



# Anthroposophy worldwide

What is happening in the Anthroposophical Society

11/23

■ EDITORIAL

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## Anthroposophical Society

### Being connected

Dear Members,

We look back with gratitude to the Goetheanum World Conference with around 950 active participants from 50 countries, including a gratifying number of young people and visitors from Israel, Russia and Ukraine. The mood has been described as festive, stimulating and inspiring.

Just a few days later we were deeply shocked to hear of the attack on Israel and the suffering of civilians in both Israel and Palestine. At the same time, the war continues in Ukraine.

Faced with these shocking events we are called upon to devote ourselves even more earnestly and intensively to our work at the Goetheanum and around the world, to make a contribution, wherever this is possible, to the spiritual-earthly reality.

Even during the Goetheanum World Conference it was apparent that the fruitful anthroposophical impulses from numerous countries are facing great social challenges: how can social conflicts, isolation and polarization be overcome and how can a movement devoted to humaneness evolve in times of war, environmental destruction and violence?

### Giving life forces

Every shadow points to the light that creates it. The light now comes from Michael, the

spirit of our time. His gaze seeks to inspire spirit knowledge in the sensory world, his scales seek to develop forces of balance in many life situations, including our relationships with one another and with the world around us, and the imagination of the sword points to spirit-guided actions. The practising of spirit-beholding, spirit-sensing and spirit-recalling relates to these Michaelic qualities.

As developmental steps in self-knowledge and free community-building they will live on in the forthcoming Christmas Conference at the Goetheanum and accompany the questions as to developmental impulses for the Anthroposophical Society. Just as the heart follows the blood that streams in from the periphery, receiving its life from the blood, the Anthroposophical Society needs peripheral forces of the kind that were so clearly noticeable at the World Conference. Institutions and centres emerged from the Anthroposophical Society after its foundation a hundred years ago. Now the stream can return as the periphery gives life forces to the Society. If the Society is wanted by this anthroposophical movement, it can unfold its life and become the body of the being of anthroposophy and its School of Spiritual Science. | *Matthias Girke, Goetheanum*

**Image** Goetheanum World Conference 2023, Workshop: Building the future, photo: Xue Li

Rudolf Steiner

## Cosmopolitan

Whenever [the archangel] Gabriel rules, an age is prepared that separates the peoples, [...] that makes them more nationalistic. [...] How is it that in our time, under Michael's rulership, there are such strong nationalistic tendencies on earth? [...] The after-effects, which are often worse than the actual event, continue to make themselves felt for a very long time. [...] Whenever a Michael age dawns, a longing arises in earthly humanity to overcome all national distinctions. [...] Michael's reign always means that a cosmopolitan principle prevails. [...] In every Michael age [...] people were permeated with the consciousness: we can ascend to the divine.

**Sources** GA 240, 19 July 1924; GA 237, 1 August 1924

**Relates to** Contributions about Israel and Armenia

### About us

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### ■ PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

#### Meditation

## From light to effective will

**The triad of light, warmth and life is not only present in the human organism but also in meditative work. Meditation turns to the light; it is essentially 'enhanced devotion' to the spiritual content and as such, it generates warmth. Finally, meditation is also effective as it radiates out into everyday life.**

Meditative work seeks to take us from a life in thought to a life in spiritual essence. In this process it carries light forces to a place that was previously concealed. Light can evolve out of the darkness that lives in any unresolved question or that surrounds us as long as our habitual sensory experience does not reveal the spirit that is active through it.

In cognition, the spiritual essence initially lights up through conceptualization in sensory experience. This cognition is connected with the Michael impulse which consists in developing light forces in a pre-existing darkness. The external light makes much of what is in the world around us visible but it also renders much of it invisible. The starry sky, for example, is outshone by the rising daylight: as the world of the senses appears, the starry sky fades away. Similarly, the light in the sensory world obliterates the spiritual light and darkens the spiritual world. Through thinking we find the spiritual light in the sensory light.

The meditative path of knowledge takes us even further. Daylight becomes dark as the spiritual light begins to shine. When we focus on a spiritual content – the concept of a triangle, for instance – the conceptual content lights up as a spiritual light in our consciousness as the visible drawing of the triangle disappears.

#### Meditative stages

In the pure thinking of a meditative content lives its meaning which, spiritually speaking, is light. Contemplating this light constitutes a first meditative stage, to which Rudolf Steiner refers in the meditative phrase Wisdom lives in light: 'This idea cannot derive from sense impressions because it does not describe what happens according to our external senses. In this case we hold the thought back by means of meditation so that it does not connect with the brain. [...] Because meditative thinking does not evoke a destructive process in our nervous system, it never makes us sleepy [...]' (GA 152, lecture of 1 May 1913).

The next stage consists in feeling the meditative content. Qualities of warmth are added to the clarity of light. Our feeling can prepare itself for this stage through forces of devotion and reverence. Rudolf Steiner changes the meditation for this purpose to Wisdom radiates in the light: '[...] We feel inspired by the radiance of wisdom when we feel elevated, when we are inwardly aglow with this content [...]' (ibid.).

Finally, the effective will is addressed as the original meditation changes for a second time: 'The wisdom of the world radiates in the light' (ibid.). The wisdom of the world is found by means of spiritual activity. It is, however, not the result of our inventiveness and creativity, but is linked to the essence of the world. As our will unfolds, the meditative cognitive activity connects with the essence of the world.

#### Effective in life

Meditative content does not remain in our thinking; the motivating power of our feeling moves it on to the will. This is how meditative activity becomes effective in life, how it becomes inner attitude in our everyday working life. The spiritual path of knowledge becomes living practice, as it were, and outer life becomes an image and expression of the inner life.

We see here a connection with our physical development: in childhood and youth we grow towards the earth; meditative work guides the light of thinking into the warmth and feeling of the rhythmic system and finally reaches the effective activity of the will. | *Matthias Girke, Goetheanum*

Extracts from Matthias Girke's book on meditative paths in medicine edited by the author. The book is currently only available in German: *Meditative Erkenntniswege in der Heilkunst*, Verlag am Goetheanum.

**Matthias Girke**, born 1954 in Berlin (DE), is a physician specialized in internal medicine; he was head of the Medical Section from 2016 to 2023 and joined the Executive Council at the Goetheanum in 2017.

**Image** Matthias Girke, photo: Xue Li



Israel

## I don't lose hope for humanity

How can one speak about the Hamas attack on Israel? Ori Ivri explains that extremism on either side will not lead to peace and that those who have died may help to find a peaceful solution.

**Sebastian Jüngel** What did your day look like before 7 October, what does it look like now?

**Ori Ivri** I was born in Kibbutz Beeri which was a target of the violent attack by Hamas. Around 120 children, women and elderly people were murdered in a few hours; some of their bodies were unrecognizable. In one day a peaceful, beautiful community was lost. For 30 years I was a Waldorf teacher in Harduf, now I am retired. In the days before this attack, I worked mainly with the Palestinian community, bringing sick people from the border to hospitals twice a week. Recently I joined the group of people who tried to support Palestinian communities in the West Bank by helping shepherds to stand up to the settlers who try to make them leave their fields. I also support an initiative called 'Beit meazen' in Hebrew, which is for the Arab community in Israel, a place for people with mental health problems who need first aid rather than hospitalization.

### Living in dignity next to each other

This is what I did before the war. I come probably from my basic understanding that the real solution for Israel's society is to be able to coexist with dignity next to each other. I must say, it is too early now to say how it will go.

At the moment I am grieving for my close friends. I go from one funeral to the next, trying to hug people and to give them some comfort, trying to take care of myself as well.

**Jüngel** When Ukraine was attacked, Andrei Ziltzov described his inner life, among other things, as follows (published on 1 April 2022; documented in *Anthroposophy Worldwide* 5/2022): 'One of the facts of war is that it is unusually easy to feel joy when you hear that this or that enemy plane was shot down, this or that unit displaced or destroyed. That's when you realize how weak these peaceful feelings are, that you don't see the human beings behind the enemy so easily.' Do you feel similarly?

**Ivri** Both the Arab and the Israeli society are attacked by extremists. The Hamas organization and its Islamist ideology are really not good for the people on either side of the

border. The situation in Gaza is very complicated: a huge population that is controlled by a very extreme terrorist group. This kind of ideology cannot be part of a peaceful solution.

I think we are talking about two struggles: being able to free the Palestinian people from their extreme government and at the same time to do the same with the Israeli government which is actually more or less part of the problem.

[However] I feel relieved when I know that there is less danger at the border of Israel when a terrorist target is bombed or something like that. Nevertheless, it hurts me to know there is a human tragedy happening at the same time.

### No forgetting but no thought of revenge

**Jüngel** In his article 'Friedensbotschaft' (message of peace) in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* of 14/15 October 2023, Daniel Barenboim vehemently advocates to 'loudly' spread the message of peace: 'The greatest danger, after all, is that all the people who so ardently desire peace will be drowned out by extremists and violence.' He reasons, 'Humanity is universal, and recognition of this truth on both sides is the only way. The suffering of innocent people on either side is absolutely intolerable.' Finally, 'One must, of course, and especially now, allow for fears, despair and anger – but the moment this leads us to deny each other humanity, we are lost.' Do such words seem too idealistic to you or are they valuable, for instance as a reminder of the power of hope?

**Ivri** This is a good question because I don't lose hope for humanity. Survivors of this horrible attack on the Kibbutzim are saying that they want to feel safe, but we should never forget the children in Gaza, never forget the women in Gaza. They are not striving for revenge. None of the people I talk to use the word 'revenge'. They say that they will never forget what happened, but they talk about the need to free Gaza from this terrorist government and at the same time they point out the next stage of a peaceful civil solution that they have always wished for. In my view, talking about the violence in Gaza is a problem at this moment when Israel is forced to fight Hamas: In the Second World War the Allies decided to fight Germany and also to bomb Germany. People were killed. Nobody said: this is now the evil

that is coming towards humanity; the aim was not to kill civilians; the aim was to kill the Nazi ideology.

### Help from those who passed away

I think we have the same dilemma here: we must not allow this power to overcome our social life in any way. On the other hand, the result of World War II was a peaceful situation in Europe for many, many years. And this, I think, is part of the work of the souls crossing the threshold.

We had the same situation in the war of 73 when my brother died as a soldier. It was a big tragedy but the next thing was peace with Egypt. So, I only wish that the people who died now will help us

to achieve a peaceful coexistence through their love.

**Jüngel** The consequences of a family member or a friend being killed or 'just' hurt affect the fates of generations. Do you see a way out of the violence?

**Ivri** My adult life started when my brother died. It didn't make me strive less for peace as a human being. I think reality can be interpreted according to your previous values. You can hate your enemies more because they killed you. And you can seek peace because your enemies killed you. You can do both. Our basic inner approach to life doesn't have to change.

**Jüngel** What can members of the anthroposophical movement and Society do? For example, there is the suggestion by the eurythmist Daliya Paz to do the Hallelujah in eurythmy three times, at 2 pm and 9 pm Israel time, with the following inner attitude: 'The first is to help all the thousands of souls who were violently killed on both sides. The second is to help all the injured and all the people who need help. The third is for all people who have bad intentions so that they change their hearts.'

**Ivri** Well, I am not really good at ceremonies. I trust Daliya Paz very much in her intentions, but I would add a fourth aim: to help the souls who passed the threshold to support us in a peaceful solution. We need to remember that they can help us.



Armenia

## What happened to Christian Europe?

The political situation in Nagorno-Karabakh caused 100,000 people to flee the area. Some of the children attend the Waldorf School in Yerevan.

Not every European knows about Armenia, its geography and history. Meanwhile, Armenia is one of the oldest cultures still alive. The country at the foot of Ararat where Noah sailed. A piece of the cultural era of ancient Zoroastrianism. Since 301 - the first officially Christian state. The mother of Mani, the founder of Manichaeism, was Armenian. In Armenia there is one of the three possible Spears of Longinus, from the monastery of Geghard ('spear'). The knights of Armenian Cilicia opened the way to Jerusalem for the crusaders. To liberate Armenian Cilicia, Jacques de Molay, the last grand master of the Knights Templar, prepared his last campaign.

In 1915 the Turkish government committed the first genocide of the twentieth century in Western Armenia. About 1.5 million Armenians died, the rest fled from their ancient homeland. Aspects of the long, interesting and hard history of this small people at the border of the Christian world.

### Fleeing from home

Today, in the 21st century, Armenians again experience massacres and deportations. Nagorno-Karabakh, a small enclave within Azerbaijan, declared independence from Azerbaijan in 1988. Even then, the Soviet Union responded with the massacres in Sumgait and Baku. That time about 500,000 Armenians fled from Azerbaijan. Then the war began and people defended their right to freedom, their own culture and Christianity.

However, in 2020, Nagorno-Karabakh, populated by 120,000 Armenians, was hit by the military might of Azerbaijan, aided by Turkey and Israel. Armenians lost about 6,000 people and significant territories in the 2020 war. Through Russia's mediation, the war was stopped; peacekeepers were stationed on the border. The enclave was connected to Armenia only by a narrow corridor. In 2023, Azerbaijan blocked the road to Armenia and began a blockade of Karabakh. For nine months people ate nothing but bread (for coupons) and potatoes (not every day).

And so, in September, a new war began. Hundreds of people were killed. Then – the

complete deportation of 100,000 people. People left their homes, jobs, ancient churches and cemeteries. They left the country where their ancestors had lived for thousands of years. Some buried their children and left, realizing that they would never return. The capital Stepanakert has turned into a ghost town with hungry animals roaming around. There is no more agricultural work in empty villages. The traffic jam on the narrow mountain road lasted for forty hours, although it was less than an hour to the Armenian border. The UN commission arrived only after the deportation was complete. The European Parliament spoke up even later. No sanctions. Nothing.

### Providing basic provisions

What are these 100,000 people experiencing? How do children who fled hunger and bombing feel? What are the Armenian people experiencing, in whose historical memory the horror of genocide is still alive? All over the country people are collecting help for refugees.

On the ground floor of the Waldorf school - rice, flour, pasta, bed linen, clothes, hygiene items, toys, books... Almost all classes were attended by children who had lost their home. Our task is to return their childhood, to restore their faith in goodness.

P.S. Right now [17 October 2023] there are images coming from Gaza - children in a bombed hospital. I am writing these lines and tears are flowing. What happened to Christian Europe? Where is she? Why is she silent? | *Ara Atayan, Yerevan (AM)*

Ara Atayan is a teacher at the Yerevan Waldorf School, a lecturer at Yerevan State University and the representative of the Armenian Waldorf movement in ECSWE.



General Anthroposophical Society

## Stefan Hasler nominated for Executive Council in 2024

At the 2024 Annual General Meeting, the Executive Council will propose Stefan Hasler as a new member.

Dear Members,  
Following this year's AGM and with a view to the coming years, the Executive Council of the General Anthroposophical Society decided to coopt Stefan Hasler as a new Executive Council member. Since Stefan Hasler is prepared to take on this task and after discussing the proposal with the Goetheanum Leadership in June as well as in early October with the Conference of Country Representatives, the nomination will be submitted to the AGM at the end of April 2024.

Stefan Hasler has led the Performing Arts Section since 2015 and is part of the leadership team of the Goetheanum Stage and the Goetheanum Eurythmy Ensemble. Previously he worked for the Eurythmy School and Stage in Hamburg (DE) and later he became the first professor of eurythmy at Alanus University (DE). He is also part of the Goetheanum management and, being Swiss, closely connected with many tasks, initiatives and responsibilities of the everyday life in Dornach.

Adding a member to the Executive Council also seems necessary to us because Matthias Girke, after his seven-year term in office (2017 to 2024) and with the handover of the Medical Section leadership in September, will not be available for another Executive Council term after the upcoming AGM.

We are seeking the approval of the membership at the 2024 AGM and look forward to the shared responsibility within the Executive Council. | *Justus Wittich, Constanza Kaliks, Matthias Girke and Ueli Hurter, Executive Council at the Goetheanum*

Image Stefan Hasler, photo: Xue Li

Great Britain

## 100 Years matters

On 2 - 3 September the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain celebrated its centennial at Rudolf Steiner House, London.

On 2 September 1923 the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain was founded in the presence of Rudolf Steiner, Marie Steiner and some hundred members. Clearly, this was an event of great significance and, as we prepared for our centennial celebrations, I wondered whether it would be an opportunity for a celebration and some nostalgia or whether there would be a more profound reality to this event.

### Interest in the world

In recalling the scenario 100 years ago when, in mid-August 1923, Rudolf Steiner attended the Summer conference at Penmaenmawr, aside from the mighty consequences of this event (see [dasgoetheanum.com/en/the-stone-circles-of-penmaenmawr-and-the-goetheanum](https://dasgoetheanum.com/en/the-stone-circles-of-penmaenmawr-and-the-goetheanum)), I was struck by the informal conversations Rudolf Steiner had with members where he made some highly challenging comments, possibly pertinent until today. He emphasized, as an imperative for the growth of the Society, that members should be as broadminded as possible and berated them for casting a sectarian light on the movement. He also made two astonishingly direct comments, firstly that if it was up to him he would change the name of anthroposophy every week. Secondly, that he would have to admit to himself that he would most certainly not wish to become an anthroposophist! These comments would indicate that the movement was far from being the modern, open and accessible one he intended. And changing the name 'anthroposophy' every week, whilst clearly an impossibility, suggests a vision for the movement in continual development, contemporary, not fixed by traditions, existing in harmonious relationship with the wider environment.

At the founding meeting of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain, Rudolf Steiner said, 'As anthroposophists we should be intensely interested in what is happening in the world. The world is interested in anthroposophy, and if we have no interest in the world, it turns hostile' (cited in C. Villeneuve, *Rudolf Steiner in Britain*, p. 944).

### Phases of development

Our celebration on 2 September 2023 was

a truly joyous occasion. Each contribution enhanced the feeling of gratitude to the originating pioneers and their outstanding initiatives, courage, vision and selfless dedication. It was also moving to be reminded of the tenacity of general secretary Cecil Harwood who in the 1950s persevered against many challenges to mend the rift caused by the expulsion of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain (ASinGB) from the General Anthroposophical Society (1935) and achieve its reincorporation. He then helped heal the deep divisions that the expulsion had created amongst British members. It is noteworthy that a spiritual movement that had split apart in such acrimony was eventually able to fully reconcile.

The overall impression of the developments of a hundred years exemplified what Rudolf Steiner said on 23 December 1917 (GA 180) from the perspective of the rhythm of 33 1/3 years; the life of Christ on earth. Bernard Lievegoed named three phases in organizations as the pioneer phase, the differentiation phase and the integration phase and these are broadly recognizable in our biography: from 1923 - 1956 a development lead by pioneers; from 1956 - 1989/90, the development of many institutions, sometimes called 'cultural islands', and then from around 1989/90 - 2023 a development in which the anthroposophical movement, has wanted to be recognized in society – 'not preaching but reaching'.

It was moving to discover that Marie Steiner described the joyous sense of anticipation at the ASinGB founding ceremony regarding the coming Christmas Conference in Dornach. On the second day of our celebration, both the happy and heartfelt memories, as well as some painful ones, receded as we looked to the future. It now felt that a fresh new chapter was beginning, a letting go so as to move forward without past encumbrances. Listening to presentations from the founders of three diverse emerging anthroposophical initiatives it was striking that being 'out there' for the benefit of all, on a street, in a big city or in a village, was paramount. Values such as inclusivity, accessibility through language and concepts, and making the fruits of anthroposophy available to all, were the essentials. Being willing and able to work with regulators and local and national politicians is regarded not only as desirable but essential, as is being a thought leader or reference point for bringing new solutions to urgent societal problems.



### Courage for a new era

Is the ASinGB now closer to Rudolf Steiner's intentions of 100 years ago? Has this anniversary brought us into a new phase? Well, time will tell but it certainly feels that we are getting closer, not just in Great Britain but, judging by the 'feel' of the recent Goetheanum World Conference, so is the world Society too. Members of the ASinGB have surely been culpable of the things Rudolf Steiner warned about but in recent times there has been a widespread endeavour to honestly confront and courageously address these. The council of the ASinGB is likewise committed to becoming ever more open and inclusive, as with our Marylebone Theatre at Rudolf Steiner House, and we encourage and support this approach wherever we can. We also hold, in equal balance, the continual endeavour to deepen our relationship to anthroposophy and the School of Spiritual Science. We are grateful for the endorsement we feel from our members and the support and encouragement coming from the leadership at the Goetheanum. With this we can embrace the future and find the courage and vision we need for a new era. | *Marjatta van Boeschoten, representative of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain*

**Web** [anthroposophy.org.uk](https://anthroposophy.org.uk)

**Image** Rudolf Steiner House London, photo: Rudolf Steiner House London

## ■ FORUM

**Members' Forums:  
taking stock**

*In the context of the Membership Forums, Tatiana García-Cuerva and Thomas Metzloff suggested stocktaking across the different tables.*

Regarding this Members' Forum, we consider it crucial, before we focus on tasks and goals, to gain clarity on where we currently are in relation to our tasks and what the current situation is like. Developments require an assessment of the present situation before decisions as to a future direction can be made. This presupposes unreserved and sincere self-knowledge; for if we fail to adequately judge our situation, our efforts may not come to anything, or we may have to work endlessly to make corrections. Making the effort to truly understand the present situation is the necessary foundation without which ideals will remain mere abstractions. It may therefore be advisable to enter into a joint process rather than be distracted by expectations of quick results and solutions.

**Genuine questions pave the way for solutions**

We therefore think the following questions inevitable if we are to look towards the future: What is our situation in the world today? What problems are we facing in the General Anthroposophical Society (GAS) now – problems we need to understand in order to be able to resolve them so that the Society can have a future?

We suggest the following questions and invite everyone to add more such questions, for any genuine question will pave the way towards a solution.

\* We start with the Statutes of the Christmas Conference Society (AS), Article 2: 'They [the

founding members] are convinced that a genuine science of the spiritual world exists in our time, as science that has been developed for many years and of which important parts have been published, and a science that today's civilization is lacking. The cultivation of such a science is to be the task of the Anthroposophical Society.' Where are we today in regard to this task?

\* How is the anthroposophical substance fostered and promoted today in the GAS and how does it live in its institutions and trainings?

\* What is the situation of the GAS today concerning the representation of anthroposophy in public, both in general and specifically in relation to burning issues of our time?

\* What do the facts that the anthroposophical movement is much bigger than the Society and that member numbers are declining tell us? What can we learn from the fact that many Michaelites are already on earth who may be looking for anthroposophy following a decision they made before birth, but who are for certain reasons unable to join the Society?

If you would like to contribute to this stocktaking by adding further questions, please email [tatianagcuerva@yahoo.es](mailto:tatianagcuerva@yahoo.es) | *Tatiana García-Cuerva, Dornach (CH); Thomas Metzloff, Berlin (DE)*

**Members' Forums:  
proposal for a responsible  
members' committee**

Starting point: the Members' Forums, which have become established since the 2023 AGM, have the task to submit – out of the membership and in collaboration with the leadership – concrete proposals for the development of the General Anthroposophical Society. In several theme groups which have taken on this work, members have come to the conclusion that a meaningful contemporary management depends on the structured, active and responsible participation of the membership.

**Wish for more participation**

Deciding together on the Society's essential concerns could help to bridge the gap that many feel exists between the leadership and parts of the membership. In addition, this would give the leadership the chance to perceive more widely what lives in the membership.

However, not all members are actively interested in the Society's current developments, attendance in members' meetings is declining and not many make use of the online participation opportunities. It is also true that not all members are represented by their country representatives, even if the leaders seem to view this differently. And only a limited number of members actively take part in the 'Members' Forums' (around 60 to 70 in person and circa 50 online, plus the 60 participants of the Asia group). The leadership is only represented by two Executive Council members, a fact that many members deplore and find insufficient. More active participation from both the members and the leadership would be desirable. This was an outline of the framework and potential on

which any restructuring or further development could draw.

**Strengthening trust**

In recent years, particularly in 2018, many questions emerged and have since been reflected in the numerous motions submitted to the last AGM. These questions suggest the urgent need to start a developmental process that could strengthen or renew the required trust between the membership and the Executive Council and prepare the necessary structural changes – ideally based on collaboration so that the members remain actively and reliably involved in the developmental impulse initiated by them.

**Idea of a members' committee**

This could be possible with an active, co-responsible members' body to be formed in a liberally oriented, contemporary selection and formation process still to be developed in which all members could take an active part. Currently, this is the general assembly where members meet in person and online, although the latter can only have a consultative role.

Such a members' committee – consisting of, say, seven to twelve members – would be like an extension of the Executive Council, which means that the AGM would have to transfer the corresponding competences to it. The committee would then be firmly involved in all essential decisions. Its main task could initially be to initiate and actively accompany the necessary developmental impulses. The content it would focus on could be the urgent questions expressed in the motions submitted to the last members' meetings and the topics of the Members' Forums. This extended Executive Council would determine its own

mode of working and rules of procedure and communicate their most recent versions to the membership. Additionally, it would be accountable to the members and like the Executive Council it would have to be discharged. The same should apply to the Goetheanum Leadership.

This members' committee would initially be scheduled for three years and it would be required to submit regular reports during that time. Information that needs protecting or is confidential would be dealt with accordingly.

### **Towards an 'initiative Society'**

The forming of this committee would be crucial because it would have to do justice both to the legal framework of the existing Society and to the requirements of a modern and contemporary social structure. More details cannot be provided here and readers are referred to the full version of this contribution. What is required in principle is a transparent and broadly supported formative process.

It remains to be seen whether these ideas can be realized, for example by having a work group devoted to the open questions and the implementation of the corresponding procedure, and whether concrete staffing possibilities for such a members' committee will become apparent. According to Justus Wittich and Gerald Häfner this would ideally happen out of the centre of the Society in collaboration with the Executive Council or the Goetheanum Leadership. | *Thomas Heck, Dornach (CH)*

For the full (German) text, more information and sources visit [www.wtg-99.com/Mitglieder-Organ](http://www.wtg-99.com/Mitglieder-Organ)

### **Members Forums: Transparent Communication group**

In its conversations the Transparent Communication group identified a growing gap between the Goetheanum leadership bodies and the members of the Anthroposophical Society. The Covid period also revealed that the communications of the leadership bodies and the contributions in the General Anthroposophical Society's news outlets (Das Goetheanum, Anthroposophy Worldwide etc.) failed to reflect the views of all members. Additionally, they resulted in heated discussions regarding communication and the sending out of messages or omitting of clear standpoints. The question was whether and how a society such as the anthroposophical one can take a stand and express a view. The many motions submitted to the 2023 Annual General Meeting (and before that) show that people want to be heard and so far that seems to be the only way of being heard. There clearly is a growing need for participation and active involvement.

### **Facilitating communication**

From the discussions a few themes have emerged that I would like to summarize below:

1. It would be important to establish a central committee for concerns and queries from the membership. This would create an interface between the Executive Council and Goetheanum Leadership and the members. The need for more active engagement could then be realized and this would in turn create more trust. The leadership bodies would thus have a coordinated overview of the concerns that are living among the members.

2. A professional communicator takes part in the meetings of the Executive Council and the Goetheanum Leadership. This would create a distinction between direct communication and the task of the official spokesperson. If the communicator succeeded in negotiating the processes in a living way within the responsible bodies, the trust between the leadership and the membership could be greatly increased.

3. Establishing a digital platform for members. This would enable increased horizontal communication among the members, provide opportunities for self-organization and facilitate autonomous contacts. It would greatly promote the realization of a global society. We heard that the Goetheanum's Communications department has tested such a system.

4. Establishing a consultative group to revise contributions relevant for publication. Having all official publications checked for their potential effect by an independent committee would be advisable. This would minimize the risk of undesirable 'side effects' and save time that may otherwise be required later for damage limitation.

5. Establishing a council of elders. This may not be the right designation, but what is meant is a group of people with no personal interest or ambition to play an important role in the Society. Their task would be to have a sympathetic ear for the members and maintain direct and open exchange with the leading bodies, which would have to listen even if they have the power to decide. Such a group could also look out for suitable individuals to take on leadership tasks who would espouse the interests and tasks of the Society.

There is a common denominator: transparent communication creates trust. Unspoken intentions have a corroding effect on the Society. | *Summary by Ronald Templeton, Dornach (CH)*

*Anthroposophical Society*

## Christmas Conference 2023

From 26 to 31 December 2023 the Goetheanum will hold its annual Christmas Conference which this year will commemorate the centenary of the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924.

**Sebastian Jüngel** The Christmas Conference at the Goetheanum will be devoted to the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924. What guided the planning and preparations for it?



**Clara Steinemann** Rudolf Steiner explained the special importance of the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924 when he said on 6 February 1924, 'Therefore this Christmas Conference is either everything or nothing for the Anthroposophical movement' (GA260a). Many have tried since then to focus on this Christmas Conference and even felt that it was 'everything' or 'nothing' to them. Some presented their understanding and insights into its mystery in lectures and publications – and yet, one can have the impression that we as the Anthroposophical Society are only at the very beginning of understanding its actual meaning.

### Active in the world

**Jüngel** How can one approach its meaning?

**Steinemann** If we facilitate a dignified gathering for those who feel that this 'something that came from the spiritual world itself' (ibid., 18 January 1924) resonates in their soul, and if we find in that gathering impulses that can strengthen the further realization and shaping of anthroposophy on earth. The call 'That good may become' in the Foundation Stone Meditation, which refers to what 'from our hearts we are founding, what from our heads we direct with focused will,' is for me the essence of this celebration.

**Jüngel** How can this call be taken into the future?

**Steinemann** We have the most diverse tools and possibilities for this today: this year's Christmas Conference offers the opportunity to experience the Foundation Stone Meditation in speech and eurythmy, to reflect on the impulses from mystery streams and to learn in specialized courses about

the research conducted in the Sections. This future orientation is also apparent in the fact that, through the original Christmas Conference, anthroposophy opened a door for strong activity in the world; and after a hundred years the world reveals in all facets of life how urgently it needs new forms of this activity.

### Focus on practical research

**Jüngel** Can you give an example as to where new forms are needed?

**Steinemann** New forms of research need to be created and this research needs to be the basis for practical work. With 'new forms of research' I touch on a difficult question because I don't want

to belittle the efforts made by the Sections of the School of Spiritual Science in any way. But I do see a danger that anthroposophical research as it currently appears could fade into insignificance in many areas at a time when we are facing rapid developments in digital technologies and phenomena of cultural decline.

How can research be given a new form? The anthroposophical path of development, which is condensed in the passage through the School of Spiritual Science's nineteen class lessons, shows in precise steps how researchers can perceive the spiritual beings and processes behind the sensory world and consequently understand them in their true context. This will allow for quite different conclusions and above all make it possible to find ways of research that explain phenomena such as climate catastrophes, human health, the constitution of the new generation of children and much more. I have the impression that this anthroposophical development needs to be practised much more intensively and that it needs to be more research-based.

### Problems of humanity today

**Jüngel** What is the task of the Anthroposophical Society in this – as the General Anthroposophical Society and as the Anthroposophical Societies in the different countries?

**Steinemann** The Anthroposophical Society,

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**Christmas Conference** That Good May Become ... 100 Years Christmas Conference at the Goetheanum, 26 to 31 December 2023 **Web** [goetheanum.ch/en/events/dass-gut-werde](https://goetheanum.ch/en/events/dass-gut-werde)

**Image** Clara Steinemann, courtesy photo

*General Anthroposophical Society*

**Save the date:  
Annual General Meeting 2024**

26 to 28 April 2024

*Social Sciences Section*

**The Constitution of the (General) Anthroposophical Society**

**Part 2: What has become**

22 to 26 November 2023, in German, Goetheanum, Schreinerei

**Web** [goetheanum.ch/de/veranstaltungen/die-konstitution-der-allgemeinen](https://goetheanum.ch/de/veranstaltungen/die-konstitution-der-allgemeinen)



both worldwide and in the different countries, would have to support, promote and wakefully carry this approach.

**Jüngel** Did the preparation of this year's Christmas Conference give rise to new ideas regarding the task of the Anthroposophical Society?

**Steinemann** Above all the certainty that – if anthroposophical research seriously embraces the training mentioned above – it will be able to cast light on many phenomena that are still unknown or not yet understood and therefore make an important contribution to solving the problems threatening humankind today. This is why we had the idea of offering specialized courses at the conference as an inspiration for serious spiritual-scientific research in many fields.

*Anthroposophical Society*

## Call for impulses for the 2023 Christmas Conference

**Reshaping a World Movement – moving from the Goetheanum World Conference at Michaelmas to the Christmas Conference 2023, with a call for active involvement.**

At the end of September and beginning of October, the Anthroposophical Society experienced the big World Conference at the Goetheanum and received ca 1000 people from the anthroposophical movement around the world under the motto Reshaping a World Movement. Many burning issues were presented to the conference members in keynote speeches, thematic forums and conversations, opening up insights into the anthroposophical work around the world and enabling a broad perception of the current situation of this global movement. A joyful breath of fresh air!

### Further meetings

After the conference, the Anthroposophical Society's country representatives, many of whom had attended it, had their annual autumn meeting with the Executive Council and the Section leaders. They talked about reshaping the world movement: about strengthening and deepening the working together of country societies, about clarifying the tasks of country representatives and the relationship between the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum and the autonomous Anthroposophical Societies

in the countries (both in relation to individual sections and the first class). They also spoke about presenting and supporting the many research plans. Great commitment and many promising perspectives!

Two further important meetings are yet to come, the first in early November when the treasurers will hold their autumn meeting in Milan (IT) where financial transparency and cooperation are to be promoted, which will also support the global movement.

This will be followed by the great Christmas celebrations from 26 to 31 December 2023 at the Goetheanum commemorating the centenary of the Christmas Conference. More than 500 people have so far registered and we are expecting a full house. Many facets from the world movement will be gathered at this conference and a new attempt will be made to give our Anthroposophical Society the form that the anthroposophical movement will need for its future development. And this is the reason for this call!

### Two questions

The aim is to inspire the four morning panel discussions at the conference so that a big bouquet of the most diverse ideals and impulses that live in people can be gathered with a view to reshaping the world movement. The two questions are:

- 1 What do the Christmas Conference and the new beginning at that time mean to me?
- 2 What are we doing today to realize the intention of the Christmas Conference?

Please send your contribution of no more than 300 to 400 words to the preparation team (100@anthroposophie.ch). We regret that longer contributions cannot be considered. A group of three to four people will go through these valuable thoughts and impulses. Some of these 'gems' will then be presented by their authors at the beginning of the panel discussions so that their light and radiance can flow into the conversations.

We are very much looking forward to receiving your contributions which will be so important for the reshaping of our movement. With warmest gratitude | *Marc Desaulles on behalf of the preparation team consisting of Matthias Girke, Gerald Häfner, Stefan Hasler, Ueli Hurter, Constanza Kaliks, Peter Selg, Justus Wittich (Goetheanum Leadership), Clara von Recklinghausen (project team) and Marc Desaulles, Milena Kowarik and Clara Steinemann (Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland)*

*Goetheanum Leadership:  
lecture series*

## The impulses of the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924

The Goetheanum Leadership's lecture series The Impulses of the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924. Where are we now? approaches its topic from seven different angles, focusing on questions of social development.

**6 November 2023** Gerald Häfner and Justus Wittich: The problem with the Anthroposophical Society's constitution: crises, processing and ideas for healing

**13 November 2023** Nathaniel Williams and Johannes Kronenberg: Form and vision of the Anthroposophical Society

**20 November 2023** Justus Wittich and Marc Desaulles: Three impulses arising from the Christmas Conference for dealing with money – then and now

**27 November 2023** Jean-Michel Florin and Karin Michael: From the joint activities of the Sections for Agriculture and Medicine – how do we nurture nature's and human health?

**4 December 2023** Claus-Peter Röh and Oliver Conradt: The Anthroposophical Society's School of Spiritual Science in relation to the esoteric groups founded before the Christmas Conference.

**11 December 2023** Christiane Haid and Ueli Hurter: The Executive Council and Goetheanum Leadership – founding motifs and the situation today

**18 December 2023** Peter Selg: An answer for the future – The Christmas Conference against the background of socio-political developments in 1923.

**Goetheanum** Mondays, 8 pm CET, Goetheanum/Schreinerei (free admission, collection), in German

**GoetheanumTV** Mondays, 8 pm, goetheanum.tv (€6 per lecture, or as part of a monthly €15 subscription. **Livestream** in German and English, **subtitles (to follow later)** in German and English; French and Spanish under discussion.

## ■ GOETHEANUM WORLD CONFERENCE

*A glimpse*

### A celebration in a time of crisis

The Goetheanum World Conference took place from 27 September to 1 October with lectures, conversations and art (eurythmy, drama, music).

What a celebration it was! Around 950 people from 50 countries came to the Goetheanum's World Conference which focused on Reshaping a World Movement. One felt connected even without knowing each other. Heart and will forces were tangible, some more subtle, some more visible in concrete projects, and often in the various personalities.

#### Stocktaking

The centenary of the Anthroposophical Society's re-founding at the end of this year, an event that is being prepared now, also featured during the World Conference. Similarly to a hundred years ago, we find ourselves again in a dramatic situation with crises and wars around the world. Humanity is dominated by a (now digital) technology that impacts on childhood; Artificial Intelligence lets us ask about the meaning of being human; and the understanding of basic values is disappearing.

And yet, the situation today is different. A hundred years ago anthroposophy was still in the fledgling stage, while we can now look back on the history of its effectiveness, which is ongoing.

We are not standing before the ruins of the burned-down First Goetheanum now but are able to meet and speak to each other in and around the Second Goetheanum. Individual responsibility is required more than ever now for the continuation of the anthroposophical impulse.

This Michael Conference started with a trumpet call from the gallery of the Main Auditorium, during which Claudy Jongstra's tapestry *Guernica de la Ecologia* was lowered onto the stage. The title of this work of art refers to the ecological challenges we are facing today. A number of audience members walked on to the stage one by one and looked at the tapestry before four of them turned to the rest of the audience and briefly spoke about their work.

The audience was then invited to step out onto the terrace and speak with one other person about the questions: What burning question lives in me? What are my concerns in life? What question or intention

brought me here? – spending ten minutes on each question.

A celebration needs a festive ambience. Numerous works of art were scattered in and around the Goetheanum (and are still there now): the tapestry in the Main Auditorium, a relief made of hammered steel by Peter Goehlen in the Reception area, paintings by people with support needs in the Terrace Room as well as sculptures by Feroose and paintings by Stephane Zwahlen (Anthroposophy Worldwide 10/2023) inside the Goetheanum and around the Garden Park. The iron art works are a reflection of our Michaelic age: there is much to do – let's get started. How this is done is illustrated among other things by a permanent exhibition about Rudolf Steiner, the Anthroposophical Society and the Sections of the School of Spiritual Science.

#### Abundance of content and initiatives

Nurturing content was provided in the form of contributions on the will, the beat of heart and lungs and Spirit Beholding. Peter Selg spoke of the human will as a phenomenon that has really only been described quite recently (cf. p. 11). Christine Gruwez and Constanze Kaliks illustrated the beat of heart and lungs making their topic tangible even in their delivery.

Christine Gruwez explored the meaning of 'movement' in our relationship with the world, our standing between cosmic heights and earthly depths, our horizontal relationship with each other. She described the awakening of the heart and the emergence of warmth, of centre and periphery, the rhythms of time and how we become contemporaries of a particular time. She continued by referring to different kinds of courage: the courage for the fragment that bears within it future potentiality. The courage to be vulnerable lets us acknowledge that we don't live in a world permeated by god but in one where we remain connected to the divine due to Michael. And finally, she spoke of the courage to wake up which needed to be complemented by the courage to stay awake.

Constanza Kaliks described how, in the centre of centres, the heart, we are connected with the world-I. We have a relationship with time and the world of emerging deeds. Referring to Paulo Freire, she explained how we each represent our own 'condition' which is, however, not determined but allows for new developments.

In a dialogue, Christiane Haid and Wolfgang Tomaschitz explored the realm of Spir-



it Beholding based on the importance of thinking (see p. 12f. for an abridged version of their conversation).

The breadth of anthroposophical activities was apparent in many projects and achievements, for instance in the vigour and potential of visions, the importance of individual actions and the vitality as well as mortality of institutions. It was mentioned again and again how anthroposophy can re-enliven cultural traditions by helping people to unlock their (spiritual) content in a new way.

Lastly, the earnestness and creative commitment of the many young people was strongly tangible in their presentation on stage, their filing off the stage at the end mirroring the opening ceremony.

The global character of the conference was noticeable in the choice of both English and German as conference languages and the fact that there was interpretation into Chinese, French, Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

#### First resonance

The conference was so intense that I felt almost hung-over afterwards: a great celebration, brimming over with content ... The preparation team is now evaluating the feedback and the many results. A first impression of the comments is that they speak of a great success, gratitude, balance and a Goetheanum of openness. From some I heard the wish for more flexible formats where something can grow between those present.

Any agreements and future plans will be reported on as soon as the evaluation process is complete. | *Sebastian Jüngel*

**Image** Goetheanum World Conference 2023, young people on the main stage, photo: Xue Li

*impulse contribution*

## The will for future

**At the Goetheanum World Conference Peter Selg spoke of the essence of the human will and the emergence of the future, 99 years to the day after Rudolf Steiner's last address on 28 September 1924 which concluded with the Michael Imagination.**

In July 1920, three months before the opening of the Goetheanum as a School of Spiritual Science, Rudolf Steiner said in a lecture that Western culture and human development would end prematurely if human beings did not take the conscious decision to save it. No higher powers could take this task away from them, but 'only the actions of human beings who save the declining civilization of their own volition.'<sup>1</sup>

### An organ of freedom and future

The future depends wholly on the will, on the experience of the willing I. In antiquity this free human will was largely unknown and its existence continues to be discussed controversially by many philosophers, psychologists and physiologists. Nonetheless, in the most recent phase of the modern era the will has replaced reason as the supreme human capacity. Immanuel Kant thought that the absolute value of the human being depended on the autonomy of the will.<sup>2</sup>

According to Friedrich Hegel, as thinking human beings we make the world our own; we make it something that is essentially and immediately ours. The human I is at home in the world 'once it has comprehended it.' But it is the will, Hegel adds, which imprints the 'trace of the spirit', of our own spirit, on the world once the world is no longer alien to us.<sup>3</sup> The conscious will<sup>4</sup> is accordingly very close to the human I, to our spiritual centre.

Rudolf Steiner pointed out that the I was entirely of a will nature.<sup>5</sup> The will is not the secondary executive organ of reason or desire but, as Hannah Arendt argued convincingly in the twentieth century, a power in itself.<sup>6</sup> It is, one could say, a spiritual organ for the future, as memory is an organ for the past; it is an organ of freedom and of future.<sup>7</sup>

Because the future is in principle undecided, it can bring new, unforeseen experiences. The real future is coming towards us; it is not the consequence and continuation of the past. The past is certain, but the future is necessarily uncertain and therefore accompanied by fear and hope.

### Unfinished and fragmentary deeds

As will-imbued human beings we extend beyond ourselves, beyond our present existence, even beyond our body. In our actions we live ourselves into the laws and processes of the world around us; we transcend our own organism and are with the other. At the same time, we awaken to ourselves and become aware of ourselves. We get to know ourselves, and are known by others, in our actions.

Living 'in the limbs',<sup>8</sup> we become our own selves, individualized earthly beings; we become body, we act and assume responsibility and create destiny as we go towards the future.

It is not least our heart centre that allows us to actively create future as we ensoul the life of ideas and receive it in our existential will, with 'ideals that are born out of the fire and light of our hearts,' as Rudolf Steiner said.<sup>9</sup> Our actions will always remain unfinished, fragmentary; the will is 'seed' and does not achieve its realization on earth. It is always a beginning and in a certain way it is 'supra-real'. It is bigger than one earthly life. But we must make a start.

### Communal will

In the context of the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924 and Rudolf Steiner's last address it is very important to consider that there is not only individual will but also a common, communal will. 'That good may become what from our hearts we are founding, what from our heads we direct with focused will.'<sup>10</sup> According to Hannah Arendt, 'a We is always engaged in changing our common world' when we are active.<sup>11</sup> Only together, connected in our activity, will we achieve anything. This is why we have this Goetheanum World Conference of encounters and agreements. The will of one person can become effective in the heart of another and of others. Rudolf Steiner translated the line in the Lord's prayer 'Your kingdom come' as 'May your kingdom grow in our deeds and in our inmost lives.'<sup>12</sup>

### Forces of hope

We should not give up hope but go together towards the future.<sup>13</sup> With all the crises and chasms of our time, a change will come from a purely materialistic to a spiritual worldview. We need the forces of hope and of trust in the future, and we need to have the courage to embark on new beginnings together. Hannah Arendt said, 'the will with its projects for the future challenges the



belief in necessity, the acquiescence in the arrangement of the world which it calls complacency.'<sup>14</sup>

We should overcome the complacency and truly and effectively 'take up the loving word of world-will actively into [our] striving souls'.<sup>15</sup> Then we will not be alone: 'Awaken in the will: you are in the spirit being of the world.'<sup>16</sup> | *Peter Selg, Goetheanum*

| 1 Rudolf Steiner: GA 198, lecture of 9 July 1920 | 2 Cited in Hannah Arendt: *Denktagebuch*, 1950–1973, Munich 2022, p. 816. | 3 *Ibid.*, p. 85 | 4 Cf. Peter Selg: Friedrich Schiller. *Die Geistigkeit des Willens*, Dornach 2010 | 5 Rudolf Steiner: GA 207, lecture of 2 October 1921 | 6 Cf. Hannah Arendt: *The Life of the Mind*, New York 1978. | 7 Cf. Peter Selg: *Der Wille zur Zukunft*, Arlesheim 2011. | 8 Cf. Rudolf Steiner: GA 260, lecture of 25 December 1923, morning | 9 Rudolf Steiner: GA 155, lecture of 14 July 1914 | 10 Rudolf Steiner: GA 260, lecture of 25 December 1923, morning | 11 Hannah Arendt: *The Life of the Mind III, Will and Intellect*, New York 1978, p. 200 | 12 Rudolf Steiner: GA 268, *The Esoteric Lord's Prayer* | 13 Cf. Peter Selg: *Das Leben des Geistes in der Corona-Krise. Von der Hoffnung und vom Vertrauen in die Zukunft*, Arlesheim 2022 | 14 Hannah Arendt: *The Life of the Mind III, Will and Intellect*, New York 1978, p. 196 | 15 Rudolf Steiner: GA 40, *Michael-Imagination* | 16 Rudolf Steiner: GA 265

**Image** Goetheanum World Conference 2023, Peter Selg, photo: Xue Li

*Dialogue***Thinking, knowledge, meaning**

At the World Conference, on 30 September, Christiane Haid and Wolfgang Tomaschitz had a conversation on the implications of suspending thinking.

**Christiane Haid** What resonates in me from having just moved to the third verse of the Foundation Stone Meditation is the cautious searching in the realm of light above. There was stillness in the auditorium, a moment of stillness of thought compared to the incredible life that we experienced here yesterday. We are concerned with knowledge, cognition, art.

The availability of knowledge has changed dramatically in the last two decades, not least due to the internet. We are also approaching the completion in 2025 of the full German edition of Rudolf Steiner's works – an amazing source of knowledge. Both things make something available to us that did not exist in the same way before. How are we dealing with that?

**Clarity and wakefulness**

**Wolfgang Tomaschitz** With so many big words and plans in the room, I'm someone who tends to say, 'Stop, stop! What does it all mean?' In his 1924 Christmas contemplation *The Mystery of the Logos*, Rudolf Steiner described how the consciousness soul, which has immense reassuring power and strives for clarity and wakefulness, was initially cool. He spoke of the 'consciousness soul's cold element of light' (GA 26). This refers first of all to an observer's position: we learn to switch off subjective elements and find objective methods, thus creating an instrument of reassurance: I will only take the next step once I have (really) understood something; I hold my knowledge back until something even better has been found.

According to Rudolf Steiner this kind of reassurance is dramatic because we starve emotionally in that kind of coldness. Remarkably, this gesture of freezing, of turning rigid, lives in intellectuality. He therefore pointed out that the consciousness soul needed to grow strong and warm.

**Haid** In the third verse of the Foundation Stone Meditation we find huge concepts such as 'eternity' and 'light of cosmic being'. Coolness naturally emerges when one opens a space of stillness so that the stillness begins to live. This is how realities can become part of a perceptual context. I try to bear

the stillness and create a perceptive openness towards something I cannot yet unlock. I try to become conscious of what I cannot yet penetrate inwardly and ask myself to what extent I actually come close to these big concepts in my inner experience. What are they telling me?

**Tomaschitz** The warmth that the consciousness soul needs arises from activity. The consciousness soul can acquire different cognitive languages. I'm not talking about theory; what is needed is cognitive practice, activity is the answer. It does not have to be the path of inner development. It is enough to ask: what do I actually know about my basic cognitive manoeuvres? How do I form a concept? How do I pursue a thought? How do I wake up to myself? How do I manage to direct my attention outward? We are not awake in these manoeuvres; we need to first make them our own even if we apply them intuitively.

Here, too, we need to ask: what does wakefulness mean? Wakefulness is not something we have access to, because we would have to be awake already for that. According to the German philosopher Dieter Henrich, wakefulness is a dimension that has access to us. This is a broad field for meditative research.

The performance aspect of thinking, the thinking power, can be technologically accelerated, widened, simulated. When it comes to the inner aspect of thinking, where self-thinking and self-being belong together, anthroposophy can make a valuable contribution with its methods.

**Waking up in the middle of events**

**Haid** I can also approach the Foundation Stone Meditation with my inner experience and ask: what does 'in stillness of thought' mean? Are the thoughts resting or thinking itself? Can another side of thinking light up in the stillness? Can I listen to the actual words at a deeper level? What are 'grounds of eternity'? Two concepts come together here – 'grounds' and 'eternity' – that need to be related to each other. As I rest on each word I become still inwardly and ponder it in my soul, awake, so that it begins to speak out of itself. As a result, I don't know rationally what eternity is but I listen to what seeks to speak in me. I may notice that I



am moving in a different space from usual.

**Tomaschitz** It says in the first line that the world-thoughts are unlocked which implies that I already understand thinking. I do not need to understand thinking again through thinking. In thinking I am in the middle of the events, albeit usually in a sleeping state. It is there where I must wake up, in the actual meaning. I may not discover higher worlds there but something that is more original compared to everyday consciousness. This kind of insight is important biographically too.

**Fading of fundamental intuitions**

**Haid** Artificial Intelligence (AI) creates tension in us, a deep sense of distress: when we hear again and again that machines can do everything we do but faster and better, we must ask what is specifically human? If AI now even does art – what do we mean by art then? And what is human creativity in comparison? Digital reality has a distinct mind-soul quality. It drags us into what has become, into what has been created. Is there a space for the self-reflection of the consciousness soul that we as human beings shape ourselves?

**Tomaschitz** It is like a big shock: central motifs of our cultural history such as 'autonomy' or 'self-determination' are called into question.

It seems to me that intellectuality is losing its fascination, for young people in particular. The euphoria that used to be associated with self-determination based on independent thinking is fading. Concepts that used to inspire us such as 'equality', 'rights' and 'solidarity' have lost their former radiance. This has consequences since such concepts are not only ideals; they are crucial in the world of rights and institutions. A weakening of that foundation has serious consequences because our republics are built on these intuitions.

The German philosopher Rainer Forst says that our constitutions speak of the equal

and inviolable dignity of all human beings. He asks: 'how do we know this?' We cannot derive it empirically and it can hardly be explained with today's intellectuality. This is a huge problem: we can no longer approach our own constitutional texts! I think anthroposophical cognitive practice has a role to play here.

### **Disappearance or reinterpretation of traditional meaning**

**Haid** The understanding of freedom changed radically during Covid. It was degraded to something (supposedly) egocentric. This has led to total uncertainty since freedom used to be seen as our highest cultural possession.

The traditional meaning of central Western concepts – such as solidarity – is disappearing or reinterpreted. It is dramatic when concepts lose their inner reality and reliability. I would not like to live in a world where everything is determined by the state or by digital content. The question of thinking cannot be avoided. According to the third verse, 'god's eternal aims [can] bestow the light of cosmic being [...] for free and active willing'. However, this perspective does not initially offer our current consciousness much to hold on to. We realized in our conversation how dramatic the situation is after a hundred years: the abyss of which Rudolf Steiner spoke so often is now even more noticeable.

**Tomaschitz** From the point of view of the consciousness soul in particular we want to know everything precisely: we are not satisfied with dreaming the concepts, we really want to be present in them.

### **Thematic Forum 10: Anthroposophy Today**

It's October 2014, I am 25 years old, living and working in London and this evening, I am searching for a book as a present for a friend in a second-hand library in Camden Town. The place is cozy, smells of old paper, it is filled with a warm yellow light. In a corner, a bookshelf catches my attention. It is full of dusty old books... by Rudolf Steiner. 'Look!', I say to whom I'm there with, 'this is the guy that founded my school!' I should take this with me...

### **A book as turning point**

The little book in question is a rather cute, small, slightly worn and, I must say, completely beautiful edition of the *Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, printed in 1927 by the London Anthroposophical Publishing Co. It cost me 5 pounds. It's funny to think, that even though I have never read the book (not even to this date, because I've used other copies to work on the *Leading Thoughts*), this little printed book represents the turning point in my 25-year-old self's life. Purchasing it led to my search for courses on Waldorf Education (I was working with youth in the UK and was searching for different approaches to youth work), which in turn led to a recommendation to study Anthroposophy as a foundation first. As a result of this chain of events, in October 2015 I arrived in Dornach to begin my study Theosophy under the

guidance of Dr Virginia Sease, who taught me 'how to read' Steiner. If I'd known what it would bring, I would have certainly paid more for it!

### **Call for deepening**

How many stories similar to this might be out there? How many of us were gifted 'that' book by a friend, mentor, even a stranger, that led us to the work of Rudolf Steiner? How many children grew up surrounded by these books, unconscious of them, until one day in late teenage or early adulthood, a snoop around dad's library led to the turning of *An Outline of Esoteric Science*, or some other title, leaving one mesmerized by the immensity contained in it? And how many of us felt the call to then find a place where these works could be seriously studied, their ideas grappled with next to other students who shared the same enthusiasm and devotion for entering and understanding these thoughts?

### **Networking**

Publications and training centres make anthroposophy present in the world. 100 years since the founding of the School of Spiritual Science, anthroposophical trainings and publishing houses are spread across the globe, working in numerous languages and often swimming against the current to make it possible for anthroposophy to be public in their local communities. The General Anthroposophical Section sees their tasks, challenges and questions as vital to the future of

the movement, which is why we hosted a forum focused on the work of publishers and educators holding responsibility in anthroposophical training centres. For three days we discussed their work, guided by the presentations of experts from different regions. As a result, we have made a commitment to work in the next years to solidify a network of publishers, librarians and people responsible for further education initiatives with a view to develop together a platform with an overview of how the written works of Rudolf Steiner are alive in these professions today. This 'directory' or platform aims to be a central consulting space for any student, scholar or interested person wanting to approach Steiner's work. We are opening a call to any of you working as a publisher, editor, even translator to get in touch and connect with this impulse. | *Andrea de la Cruz, Goetheanum*

## ■ GOETHEANUM WORLD CONFERENCE

### World Conference as seen by the international youth group from Ukraine

The Michaelmas Conference was undoubtedly a wonderful event in the series of anthroposophical work, full of interesting reports, joyful meetings, sharing of experiences and new friendships – everything that conveys peace of mind and confidence in the future. It would seem that everything is fine, what more could one want? We also did our own workshop presentation about the deeper causes of today's war, which go back five to six centuries. This generated great interest, and we had a huge number of meetings afterwards, so that we were never released before 2 am. And the greatest meeting was with a representative of the School of Spiritual Science which lasted about ten hours. Many issues were discussed, and we came in general to a consensus about the situation in the world: despite the external prosperity, it is a powder barrel with a burning fuse, and the explosion can happen at any moment. Metaphorically speaking, the first two apocalyptic horsemen have so far only very lightly revealed themselves. What awaits us in the very near future is so terrible, that the mind refuses to believe it, and the spiritual eyes would rather not look there.

#### Main task of the General Anthroposophical Society

Our difference in opinions was only that our companions have accepted this as unavoidable, while we have a deep inner conviction that it is not too late to change things even

now. Our conviction is not just an unwillingness to accept the fateful course of events. It is rooted in Rudolf Steiner's prediction that either by the end of the century Michael's cause will have triumphed on earth or civilisation will perish. We understand that the feeling of hopelessness arises in our interlocutors from the inner vision of the developmental tendencies of the GAS and the School. That gives rise to a sense of a fundamental inability to change anything and that Michael's cause has already been hopelessly lost. But perhaps out of the feeling that it is our generation that will have to experience the full force of all the burdens of the coming of all four Apocalyptic Horsemen, an indomitable certainty is born that WE are the ones who must do everything possible and impossible now so that the GAS can still fulfil its main task, even with a delay: to carry out the spiritualization of the fallen cosmic intelligence and thereby the spiritualization of all of modern civilization. During the last few years, we have worked out practical steps to turn the current course of events despite the hopelessly lost time and the full neglect of the situation in the last century. Evidently, this can only be achieved by the Anthroposophical Society out of the impulse of the Christmas Meeting of 1923-1924, not by the Anthroposophical Society in the outwardly respectable form that currently exists. But this was not discussed at all, nor were the numerous problems of our society that prevent even the very formulation of such a question.

That's why the seemingly beautiful World Conference was inwardly experienced like a feast during the plague. Anything but the most important things were talked about, to an extent that one wanted to cry.

#### A unique chance for all

But if we understand now that according to the cosmic cycles there is a unique chance for all to unite and to bring back the substance of the Christmas Meeting at Christmas 2023-2024 (at least to start bringing it back), then it is not too late to start preparations to come out of the doomed hibernation and not miss this historic chance.

As a group we are deeply dedicated to this goal and the experience of the conference. Although the conference was very harmonious, it fills us with concern that it did not look at the existing problems or address goals as the ones described above, which we experience as central. We would like to be in contact and in exchange with other people around these subjects. For those who are interested in our work, please email us on [kopievska82@gmail.com](mailto:kopievska82@gmail.com). We would also be happy to present our work to all who send their question to the above email address and who are determined to take responsibility for the future. | *Iryna Kopievska (UA)*

## ■ SCHOOL OF SPIRITUAL SCIENCE

General  
Anthroposophical Section

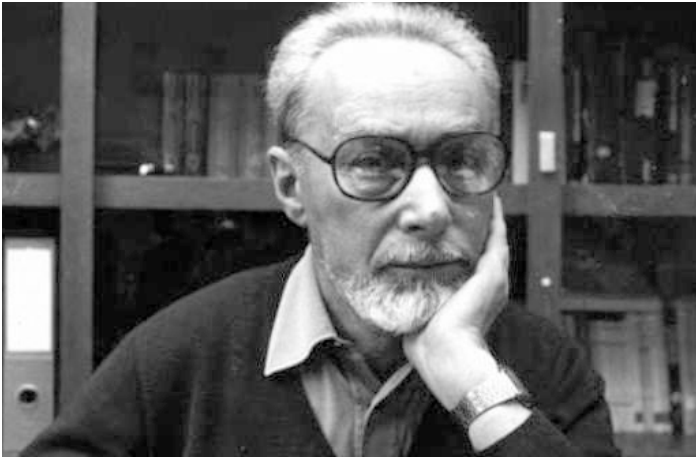
### The uniqueness of every individuality

Contributions on Jewish Humanism have resulted in the publication of a book on anthroposophy, Judaism and antisemitism.

Constanza Kaliks, member of the leadership of the General Anthroposophical Section says that 'there are many voices on humanism in the twentieth century.' Given the acute conflicts and cultural challenges of our time, Kaliks and her colleague Peter Selg find exploring the contributions of Jewish humanism an existential task that the General Anthroposophical Section has decided to take on. And it is one of many tasks, as is apparent from the School of Spiritual Science's list of research projects.\*

#### Rudolf Steiner's differentiated relationship

Why should this be done in a section of the School of Spiritual Science? In his book on anthroposophy, Judaism and antisemitism, Peter Selg describes Rudolf Steiner's differentiated relationship to Judaism, Zionism and antisemitism, which ranged from deep respect for the cultural and scientific achievements of people connected with Jewish culture to a critical view of a national Zionism that he considered dangerous and outdated (as he did all nationalist movements). In the 1880s, Rudolf Steiner also expressed himself in terms that alienated some of his Jewish friends. Peter Selg contextualizes these statements in the discourse of the time and shows that Rudolf Steiner went on to take a sympathetic interest in the developments in Palestine, that he valued the work of Martin Buber and that he was closely connected with Zionists such as Ernst Müller and Hugo Bergman.



However, Rudolf Steiner's interest was not shared by all members of the Anthroposophical Society. The fact that there was antisemitism within the Society needs to be worked through, as Peter Selg illustrates, whose publication has the character of a reference work.

Peter Selg and Constanza Kaliks locate the works of 20th century Jewish philosophers close to the social and spiritual concerns of the School of Spiritual Science. Constanza Kaliks thinks 'the perspectives described in Jewish Humanism include the spiritual dimension of the human being. Humaneness itself is rooted in the interest in others. It opens up a dialogue with oneself, with others and with the world that points to an extended horizon of knowledge that is needed. It includes the opportunity of a fruitful dialogue between the impulse behind the School of Spiritual Science and the philosophers of Jewish Humanism.'

### Dialogue between anthroposophy and Jewish Humanism

Peter Selg and Constanza Kaliks are convinced that the dialogue between anthroposophy and Jewish Humanism, which has not yet taken place, needs to happen now. With this in mind, they began in 2021 to study the biographies, writings and activities of Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig, Primo Levi, Hans Jonas, Hannah Arendt, Simone Weil, Gustav Landauer and Maria Krehbiel-Darmstädt-

ter, based on a comprehensive body of scientific primary and secondary literature. Further events, on Emmanuel Levinas and Paul Celan, are to follow later in 2023. The series will continue in 2024/2025, paying homage to the work of Ernst Müller, Hugo Bergmann, Gershom Scholem and Margarete Susman. | *Sebastian Jüngel*

\*Insights: Current and Future Research Projects in the Sections of the School of Spiritual Science. Available from the Humanities Section at the Goetheanum, contribution towards costs: CHF 10. Email [ssw@goetheanum.ch](mailto:ssw@goetheanum.ch)

**Video series on Jewish Humanism** (in German) allgemeine-sektion. goetheanum.ch/de/dialogphilosophie-zum-juedischen-humanismus-und-zur-interkulturalitaet **Book** Peter Selg, Constanza Kaliks: Die Gegenwart des Anderen. Über Martin Buber und Franz Rosenzweig, Verlag am Goetheanum 2022 **Book** Constanza Kaliks, Peter Selg, Udi Levy, Iftach Ben Aharon: Anthroposophie, Judentum und Antisemitismus, Verlag am Goetheanum 2023 **Contribution in Anthroposophy Worldwide** 10/2023

**Statement by the Goetheanum Leadership** Anthroposophy and Racism **Web** [goetheanum.ch/en/news/working-paper-on-racism](http://goetheanum.ch/en/news/working-paper-on-racism)

**Image** Primo Levi in the library, 1983, photo: Monozigote/Wikipedia, CC ASA 4.0 International (reduced at the sides)

## ■ ANTHROPOSOPIHICAL SOCIETY

We are pleased to announce that the Membership Office at the Goetheanum registered 72 new members in September 2023.

Between 15 September and 12 October 2023 we heard of 38 members leaving the Society.

We have been informed that the following 43 members have crossed the threshold and provide this information in their remembrance. | *Membership Office at the Goetheanum*

**Alexandra Gräfin Basselet de la Rosée,**

Munich (DE), 3 March 2022

**Lars Sundell,** Östersund (SE), 10 May 2022

**Maria Linder,** Burbank (US), 25 September 2022

**Hans Dieter Oehme,** Dresden (DE), 23 November 2022

**Angela Carpos,** London (GB), 25 December 2022

**Wolfgang Körner,** Nuremberg (DE), 7 April 2023

**Irmgard Schmidt,** Algermissen (DE), 24 April 2023

**Margarethe Spühler,** Stroud (GB), 9 June 2023

**Ingeborg von Radecki,** Diethardt (DE), 21 June 2023

**Pauline Anderson,** Neston (GB), 28 June 2023

**Joachim Wagener,** Göttingen (DE), 6 July 2023

**Hana Jankovská,** Hranice (CZ), 7 July 2023

**Gertrude Schneider,** Nürnberg (DE), 9 July 2023

**Edelbert Chrétien,** Obergösgen (CH), 4 August 2023

**Gertrud Bendele,** Nuremberg (DE), 5 August 2023

**Ilse Ebisch,** Bonn (DE), 6 August 2023

**Marit Weihe,** Oslo (NO), 18 August 2023

**Ilse Kühne,** Nuremberg (DE), 25 August 2023

**Irmela Schlie,** Munich (DE), 3 September 2023

**Norbert Schmidt,** Mainz (DE), 4 September 2023

**Melvyn John Pearce,** Ilkeston (GB), 5 September 2023

**Hester Renouf,** Göteborg (SE), 5 September 2023

**Monica Matthes,** Darmstadt (DE), 9 September 2023

**Michel Bohner,** Trub (CH), 10 September 2023

**Elfriede Peters,** Paderborn (DE), 12 September 2023

**Ilse Wünnenberg,** Borchon (DE), 12 September 2023

**Dag Schröder,** Västra Frölunda (SE), 13 September 2023

**Hermanus van Dijk,** Callantsoog (NL), 14 September 2023

**Esther Menz,** Basel (CH), 15 September 2023

**Gudrun Gärtner,** Darmstadt (DE), 16 September 2023

**Christoph Killian,** Dornach (CH), 16 September 2023

**Marjorie Thatcher,** North Vancouver (CA),

17 September 2023

**Magnus Danielsson,** Järna (SE), 18 September 2023

**Dorothea Weyrather,** Dornach (CH), 21 September 2023

**Federico Back,** Stuttgart (DE), 22 September 2023

**Roland Halfen,** Esslingen (DE), 23 September 2023

**Hans Thiel,** Vellmar (DE), 24 September 2023

**Joost Laceulle,** Haarlem (NL), 26 September 2023

**Liliane Suter,** Basel (CH), 26 September 2023

**Bernd Blumenthal,** Lägerdorf (DE), 28 September 2023

**Edeltraud Frank,** Munich (DE), 29 September 2023

**Kurt Bräutigam,** Kreuzlingen (CH), 1 October 2023

**Geertruida Geraets,** Driebergen (NL), 4 October 2023

## ■ GOETHEANUM



Stage

## New stage-eurythmy training

A one-year further training in stage eurythmy started on 16 October as a cooperation of the Goetheanum Stage and Eurythmeum CH.

Twelve qualified eurythmists from eight nations have embarked on a further training to deepen their artistic performance skills at the Goetheanum and Eurythmeum CH. They will work on diverse aspects of eurythmy with different lecturers, polish their artistic expression with mentored solo work and learn about directing. The course includes a conscious approach to practising and social processes, the enhancement of perception and awareness of etheric forces in eurythmy and organizational aspects of stage eurythmy.

During their professional development, the participants will gain performance experience at the Goetheanum, for example during the 2023 Christmas celebration and on the occasions of Rudolf Steiner's birth and death day in 2024. They will also rehearse a folktale in 2024 and conclude the course with an evening programme and tour that they choreograph and organize themselves.

Throughout the year they will share the backstage area with the Goetheanum Eurythmy Ensemble and take an active part in the Goetheanum's stage life.

The training also includes weekend modules that are open to all qualified eurythmists seeking artistic deepening. | *Marianne Dill, Goetheanum, for the further stage eurythmy training*

**Stage eurythmy further training / open weekend modules** [www.goetheanum-buehne.ch/eurythmie-ensemble/buehnen-fortbildung](http://www.goetheanum-buehne.ch/eurythmie-ensemble/buehnen-fortbildung)

**Image** Members of the further stage eurythmy training, photo: Nicolas Prestifilippo



Stage

## Schubert cycle

Between 2023 and 2029 the ensemble Faust Quartett will perform all of Franz Schubert's string quartets at the Goetheanum. An introductory Schubertiade will be held two days prior to each of these concerts.

'Franz Schubert's quartets unite light and darkness, unearthly celebrations of beauty and glimpses into profound, dark abysses,' says Faust Quartett cellist Birgit Böhme. 'They reflect his artistic development from original youthful works to the monumental masterpieces of the years 1824 to 1826.' The ensemble whose Schubert cycle is scheduled to take place over the next seven years will follow this development by performing all the string quartets. 'The Goetheanum's Main Auditorium offers an ideal sound space,' the cellist adds. Her fellow musicians are Uta Klöber (first violin), Cordula Kocian (second violin) and Ada Meinich (viola).

With his Schubertiades, Franz Schubert cultivated a kind of artistic 'biotope' in 1820s Vienna where works by Ludwig van Beethoven and other contemporaries could be heard. Franz Schubert would perform them alongside his own partly unfinished pieces on a grand piano. After the recital they were discussed and in the case of Schubert's own compositions probably immediately corrected. The Goetheanum will provide the opportunity to get into the spirit of these gatherings.

Faust Quartett was founded in Weimar in 1996 and has toured in Germany, Switzerland, Norway and the Netherlands. Their tours have also taken them all the way to South America and, in collaboration with the Goethe Institute, to several African countries.

**Schubert cycle Touching Eternity** The first concert took place on 29 October 2023, the next one will be on 24 November 2024 [Web faust-quartett.com](http://Web faust-quartett.com)

**Image** Faust Quartett, photo: François Croissant



Gardening department

## Relocation of dye plants and cut flowers

The Goetheanum's dye plant and cut flower gardens were moved to the north of the garden park. Benches invite visitors to rest and enjoy the views across to Basel and France.

'Before relocating any part of a garden one has to consider the new location,' says Benno Otter, the coordinator of the Goetheanum garden department. The new location for the dye plants and cut flowers is between Haus Schuurman and the Kepler Observatory.

Benno Otter explains, 'you can see from here how the Goetheanum is moulded in the Jura landscape.' The elevated position offers views towards France and Basel. It seemed only logical to set up benches for visitors to linger. The benches are made from the wood of the cedar tree that had to be felled in the Garden Park in March 2022.

The relocation was necessary for various reasons. An oak tree near the dye plant garden has extended its nutrient catchment area. 'The cut flowers are anyway moved every eight to ten years to prevent soil depletion,' says gardener Paul Saur. In addition, a new place needed to be found for the compost heap because of plans to build a pavilion for the preparations. Since the upper part of the garden park was no longer needed as a private garden, it seemed the ideal place for the dye plants and cut flowers. A small pond was created as an additional feature.

The dye plants are actually used for dyeing, most recently on the occasion of the World Goetheanum conference, for the fabric of the Goetheanum Thonet S33 cantilever chair. Goetheanum gardener Rob Bürklin also offers plant dyeing courses. | *Sebastian Jüngel*

**Web** [gaertneri.goetheanum.org](http://gaertneri.goetheanum.org)

**Image** Garden park, photo: Sebastian Jüngel