



# Anthroposophy worldwide

## What is happening in the Anthroposophical Society

10/23

### ■ EDITORIAL

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Michaelmas

## Inner forces of courage for knowledge

Dear members,

In the autumn around Michaelmas, we can connect particularly well with Michael and his mission. Michael has been the spirit of time since the autumn of 1879. Seven arch-angels pass on this mission to one another, each holding it for around 350 years. The last time Michael was the ruling spirit of time was consequently more than 2000 years ago.

Rudolf Steiner describes how the Alexander campaigns which carried Hellenism to the Levant and all the way to India were an expression of Michael's activity at that time. A campaign of conquest carried the cultural impulse in a cosmopolitan way to the sites where the academies of Aristotelianism were founded.

#### Independent thinking

In the Christian occident, too, Michael was known as the strong leader of angelic hosts. In Europe there is even something like a Michael geography. Important Michaelic sites can be found on a straight line stretching across Europe from the southeast to the northwest, from Monte Gargano in Apulia (IT) to Sacra di San Michele near Turin (IT) and to Mont Saint Michel in Normandy (FR). We meet Michael in many places in the arts, a militant spirit brandishing his sword above his helmet-clad head, engaged in battle. Other depictions show him exuding greatest calmness of soul, using his spear to subdue the dragon at his feet while his other hand holds the scales that weigh human souls.

The latter image characterizes Rudolf Steiner's references to Michael as the spirit of our time: calm and silent. Michael does not speak. In his current era, he does not tell us what to do. He leaves us free. As the 'prince of thought' he exercises restraint. In-



dependent thinking is what is required now. The geography becomes an internal one, the line runs from the head to the heart. 'And the hearts begin to have thoughts' (Rudolf Steiner, GA 26. 'At the dawn of the Michael Age'). What used to be experienced as Michael's militant gesture has now become the force of inner courage for freedom. Free deeds have consequences. This is what Michael is interested in. He lives with the consequences of our actions. We are not falling out of the world although we have acted out of freedom. Michael carries us – silently, leaving us free.

In this Michael period we will gather for the Goetheanum World Conference. What contributions can we make to this Michaelic age? How can we be a movement that is both open and consciously formed? How can we work together on actively shaping the world out of inner forces of courage for knowledge? | *Ueli Hurter, Goetheanum*

Image Michael, photo: Jean Baptiste/Unsplash

Rudolf Steiner

## Creation from nothing

Christian esotericism is connected with the [...] idea of creating out of nothing. If there were only evolution and involution, we would have eternal repetition, like plants, and nothing would exist on Vulcan that did not begin on Saturn. [...] Once Saturn, Sun and Moon had passed, Christ entered Earth as an immensely enriching element with the effect that on Vulcan there will be something entirely new, something that was not there yet on Saturn.

Such creations out of nothing emerge constantly in the human soul. They are soul experiences that are not caused by facts but by relationships between the facts that we ourselves create.

**Source** GA 107, lecture of 17 June 1909.

**Relates to** Pause for thought and Feature

### ■ PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

*Cultural development*

## A new culture out of the I's centre of love

**Before the future can be fulfilled through the forces of will, the past needs to be raised to consciousness. Our future being can only be realized if we assume full responsibility for our past.**

It is only from out of the future that we are able to grasp evil as a necessary resistance within human evolution. Freedom could not be born without the awakening interference of evil.

### Forces in cultural evolution

From a wider perspective we discover similar processes in world evolution. We perceive something like a seed that, planted in one cultural era, begins to grow in the next one. For this to be possible humanity needed help from Lucifer and Ahriman.

It is therefore important to distinguish between the spiritual-cultural seed which was planted and which emerges from that continuous stream of metamorphosis, and the Luciferic impulse that motivates the fighter, artist or leader, instilling in them the ambition to strive for fame and success.

According to Rudolf Steiner, everything Luciferic that rises up is doomed to extinction by the opposing power: 'Without Lucifer's influence humanity would lack the enthusiasm and fire for the continuous stream of human evolution; without Ahriman, who destroys from one civilization to the next all that does not arise from the continuous stream but is merely a result of Lucifer's impact, Lucifer would perpetuate each civilization to eternity' (GA 120, 28 May 1910). This is why Ahriman's opposing power is needed; it takes from Lucifer everything he has created and destroys it so that the inner essence of evolution can resurface. This is the reason why civilizations come and go. 'Ahriman is the karmic fulfillment of Lucifer' (ibid.).

Where, then, do we find the new starting point for our work so that a new culture can evolve? 'We shall willingly and with love devote ourselves to a theosophical [or anthroposophical, Iftach Ben Aharon] culture that will not last forever. But we shall accept with enthusiasm and create with love what we were driven to in the past under Lucifer's influence' (ibid.).

### From within – with Christ

We have arrived at a moment (of world evolution) when we need to draw inspiration

for our work from a new source: no longer from the enthusiasm for a cultural evolution that is founded on an illusionary belief in the eternity of the 'realization structures of our thoughts', but from the pure enthusiasm for the spiritual activity, for the spiritual work we do together and that, on the path of transformation, is always united with the evolving spirit. We must direct our gaze at the actual seed that needs to be prepared at this time rather than focus on the changing forms of impact.

A new task arises from this for Lucifer and Ahriman: rather than instil enthusiasm and impulses for creation (Lucifer) or destroy antiquated cultures (Ahriman), these beings will become the substance of inner resistance that enables the soul to grow in transformation.

What used to be effective from the outside as karma-creating influence, can and should now be activated from within. As soon as we start to be active out of our centre, working on creating a new community and a new civilization, the Christ – as the being of the 'I am' – will become the lord of karma. | *Iftach Ben Aharon, Harduf (IL)*

### About us

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English translation based on a Hebrew to German translation by Yoav Sapir.

**Iftach Ben Aharon**, born 1965 in Israel, studied literature and philosophy. He is a poet and a researcher in the areas of



culture and consciousness development. He teaches anthroposophy at Kibbutz Harduf and at several universities in Israel.

**Image** Iftach Ben Aharon, courtesy photo

General Anthroposophical Society

## Fourth Members' Forum

**At the fourth Members' Forum on 9 September which was held at the Goetheanum and online, further results were presented and forms of implementation considered.**

175 years ago, on 12 September 1848 the Swiss Constitution came into effect. Ueli Hurter mentioned it when he opened the fourth Members' Forum, referring to the wrestling preceding that historical event for finding ways of working together despite many differences (and without overriding these), for a 'fruitful community'. He concluded that where this is not possible 'we are no longer capable of taking decisions' and this would be difficult.

The motto Harald Jäckel chose for the fourth Forum was 'What you think I am is not me, it is you'. He quoted qualities mentioned by Rudolf Steiner in *The Renewal of the Social Organism* (GA 24) such as individual initiative and self-administration to prevent that an overarching will suppresses the 'fruitfulness of individuals', so that the right people can be brought to the right place and 'law and regulations' replaced by 'direct living trust'.

Then the members of each work group formed human statues to illustrate first the current situation of their topic and then the quality they wish to achieve in future. Despite many differences, all the presentations showed personal will with little or no relation to others before and openness and mutual interest as a goal after so that community can grow without forfeiting the strength of the individual.

### Dealing with the results

The next part consisted in presentations from the work groups. Eva Lohmann-Heck (CH) suggested to consider the following idea for a future social form of the Anthroposophical Society: a body could be formed out of the members' forums to complement the Executive Council and the Goetheanum Leadership. This would create a broader base and add more input from the Anthroposophical Society. Thomas Heck (CH) added that this was about competences, about a third perspective at eye level, and that one could review the situation after three years to see if it was successful.

Group D8 works on the question of cooperating with international organizations such as the WHO whose approach to vaccinations is seen by some as 'dangerous'. This

group is in conversation with the Goetheanum Leadership and has organized separate events for dealing with their question.

The work group on Transparent Communication (D3) asked about the relationship between freedom and commitment: all proposals are to be submitted to a members' meeting to be voted on; they include structures that concern the work of the Executive Council, for instance. Is it appropriate to use a vote to prescribe to someone else what they ought to do? How should one deal with proposals for a culture of communication that needs to be created, that needs to grow? Voting can hardly be the way. And yet, commitment is required in order to achieve transparent communication. Such proposals could maybe flow into the paper of group D2 (GAS culture) which has made much progress but is not yet complete.

The question raised by group D9 (Art, Speech and Drama) as to the nature of Section work revealed different views on the participation in other sections. Would members like to be informed and involved from the very beginning when new Section leaders are appointed or even when a new Section is formed? (We are now leaving AS territory and moving to that of the School of Spiritual Science.) Ueli Hurter and Justus Wittich pointed out that these are long drawn-out processes that concern above all those actively working in a section. It was up to these co-workers to discuss the questions and the autonomous School was assuming responsibility.

### Continued reservations about hybrid format

The hybrid format of the Forum was discussed again. One point of criticism was the absence of a shared space for conversation, for example, and the disruption of the social inner space in the Schreinerei [as the in-person venue]. Others defended the simultaneity arguing that it was important that everyone could meet at the same time.

Not all questions were answered. They were heard and will have to be resolved in the future meetings. | *Sebastian Jüngel*

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Membership forums

## Work group on GAS culture

In May 2023 several open groups started working on different topics in order to develop and prepare draft proposals for the AGM. What is it like working in such a group? I will focus on the group with the title 'A future GAS culture' (D2, the German-language second group). This group has twelve members who were interested in this particular topic from the very beginning. Some of them are active in several groups, but an 'inner core' of six people is carrying the group process.

### Working together on every sentence

We started by asking ourselves what qualities we find necessary for working together in an anthroposophical society. What could the culture of our collaboration in the General Anthroposophical Society look like? In our deepening online conversations we identified ten such qualities. Over the last less than two months we condensed these qualities into a precis with suggestions for their implementation. Will this precis meet with approval? We welcome feedback from other members (available from [mchristoph2011@gmail.com](mailto:mchristoph2011@gmail.com)).

We had hardly completed our precis when we started to work on a more comprehensive version that will enable anyone interested to enter into a deepening exchange on the ten qualities. The long versions on the individual qualities were spread among the group and then formulated in detail. Each of these texts required a full consensus. For this we added our comments to a central document that we worked through, sentence by sentence, in three in-person meetings, taking more than four hours each time.

Does this mean that we have completed our task? No, for we are looking forward to feedback that we will take into account when putting together draft proposals for the Annual General Meeting. Will we sit around 'bored' whilst waiting for feedback? Certainly not. The group 'How can we attract young members?' (D7) has invited us to work with them. The forging of ideas continues. | *Moritz Christoph, Weil am Rhein (DE)*

### Correction

Two errors occurred in the article *New Section in Anthroposophy Worldwide* 9/2023, p. 12: The English title of the new section to be founded in 2024 will be Section for Inclusive Social Development. The former name of what is currently the Anthroposophic Council for Inclusive Social Development was 'Curative Education and Social Therapy Council' (from 1979 to 2018). We thank Jan Göschel for pointing out these mistakes and apologize for any inconvenience caused. | *Margot M. Saar*

## ■ FORUM

**Constitution:  
Of two, that a third may be**

The history of the two Jesus children is not only interesting as a tale of two 'bodies' that work together; they do so because Zarathustra avails himself of them (one his 'own' and 'talented', the other 'borrowed' and 'untalented') so that he may then absent himself in favour of the Christ.

**Earthly vehicle  
of a higher being**

Zarathustra's 'use' of the king-ly Solomon Bethlehem and priestly Nathan Nazareth Jesus children was so that the Christ might have an earthly vehicle. It was not about which was primary or more real but how he, through them, enabled a greater event, with the first of them dying away, so that a higher entity might 'make use' of the other's mortality – all so that the Christ might have 'a bearer who is not Christ Himself'. The allusion here is equally to the two Johannes Bau Associations, so that the (meta) Christmas Anthroposophical Society may exist, and the two Societies, the re-founded Anthroposophical Society (AS) and the General Anthroposophical Society (GAS), i.e. the renamed second, Swiss, Johannes Bau Association, so that 'the Goetheanum' may be. I am minded of this every time the 'constitution question' comes up. For can this question be understood, let alone answered, if it is only about the relationship between two bodies, irrespective of how heavily or lightly incorporated they are? Is not the twin Jesus tale an archetypal story of how two bodies are used by an 'agent' so that a third thing may happen as a consequence? I do not mean this analogously, but poetically – in order to balance the certainty of legal arguments with the improbability of spiritual science. And to ask

what might be the higher purpose of re-founding the Anthroposophical Society, of which Rudolf Steiner was the agent?

**Bearer of the  
Anthroposophical Society**

I ask this question because when on earth, do we not need some telos or purpose beyond ourselves? Beyond the earth, even? Binary constructs are forever fraught and thwarted unless they serve a higher goal. Take that away, and debates over two become interminable because they imply the victory of one over the other rather than sacrifice on both their parts.

When deliberating on the constitution of the Anthroposophical Society, ought we not, therefore, ask of what it might be the vehicle? Whether it folds within itself the various undertakings Rudolf Steiner had in mind or they are held in a sibling entity or entities – this may be a matter of timing; of legal and other external constraints, such as taxation; or even pending the maturing of our collective understanding of such things.

In all cases and scenarios, however, if the entities were carried by an initiative council made up of members of the Society undertaking their public activities in their capacity as members of the School of Spiritual Science – that is to say, as 'representants' of anthroposophy – we might be able to bide our time in this matter and seek recourse to a higher instance than the court of Solothurn (or anywhere else on the planet).

**Equity as the abode  
of conscience**

Indeed, the constitution question may be a conundrum we are supposed to live with, a riddle to be wrestled with but not necessarily solved. Especially, if any solution leaves the one or other party aggrieved or disenfranchised; outwardly defeated

but inwardly not accepting. I write this out of an English mind, a mind that nestles law in equity, with equity understood as the abode of conscience, that element in us that is born of the Cherubim and, in England at least, is the home of every I that has emancipated itself from Church and King. Or so Steiner seems to imply when in *The Mission of Folk Souls* he describes the path from Teutonic mythology to Anglo-Saxonism.

The history of the I that is or can become conscious of its actions and their ethos. The I that knows (or seeks to know) how, like Rudolf Steiner at Christmas 1923, to bring something to earth but at the behest of the spiritual world and for which the related rights and resources are but clothing; not existing for themselves or determinative of what they house. Is this the secret of, rather than answer to, the constitution question? Whatever else it is and does, is not the purpose of the Anthroposophical Society to be the home of those who would take initiatives in the name or for the sake of Anthroposophia? And so give purpose and direction to the world of rights and resources, instead of them reversely determining what from the spiritual world will be permitted to happen and how?

**Michael period**

Is this the reason some call the re-founding of the Anthroposophical Society 'the Deed of Rudolf Steiner'? How different things would have been, could be now as we head towards Christmas, and would be in the future, had Statute 10 committed the Society to a general meeting, not once a year, but once every 100 years – 2023, 2123, 2223. For then we could pace ourselves through this Michael period, arriving at its end intact and on time and with our mission accom-

plished. | *Christopher Houghton Budd, Folkestone (GB)*

Christopher Houghton Budd has been a member of the Anthroposophical Society for over 50 years. The fuller background to his concerns can be found at [www.hopespringseternal.world/](http://www.hopespringseternal.world/)

**Constitution: Wave of confusion  
about Society name**

Rudolf Steiner said a hundred years ago that Ahriman would bring a 'wave of confusion' (GA 190, 5 April 1919). The growing dimensions of this wave of confusion have been noticeable since Covid in that we are exposed to a plethora of contradicting information. As a method, confusion involves the mixing of truth and lies. How does this affect our consciousness? Faced with a flood of contradictions, a mixture of lies and truth that is not immediately transparent, we end up shrouded in a kind of mist, our thinking forces paralyzed, victims of an unconscious powerlessness. When we are told 'untruths in a voice of authority' this will 'dull our consciousness to a dreamlike state' (GA 198, 6 June 1921). Looking for the truth requires an awakening at a higher level: an awakening to the fact that we are confronted with lies and that the dullness and powerlessness are intended. (In connection with the sources of public opinion making Rudolf Steiner speaks of targeted intentions).

**False beliefs**

A wave of confusion reached the Anthroposophical Society even before Rudolf Steiner's death as one can see from a statement by the Executive Council in the Newsletter of 22 March 1925. The statement was made by Guenther Wachsmuth, although this was not apparent since it was

signed 'the Executive Council'. The members had therefore no cause to doubt the situation described and continued in the belief that the Christmas Conference Society was called 'General Anthroposophical Society'. The members of the Executive Council had apparently been convinced of this since 8 February 1925 (cf. Albert Steffen's diary entry, for example). In truth, that was the day when the Johannes Building association, which was founded in 1913, was renamed 'General Anthroposophical Society'.

### Successfully clarified but not implemented

For decades individual members have been trying to clarify this error or to discuss the questions arising from it. This was prevented by the Executive Council up until the 1990s. After that a collaboration started between the members and the Executive Council that was discontinued, however (2002). That is not all. To this day the 'wave of confusion' is perpetuated, a fact that is very much in Ahriman's interest. To this day people wishing to join our Society find the following statement on page 6 of the Pink Booklet: 'During the founding meeting of the General Anthroposophical Society at Christmas 1923/1924 [...]' This is not

correct. On 28 December 1923, Rudolf Steiner newly founded the Anthroposophical Society of 1912/1913 under his own leadership. Under the heading Current Statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society we read on page 38, paragraph 2: 'The Society pursues its tasks and goals in accordance with the founding statutes proposed by Rudolf Steiner which were unanimously adopted by the members on 28 December 1923 [...]'. Readers can only conclude that this General Anthroposophical Society received the founding statutes by Rudolf Steiner at Christmas 1923. Since the 2022 AGM, when Gerald Häfner presented the colloquia results established in two years of work on this issue (moderated by Justus Wittich and himself), the true identity of our Society should have been known to all leaders, people in charge and numerous members. Should one not expect that now, a year and a half later, the implications and consequences of that public clarification could be apparent in that corrections are made in references? Far from it! There appears to be little interest in the matter. The state of knowledge achieved together was not announced at the AGM in 2022 or in conversations with members, nor

does it seem to have reached the awareness of the Executive Council or Leadership or other representatives of the School of Spiritual Science and the Society: in the invitation to this year's Christmas Conference at the Goetheanum ('A Hundred Years' Christmas Conference at the Goetheanum) the confusion is perpetuated in that the designations General Anthroposophical Society and Anthroposophical Society are used synonymously. In the Newsletters VII/VIII of the Swiss Society one also finds a reference to the new foundation a hundred years ago of the General Anthroposophical Society.

Ueli Hurter, who is a member of the Executive Council, wrote in Anthroposophy Worldwide 9/2023 about the 'hundred-year history of the General Anthroposophical Society' stating that 'As early as 1925, the Christmas Conference Society was legally registered as Bauverein (Building Association)'. Neither statement reflects the state of knowledge that has by now been jointly established. How can this happen?

### Implications of false statements

What are the spiritual implications when such things can happen in a Society that by its

nature should serve the truth and whose members should be imbued with 'enthusiasm for the truth' and 'longing for truthfulness' (GA 197, 22 November 1920, among other sources)?

Nothing less is at stake, after all, than our Society's identity and its earthly 'body' for anthroposophy. Can the arbitrary use of two designations, of which one refers to the being of the Johannes Building Association and the other to the being of the Christmas Conference Society with Rudolf Steiner as its representative, remain without consequences for these beings?

What will the spiritual consequences be for the being of Anthroposophy and the supersensory Michael movement, when now, after a hundred years of Christmas Conference, statements that contradict the facts are not corrected although one should know better, but are being spread further and consolidated? It is shocking. How can the being Anthroposophy remain connected with a Society in which confusion is spread about its own identity? 'Untrue statements, even if they are born from good will as it were, have a destructive effect in an occult movement' (GA 270a, 11 April 1924) | *Eva Lohmann-Heck, Dornach (CH)*

## Invitation to donate

Dornach, 29 September 2023

Dear Members,

25 years ago Anthroposophy Worldwide came out for the first time as a special edition of the Newsletter of the General Anthroposophical Society. Since then, it has made it possible for members to learn about the Goetheanum and each other.

In 2019 the General Anthroposophical Society moved the publication of Anthroposophy Worldwide online but continued to provide a printed edition, too. As this involves additional costs for design, printing and distribution compared to the digital form, we are asking for a donation again this year. The print edition can also be ordered without a donation. Those who receive Anthroposophy Worldwide exclusively in digital form may of course also make a donation.

Anthroposophy Worldwide informs its readers ten times a year in German, English, French and Spanish about what is happening at the Goetheanum and in the Anthroposophical Societies and initiatives around the world. In addition, the authors provide thought-provoking contributions.

It's great that you are here!

Many thanks!

*Sebastian Jüngel*

*Christmas Conference 2023*

## Anthroposophy streams – does it stream in me?

Christine Gruwez looks at anthroposophy with a view to finding out what it means to choose an (esoteric) stream.

What does 'anthroposophy' mean? What does it stand for? What is it witness of? When these kinds of question arise, one often speaks of a 'stream'. This year's Christmas Conference at the Goetheanum will also feature contributions on this, on the mysteries of Ephesus, the School of Chartres and the Rosicrucian mystery. Is anthroposophy a stream?

There are all kinds of streams. Is it a spiritual stream? Does it refer to a movement? Is it possible to discover something about its source? Where and how did the stream of anthroposophy originate? Even asking about its in-fluence evokes the image of a 'stream'.

### 'Stream' implies a being

The influence, or impact, of a river is visible in the surrounding landscape and atmosphere. A city with a river flowing through it has a particular atmosphere. The dynamic interplay of light, air and wind seems to be permeated and 'coloured' by the river. It brings order to the multiple phenomena of a human community. It creates context, for every river has its individual form – this is why rivers have proper names.

When using 'stream' or 'river' as a metaphor for anthroposophy, we would have to say, 'Anthroposophy is like a stream'. The picture of a river is 'transferred' to anthroposophy. But it is not just a metaphor. When we say that 'Anthroposophy is a stream', we are saying that 'Anthroposophy streams'. And when we say, 'it streams' we are saying, 'it is a live, it lives.'

Like all rivers it streams between a source and a mouth, creating a continuously changing form. A temporary form. Not one single temporary form but as many temporary forms as possible, each of them arising out of its own essence, with new shapes emerging in response to the quality of the soil and of the environment. A streaming river is never the same, as Heraclitus claimed when he said that we cannot step into the same river twice because everything is in flux. In fragment 49a we read, 'Into the same river we step and we do not step. We are and we are not.' Something of a living being emerges. A temporary form that is continuously emerging, flowing and able to appear in any form.

### Unique

What remains though when something keeps evolving? What is it that creates the river's unique form as it streams? Often one points to the course of a river, how it carves its way through a region, through an existing human or natural landscape.

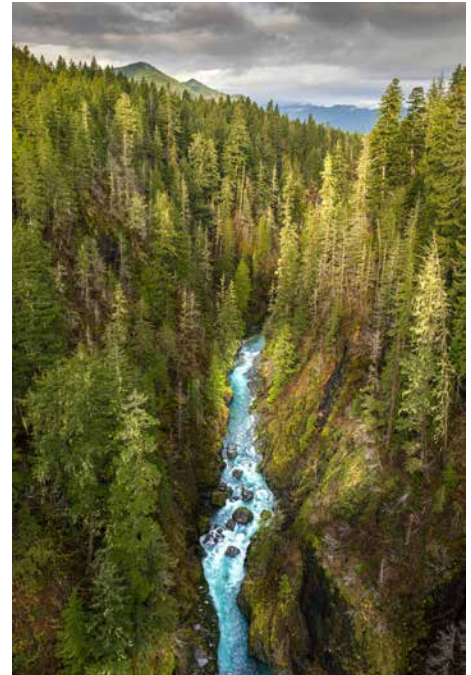
Although similar laws are at work, no two rivers are identical. The traces left by a river are its own and they are unique. One can retrace its course, even back to its source and discover how the waters collected and contracted before the river rose to the surface and started on its way. Or one can point to the tributaries and how and when they joined the main river and what in-fluences resulted from that. One can also focus on how different every river mouth is: how the streaming river urges towards the sea. And yet, there are rivers that never reach the sea, like the Zavandeh in central Iran. Its name means 'life-giver' which is precisely what it used to be for the desert dwellers around Isfahan up until a few decades ago. One could explore how deep below the riverbed the first subtle signs of change appear, or one could investigate the depth itself and its origin! For no riverbed forms without resistance. The earth and its interior, the soil, the mountains – everything that is essentially related to gravity and to the mineral world offers resistance. Without this resistance, we could not speak of a river or of streaming: there would just be falling, like with a waterfall, a dropping down. A waterfall does have a source and a mouth, but it is lacking the depth of a riverbed and the estuary's expanse.

### Different sources

Anthroposophy can be seen as a living organism in various ways. Different sources came together to form it and it created its course by carving and changing its riverbed. As a streaming, emerging being, anthroposophy is unique just as a river manifests its essential nature in streaming! In its essence, 'anthroposophy' is something living, something streaming!

What does this river carry? It carries the light of consciousness. Not only the light that is mirrored and reflected in the river. This essential light is the image of the living streaming itself as an image and metaphor of anthroposophy (or vice versa).

Of course, anthroposophy – just as any natural river – has a physical form that imprints itself, incarnates in space and time. Do I remain standing on the riverbank or do I step in? Another question is: how is



it streaming in me? What seeks to stream through me? I can only meet anthroposophy as something that streams once it has started to stream in me. Then something new can begin. Again and again. I am at the source and at the mouth simultaneously. In the presence of the spirit. Where the streaming is. | *Christine Gruwez, Antwerp (BE)*

**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](http://goetheanum.ch/en/events/dass-gut-werde)

**Generic image** Anthroposophy streams, photo: Jasper Gronewold / Unsplash

■ ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

America

## Whither the Anthroposophical Society?

From 29 June to 2 July 2023 fifteen members met at Rudolf Steiner House in Ann Arbor to share their views on developments in the Anthroposophical Society.

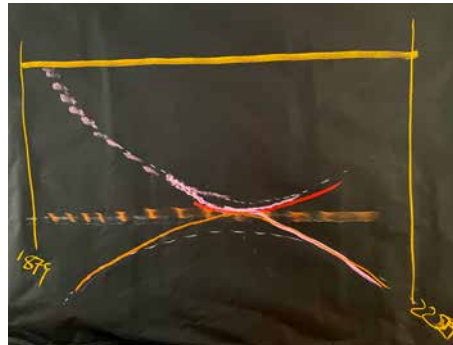
'Welcome to the space of the Anthroposophical Society, before all the arguments began. We are meeting as concerned members with pink cards, supported by the Economics Group of the Anthroposophical Society in America in link with the Great Lakes Branch at the Rudolf Steiner House, Ann Arbor, headquarters of the Anthroposophical Society in America. We are starting in this meta-event with Rudolf Steiner who is bringing a gift – an endowment with a specific intent – from the spiritual world to the earth, before all the problems began. We are on our way to becoming worthy of such an endowment. Now is not the time to question the effectiveness of it, so much as of ourselves. We daren't disappoint Michael, the one spiritual ruler steadfast in his faith in us.'

### Finance as a tool of the spirit

These words capture the mood of the opening gesture of the meeting. Marking the centennial period during which Rudolf Steiner founded many country societies leading up to the Christmas Conference, fifteen participants stepped into a space in which, with Rudolf Steiner, as it were, we weighed his concern that humanity was at risk of losing sight of the Mystery of Golgotha, so that something, or some deed had to be done to rescue humanity's situation. He showed the generally human way forward in social life. Such was the deed of Rudolf Steiner at the Christmas Conference 1923/24.

That confusion and conflict continue to unfold since then is separate to the fact that this deed occurred for the whole of humanity. His establishing of the Anthroposophical Society, as the body on earth of the School of Spiritual Science and its Sections, needs fresh affirmation and new life breathed into it so that the good spirit of the Goetheanum can work in the world on behalf of humanity.

With this in mind, the event focused on finance as a general tool for expression of the spirit in the 21st century and specifically how this might look, in keeping with the Statutes and the three financial calls



that sounded during the proceedings of the Christmas Conference.

### Goetheanum Fund Worldwide

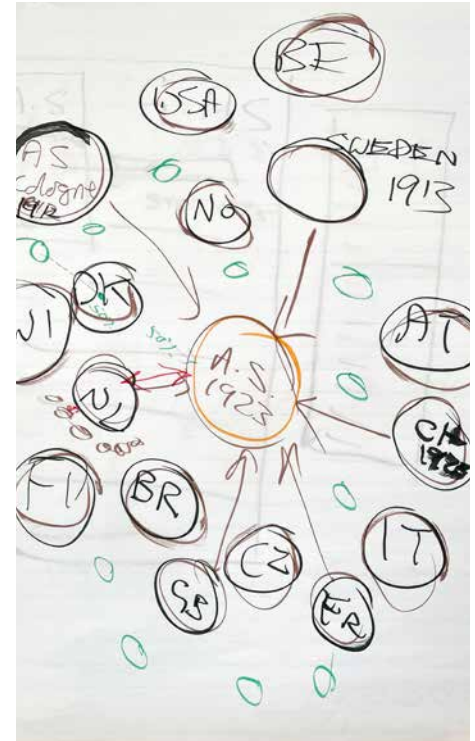
As Eddie Lederman (director of finance, Anthroposophical Society in America) remarked, 'We need to tend to the wellspring (of our movement.) But finance is the real tool we have. Finance is a mirror to what has been done, a reflection of decisions made.' And, indeed, as Christopher Houghton Budd shared with us, this would seem to be the spirit in which, for some years now, the treasurers of various Country Groups have been working, as one can see from the nine Treasurers' Guidelines agreed and adopted by the Executive Council and all the General Secretaries (now called Country Representatives) in 2019 (Anthroposophy Worldwide 11/2021, p. 4f.).

Additionally, in response to the Weleda crisis, which last year suddenly decreased the Goetheanum's revenue by 10%, an initiative amongst the treasurers led to the creation of the Goetheanum Fund Worldwide, an association established under Swiss law to provide support for the Anthroposophical Society/Goetheanum in all parts of the world. Its founding membership consists of fifteen Country Groups or Societies who chose to join and work with the Fund (See image).

### Accounting exercises lead to surplus

As a result of two accounting exercises we did concerning the funding of the event, a further step to 'breathing life into the body of the Anthroposophical Society' was taken. Participants shared their budgeted and possible amounts for food costs for attending the event. We all came with cash expecting to pay our share of the mutually prepared food. Some said they could pay more, some less. In the end, there was a large enough surplus out of which the venue cost was also covered. Even then, there was enough to place on reserve with the Anthroposophical Society in America for future events.

A similar exercise was done with travel



costs, each according to personal circumstances, comparing what had and what could have been spent on travel to the event. Though we did not cash out in this case, it was clear that a surplus would have been generated relative to the actual cost incurred by the whole. Indeed, this experience led us to think this might be the way to fund future events, using an account in the Society's bookkeeping (i.e. not using the Society's money) as a flow-through for the funds involved. | Kim Chotzen, Ann Arbor, MI (US)

**Images** History of the Bauverein: the esoteric challenge of funding the Anthroposophical Society; Illustration of the relationship of the country groups/societies and the General Anthroposophical Society, drawings: Christopher Houghton Budd

## ■ ANTHROPOSOPIHICAL SOCIETY

### General Anthroposophical Society

## Weleda restructured

Since the drop in Weleda's business results in 2022, the company's management team and processes have been restructured.

The Anthroposophical Society's concerns about Weleda often come to expression, particularly in the Society's annual general meetings, when members express reservations about the company's orientation. There is a reason for this concern, because only members of the Anthroposophical Society can own Weleda shares. But the General Anthroposophical Society also has a direct relationship with Weleda in that it is one of the main shareholders and owner of so-called 'participation certificates'. Ueli Hurter from the Goetheanum's Executive Council is a member of Weleda's board of directors, and the budget of the General Anthroposophical Society depends on receiving dividends and donations. The drop in Weleda's business result in 2022 meant that no dividends could be paid out and as a consequence the Goetheanum as the Society's headquarters incurred a ten percent loss of income.

### More sustainably resilient

In recent months Weleda has undergone a restructuring process, something that would not have been thought necessary in the years of the pandemic when business went well. But with the war in Ukraine, inflation and high energy costs, consumer behaviour changed, in Germany above all, and sales have dropped. In France the market for medicines slumped when homeopathic and anthroposophic medicines were made non-refundable by law; as another result of this the production in France was stopped. Independently of this, a major investment was due in a sustainable logistics centre in Schwäbisch-Gmünd (DE) and the leaving of three of four management members, each for their own reasons, constituted another challenge. Weleda's board of directors realized that any measures to be taken would have to aim at a sustainably higher resilience of the company.

The restructuring process encompassed several levels. All staff in Germany and Switzerland were invited to have their say; two co-workers were released for these tasks. Based on the outcome of these consultations, the Executive Leadership Team prepared decisions which were then ratified by the board of directors.

There were also changes in the management. From the autumn of 2022, Thomas Jorberg had worked closely with the management as chair of the directors' board; in March 2023 he became CEO. In the past, Jorberg had for many years been chair of the board of directors at the GLS Bank in Bochum (DE). On 1 November 2022, Raphael Savalle was appointed CFO and on 1 October 2023, Tina Müller will become head of cosmetics. The position of head of medicinal products is being advertised and is due to be filled in the first half of 2024.

With these new appointments the structure of responsibility is also changing. While the responsibility used to apply horizontally across sectors for the production of both medicines and cosmetics, it will now be vertical, applying to the whole range of medicines, for example.

The restructuring also aimed at consolidating the financial situation. This happened through job cuts accompanied by social programmes, and the identification and implementation of savings in operating costs.

### Maintaining the range of medicines

With all these steps, a basis was created that will ensure that Weleda's range of (industrially manufactured) medicines will not be further reduced. This was one of the main criticisms stated by members at the General Anthroposophical Society's AGM in the hope that the GAS as main shareholder will set boundaries to Weleda.

As a member of Weleda's board of directors Ueli Hurter points out that the range had been agreed with IMKA (International Coordination of Anthroposophic Medicines), which is an interdisciplinary committee. 'Any changes in range and potencies were discussed and decided there whilst making sure that the therapeutic capacity was retained. However, there are physicians who used to work with the medicines that were removed from the range and who need to reorient themselves. That this leads to disappointment and anger is totally understandable.'

Thomas Jorberg and Ueli Hurter point out that no further reductions of industrially produced medicines are planned. They call attention to the fact that the drop in income and profit in natural cosmetics illustrated the urgent need to strengthen the medicines (which even saw increased profits in 2022) as an increasingly independent sector within Weleda.



### Independence of medicines

Ueli Hurter adds that the medicines continue to be subsidized with income from the sales of natural cosmetics. Weleda was striving, as he points out, to make the anthroposophic medicines financially more independent of the natural cosmetics. No further reductions in range were intended, however, but rather a reducing of operating costs. At the same time, steps have been taken to keep the company healthy by extending the pomegranate facial care range in 2023. | *Sebastian Jüngel*

Image Ueli Hurter and Thomas Jorberg, photo: Sebastian Jüngel



*General Anthroposophical Section***Jewish humanism**

The recent series *Contributions to Jewish Humanism* provided by the General Anthroposophical Section at the Goetheanum focused on Primo Levi, Simone Weil, Hannah Arendt and Hans Jonas.

In February 1944, Primo Levi was deported from Italy to Auschwitz. He survived the concentration camp Buna-Monowitz (PL). Simone Weil fled with her parents to Southern France when the German Wehrmacht invaded Paris (FR) in May 1940. She worked for the Résistance in Marseille (FR), emigrated to New York with her parents in 1942 but returned to Great Britain to continue her French resistance work. Hannah Arendt was arrested by the Gestapo in Berlin (DE) in 1933. She was released again when a collection of antisemitic literature was found among her belongings and fled to Paris (FR). In 1940 she was held in Gurs internment camp in Southern France, from where she escaped. In 1941 she managed to flee to New York with her husband and her mother. Hannah Arendt's fellow student Hans Jonas, emigrated to Great Britain in 1933 and from there to Palestine in 1935; he fought in the country's military defence and from 1944 in the 'Jewish Brigade', a military formation of the British Army, against Germany; in 1948 he moved from Israel to Canada and the USA.

**Life paths**

Primo Levi's family had lived in Turin (IT) for many centuries; it was to Turin, to Corso Re Umberto 75, that Primo Levi returned from Auschwitz; he lived and died in the house of his parents. Simone Weil's family had Paris connections although her parents and grandparents came from Eastern Europe and Alsace. She could not get back to Paris, however, even though she would have liked to work on the front line of the Résistance. Her path ended in Kent (GB) in the summer of 1943, with her inner gaze firmly focused on France.

Hannah Arendt and Hans Jonas stayed in North America. Hannah Arendt and Simone Weil may have met in the streets of New York in the summer and autumn of 1942 before Simone Weil took a boat to take her back at least as far as England.

Primo Levi experienced the German concentration camp system from the inside; his memories and reflections on the camps, which he began writing down directly after his liberation, are part of world literature.

The perceptions, analyses and thoughts arising from his direct, personal, existential experience were groundbreaking. Not many survivors were able as he was to describe and process what happened to them – and to humanity – in the German concentration camps.

Simone Weil analyzed in her own way the abysmal traumatization and uprooting of modern humanity, the plight of civilization and its humane aspects. Hannah Arendt presented impressive analyses of totalitarianism and its preconditions after 1945, and Hans Jonas developed a philosophy of resistance and responsibility.

**Relationship to Judaism**

The relationships of Primo Levi, Simone Weil, Hannah Arendt and Hans Jonas to Judaism, to its history and culture, its self-image and spirituality, to Zionism and the State of Israel differed widely, down to Simone Weil's great distance to it. And yet, the French philosopher Gabriel Marcel called even her a 'daughter of Zion', given her great, even outstanding gift for the spoken and written word, for thinking, conscience and spirituality.

What unites Primo Levi, Simone Weil, Hannah Arendt and Hans Jonas beyond their fate of flight and deportation as members of a persecuted people threatened with annihilation is that they broke through to profound anthropological and sociological insights, the way they lived and partly even suffered their life of knowledge, which brought light into the darkness in the midst of an abysmal 20th century.

**Section work**

Their contributions to 'Jewish humanism' (Martin Buber) were most recently part of a lecture series provided by the General Anthroposophical Section of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum.<sup>1</sup>

It is one of the tasks of the School of Spiritual Science to gain an ever deeper understanding of the 20th century's spiritual signature by confronting the forces of evil but also by engaging with the spiritual light. The time when Rudolf Steiner developed his anthroposophical spiritual science is also the time of the events and reflections described in the second volume of the General Anthroposophical Section's publications on 'Resistance and Responsibility: Primo Levi, Simone Weil, Hannah Arendt, Hans Jonas', and of the conceptions and ideas of these authors. It is well known that Rudolf Steiner, who died in 1925, did not live to see



the Nazi system. However, he never tired of warning against the dangers of totalitarianism in the 20th century, and described the developments and forces involved with extraordinary clarity and far-sightedness.

Anthroposophical anthropology is deeply connected with the approaches and conceptions of the Jewish individualities mentioned. It is one of the tasks of the School of Spiritual Science to unlock these connections. 'For human beings, thinking of past matters means moving in the dimension of depth, striking roots and thus stabilizing themselves, so as not to be swept away by whatever may occur – the zeitgeist or history or simple temptation.'<sup>2</sup> | *Peter Selg, Goetheanum*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. <https://allgemeine-sektion.goetheanum.ch/en/recordings>, and Peter Selg/Constanza Kaliks: *Die Gegenwart des Anderen. Über Martin Buber und Franz Rosenzweig*, 2022; Constanza Kaliks/Peter Selg/Udi Levy/Iftach Ben Aharon: *Anthroposophie, Judentum und Antisemitismus*, 2023 | <sup>2</sup> Hannah Arendt: *Some Questions of Moral Philosophy*, in: *Responsibility and Judgment*, New York 2003, p. 95

**Image** Hannah Arendt at the 1st Congress of Cultural Critics, 1958, photo: Barbara Niggli Radloff, Source: Münchner Stadtmuseum, Sammlung Fotografie

**Web** [sammlungonline.muenchner-stadtmuseum.de/objekt/hannah-arendt-auf-dem-1-kulturkritiker-kongress-10218949](https://sammlungonline.muenchner-stadtmuseum.de/objekt/hannah-arendt-auf-dem-1-kulturkritiker-kongress-10218949)

*Medical Section***More dynamic pictures of health and illness**

At the Medical Section's Annual Conference at the Goetheanum Adam Blanning, Marion Debus and Karin Michael took over the section leadership from Matthias Girke and Georg Soldner.

**Sebastian Jüngel** How has your view of the Goetheanum changed since you were asked to become Section leaders?

**Adam Blanning** For me the Goetheanum was first a place of tremendous history and beauty, then of collegial learning and encounter. Now the gaze is strongly directed towards the future and how the Goetheanum can help us all to gain support and lively community for what is coming out of the future.

**Karin Michael** Since I can remember, the Goetheanum has been a special place for me, a place for which I felt deep admiration. This feeling has deepened further by the unexpected call to the School of Spiritual Science and my sense of responsibility towards anthroposophy and Anthroposophic Medicine has clearly grown.

**Marion Debus** I had my first deep and formative experience of what the Goetheanum is at the youth conference in 1988 when we had the chance to watch all four mystery dramas in the course of a week, with daily lectures by Jörgen Smit. Later, the relationship became more relaxed and pragmatic. Taking on the responsibility for the Section brings home to me the irreplaceable spiritual significance this place has for the future cultural evolution of humankind in dramatic times and it feels closer to my heart in ways that I couldn't have imagined before taking this step.

**Working as a team**

**Jüngel** How well did you know each other before? How are you approaching your new task together?

**Blanning** Marion and I had already met many years before, Karin I met just with this new work. But it feels as if we have known each other for decades. We will all three meet at least four times a year, plus weekly video conferences with the whole Medical Section team.

**Michael** I have known and appreciated Marion from our work in the specialist medical group. We felt at once that we could share a rope on a rock face. Adam Blanning I met for the first time two days before we intro-

duced ourselves to the faculty of the School of Spiritual Science. After a few days it felt as if we had known each other for much longer.

**Debus** During the rare but always somehow significant meetings with Karin Michael, I always felt half unconsciously, 'We don't have so much to do with each other now, but we may work on something essential together in the future.' And when the question came whether we would take on the Section leadership together, I didn't hesitate for a second. The question was like the answer to that unconscious feeling. I had known Adam Blanning for some time from two International Postgraduate Medical Trainings (IPMT) in the USA but getting to know him in this constellation was a wonderful new step.

**Goals**

**Jüngel** Your predecessors established and built up the Care Areas and were very active during Covid. What tasks do you envisage? What lies ahead for you?

**Michael** We got to know and appreciate the Care Areas in the recent years because we were working on them. Our aim is to continue to deepen them and to make them more international.

**Blanning** In some ways we don't have to make too many plans, because the many needs are coming towards us quickly! Some other issues that come to mind are the role of artificial intelligence, the health of the senses and perception (how do we know what is real?), burnout and social isolation. They are all pressing needs that affect individual and community health.

**Debus** The challenges are both inside and outside: how do we shape our PR work so that the voice of anthroposophy can be heard in the search for solutions to the burning questions of our time which arise today more than ever in the field of medicine in particular? How can the Goetheanum, in times of increasing one-sided manipulation, become a place for a courageous free spiritual exchange on these complex questions, through specialist congresses, for instance, and by including people who are not primarily close to anthroposophy?

It is also true that all therapeutic professions are in deep crisis today, because the inner and outer conditions for true healing, which make us love our work, which make it a vocation, are no longer given space in our materialistically informed healthcare system. How can the individual therapeutic professions find and strengthen their inner identity, their esoteric essence, so that they

can develop even stronger forces of healing enthusiasm, especially as we are faced with these challenges? Providing the right kind of 'birth support' in this respect is one of our main concerns.

**Place of the Medical Section**

**Jüngel** The structure and organization of the anthroposophical medical movement is relatively complex. What is the place of the Medical Section in this? What does it stand for? And what about research?

**Michael** At the end of the Christmas Conference on the evening of 1 January 1924, Rudolf Steiner described the following aim, among others, 'One must be able to gain strength in Dornach, as it were, in order to stand face to face – spiritually speaking – with the spiritual world, to learn about the spiritual world.' May this strength and this attitude permeate our research.

**Blanning** Yes, with many existing structures and organizations, one activity is to support good co-working and communications within the medical community. It is broad and beautiful work that must be shared among many colleagues. What the Medical Section offers is a home for deep spiritual study, and research that bridges (always) back to the spiritual world.

**Debus** The Medical Section is like the heart where everything flows together that comes from the different organs in the organism, where all that is perceived and receives new impulses from spiritual sources.

**Human being and body**

**Jüngel** How has our relationship to our body changed in the past years, particularly as a result of the growing digital influences?

**Blanning** Many people feel so consumed by the offerings and demands of the outside world that they start to lose some trust in their own capacities for rhythm, change and healing. Our connection to our life sense becomes more threatened, especially in children. In adults, it may be more a question of 'When do I rest, when do I hold back some forces for my own creativity? How do I learn to connect to the feeling that everything I need is right here, and I don't need anything more?'

**Michael** With the growing virtualization of our life worlds, the healthy development of children and adolescents faces great challenges today. 'But this is the real world for me,' an 11-year-old patient once said to me when confronted with the view that a much greater part of everyday life should take place in the real world.

**Debus** In oncology the warmth organism plays a particular role because its health reflects to what extent the body is permeated by the 'I' forces. Since the industrial revolution, our body temperature has dropped by 0.1 degrees Celsius per decade. This shows a culturally conditioned physiological alienation from our own body, which is expressed particularly clearly in cancer, but also in many other phenomena. Anthroposophic Medicine is actually a medicine of warmth. We see this for instance in the external applications, the pharmaceutical processes, the deep interest in the individuality of the patient.

**Jüngel** How do you deal with the causes of illness?

**Blanning** Sharing more dynamic pictures of health and illness is a good starting point, and that illness is an expression of some imbalance. Also, some differentiation between what symptoms are part of the illness and what symptoms are part of the healing process, and that we can actually gain new capacity or strength while working through a healing process. Asking about a person's goals is also important—sometimes the window opens to talk about a very deep spiritual process (such as reincarnation), at other times, we just want to feel better first. It's really a conversation.

**Michael** In the Ruhr region of Germany the poor air quality and humid climate keep coming up in consultations and have been the main reason for applying for periods of focused treatment, by asthma patients for instant.

The deeper causes of an illness have usually played less of a role for me in paediatrics unless children were born with a disability or became seriously or chronically ill. In such cases, parents actually always ask about destiny. Salutogenesis is a central aspect in paediatrics and adolescent medicine. It is what made me a school and kindergarten doctor over and above offering preventive care and consultations in the paediatric outpatient clinic.

In response to the disastrous developmental conditions many (already socially disadvantaged) children and adolescents experienced during the Covid crisis, we founded the 'Von Tessin Centre for Health and Education' at Freie Hochschule Stuttgart (DE), which focuses on the question of how healthy development can be made possible today.

**Debus** For patients in the second half of life in particular, external factors must be adequately addressed (for example, the connection between alcohol and the risk

of breast cancer, nutritional issues, exercise). However, in this phase of life the actual salutogenic forces come from within, from the way we take hold of our own biography and its deeper intentions. From the age of 30 onwards, we don't build up our body from the outside but from the inside; we need to be aware of that.

Cancer patients often ask about causes. Sometimes there may be an obvious cause, but with regard to the deeper causes which are not intellectually accessible anyway, I try to encourage the same humility that we should develop towards all spiritual questions, in the sense of Rainer Maria Rilke who explained in a letter that if we live patiently with the questions, we will eventually grow into the answers.

#### Treasure of anthroposophic medicines

**Jüngel** What do you do for the availability of anthroposophic medicines, in relation to Weleda or Wala for instance?

**Blanning, Debus, Michael** This is a question of high priority for us and should be supported on all levels: through training, congresses, PR and research. Close collaboration with and support of the manufacturers is important to us.

**Jüngel** How do you create a balance to your full workload?

**Blanning** I enjoy running (though I am realizing that is not so common in Dornach) ... Also, being in nature, plus good laughter with family and friends.

**Michael** My family and my garden provide balance, protection and fun. But I really wish to keep my enthusiasm for my work alive in the future, too!

**Debus** With the travelling and diverse human encounters that our work involves come many special moments and opportunities. I try to use such moments by spontaneously attending a concert or exhibition, visiting a friend's practice and sharing experiences. Such unexpected moments are particularly refreshing and nurturing.



**Marion Debus**, born in Erlangen (DE) in 1968, specialized in internal medicine, haematology and oncology. From 2005 to 2027 head of department at Havelhöhe community hospital in Berlin; from 2017 to 2023 head of oncology at Arlesheim hospital (CH). Medical editor for Merkurstab medical journal. Co-founder and co-director of Havelhöhe medical training, Berlin.

**Karin Michael**, born in Freiburg (DE) in 1970, qualified in anthroposophic geriatric care in Frankfurt/Main (DE) before studying medicine and Anthroposophic Medicine in Witten/Herdecke (DE) and specializing in paediatrics. With Michaela Glöckler she is co-author of a book on child health (Kindersprechstunde).

**Adam Blanning**, born in Denver, Colorado (US) in 1972, where he is a family doctor. He studied English literature and taught family medicine at New York Medical College and the University of Colorado. He is head of the anthroposophic medical training in the USA and author of the books *Understanding Deeper Developmental Needs* and *Raising Sound Sleepers*.

**Web** [medsektion-goetheanum.org/en](http://medsektion-goetheanum.org/en)

**Image** Marion Debus, Karin Michael, Adam Blanning, photo: Ariane Totzke

■ SCHOOL OF SPIRITUAL SCIENCE



Section for Agriculture

## Learning to understand water means protecting life

The earth's water balance is out of joint. This is not caused by the water itself but it expresses the conditions created largely by humans.

According to Jasmin Paschke, head of Nutrition at the Goetheanum, 'we cannot afford to wait for the great global resolution of the water problem but must tackle the causes now.' She is convinced that conscious food choices can make a real difference.

The power does not lie with corporations alone, but also with the individual consumer. 'If I choose organically or biodynamically grown food, I contribute to an environment where the groundwater is not polluted with excessive nitrate or pesticides. In addition, I support the management of a soil that can absorb and store water because it has built up humus and is covered with vegetation throughout the year,' says the nutrition expert. As a result, the quality of food production is also ensured, in which water plays an important part.

More than 2.4 billion people live with water shortage or contaminated water. In recent decades the freshwater resources per person around the world have gone down by twenty percent. Lack of water disrupts the physiological processes in living organisms, affecting for instance the transport of nutrients and breakdown products, temperature regulation and the basic supply of cells and tissues.

'Water itself does not represent a hazard; it adapts to different conditions. Learning to understand water means protecting and facilitating life,' says Jasmin Peschke on the occasion of World Food Day 2023 which this year has the motto 'Water is life. Water is food'. | *Sebastian Jüngel*

**Web** [www.sektion-landwirtschaft.org/ernaehrung](http://www.sektion-landwirtschaft.org/ernaehrung)

**Image** Chälengrabenschlucht, [gorge near Dornach], photo: Sebastian Jüngel



Visual Arts Section

## Dialogue between colour and light

The exhibition *Light Leaf and Fire Form* at the Goetheanum will show works by Ferose (iron sculptures) and Stephane Zwahlen (painting and words) up until 21 January 2024.

The exhibition *Light Leaf and Fire Form* is a first encounter between Ferose's iron sculptures and Stephane Zwahlen's colour studies and 'word works'. The Visual Arts Section at the Goetheanum has brought the two polar approaches together in a way that makes tangible what lives in the in-between in the works of both artists.

### Tough and tender

The artist Ferose works with iron. When welded, the tough material shows its tender sides. The heat softens it and suddenly it reveals all the colours of the spectrum. Stephane Zwahlen also works with colours, but on paper and canvas. 'Both artists have in common that they are listening, to the sound of colour and light spaces, the language of nature and light forces, the echo of deep layers of consciousness,' says Christiane Haid, head of the Visual Arts Section. The exhibition *Light Leaf and Fire Form* is curated by Barbara Schnetzler.

After training as a landscape gardener, Ferose studied painting, graphics and sculpture at Freie Kunststudienstätte Ottersberg, an art college near Bremen, Germany. She was fascinated with iron from an early age. First encounters with sheet metal in a car workshop led her to autogenous welding which she learned from the iron sculptor Freddy Madörin in Basel, Switzerland. Today she creates freestanding sculptures



and large relief-like wall art. From thin iron wire she creates works that are sometimes fragile and delicate and sometimes massive and powerful.

### Silence of the afterimage

In the exhibition, these strong iron structures can enter into a dialogue with Stephane Zwahlen's transparent and vibrantly colourful paintings. He studied sculpture, photography and typography at Kunstgewerbeschule [arts and crafts college] Basel in Switzerland and used to be assistant stage designer at Theater Basel. He also studied painting with Beppe Assenza in Dornach, Switzerland.

Stephane Zwahlen is interested in what he calls 'the silence of the afterimage'. As he listens to the resonance of the visible phenomena, he creates sequences that make different layers of reality of nature and of the human being visible. He complements some of his colour creations with word works. | *Sebastian Jüngel*

**Exhibition** *Light Leaf and Fire Form*. Sculptures and paintings by Ferose and Stephane Zwahlen, 23 September 2023 to 21 January 2024, daily 9 am to 8 pm (extended opening times during events at the Goetheanum), Art Gallery, Goetheanum

**Web** [ferose.de](http://ferose.de)

**Portrait** Stephane Zwahlen, [dasgoetheanum.com/von-der-krise-der-stille-und-dem-licht](http://dasgoetheanum.com/von-der-krise-der-stille-und-dem-licht)

**Images** Ferose: Untitled, photo: René Lamb; Stephane Zwahlen: *Nous*

## ■ GOETHEANUM

## Leadership

**Cultivating open dialogue**

From 28 to 30 August the Goetheanum Leadership formulated wishes, goals, tasks and images for the future whilst looking with some concern at the financial situation.

L'Aubier is situated above Neuchâtel (CH). Since 1979 the eponymous association has been developed there, which now includes a Demeter farm and dairy, a restaurant with lake views, a health food shop, a hotel with conference facilities, a youth seminar, private housing with a small cultural centre and community gardens. The combination of new and traditional buildings forms an impressive campus.

Three members of the leadership team talked to us about how they bring opposites together: culture and entrepreneurship, esoteric striving and networking with the regional economic and political context, individual initiatives and collegial leadership, direct financing and spiritual-cultural independence from sponsors.

The inspiration for this association came from Rudolf Steiner, but also from Denis de Rougemont, born 1906 in Neuchâtel, who in the early days of the European Community championed the freedom of art and education and advocated federalism as a semi-autonomous collaboration of regions with a 'variable geometry' approach, depending on whether the question under discussion is cultural, political or economic.

L'Aubier – the Goetheanum leadership chose this venue for its retreat at the beginning of their new working year. The ideals of L'Aubier kept resonating again and again in its conversations.

**Forms of working together**

Following the centenaries in the anthroposophical movement and in preparation for the Goetheanum World Conference and this year's Christmas Conference we discussed goals and tasks for the next five to seven years. Aware of humanity's situation today, of the various anthroposophically inspired professional groups and in commemoration of Rudolf Steiner's countless inspirational indications during the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924 for an entirely new way of working together within the Anthroposophical Society, we worked in small groups and then shared the results in plenary sessions. The situation today differs from that of 1923

when much was destroyed outwardly following the world war and the fire at the Goetheanum. And yet, today, after the pandemic, both the General Anthroposophical Society and civil society as a whole are divided. Are we doing justice to the tasks described by Rudolf Steiner at the Christmas Conference?

Wishes, goals, visions for the future were collected but will not be finally formulated or transformed into concrete steps and plans until the future perspectives to be developed at the Goetheanum World Conference can be included. For example: At the Goetheanum we wish to

... cultivate open spaces for dialogue as a contribution to a Society that often splits into camps that stop talking to each other due to differing views. We will do this with enthusiasm for research, questions of our time, encounter.

... using the example of intelligent cooperation in the plant world ('Doing with will what plants are doing without will – that is the way' Friedrich Schiller) to improve collaboration within the School of Spiritual Science and to listen to non-anthroposophical partners.

... cultivating conferences at the Goetheanum that not only convey content but where humanity can be practised and experienced. The transformative power of art!

... helping co-workers in institutions to represent anthroposophy openly and not hide because of accusations of sectarianism.

... perceiving and appreciating the reality of cultural diversity.

... further enhancing the collaboration of the Sections – following jointly organized lecture series and the publication of research projects.

**Medical Section**

Looking at the work of the Medical Section in the past and future was a special moment. It was Georg Soldner's last session as part of the Goetheanum leadership. Matthias Girke will continue as a member of the General Anthroposophical Society's Executive Council until the AGM in 2024. With immense



commitment, always optimally informed on the most recent developments in university medicine and out of a profound connection with anthroposophical spiritual science, both Section leaders strove to formulate the perspectives of Anthroposophic Medicine comprehensibly and to extend the scopes of action. Guided by Rudolf Steiner's ethical individualism, they always aimed to enable patients to make free and informed decisions! As the Medical Section's new leadership team Marion Debus, Karin Michael and Adam Blanning presented their concerns and spoke of motifs in their biographies.

There were two items where a certain unease could not be prevented. Since the loss of Weleda's donations which led to a ten-percent drop in income for the Goetheanum, its budget has been imbalanced. While solutions could be found here or there, we are nonetheless facing a serious problem in the medium term that will need to be addressed.

The Members' Dialogue Forums made it possible to discuss important controversial questions in an atmosphere of mutual respect where members sought for new insights together. Will this enable a constructive dialogue culture in the Anthroposophical Society in the long term?

**Warmth of soul**

At the end of the retreat, Georg Soldner was presented with a large L'Aubier cheese. It was explained to us that huge amounts of blood need to flow through the udder when the milk is being produced. Could this not be a picture of the huge amount of soul warmth that is needed in the anthroposophical movement and Society for the being of Anthroposophy to come closer to Earth? | *Philipp Reubke, co-spokesperson of the Goetheanum Leadership*

**Image** The Goetheanum Leadership in L'Aubier, courtesy photo.

## ■ FORUM

### To the Berlin article Navigating the Sea of Impressions in Anthroposophy Worldwide 9/2023

In his book on chakras of the earth as a mirror of humanity [Chakren der Erde – Spiegel der Menschheit], Gregor Arzt (1963–2022), who trained as a geomancer with Marko Pogačnik, devoted a chapter to Berlin as the heart chakra of Central Europe. People who live in Berlin and the millions who visit the city will probably rely on inner activity to create a living and astute picture of the fractures and challenges, the light and darkness of the history of Berlin and Germany. Berlin as a spiritual place invites us to do this in a unique way. In the words of Jürgen Habermas, ‘Berlin is the pivotal point that reflects with particular acuity that the problems of the world are coming to us.’ Every individual person enters history as a responsible co-creator.

#### Continuing to be effective

Many of Rudolf Steiner’s ways to spirit knowledge came to light in Berlin. While they did not break through in public during his lifetime, they nonetheless continue to be effective. When we look at the places where he was active, on the other hand, we face a kind of blank slate of architectural history, as they have been erased or perverted again and again. The meeting places of the literary and artistic avantgarde, such as the coffeehouse Café des Westens, the Casino at Nollendorfplatz and Künstlerklaus Stallmann have disappeared, as has Circus Schumann, the Architects’ House and the Alte Philharmonie. Prince Charles Palais, where Rudolf Steiner welcomed, introduced and quoted Annie Besant in 1902, was used during the Third Reich as headquarters and

place of torture by the SS and then flattened by bombs.

The studio in Potsdamer Strasse 98 (then 39a) has had a more positive history: built in 1893 for the association of artists and art lovers in Berlin, where Käthe Kollwitz taught and Paula Modersohn-Becker studied, it was rented by the Anthroposophical Society from 1918 until it was banned in 1935. Theatre performances took place there and Rudolf Steiner gave his last Berlin address for members there in May 1923. In 1925, Helene Reisinger and Martha Morel turned it into a eurythmy school. In addition to the Blue Hall, there were rooms for courses and a library and a small apartment for Anna Samweber, the ‘soul of the house’. Elisabeth Schöneborn remembers Motzstrasse 17, another place of Rudolf Steiner’s activity in Berlin: ‘From 1916 to 1917, Rudolf Steiner provided many inspirations for puppet plays.’

The Jewish Cemetery in Weißensee, where Rudolf Steiner buried his Jewish friend Ludwig Jacobowski (1868-1900), remains unharmed, as do the graves of Wilhelm and Alexander von Humboldt in Tegel, where Rudolf Steiner spoke on 20 June 1903 at the midsummer celebration of the Giordano Bruno Society.

#### Forces of social renewal

But let’s return to Rudolf Steiner’s activities: the Anthroposophical Society had rooms in Sesenheimer Strasse in Charlottenburg from around 1917/1918. When Rudolf Steiner spoke there for the first time on 12 September 1919 (arriving directly from Stuttgart, DE, where the first Waldorf School had opened five days earlier), he outlined his vision for this venue: ‘I wish that our ceremony meant that we, whenever we



are in these rooms, remain aware of the truths that are so essential for the development of humanity.’ For him, these truths included the ‘connecting of the human soul to the activities of the higher hierarchies, the recognition of the conscious human soul which comes from previous earthly contexts, the threefold social order.’ Those who came together in the movement of anthroposophically oriented spiritual science ‘should feel that they are a nucleus from which the forces of social renewal radiate out.’ (A few years later, he said in The Hague, NL, on his 60th birthday, ‘May the work in the branches merely be the beginning of a spreading among all people’ (in Christoph Lindenberg, Rudolf Steiner - eine Chronik, p. 455).

#### We are Berlin’s destiny

I would like to conclude by quoting Gregor Arzt, ‘Like us, this city can continue to be, and if and how you feel this, will be its destiny’ (from the poem Engel von Berlin [angel of Berlin] in the book mentioned at the beginning). | Collated by the editors from texts by Manfred Kannenberg-Rentschler, Berlin (DE)

**Image** Rudolf Steiner’s residence, Motzstraße, Berlin, stock photo: Manfred Jünger

## ■ SOCIETY

Members’ communications

## 25 Years of Anthroposophy Worldwide

At Michaelmas 1998, Anthroposophy Worldwide was published for the first time as a special edition of the Newsletter.

Twenty-five years ago, on 4 October 1998, the first edition of Anthroposophy Worldwide appeared following a year’s preparation. Since then, the intention has been, as the then publisher representative Paul Mackay stated, to ‘extend the Newsletter once a month under the motto “anthroposophy worldwide” so as to provide a picture of what is going on in the global Society.’

Twenty-five years ago, the editorial team used a fax machine, contributions were sent in envelopes and entrusted to the editors. There is no fax machine today, more than 99 percent of contributions arrive electronically and edited contributions are generally sent back to the authors for agreement.

Anthroposophy Worldwide has changed in many ways in 25 years. From a magazine with mostly short news items it has turned into a sequence of contributions. The conceptual focus is constantly adapted to current requirements. Anthroposophy Worldwide first came out in German and English only, then Spanish was added and finally French. Unless it is part of a ‘Goetheanum’ subscription, distribution was transferred from the anthroposophical societies in the various countries to the Goetheanum.

#### Different communication cultures

Widening the scope of a newsletter from German only to a four-language edition means moving to the level of intercultural communication: while one culture prefers addressing issues directly (because anything else



may be felt to be ‘pussyfooting around’), another one may find this aggressive and inconsiderate to others.

When the newsletter changed from three German editions and one Anthroposophy Worldwide a month to ‘only’ one monthly multilingual Anthroposophy Worldwide, some members experienced this as a loss of the former newsletter. At the Goetheanum on the other hand it was seen as an enhancement of the newsletter because instead of separate editions for German speakers (Nachrichtenblatt) and English speakers (News from the Goetheanum), all members around the world now receive the same newsletter.

### Digital format

In 2019 Anthroposophy Worldwide came out digitally for the first time, as a newsletter without a publicly accessible website. The print edition was continued because one did not want to put readers under digital pressure. Since then, the members – you – have been asked to support Anthroposophy Worldwide financially, particularly if you receive a printed edition. Of course, everyone else is also welcome to donate (payment slip in a part of the edition or at [www.goetheanum.org/en/](http://www.goetheanum.org/en/)

donations). All members who wish to receive Anthroposophy Worldwide, digitally or printed, can apply for it irrespectively of whether or not they contribute to it financially.

With the beginning of the Members’ Dialogue Forums the Executive Council wishes to make controversies visible (for guidelines see Anthroposophy Worldwide 6/2023). We hope that Anthroposophy Worldwide will continue to serve as a dynamic medium of exchange between the members worldwide and that it will develop in accordance with their needs.

As of 19 September 2023, the print edition reaches 5363 members, while 31,813 members receive Anthroposophy Worldwide digitally (with some overlap, the figures are for German 4659/15,672, English 502/13,532, French 118/1356, Spanish: 84/1253). | *Representing the Executive Council as publisher: Justus Wittich, editor: Sebastian Jüngel*

**Image** Fourth Members’ Forum, plenum, photo: Sebastian Jüngel

We have been informed that the following 39 members have crossed the threshold of death. In their remembrance we are providing this information. | *Membership Office at the Goetheanum*

**Peter Zinecker**, Halle (DE), 7 October 2022  
**Helga Gärtner**, Übersbach (AT), 21 October 2022  
**Alice Steinemann**, Schaffhausen (CH), 23 March 2023  
**Jeanne-Marie Gontard**, Saint-Etienne (FR), 23 May 2023  
**Edgar Utinger**, Basel (CH), 29 May 2023  
**Monique Meenk**, Lochem (NL), 4 June 2023  
**Christoph ten Houte de Lange**, Zeist (NL), 6 June 2023  
**Annette Nielsen**, Copenhagen (DK), 8 June 2023  
**Christoforus van Bemmelen**, Burgh-Haamstede (NL), 3 July 2023  
**Claude Guérin**, Paris (FR), 5 July 2023  
**Virginia Tassan**, S. Martino Di Campagna (IT), 8 July 2023  
**Thelma M. Hodges**, Harbor Springs / MI (US), 16 July 2023  
**Jean-Pierre Fleury**, Courteron (FR), 21 July 2023  
**Berit Sigmond**, Elverum (NO), 24 July 2023  
**Ulrike von Sass**, Katzenthal (FR), 30 July 2023  
**Ulrike Windgassen**, Wuppertal (DE), 31 July 2023  
**Kim Baker**, Fair Oaks / CA (US), 1 August 2023  
**Stefan Meiner**, Munich (DE), 2 August 2023  
**Keld Nielsen**, Skanderborg (DK), 5 August 2023  
**Sabine Palmer**, Leipzig (DE), 6 August 2023  
**Peter Lampasiak**, Hannover (DE), 7 August 2023  
**Klaus Labudde**, Stuttgart (DE), 9 August 2023  
**Klaus-Hinrich Hengst**, Schlitz (DE), 12 August 2023  
**Gisela Rilke**, Hanover (DE), 13 August 2023  
**Doris Karutz**, Stuttgart (DE), 14 August 2023  
**Christa-Renate Nickel**, Stuttgart (DE), 14 August 2023  
**Elisabeth Loose**, Sargans (CH), 15 August 2023  
**Rebecca Maxwell**, Richmond (AU), 18 August 2023  
**Ursula Stalder**, Orpund (CH), 18 August 2023  
**Manfred Buseke**, Hamburg (DE), 22 August 2023  
**Karla-Maria Schälke**, Bishkek (KG), 25 August 2023  
**Bernhard Schaffner**, Basel (CH), 26 August 2023  
**Friedhilde Laupheimer**, Tübingen (DE), 28 August 2023  
**Donata Lietha**, Andeer (CH), 28 August 2023  
**John Caruana**, Köngen (DE), 29 August 2023  
**Angelika Mollwo**, Dornach (CH), 30 August 2023  
**Ruth Burckhardt**, Borchern (DE), 31 August 2023  
**Ines-Renate Städtler**, Nuremberg (DE), 2 September 2023  
**Fredy Prack**, Basel (CH), 3 September 2023

Correction: Cornelia Selinger died on 17 March 2023, not on 19 April 2023 as announced in Anthroposophy Worldwide 9/2023

In August 2023 the Membership Office at the Goetheanum registered 92 new members. 20 left the Society between 11 August and 14 September 2023.

Christmas Conference 2023

## That Good May Become...

100 Years Christmas Conference at the Goetheanum

Conference of the General Anthroposophical Society and the Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland

26 to 31 December 2023, Goetheanum

**Languages** German, English, French, Italian, Spanish

**Information / registration** [goetheanum.ch/en/events/dass-gut-werde](http://goetheanum.ch/en/events/dass-gut-werde)

## ■ FEATURE

## Artificial intelligence

**Using knowledge, acquiring skills**

People have been fascinated by automatons since antiquity. While such devices were purely mechanical in the past, they are now based on virtual systems. They are applied in practice as industrial robots, text generators or in machine translation. While they can make life easier in some respects, they don't help us to acquire skills of our own.

Magic works because it takes us by surprise – incredible things seem possible. The trick behind the magic has less to do with what we actually see than with psychology. Some presentations of virtual technology remind me of this because the results are also impressive, a fact that benefits product developers looking for investors. – I would like to encourage reflection on artificial intelligence (AI), although the diversity of aspects cannot be fully explored here.

**Skills need to learned**

In the current debate, authors never tire of explaining that artificial intelligence is based on the linking of existing knowledge by means of certain selective procedures. But what is intelligent? When decisions are being made? On what level? Is a tea strainer intelligent because it separates the tea leaves from the water? Does it make a decision? There is no doubt that it is doing its job (unless it is broken). The question is rather if what it does is based on intelligence. I don't want to make it too easy for myself: we can also see the effects of physical laws as an expression of intelligence.

It is not only useful that we can enjoy the tea once it has been filtered through the strainer. That the content of a machine-translated text can be understood is also useful for someone who does not understand the language of the source text; or when one can save oneself a lot of research because knowledge has been compiled and made available so that conclusions can be drawn from it (expert systems).

Let me put the question differently: what is useful? A student told me she was going to use Chat-GPT (an AI chatbot that creates texts, for example on a particular area of knowledge) for her bachelor thesis. I asked, 'not inspired to find your own insights?' – She replied, 'In my bachelor thesis, I only present what has been written hundreds of times before.'

The word 'science' may seem to suggest the acquisition of knowledge, but that in itself is more like studying than conducting scientific research. Science is not a squirrel that simply collects nuts; science means striving for new insights: perceiving and

interpreting phenomena in a new way and deriving something new from them, or even identifying new phenomena, formulating questions and pursuing them or refuting hypotheses.

What does 'what has been written hundreds of times before' mean? Millions, even billions of people have learned to walk, speak, write and do arithmetic – there is no way around it however many times it has been done by others. They are skills I have to acquire myself. That is not something others can do for me. However, I can learn from the experiences of others if they guide me in acquiring skills in some way or other, but I need to practise these skills myself, whether they are in sports, eurythmy or learning to play a musical instrument.

**Weighing up and deciding**

All that is true for 'knowledge' too. Knowledge can only be used responsibly when I have learned how to use it. I may know a lot but do little with my knowledge. (On another level that is the danger with some academics whose area of expertise may not be relevant to others, which does not mean that it has no relevance).

Dealing with the algorithms of artificial intelligence also requires skills, even if their application seems to be dead easy. For example: When putting together a text on the production of Richard Wagner's Parsifal at the Goetheanum, the AI text generator claims that Daniel Barenboim was the musical director. That is not true. AI cannot judge situations and make decisions. It does not weigh up what is true or not but predicts probabilities. That presupposes predictability.

After leaving school I programmed a simple poetry generator. It was able to generate poem after poem, within the limitations of its verbal repertoire. As an IT student I programmed a simple dialogue generator (for insiders: based on Joseph Weizenbaum's Eliza). The algorithm wasn't intelligent, but the communicative structures were psychologically well chosen. Just as magic tricks are.

**Unexpected, intuitive**

The number of all possible outcomes of sys-



tematic combinations (all possible variants are generated) are limited by rules, calculable probabilities and possibly by a random generator. This is an entirely virtual, mechanical process. We also follow rules when we make judgments. But as far as I know, humans do not usually first generate lots of possible variants and then select one or more of them. Something else is going on.

We could say that poets and writers create new, original texts by combining letters. An AI system can do that too – but it simulates a creative act rather than perform it. Simulation is based on rules and an existing body of knowledge that are dynamically supplemented in learning systems. Original creative acts include a moment where something is created from nothing, something one cannot expect from the material at hand, intuitively, possibly by breaking existing rules.

What is needed in addition to the classic acquisition of skills mentioned earlier, is the ability to distinguish simulations from actual events. (A real apple is refreshing, a virtual one isn't.) Otherwise, the world becomes a magic trick or a random selection from a predictable number of combinations (variants), as the case may be. For me, there is more to the world. Maybe because I'm human? | *Sebastian Jüngel*

**Hinweis** Die Zeitschrift «Stil» Herbst 2023 behandelt das Thema «Herausforderung Technik».

**Image** Learning to play a musical instrument, photo: Julio Ronaldo / Unsplash