätseln. GA 21, p. 150-163.

The I works in the opposite way on the neurosensory system where it takes effect directly without animating and enlivening mediation. The physical body is exposed to the direct influence of the spirit and this leads to destruction and death in the organism. The physical manifestation here are the nerve tracts which represent the polar opposite to the blood vessels.

Between the two polar forces we have the rhythmic system which includes the breathing and the pulsating cardio-vascular activity. The harmonization of lungs and heart in the rhythmic system balances how the I works on the body through the “visible” and “invisible beings” and, in doing so, it keeps our physical body healthy.

3. The predominance of polar organisations in the human organism

The above indications are as much of interest to anthroposophical physicians as they are to Waldorf teachers. Both deal with human beings. We will not find many people who are not either born with a one-sidedness in this respect or acquire it due to biographical influences, experiences or stress situations to which they are exposed in the course of their lives. The neurosensory system and that of metabolism and limbs are usually not in balance which manifests in mental or physical health problems. One of the two systems is predominant in each of us. I want to explore this fact in more detail with regard to children and education because it is an essential task of the Waldorf teacher to become aware of and understand these unbalances and their therapy.

3a. Children with a dominating metabolism-limb system

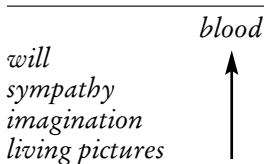
Every teacher will know children whose lower organisation – or metabolism-limb system – dominates their entire constitution. According to the lecture referred to above this happens when the child’s “invisible being” works strongly from below into the anabolic processes.

These children are often chubby if not overweight or corpulent. Much faster than with other children their peripheral blood supply becomes visible in the face when they are active doing sums, writing or drawing and even more so when they move. The hair soon gets sweaty, the head red and hot. But they love movement more than anything and often they are talented movers.

In their soul life they are very imaginative, often they are natural artists. They don’t dither, get on with things and straight away transform them. They are great at retelling stories they have heard, also at inventing stories and sometimes writing them down. But alas! the poor teacher who has to read them! They are full of spelling mistakes since these children have a weak sense of orthography; and they find it difficult to memorize names and dates. Consistent, systematic, reflective thinking is equally hard for them. They think and act spontaneously and impulsively, tend to lack discipline and get angry easily. They are too involved.

It is these children that Steiner refers to when he speaks to the first Waldorf teachers of the “*imagination type*”.⁵ But if we focus too strongly on the term “imagination” we will find it difficult to grasp the underlying principle.⁶ These are children, after all, whose physical body is dominated by metabolism, their soul life by the will stream. Steiner follows on from the important soul law to which he refers in the second lecture of “The Foundations of Human experience”⁷ by adding further aspects about the physical body and about education and therapy.

The metabolism-limb type
(the I has an animating and enlivening effect on the physical body)



These are the metamorphoses, stages and escalations of the will within the human being. In the will lives the soul force of sympathy. If sympathy is enhanced in the soul realm, will becomes imagination and eventually into ordinary perception and experience in living pictures. It is the soul relationship with the system of metabolism and limbs that manifests physically in the blood. The predominance of the metabolism-limb system pushes the neurosensory system back and, in doing so, weakens it.⁸

3b. Children with a dominating neurosensory system

There are children who are, in outer appearance and behaviour, in body and soul, the opposite to those described above. They are more delicately built, slender or gaunt and usually taller than the others. Their complexion hardly changes even if they move and are engaged in activity. Their circulation is centred around the trunk and hardly noticeable in the periphery. They are generally paler, their hands and feet tend to feel cold. Their faces express less emotion and inner movement since these children are more introvert. It is not so easy to read from their faces what is going on inside. But they are very alert. Attentively, even anxiously, they

5 Steiner, R. (1996): The Foundations of Human Experience. GA 293, pp. 181. Tr. R. Lathe, N. Whittaker

6 I do not want to elaborate here on the concept of imagination. For more information see: Wiechert, C., Schiller, H. (eds): *Fantasie. Von den schöpferischen Kräften in der Erziehung.* Stuttgart: Verlag Freies Geistesleben

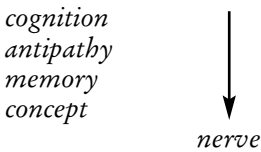
7 *ibid.*, p. 57.

8 “... *the children turn away too strongly in their astral body and I from the neurosensory system*”, in: Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner. GA 300b.

scrutinize the world around them. They tend to hold back, not feeling called upon to participate in practical tasks where they might possibly get dirty. They prefer to observe carefully. They might face an artistic task set for them, feeling helpless, clumsy and unhappy. They might sit over their wet blank paper and the painting jars with brush in hand, looking lost and tormented when others are handing in their finished pictures. Their strength is not in producing but in reproducing. Observing spelling rules, memorizing incoherent details, understanding diagrams, systems and orders are easy tasks for them.

In summary we can say that with these children there is a predominance of the I-activity that takes hold directly of the neurosensory system. Their system of metabolism and limbs is weakened because their physical body is not sufficiently penetrated by the invisible being. “*The spirit cannot get to the blood process*”, which means that these children are not sufficiently incarnated. Steiner refers to children with this kind of one-sided constitution as the “*memory type*”. Again, he focuses mainly on the aspect of the soul life that relates to the neurosensory system, where formation of mental images and cognition metamorphose into memory and conceptualization.¹⁰ Antipathy works as a soul force here.

The nerve-sense type
(direct destructive effect of the I on the physical body)



4. The connection between soul-spirit constitution and growth

The diagrams show that soul forces are related to specific life processes and therefore to particular body organs. In the case of the wakeful soul forces of cognition and memory this is the neurosensory system which is subject to the process of destruction and death. The unconscious life of will and imagination, on the other hand, is based on the anabolic processes that are carried by the blood.¹¹ It is noticeable that the two soul forces – wakeful formation of mental images and memorizing on the one hand and unconscious will and imagination on the other – stand in a polar relationship to the ether forces. Close observation

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 I will not go into detail here, you find information on these aspects in Kranich, E. M. (2003): *Der innere Mensch und sein Leib. Eine Anthropologie.* Stuttgart: Verlag Freies Geistesleben, p. 133-138 and 230-236.

of the ether forces in childhood is therefore an essential prerequisite for learning to understand the connection between teaching and growth.

The ether forces form the invisible configuration responsible for regeneration and metabolism in all living organisms. They are forces within the rhythmic life processes that control regeneration in all organs and tissues by breaking down, eliminating and newly building up substance.

Compared to adulthood the ether forces fulfil a further essential task in childhood as they are involved with growth. During the time of growth organs not only regenerate they also increase in size. This means that new substance is generated in the organ. Metabolism, as far as nutrition and substance regeneration are concerned, relies on other ether forces than growth. This difference is understandable since growth occurs only during the first two decades of life and then ceases, while metabolic processes continue until we die, although they decrease. (The independence of growth and physical metabolism is also reflected in entirely different hormone regulation processes.) The growth forces stimulate physical growth from the inside out through stretching, expanding and enlarging. Once they have completed their task in the organs they are transformed into the soul forces of reason, memory, interest and the capacity of love and experience etc.

How do constitutional weaknesses in our threefold organisation affect growth? What happens when the impact of the I on the neurosensory system (“imagination type”) or on the system of metabolism and limbs (“memory type”) is weakened?

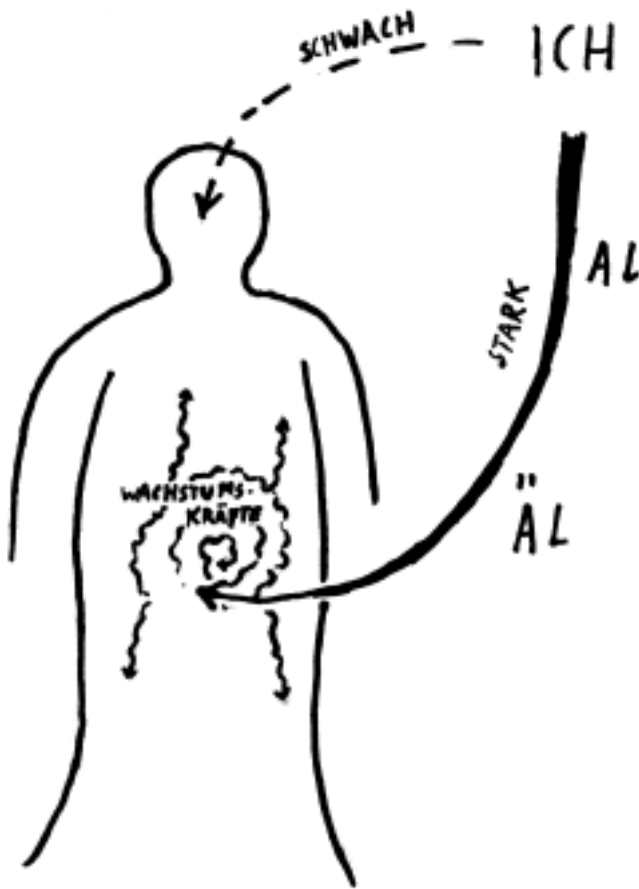
If a “memory child” has an I-weakness in the metabolism-limb system, I and astral body are not fully incarnated and unable to take hold of and structure that area. The growth forces of our lower being are left to “themselves”, to their own inherent nature. They stream to the periphery effecting hypertrophy, exudation and volatilization. The children in question, though slender (like undernourished), grow taller than their peers. Their growth forces are not penetrated by the forces of the invisible being’s I-organisation and astral organisation and do therefore not form part of the whole organism in a healthy way. In the discussion of a patient at the Ita Wegman Institute we read: “*The patient was anything but dwarf size, however, and in fact very tall, which was due to the fact that the ether body’s growth forces, uninhibited by the astral body, caused a tremendous increase in the volume of her physical body*”.¹² In other words: in these people the ether forces work in an unmodified, pure way. Interestingly, they are forces that, unlike physical forces, do not have “*a centre but a periphery*”¹³, they tend to push towards expansion and enhance growth.

12 Steiner, R. & Wegman, I. (1996): Extending Practical Medicine. Fundamental Principles based on the Science of the Spirit. GA 27, S. 97. Tr. A. Meuss

13 *ibid.* p. 20



In the “imagination type” child the life forces that would otherwise drive growth are used as metabolic and generative forces. They are diverted by the activity of I-organisation and astral organisation, more strongly caught in metabolism and retained there with the result that with these children growth is slowed down and halted. They tend to be more podgy. At first glance this does not seem to make sense: although metabolism is stimulated the children do not grow more but less than others. What happens here also is that the life forces which are permanently tied to the body usurp, as it were, part of the growth forces, with the result that these children do not grow taller but more sturdy and corpulent and deposit more fat.



5. Aspects of hygiene and therapy in education

Teachers can make sure that their lessons are more balanced to prevent such one-sided development. They can also try to attenuate rather than enhance any constitutional one-sidedness by working therapeutically in their teaching.

There are situations in the classroom where the teachers' approach seems to make the students freeze, where they bury their head between their shoulders and endure the teaching like a cold shower of rain. The words bounce back from their inner being like rain drops from the wet head. This happens when the teacher presents the lesson in an abstract and boring manner. What remains after getting soaked in the downpour is, at best, the memory of something that happened and that is now over or, at worst, a bad cold. And what happens in the case of intellectual teaching where

verbal information processing and reproduction prevail? What happens if pupils are forced to acquire these lesson contents to gain good marks and pass tests and exams? We can see in their faces that they are not inwardly moved. They yawn, they are absent-minded, tired out and pale. What can we do? How can we touch the inner essence of our pupils? We need to use images to stimulate imaginative processes in the children, to warm their thinking and feeling. Or we get them to be active by setting small group tasks, by letting them draw, paint, write etc. Then we will involve the whole human being and not just the nerve-sense part.

Especially for “memory children” an intellectual teaching approach would not be remedy but poison even though they might initially seem to cope well with it. It would aggravate their one-sidedness. We need to recognize these children’s intellectuality, but lead them to a warm interest with emotional involvement so that the intellectual work is enlivened and supplied with blood!¹⁴

We find similar warning signs in the outer appearance and behaviour of children when teachers deal with certain practical activities insensitively. The “rhythmic” part can be too drawn out if teachers ask the class to sing, recite or play the recorder yet another time and keep the children clapping and stamping for twenty, thirty, forty minutes. Teachers don’t notice that the pupils are no longer joyfully engaged. The activity has become mechanical and is no longer refreshing, the class has turned into an indifferent mass.

The “imagination type children” are one-sidedly will centred and can tolerate such imbalance in teaching quite well. But they need to be led from the choric to the individual and they need consciousness-inducing moments to wake them up.

These brief descriptions draw attention to one-sided ways of teaching that are directed at the polar parts of the threefold human being and therefore enhance one-sided developments that even extend to the physical body and growth processes. There is profound justification for attuning the teaching to the rhythmic system of breathing and heartbeat. Rudolf Steiner at one point even refers to the rhythmic system as the human being’s “*physical organ of education, of teaching*”.¹⁵ The fundamental question for all healthy teaching is how it can be attuned to or based on the rhythmic system. It is therefore the first question of Waldorf education. There are two answers to this question.

Firstly, as we know today from chronobiological research, certain artistic activities can stimulate physical processes that have a healthy and harmonizing effect on the physiology. Recitation and singing, for instance, balance and synchronize the rhythm of circulation and breathing and this is reverberated in the entire organism and has a demonstrably positive effect on general wellbeing.

14 Steiner, R. (1996): The Foundations of Human Experience. GA 293, p. 203. Tr. R. Lathé, N. Whittaker

15 Steiner, R. (1972): Adolescence – Ripe for What? Part of GA 302a, Lecture of 22 June 1922. Tr. M. Stott

“And, as it is with music, so it is in a finer, more delicate way with modelling and painting. Colour harmonies and melodies are also reproduced and live as inner rhythmic processes within us.”¹⁶ The rhythmic system is best supported and enhanced through eurythmy since what “takes place between breathing and circulation” in the rhythmic human being during eurythmy takes hold most strongly of the entire organism right into the movement system. Eurythmy not only induces clear sound structures in the heartbeat that are even more subtle than those induced by recitation and music, it also increases the beneficial effect of sleep and has a positive effect on health in general.¹⁷ All the arts are therefore reliable tools for addressing the rhythmic system in teaching.

The second answer to our question concerns the non-artistic subjects and activities. They include writing and arithmetic but also content-heavy subjects such as history, geography, nature studies etc. The golden rule here is to work as artistically as possible which is best achieved by using images: imaginative images, living images, spiritual images, images that the students can enter into with their whole being. These images stimulate the rhythmic system. An American study has revealed that the simple recollection of a pleasant sensation or even just an imagined scene that relates to a positive, joyful reaction, can harmonize a chaotic heartbeat in a very short time.¹⁸ Investigation based on analysis of the heart rate variability and the heart rate itself looked for physiological correlates of imagination processes (transformation of signals in the surrounding – spoken text – into inner pictures) and of ‘vigilance processes’ (mere attention to signals in the surrounding without inner imaginative activity) and found significant differences in the cardiovascular measurements.¹⁹ Imaginative teaching stimulates the child’s rhythmic system. This means that we can teach in a hygienic-preventive or in a pedagogical-therapeutic way.

6. Measures of a specific medical nature

The tools described can even out the interaction of the three essential parts of the human organization in a pedagogical way. They are “therapies” that can be applied by teachers. Rudolf Steiner once referred to education as “*subtle healing*”. Over and above that there are actual healing interventions, i.e. medical treatment and therapies that are useful for the constitutions described above. I will only briefly mention them since they are the domain of the physician with which the teacher must not interfere.

16 Steiner, R. (2004): The Spiritual Ground of Education. GA 305, p. 50.

17 Moser, M. et al. (2001): Stress, am Herzschlag sichtbar gemacht. AUVVA Forum Prävention. Innsbruck 2001.

Moser, M. et al. (2003): Luftkunst – Von der Fähigkeit, mit dem Atem das Herz und den Körper zum Klingen zu bringen. In: Forum, S. (ed.), Luft ed., Vol 4 Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der BRD.

18 McCraty, R., Atkinson, M. et al. (1995): The effects of emotion on short-term power spectrum analysis and heart rate variability. In: The American Journal of Cardiology, vol. 76(14), p. 1089-1093.

19 Unterweger, E. (1998): Bildhafte Vorstellungen physiologisch sichtbar gemacht: Herzfrequenzvariabilität als Indikator für Imaginationsprozesse. Göttingen: Cuvillier Verlag.

There are, firstly, topical applications that stimulate or calm down particular processes and induce harmony. For the “memory type” Rudolf Steiner recommended the use of warm abdominal compresses to stimulate the I and astral organization to take hold of metabolism. The next step would be to adjust the diet: a moderately sweet diet can enliven and stimulate metabolism from within. Rudolf Steiner recommended silver and iron preparations to add gravity to the blood and reduce the upward activity of the growth forces.²⁰

For “imagination type” children he recommended washing the head with cool water to force the blood processes away from the neurosensory system and strengthen the nerve processes. A salty diet can harmonize the overall organism by putting stress on the digestive process and slowing it down. Lead and copper preparations are recommended as appropriate medicines for these children. With the excessive formative and regenerating life forces in these children, lead, “*when it is administered in an extremely fine hyper-homoeopathic dilution, can at any given moment bring about the dampening down of the life forces to the extent necessary to enable a human being to be a conscious being and not to be perpetually in the grip of uncontrolled processes of growth which cause faintness and loss of consciousness ...*”²¹ This little example shows how new dimensions open up in medicine as a result of anthroposophical cosmological and anthropological insights. To us teachers it shows the almost seamless transition from education to medicine and the close affinity between these two practical fields of work. Education can become the “next metamorphosis of the remedies”.

7. Inner development and anthroposophical education

As teachers we wonder sometimes how we should deal with indications by Rudolf Steiner that seem quite provocative at first glance, such as the following passage from Lecture 11 of “The Foundations of Human Experience”: “*You must be a good friend to natural development. However, if you have no understanding of natural development, how can you possibly be a good friend to it? If, for example, you do not know how to teach through the soul in order to slow down or accelerate growth, how can you teach well? The way you affect the soul to a certain extent gives you the possibility of disturbing the growth forces in the developing children*”²² We could simply despair: will I ever be a good teacher? I don’t really know whether I accelerate or retard my pupils’ growth. I must be such a bad teacher! Maybe I should find another job? Or maybe Rudolf Steiner is trying to tell me something else?

I think that with his succinct and pointed remarks, Rudolf Steiner wants to guide us to the most important skill of a teacher which consists in doing what is

20 Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner, GA 300b. Also: Steiner, R. (1991): *Earthly Knowledge and Heavenly Wisdom*. GA 221. Tr. S. Seiler

21 Steiner, R. (1997): *Mystery Knowledge and Mystery Centres*. GA 232, p. 79/80. Revised tr. by P. Wehrle

22 Steiner, R. (1996): *The Foundations of Human Experience*. GA 293, p. 180. Tr. R. Lathe, N. Whittaker

right for the individual child in a given situation without having to think about it for a long time, maybe even without knowing what it is; just like that – instinctively, intuitively.

In order to develop this kind of educational intuition it is most important that we show a keen and perceptive interest in the life of the pupils. To develop a keen sense for the manifold expressions of our pupils is the first and foremost condition for the art of education or, to put it differently, for intuitive teaching: “*You must be able to observe life in all its manifestations.*”²³ Will I succeed in developing an awareness for the physical development and growth of my pupils? There are certainly ways of keeping track. Could I write down a few notes on every pupil at the beginning of the school year? Or do I put together a short questionnaire for the parents? Or could I try to do sketches of some conspicuous pupils? Or – making use of the technical achievements of our time – should I take photos of my pupils? And all that not just once, but repeatedly, at least twice per school year, best at the beginning and towards the end of the school year.

Or can I identify less noticeable but unhealthy physical changes in face expression or complexion that might constitute first warning signs?

The second essential precondition for intuitive teaching is the profound penetration of anthroposophy in study and meditation. I must live so intensely with the anthroposophical contents that a certain understanding of the human being, especially of human threefoldness, permeates me and becomes second nature. My concern with these contents turns into a life process (like eating and breathing) of my soul. They are rooted in the depths of my soul and spirit. I take them into my thought and feeling so that they become part of my self.²⁴

This allows us as teachers to become competent artists in our field. As a result of observing the pupils and studying the anthroposophical view of the human being we will be able to find access to the right tools, responses, words etc. with the pupils. But we have to be open, capable of intuition, ready to take a step away from our preparations and written notes in the classroom. Then we provide an inner space where pedagogical intelligence and intuition, inspiration and sensitivity can unfold. Education becomes art.

Tomáš Zdražil
translated by Margot Saar

23 Steiner, R. (1995): *The Kingdom of Childhood*. GA 311, Lecture of 13 August 1924. Tr. H. Fox. (In this context see also Steiner, R.: *Human Values in Education* (GA 310))

24 Rudolf Steiner describes in various places what he refers to as the “anthroposophical understanding of the human being”. Best known is the relevant passage in the lecture of 21 September 1920 (GA 302a: *Balance in Teaching*). The way it is formulated, i.e. that anthroposophy must become “second nature” (300b, 304a) or our “spiritual life substance” (304a) points to this profound, inwardly transforming process of appropriation.

I and body

The child ...

... is running to and fro, full of beans, skips and shouts “hello” from the tree. No, not from the tree, o dear, from the window sill... on the second floor, that is. Yesterday he climbed on the school roof without asking permission ...

He had nicked an enormous wooden block from somewhere and, with much fussing and scolding, worked hard to drag it up the tree. To his tree house!

And this child is sad, really sad. He won't speak and there is nothing you can do about it. “Who hurt you?” – no answer.

What would be better: doing silly things or just sit still?

And this child is as sweet as honey pie.

You educate these beautiful children, dear teacher.

Often you are very tired; you didn't get enough sleep. You've done your lesson preparations but not quite the way you would have wished. You enter the classroom and you meet the eyes of your pupils.

When you say “pray” they pray. When you say “write” they write. Stand on their heads – some will also attempt that ... You have the power to give orders and you carry full responsibility. In the children's eyes you read: Guide us! You know the way!

Year after year the handshake in the morning gets firmer. In the first three years you looked down, now they are at eye level, in a few years time you will be the smallest in the class. They don't notice that you get smaller and smaller every year. For them you are tall.

Behind your shoulder you have a subtle spiritual inkling, a prescience, a hope for the I and the life goals of each child. The children know that and they wait for the next word from your lips.

In twenty years they will be different people. If you happen to meet them you will look in vain for the little boy behind the strong, calm young man with the glasses. You won't find him. And it will hurt when you realize that he has forgotten you ...

A metamorphosis has taken place. The I has come down and has taken hold of soul and body.

Everything we do with the children at school serves the incarnation of the I.

It is interesting that the I can take hold too strongly or not strongly enough. We usually try to make sure that the I is not too weak (especially where we are, in the Eastern Slavic countries). But we must not forget the other side. The I can take hold too strongly and can establish itself too firmly in the body.

The art of educating consists in harmonizing the incarnation process. The following indications, developed by Rudolf Steiner out of his insight into human nature, can help us with our teaching in relation to this complex process.

Conceptions of space (geometry) and numbers strengthen and bring order to the I. Geometrical ideas are will that radiates from the sense of movement. They are carried by the sense of balance and weave into the I. Numbers reflect objective laws that are rooted in the spiritual. The I is related to them.

Beware of the dry rigidity of mathematical concepts, though.

Joy and a deep sense of wonder, reverence for the secrets that have been unveiled, help let go of the I again.

Recitation of poetry, the rhythm and pulse of the language prepare and pave the way for the I. The children breathe deeply, their cheeks turn red. Proper speaking makes children strong. After speech exercises children are ready to take on the world. If the I marches too strongly on this path, we pause and illumine for the child the meaning of language and of the word. It helps loosen the I in a healthy way.

Looking at history and its meaning strongly draws in the I. The children are asked to draw conclusions and form concepts through judgment. The I penetrates the organisation of the physical body. To make sure that the I does not become caught in this process we bring movement into the rhythmic system: we describe a personality or an event in a lively way so that the children's heart rate is raised because of the hatred or enthusiasm they experience.

Trying to understand art and to grasp the meaning of a work of art invites the I in. As a polar opposite activity we would let them paint, draw or model. This releases the own spirit and the spirit that is caught in the world.

Interestingly, even the musical element can take hold of the I too strongly, for example when children are made to practice a lot. We can free the I if the soul can form an ear to perceive and listen to music.

There is a verse by Rudolf Steiner:

*Our bond with the spirit will tear,
If it is not sustained by beauty.
Beauty joins the I with the body.*

We call on beauty to invite the I. We try to bring beauty to geometry and number work, to historical events and theories of art. The experience of something complete and fulfilled forms the chalice that will receive the I.

We have to learn to find beauty where it is not immediately apparent, don't we?

It is generally assumed that the I is pushed away by ugliness, chaos and violence. People say that beauty will save the world.

The incarnation process of the I into the body is like playing on a delicate string instrument. We can touch the strings too forcefully or too softly, which will result in dissonance or in a tone too soft to be heard.

It is the teacher's destiny to guide and accompany this process. When he sets up the teaching plan, prepares the lessons and especially when he teaches he strives to find the golden mean between too much and too little, too short and too long, too fast and too slow.

In the actions, moods and thinking activities an I-theme gently resounds in each child. The teacher really has to become pure and permeable inside to be able to hear and sense this subtle tune.

Rudolf Steiner's "Daily Prayer for Teachers" can help us to develop this capacity:

O God,
May it be that I,
As far as my personal ambitions are concerned,
quite obliterate myself,
And Christ make true within me
The Pauline words:
"Not I, but the Christ in me!"

The child has forgotten you. Because he has absorbed the teacher out of sympathy. And the seeds of beauty, goodness and truth that the teacher has sown live in the child's face, form the substance of his bones and guide the I's moral decisions.

*Iryna Kokoshynska
translated by Margot M. Saar*

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World Kindergarten Conference 2012 – Preparations

The IASWECE planning group for the world kindergarten conference in April 2012 has already begun preparations for the conference.

The theme “*the I and the Body*” is especially interesting for working in the kindergarten and with groups of very small children. We have been active with the following questions:

From the spiritual world, from pre-birth existence, the “I” comes in, bringing its destiny, and forms the vessel of the body in the first years of life. Spiritual beings are also active in this process, accompanying the development of walking, speaking and thinking.

Only in the 3rd year of life does a preliminary *I-consciousness* appear, but the *I-activity* is there from the very beginning. It is visible through the physical body, above all through movement. Already in achieving uprightness, the guidance of the I is visible through the overcoming of gravity – the penetration of the I is visible down into the feet of the child. One can observe, for example, how the child walks – strong and secure, or insecure and on tiptoes.

This is all connected to the *peripheral activity* of the I. In our times, this is hindered through *accelerated development*. In the little child we see shortened maturation processes and early I-consciousness. By learning to read and write too early, the development of the inner bodily form (“gestalt”) is premature and the imitation phase is shortened. This can lead to later disturbances.

Through *imitative activity* the I anchors itself in the *physical body*. The drive to imitation is something the child brings with it – it is an activity of the I.

Sense impressions, when they are not virtual but are experiences in reality, give *bodily experience and bodily form* (“gestalt”). The I is connected to every perception and is only able to experience itself through sensory content. It needs the physical body in order to come into appearance. The body does not create the soul life; it is the necessary mirror for soul-spiritual activity which takes place outside.

Sense impressions are often difficult to digest today; the bodily vessel becomes damaged and therapeutic support is needed. Hindrances must be removed so that the individuality can penetrate the body and complete its formation in a healthy way. In the first seven years this has to do primarily with the formation of the physical body.

Thus the task of the kindergarten becomes clear. Children need the feeling that they can *play in a protected way, experience the world through their own activity*, discover, experiment, and have social experiences rather than conceptual training, information and explanations.

The task of parents and educators has become more difficult. Little children today are much more awake, self-conscious and often extremely sensitive. Their will is not stimulated enough and is not guided through rhythms and meaningful activity; instead, the head is expected to understand, remember and

achieve. Expectations of children have changed. Harmonious movement, dexterity, and the training of capacities often remain *undeveloped*.

Naturally we must ask whether this situation is just a problem or incapacity, *a new development*, or perhaps both?

We must also ask whether the *thoughts and feelings* of the adult are not the most *important educational tools* to reach the peripheral I and make it possible for the child to open its soul and form relationships.

When the adult engages in work with her whole body, this is a great support for imitation. *Large movements* such as sweeping the floor, hanging up the laundry, etc. allow a better consciousness of the periphery, a feeling experience of space, whereas work with small things creates a consciousness of the point. The aesthetic element in the work should not arise from the head, but should flow from the will.

Educators must exert themselves, discover *sources of strength* for themselves, in order to be able to radiate the inner peace and equanimity that form a necessary sheath for the group and create a common experience of the present with the children. In order to be able to work at all with today's children, one's own *inner spiritual path of development* is essential and a well-grounded training is the foundation.

Brigitte Goldmann
translated by Susan Howard

Seven-foldness and Twelve-foldness in the Upper School?

In recent years educating the four temperaments may often have faded into the background, yet it is a fundamental idea of teaching, which works to support and harmonise the life processes and soul processes of children between seven and twelve offers the teacher variety in his or her approach and self-development. Why should not the same care be applied when the souls of the adolescents are maturing. The soul forces are rooted in the seven planetary forces. For this reason we can observe in later life that seven different world-view moods can develop. Rudolf Steiner's "Der kosmische und der mikrokosmische Gedanke"¹ has spurred Sigismund von Gleich² to name the following moods:

- 1 Rudolf Steiner: "Human and Cosmic Thought", originally 4 lectures held in Berlin from 20-23.1.1914.
- 2 Sigismund von Gleich: "Die Wahrheit als Gesamtumfang aller Weltansichten" (Truth as the encompassing of all world-views), Mellinger Verlag.

☾	Occultism
♀	Transcendentalism
♀	Mystik
☉	Empiricism
♂	Voluntarism ³
♁	<i>Logism</i> ⁴
♃	Gnosis

We find seven-foldness in the first Chemistry main lesson, through which the adolescents connect their metabolism with the metabolism of the world. The qualities of the seven metals must be compared to the human characteristics during the class teacher time⁵. In the woodwork lesson too the seven-foldness can be fostered meticulously through the artistic work on the seven planetary types of wood. In just the same way the working of the planets can be picked up through botany⁶, the study of the organs in the study of man, the seven intervals in music and last but not least the developmental changes in human biography⁷ and the seven cultural epochs, which are led by the seven archangels. This is where research needs to be done: how does a Michael culture differ from a Gabriel culture, from a Raphael culture, a Samuel culture from an Oriphiel culture? We would have to gather examples from literature, architecture and painting in order to present them to the pupils. Their soul life would get a clearer historical power of judgement, if the cosmic dimension could be thought.

On the other hand, the thought life is developing in the soul life of adolescents going through puberty. After all, this is the level, from which the soul life can be trained in later life. Since it would be asking too much of the pupils if they were straightaway introduced to the twelve world-views, elementary finger exercises would be necessary, first of all to be worked out in the circle of the twelve polarities; through these at least dialectic thinking can be tried out (in essays and role play, in group conversations). Thus, starting with the subject concerned you could start a dynamic between the approach of materialism with the approach of spiritualism or confront sensualism with

3 The doctrine that the will is a fundamental principle in the individual or the universe.

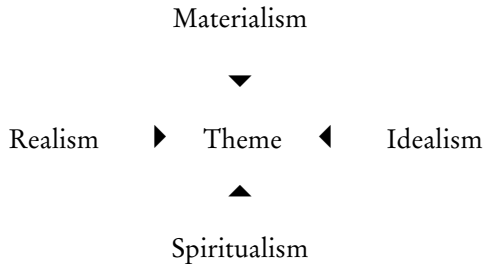
4 The view that the world is built up logically.

5 Fritz Julius: "Chemieanregungen".

6 Fritz Julius: "Metamorphose – Ein Schlüssel zum Verstaendnis von Pflanzenwuchs und Menschenleben" (Metamorphosis – A Key to the Understanding of Plant Growth and Human Lives). Chapter E4; The Planets as Inspiration for the true Art of Living.

7 Rudolf Steiner: "Der Lebenslauf"

pneumatism. Or mathematism with monadism, idealism with realism, rationalism with dynamism, phenomenism with psychism. In his work “Die Wahrheit als Zusammenfassung der zwoelf Weltanschauungen”⁸ (Truth as a Combination of the twelve World-views) Sigismund von Gleich gives examples from cultural history, which may help with the search for suitable texts. Dealing with polar opposite starting points, for instance, viewing a soul or a world content from four different viewpoints.



This variety of method can be practised in work on literature without losing sight of the required course content (‘A’ levels). A conversation among colleagues on a non-personal level might be suggested, in which you come to an agreement as to which world-views or their moods have emerged in the various subjects. This would give the pupils the feeling you can come to an understanding in the realm of thought, whereas in the feeling realm often chasms open up (male-female, moods of nations, moods of generations etc.). The soul and social destitution, in which we find ourselves today, can basically only be ordered and alleviated through a faculty of developing a spiritual overview. If a person has not included the starting-points of others in his thinking, he will be unable to be social. Increasingly, this can be witnessed among our fellow teachers, where well-worn starting-points are postulated as the one and only true approach with a heightened sense of self-importance gained through anthroposophy. I have been through the mill of experiencing colleagues with their phenomenism, voluntarism, spiritualism and idealism which made me realise that a prior general education was simply wanting; this would have brought them face to face with a variety of possibilities. Colleagues with more comprehensively developed thinking found it easier to distinguish when the idealistic standpoint and when the realistic standpoint (or even the voluntarist one) needed to be adopted. There are areas and subjects which can rather be approached by starting with the outside world, but equally well, there are areas where it is more adept to start off with the concept and then to sight the phenomena.

8 Sigismund von Gleich: “Die wahrheit als Gesamtumfang aller Weltansichten“ (Truth as the Encompassing of all World Views); Mellinger Verlag.

At this juncture, I would like to point out the two volumes of Rudolf Steiner “The Riddles of Philosophy”, presented as a historical outline.⁹ There, by way of orientation over the broad outline of this account, a finding is presented as to how four great epochs of thought can be distinguished in the course of history.

- The first epoch from the emergence of thinking with the Greeks (Pherecydes of Syros, Thales, Presocratics etc.) up until the emergence of Christianity, where thoughts were still perceivable, so to speak. (This phase of thinking can be observed in early puberty, classes 6-9).
- After this a new phase begins as Christianity develops, which Steiner names the ‘the Awakening of Self-awareness’, a period which lasts until the philosophical strivings of Scotus Erigena (who died in 877 A.D.). This kind of experience belongs to the next age group. 16-17 year olds suffer when thoughts, religions are not lived. This can lead right up to the deepest despair.
- In class 12 we can stimulate debates on Nominalism and Realism. Do ideas lead to the distinctive character of reality? This can be especially clearly seen from linguistic theories.
- In the class 12 main lessons that present an overview the approach of Giordano Bruno with its consciousness soul character can be discussed, which, above all, has its place at the beginning of the scientific world views. The world views of the scientists emerge with the question whether the inner world of man can be anchored in just the same way as facts of nature.

Thus we arrive in the present day and also at the approach of anthroposophy of founding spiritual science with scientific method. Against the background of the development of thought anthroposophy can be mentioned as a logically consistent step forward in thought without the impression arising that we are imparting anthroposophy. Yet, it has become a historical fact, after all, which has given a variety of cultural stimuli and is still doing so.

I think that teaching in the upper school would become more accurate with regards to the education of the soul, if seven-foldness and twelve-foldness played the part that four-foldness plays in the second seven-year period and the development of the senses does in the first. I assume that a number of colleagues are already concerning themselves with this and would be glad to hear how they put it into practice in their lessons. And in the overview main lessons at the end of the school the very much open task of humanity should light up especially well. What has been achieved so far, what is waiting for further development through active research? What soul forces does a Michael period require as opposed to a period inspired by Gabriel? How can we invent occupations when the old trades and professions dissolve? And there is the joyful expectation that all social-soul problems will be settled through spiritual work. That would be a

9 Rudolf Steiner: “The Riddles of Philosophy” 1914, GA 18.

message that could resound from the upper school teachers which would give the souls of our adolescents lasting courage for life in this irritating civilisation.

Here is another quotation from Sigismund von Gleich's work which makes it clear how anthroposophy is suited to be a kind of universal knowledge through the development of the faculty of honouring the existing world-views together with the seven moods. Altogether the result would be 7x12 possibilities of viewing reality, i.e. 84! And some people believe there is only one right approach!

“Anthroposophy is a form of universal knowledge with two sides to it, natural science and spiritual science. It researches the spirit world so as to light up the world of senses and to bring reality fully to our awareness. It recognises the being of man in his three-folded nature with body, soul and spirit. It knows that the soul is standing on the threshold between the sense world and the spirit in that it belongs to the sense world through the body and the supersensible world through the spirit. For this very reason it can comprehend all regions of the world of the senses as well as the world of the spirit. And for this very reason we can represent the complete compass of all world-views with the help of this universal science in such a way that all twelve aspects come into their own, each one of them is illuminated by one of the many sides of the being of anthroposophy.”¹⁰

Angelika Kobli-Stroé
translated by John Weedon

Craftsmanship Leads to Art

Waldorf education places particular emphasis on crafts and art. That's why the respective subjects are part of the curriculum throughout a pupil's school time. When at state schools the focus is on spelling, a great deal of effort is devoted to teaching knitting to our pupils in their first year. Class teachers are not assisted by so-called “reading mothers” but by industrious mothers who patiently retrieve dropped stitches. While 12-year pupils in other schools usually only train for the “Abitur”, (the German equivalent to British A-levels), our pupils put a lot of effort into rehearsing a play.

Yesterday two 13th graders visited my 6th grade to do a survey on media use – the questionnaire had been prepared in their “Social Studies” lessons. Their visit gave me an opportunity to talk to them. After the “Abi” one of those pupils wants to do an apprenticeship as a confectioner, the other one hopes to attain an apprenticeship

10 Sigismund von Gleich; “Die Wahrheit als Gesamtumfang aller Weltansichten”; Mellinger Verlag, P. 280.

place in the film industry after serving an internship there. “Many of us do something practical. That’s when we feel confident!” “That’s right”, added Anna, “we have a very long CV if we list all the projects and work placements we’ve done so far.” Both had attended the school since their first year and were willing to talk about their “Waldorf”-specific career at a parents’ evening.

All this highlights the pupils’ attitude: in the artistic subjects those pupils had experienced their skills and their self-confidence helped them to find their place in the world.

So far a lot has been said about the artistic element of Waldorf education. As far as the main-lesson blocks are concerned, we all know that Steiner’s recommendations do not mean that predominantly artistic activities have to take place in those periods.

Instead, it’s the lessons themselves which are the work of art. But, in what way can we teachers find out whether we are successful? We are not able to look into the soul and likewise, unlike a doctor, we teachers cannot check the bodies. We can only succeed in perceiving the group dynamics – a fact which might lead to giving higher priority to the life processes of the class than to the learning processes of an individual pupil.

How does a crafts teacher find out whether his lesson has been successful? Here the pupil’s concrete work piece plays a decisive role. The main principle is: it has to be finished! I can remember when I was still inexperienced a long-serving teacher explained to me that everything that does not get accomplished will result in a weakening of the will.

“Mrs Stolz, Max has still not managed to finish his pair of socks in year 6, so what can we do? After thinking this over for a brief moment I offer Max, who is a weak pupil, to finish his socks during the main lessons. The others help him with their know-how and on top of that, I can give him some extra encouragement. By the way, this measure resulted in my industrious craftsmen also demanding to have the possibility of doing their knitting and stitching in my lessons during those two weeks.

We do not spare any effort to help pupils accomplish things, to finish their pieces of work or art. Again and again after school our needlework teacher calls parents to give instructions on how to assist their children. To realise the artistic approach enormous preparations have to be done. Frequently a class is divided into three groups, a lot of effort is used to furnish workshops massively investing in tools and material. As regards replacement lessons, in contrast to foreign language teachers the crafts teachers are rarely confronted with a whole class. And that’s right as accomplishment can only be gained when the necessary requirements are fulfilled. Rudolf Steiner demands lessons to appeal to the will and the soul. I have already referred to the education of the will which can be traced in the respective subjects. However, in general the education of the soul qualities is also provided for.

Today the therapist of one of my pupils suffering from Asperger visited my lesson. He witnessed Lorenz’ exaggerated way of addressing me. Lorenz said: “What has my charming teacher again prepared for me?” He explained to me

that autistic pupils who experience a caring, understanding and supportive environment usually do not display any unacceptable behaviour. It was obvious that this Waldorf school provided such a kind of environment. Years later that pupil was able to pass the Abitur at a different Waldorf school.

We reflect on how we can integrate special children into our community and which regular tasks could help them to feel part of the class or school. Many opportunities to experience this are provided by our diverse projects, e.g. our circus, in which the articulate Lorenz, who does not like to move, acted as the eloquent director. To put it differently, we not only devote time and energy to artistic but also to social learning. Success or failure are clearly stated in reports ... *“now in class 3 he has found his place in the community”*...

However, the main lesson plays the most important role in Waldorf schools. It is the most striking and productive part of the daily schedule. Then the focus is on the primary aim of education: reading, writing and arithmetic, the techniques that have become part of our culture. Thinking, feeling and will, the three qualities of the soul should be taken into account in this learning process. But we cannot ignore the fact that thinking plays a particular role in this process.

“At the end of class 1 Marie is not able to write a single word. But she is a real Waldorf pupil beaming all the time and decorating her (main-lesson / exercise) books with great devotion. Some time in the future she will be ready for learning to write.” Her class teacher shows a totally relaxed attitude. And she is prepared to wait for another year.

This example is exaggerated. It occurred 20 years ago, long before trained special needs teachers worked in our schools. However, this sort of attitude towards the teaching of basic skills can still be found, particularly in the lower classes. Compared to the great variety of complex main-lesson topics such as house-building, form drawing (interlacing), Greek mythology including the Olympic Games, maths and German *play a minor role* in the first eight years. A great number of (us) class teachers were not trained as primary school teachers and, thus, are not informed about current didactic approaches. Still ten years ago those new teaching methods such as (organisational forms of) group work, learning at different places (“Stationenlernen”), learning with a weekly schedule or portfolio were frowned upon. Up to now the classrooms have been poorly equipped with material that supports the process of metamorphosis of the physical senses to the sense of thinking to educate sensory awareness. Instead, more and more furniture such as tables and chairs that enable writing activities have been exchanged for benches to transform the classroom into a workshop for movement. Again, actual learning, which indeed is a mental process, has been dismissed. As if it was a taboo, as if everything could be done apart from teaching the three ‘R’s. As if learning had to be prevented or postponed.

At the last conference on Special Needs teaching in November 2009 Michaela Glöckler, Head of the Medical Section, and Christof Wiechert, Head of the Pedagogical Section, set an example by stating the following ideas on the necessity

of developments in Waldorf Schools. Rudolf Steiner asked anthroposophical doctors to participate and graduate in “normal” medical studies. Why did he not ask teachers to do the same? Only in the last decades the tool kit of teachers has increasingly been filled exactly to the extent that not only empirical, but also scientific data on learning have become available. Though reluctantly, those findings have been finally put into practice in state schools in curricula and subject-related methodology and didactics. In comparison to that, there was only a small tool kit available during Steiner’s time, but he made use of the novelties he could take hold of and provided it for the Waldorf School on the basis of the study of man. A good example is the fashion of playing the recorder in class, which was popular then and which aimed at guaranteeing a musical education not only for the upper class, but for children from all walks of life. In the seventies in primary schools the recorders were exchanged for the permanently tuned Orff instruments, because musical ears are tortured by the sound of recorders and thus the desired success of early musical education failed. Unlike many other schools, the Waldorf Schools have not taken part in that process.

First of all we visited the cathedral in Cologne and then we retreated to the impressive, humble silence of the Romanesque church of “St. Maria im Kapitol”. The incredible complexity and richness of pictures and words was followed by its complete opposite. Their senses heightened, their interest stirred up the sixth graders had written down all the important facts and then, in the Romanesque crypt, they were asked: “In what way does the room affect you, what are you feeling?” A spontaneous answer was: “Now I’m myself. I’m able to concentrate!” In class we had practiced black and white drawing. The last task of our excursion was to find a detail and draw it according to light and shade. When the pupils were lying on the floor, the silence deepened. Thinking, feeling, willing, knowing, perceiving and acting ...

When we talk about art we usually speak about craft first. In most cases art is based on craft. Craft in action, craft in feeling and finally craft in thinking. Waldorf education could be an extension of conventional education such as anthroposophical medicine is an extension of conventional medical science. Then it would be “education plus”. If in the near future we aim at putting this idea into reality, we have to be aware of the fact that the “plus” is not sufficient, but from the very beginning it is necessary to have a clear view on education, on the teaching of basic skills. Then we, as class teachers, have to admit humbly: we have not reached the level of craftsmen yet, not to mention that of an artist. At the beginning of artistic teaching there are the skills of the teacher, at the end the skills of the pupil. Both are connected by a common aim: the aim “plus”, i.e. the educational objective to focus on the pupil’s development. Then the comprehensive piece of art will consist of the abilities of the pupils not only in a practical and social context but also in the spiritual realm: abilities and skills which they can display with self-confidence.

*Uta Stolz
translated by Ulrike Creyaufmüller*

Agenda

Forthcoming Pedagogical Section Conferences and Events at the Goetheanum, 2011

For information and the programme of the conference on “Meditative Praxis” in February please see our homepage.

The programme for the Conference ‘The Mystery Plays for teachers’ is in preparation and will be published as soon as possible.

Please also see our homepage for the most up-to-date information on the World Kindergarten Conference and the World Teachers’ Conference, including articles for preparation as well as information about the organisation.

We will be happy to publish the articles also in other languages on the website.

You are welcome to send us articles in other languages.

Here again the internet address of the Pedagogical Section:

www.paedagogik-goetheanum.ch

2011

February, 18 – 20, 2011

Meditative Praxis für Lehrer und Erzieher

May, 12 – 15, 2011

The Mystery Plays for teachers

2012

April, 1 – 5, 2012

World Kindergarten Conference

April, 9 – 14, 2012

World Teachers’ Conference

All four Witcher games (The Witcher, the Witcher 2: Assassins Of Kings, The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt, and Thronebreaker: The Witcher Tales) can be purchased on www.gog.com. Why specifically there, you might ask? Well, GOG is owned by CD Projekt, parent company of CD PROJEKT RED.