



Youth Section  
at the Goetheanum

# COURAGE TO TRUST

a portrait of the Youth Section work

January 2019 - January 2021

*"Courage! We learn it fast  
or not at all.(...)  
Courage to say to ourselves:  
the life of the world  
must be constructed anew  
from its foundations."*

*Rudolf Steiner,  
20 July 1924*

A large crowd of people, mostly young adults, is walking away from the camera down a path lined with trees. The path is paved and the trees have green and some yellowing leaves. A white van is visible in the distance at the head of the crowd. The people are wearing various casual clothing like jackets, hoodies, and backpacks.

Photo: International Students' Conference 2019  
at the Goeheanum. Cultural walk through Basel  
with 650 high school students from 35 countries.



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# *Introduction*





## Introduction:

*“Trust is the seed from which faith, hope and love grow, and the fruit that ripens from them. It is the simplest and therefore the most difficult thing.”<sup>1</sup>*

It is a great pleasure to present to the members of the Anthroposophical Society and to our friends and sponsors, this overview of the last period – January 2019 until January 2021 – of work in the Youth Section. You will be able to see how many different initiatives, working fields and projects were developed out of the aim to enable young people to become active, to exchange, and research to find ways of interacting with themselves, their own questions, the earthly challenges and larger societal issues.

In the Youth Section — or Section for the Spiritual Striving of Youth — as part of the School for Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum, we offer space for the questions, endeavours and aims of the younger generations. The gatherings’ themes, the initiatives and the questions that groups from all around the world work with, are chosen and defined by young people. They make visible the search to find the language and the connection between the inner striving and the needs and questions that come to meet them from the outside world through encounters, persons and circumstances.

The life in the Youth Section has been intense, full of deeds and ideas, realizations, questions and challenges. Looking back to the work that has been done, a main remark is expressed by a group of very young people in their chosen theme for the upcoming Students’ International Students Conference in April 2021: Trust. Trust as a central experience. So central during this biographical moment of youth, to search and find their own individual path in relation to the others and the world. Trust as an essential need to realise and enable that task which is given to each one to accomplish.

Trust could be experienced in so many moments at the Youth Section: it was not only a need but a lived reality in gatherings, initiatives, projects. This was possible thanks to the work and dedication of the wonderful team working at the Goetheanum, thanks to many young people from all around the world, to the sponsors and to the members of the Anthroposophical Society.

With much gratitude to you all,  
Constanza Kaliks

September 2020

1. Franz Rosenzweig, Der Stern der Erlösung. Suhrkamp: Frankfurt am Main, 1988, S. 472. „Vertrauen ist der Same daraus Glaube, Hoffnung und Liebe wachsen, und die Frucht, die aus ihnen reift. Es ist das Allereinfachste und grade darum das Schwerste.“



Photo: Youth Section Worldwide co-workers  
gathering June 2019. Social eurythmy.



## Our Vision

“Courage! We learn it fast or not at all. Courage to say to ourselves: the life of the world must be constructed anew from its foundations.” Rudolf Steiner, 1924

The Youth Section at the Goetheanum – School of Spiritual Science was founded in 1924 to provide a space for young people to explore their strivings, questions and initiatives. The Youth Section’s aim is to contribute to the transformation of the world into a place that values and supports the unfolding of every young person’s potential and creativity, in their full strength and brilliance.

As young people we have an awareness of the challenges of our time. We can find possibilities for understanding, connecting and taking actions that may lead to the fostering of an ethical, peace-deepening society and healthy relationship with the Earth. Anthroposophy allows us to deepen and widen a search for the understanding of what it means to be human today. With this in mind, the Youth Section supports and nurtures each young person involved to develop their inner initiative, acting out of it in cooperation with peers and society to consciously shape and transform the world.

In addition to providing opportunities for human encounters, learning and intercultural exchanges, the Youth Section also works on youth-led research activities. These give young people the possibility to engage with contemporary social questions that matter to them and their peers. Through this, a space is offered to reflect on the impact that human ideals and actions have in the shaping of the

future. The insights obtained inform our other activities, allowing us to continuously enrich our work as a young generation.

The Youth Section organises conferences, research activities, study groups, informal educational opportunities and any other experience that young people today feel worth developing to make their future visions a reality. From intimate gatherings with small groups, to conferences of over 700 participants, we try to carefully listen to every need and offer the best possible space to foster these encounters.

– Andrea de la Cruz, Ioana Viscrianu, Johannes Kronenberg, Constanza Kaliks

*‘Changes have to be made with a deep desire for good or for making things better, not for the result of our action.’*

*Male, age 28 from Jordan. Testimony as participant in the project (Re)search in times of COVID-19)*

## Our team

The Youth Section is currently led by Dr. Constanza Kaliks. The team is made up of young people aged 24 – 31 from a variety of cultural and professional backgrounds. All of us are passionate to support young people like ourselves who are actively questioning the role that our generations play in the shaping of reality today and for the future.

### **Dr. Constanza Kaliks (Leader since 2012)**

Born in 1967 in Chile, Constanza Kaliks grew up and lived mostly in Brazil. Constanza completed her studies of Mathematics in São Paulo, and went on to be mathematics teacher at the Escola Rudolf Steiner in São Paulo for 19 years. There she was also a teacher in the Waldorf Teacher training. Constanza has a Ph.D. in Education with a thesis on Nicolaus of Cues. She is married with two children. She has been the Leader of the Youth Section at the Goetheanum since 2012 and is part of the board of the General Anthroposophical Society since 2015.

### **Ioana Viscrianu (Co-worker since 2015)**

Born in 1988 in Romania, Ioana completed her studies in International Business (B.Sc.) and Psychology (B.Sc.) in Bukarest. With 23 she moved to Germany and continued her studies at Alanus University in the field of Biography Research with Prof. Dr. Heinritz. At the moment she is doing her specialization in Clinical Psychology (MSc.) She worked in the field of intercultural child and youth welfare and in different organizations with children and youth in the field of mental health, as well as in the field of curative education and social therapy. Ioana is part of the Youth Section team since 2015 and co-worker of the General Anthroposophical Section since 2020.

### **Andrea De La Cruz (Co-worker since 2017)**

Andrea de la Cruz was born in Madrid, Spain. She attended Waldorf School, has two art degrees from UK universities and a certificate in Waldorf education. Since 2011 she works in youth-oriented projects as a researcher, event organiser and facilitator, and offering mentorship opportunities for young people. She is interested in engaging actively with initiatives that work out of a genuine interest in exploring the essential questions of humanity, the nature of relationships and the renewal of individual human impulse in service of the future.

### **Johannes Kronenberg (Co-worker since April 2019)**

Johannes grew up with his family living and working in Camphill Christophorus, Bosch en Duin in the The Netherlands. He conducted a Bachelor of Arts at University of the Arts in Arnhem and a Master of Science in sustainability and leadership in Sweden. He has been involved in strategic sustainability work, developing education programs on bachelor level, master level and informal learning initiatives, artistic research and the Youth Section of the Netherlands since 2014. In spring 2019 Johannes joined our team.

### **Rocio Ferrera (Scholarship October 2019 - August 2020)**

Rocio Ferrera grew up in Buenos Aires, where she went to a Waldorf school. She did her studies in music school in order to become a music school teacher. Later Rocio attended the Waldorf Teacher Studies and became a Waldorf primary school teacher. Next to this she also participated in programs for social development with art and social transformation. In 2015 she joined the Youth Section in Buenos Aires, as a place to learn and fight for a better world as she says herself. Together with friends they organised annual conferences, courses and study

groups. Rocio took part of the Youth Section in the scholarship position we offer.

### **Till Julien Höffner & Ronja Eis (Co-workers since 2018)**

Till and Ronja grew up in Germany, North-Rhine Westfalia where they visited the Freie Waldorfschule Dinslaken. Both of them were actively engaged in the students' council in High School. In 2015 they were elected to be board members at the WaldorfSV. As parts of the WaldorfSV they organised several national students' conferences. This eventually led them to the Youth Section where they helped organising the international students conference "What connects us?" in 2015, the "Am I Faust?" conference in 2016 as well as the "Challenges of our time – seeking for a global consciousness by facing myself" conference in 2017. After they graduated from school in 2017, they both travelled in Latin America for a year. In October 2018 they started working at the Youth Section at the Goetheanum, where they are currently organising the international students conference "COURAGE". Since September 2020 Ronja and Till joined our team again in combination with their current online studies at the University of London.

### **Vincent Eichholz (Co-worker October 2020- May 2021)**

Vincent Eichholz grew up in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany where he made his Abitur at the Freie Waldorfschule Flensburg. In 2017 he was elected to be a board member at the WaldorfSV. During his two years in the WaldorfSV, he helped to organize several national students' conferences. In 2019 he became part of the team for the international students' conference "COURAGE". After the #ISC19 Tim and Vincent decided with the Youthsection to organize the #ISC21 with the topic "TRUST". From October 2020 on they are part of the Youthsection Team.

### **Tim Bauer (Co-worker October 2020- May 2021)**

Tim Bauer grew up in a small village in Bavaria, Germany. Until his graduation in 2019, he visited the close-by 'Freie Waldorfschule Wendelstein' until his graduation in 2019. He was active in his school's students' council and got elected to be a board member of the WaldorfSV between April 2016 and May 2018. Together with the board of WaldorfSV Tim organized multiple national students' conferences and also helped organize the YouthSections' international students' conferences in 2017 and 2019. After the ISC19 Vincent and he decided to main organize the ISC21 "TRUST". Since October 2020 he lives in Dornach, Switzerland.





**Team constellation 2019 - 2020**  
**left to right:** Johannes Kronenberg (NL),  
Ioana Viscrianu (RO), Andrea de la Cruz (ESP),  
Constanza Kaliks (BR) and Rocio Ferrera (ARG).



**Team constellation 2020 - 2021**

**left to right:** Johannes Kronenberg (NL), Vincent Eichholz (DE), Tim Bauer (DE), Till Höffner (DE), Constanza Kaliks (BRA), Ioana Viscrianu (RO), Ronja Eis (DE), Andrea de la Cruz (ESP).





## Aspects of dealing with the Corona Crisis<sup>2</sup> by Constanza Kaliks, April 2020

"[...] we have lost that which is not directly related to the two senses of hearing and seeing: that which is related to the sense of touch, the sense of smell and the sense of taste. And we also lose slowness, the time of creative germination and assimilation, the time of affection and love, the time of nature [...] We lose weight, i.e. the dimension of physicality and conceptual density, we lose the ability to feel the temperature, i.e. the warmth of others and of events, we lose the idea of the invisible and of mystery, which refers us to the other side of what is accessible and available to us, and we even lose the ability to listen, which is not easily compatible with speed and acceleration. [...]"<sup>3</sup>

The measures that have been introduced worldwide to deal with Covid-19 have drastic effects on the lives of the people concerned. At every age the consequences of the measures have a more or less specific impact. In many cases, especially for young people, these measures can mean an interruption in the flow of their biography, an uncertain disruption of planned and often long-prepared and hoped-for steps through an

2. The text was written in the context of viewpoints from different sections of the School of Spiritual Science as contributions to questions in dealing with the corona-crisis in April 2020. Wittich, J.; Hurter, U. Perspectives and Initiatives in the Times of Corona Virus. Rudolf Steiner Press, 2020.

3. Prof. Dr. João Maria André, Telépolis, Distance, Speed and Resonance in <https://www.publico.pt/2020/04/26/local/opinioao/telepolis-distancia-velocidade-ressonancia-1913721>. "The great challenge we face today, in pandemic and post-pandemic times, is to restore spaces, atmospheres and resonance axes so that we can say: When the world or the other speaks, I listen to them and resonate with them; when I speak, the world and others listen to me and we can resonate together. (Translation C. Kaliks).

apprenticeship, a course of study or the next concrete project, and concern about how and whether this flow can be resumed. In everyday life, these measures also mean isolation in a moment of biography in which being with one another is actually fundamental to the experience of getting to know oneself and the world. And in many places, the circumstances bring with them a questioning of the existential basis: the unemployment of young people, already a major concern for many years<sup>4</sup>, is intensifying and is now increasingly becoming an inescapable challenge.

A central aspect of young people's experience is learning to orient oneself through an encounter with reality. Such an experience of reality is based on various aspects: in the current situation of social isolation, these aspects are perceived in a more or less precarious form as a reality on their own and are being questioned; the one way of assuring reality is connected with the reference to one's own corporeality. Due to the current situation, this is sometimes drastically limited, which means a considerable cut, especially in early youth. The thought of Professor João Maria André quoted above points to this dimension of loss, which occurs - not only for young people - when the sensorial experience is one-sidedly reduced and the density and warmth, which make the human connection to the world possible through the senses, can no longer be experienced.

4. United Nations World Youth Report: Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2019/02/conclusions-wyr-2030agenda.pdf>. "Although the global economy has started to recover, the youth employment situation has worsened in recent years. There are presently 71 million young people unemployed, and many millions more are in precarious or informal employment. ILO estimates that 156 million youth in low- and middle-income countries are living in poverty even though they are employed.", p. 114.

The comprehensibility of the world, the possibility to penetrate the experiences more and more and to understand them anew and expandingly, is fundamental for the formation of the confidence to be able to orient oneself in and to the reality of the circumstances. This comprehensibility is currently very difficult to achieve and socially, it is mainly a matter of either holding on to positions from which everything is interpreted, or of great scepticism and discouragement.

The exchange, the reassurance of a reference to reality through dialogue with others who are going through similar experiences, reciprocity and conversation are basic elements for experiencing reality. This exchange is currently made more difficult by isolation. "I miss human encounters where you learn with others" a young woman recently wrote to me from her isolation in a large city in South America.

"The presence of others, who see what we see and hear what we hear, assures us of the reality of the world and of ourselves," writes Hannah Arendt, and concludes that the modern intensification of a private inner life and the decay of the public sphere, which has infinitely increased subjective feeling and private sensation, "could only come about at the expense of trust in the reality of the world and of the people who appear in it."<sup>5</sup> The presence of others, made more difficult by isolation - that is, absence as a threat to an affirmation of reality - turns out to be a serious consequence.

Therefore, the current situation affects the plight of young people not only marginally but existentially, as their orientation and

5. Arendt, Hannah. Vita activa. München: Piper, 1981, p. 63.

approach to reality becomes more difficult. Possibilities for an orientation towards reality - through a connection to sensual experience, through being able to comprehend over and over again and through dialogue with others for the finding of oneself in a relationship to reality - are fundamental for the formation of trust. If these avenues are excluded, mistrust currently emerging in many places, which is even extending as far as basic insecurity and fear, will result. Trust is like an investment that each person hands to other people, to the world, to an unpredictable future, so that they can form a connection to what is coming into being. To maintain a connection to this trust and to be able to transform it from an existing trust into a reflective, conscious trust thus appears in the present conditions as a long-range task.

An independent search for meaning is one of the great achievements of a young person - it is, in a way, a sign of the transition from a childhood consciousness to that of a young adult. In an interview with the Jewish theologian Pinchas Lapide, Viktor Frankl says that education should be concerned not only with the imparting of knowledge but also with the sharpening of conscience, so that a young person becomes 'sufficiently attentive to 'hearing' the possibilities of meaning and support inherent in every single situation'. In the course of the conversation Lapide stated that such a sense of meaning both calls for action and has faith in the future. In this sense, the possibility of being able to place oneself in a meaningful way and being able to find meaning in the present situation is a central learning experience for young people, which leads to a connection with future perspectives.



From such an engaged connection with the future with all its open and nascent character, the given trust can be transformed into a conscious and aware trust. In these times of existential uncertainty, a ground for the relationship to reality can be formed in this way through one's own activity.

This raises the question of what young people can do for gaining trust and the ongoing creation of meaningfulness. Generalized indications of what they can do in their particular circumstances are not realistic at this point. Nevertheless, I would like to draw attention to three aspects which could possibly be taken up actively and autonomously:

- Giving meaning through a creative, self-generated, self-determined, daily or at least repeated activity - e.g. in the conscious use and structuring of time.

- Becoming actively aware of others and turning towards them - beyond one's own needs.

- Actively cultivating the connection with others and also seeking, as far as it is possible, personal encounters - besides those through media.

In this sense, the Youth Section of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum is intensively engaged with the current situation and out of this engagement, a project was created. Young people around the world are invited to participate in a process and to think ahead to the time after the pandemic and - in the words of a young co-worker – 'to live with the question of such a future in a way that it allows us to develop a personal

contribution that becomes a reality'<sup>6</sup>. Through written and artistic answers to questions and regular exchanges, the aim is to 'achieve a visibility of young people's motives and, possibly, create a substance that will carry through these times.'

The intention of this project is to contribute to the creation of a space in which trust can develop from the conviviality thus created. Trust as a basis for life with others: '[...] if human individuality is to meet human individuality in morality, then, above all, an atmosphere of trust will be necessary.'<sup>7</sup> If it succeeds, it may be possible to experience what Ernst Bloch describes in his Principle of Hope as the not-yet-conscious, that which comes from the future and which in a foreboding form makes itself felt in the present as 'morning breeze'<sup>8</sup> - even in the present crisis.

*'It is so important right now, in our present situation, that we do not allow ourselves to be petrified (...) "It is up to us to all of us to place and direct the energy into right impulses*

*Female, age 16 from Germany. Testimony as participant in the project (Re)search in times of COVID-19)*

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6. For information and to participate in the project: ioana@youthsection.org

7. Steiner, Rudolf. Geistige Wirkenskräfte im Zusammenleben von alter und junger Generation – Pädagogischer Jugendkurs. GA. 217. Dornach: Rudolf Steiner Verlag, 1988, p. 95. (Lecture Series Younger Generation, (GA 217) 8.10.1922, Lecture VI)

8. Bloch, Ernst. Das Prinzip Hoffnung. 10. Auflage, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2016, S. 131, 132. (Bloch, Ernst. The Principle of Hope)



Photo: spring 2020 at Dorneckstrasse,  
facing the Goetheanum.





## **“Youth at the Crossroads: how we deal with crises will shape the world” by Andrea de la Cruz. November 2020.**

### **Observations from the project (Re)Search: The Spiritual Striving of Youth, Shaping Our Reality by the Youth Section at the Goetheanum.**

*‘A crisis wakes us up. Where was our attention before the pandemic? What was hidden that now is externalised? The basic needs, the innermost sense of the human beings, are now visible, urgent. And do we wake up? Why do we wake up?’* (Re)Search participant, Brazil, 2020

(Re)search<sup>1</sup> is an endeavor to elucidate meaning out of young people’s own initiative. What meaning do we find – or give – to the happenings in which we see ourselves woven into, when we contemplate and question the self and the world? In (Re)search, we attempt to live with questions and to find their answers and yet, the answers we have encountered so far have had much to do with questioning<sup>2</sup>. It seems, that our answers always open up new doors to new questions, as if we were “peeling layers off a rose, coming to its center and wondering at the mystery of the bud, which has produced such beauty – but how?”<sup>3</sup>. More and more questions arise, all interconnected, deeper at each level, clarifying the individual direction

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1 See chapter on Research in this publication.

2 “We met with a group of people to share questions and live with questions that we have. These can be any questions it doesn’t matter what kind of questions they are, as long as you go through that experience of living with them. The closer that the questions come to your reality, the more existential they become.” (Re)Search participant, 22, Germany [2020].

3 Quote by (Re)Search participant, 22, New Zealand [2018].

and destiny of the one who asks<sup>4</sup>.

By thinking about what we ask, how we ask it and the meaning we find in the process of questioning, we unveil knowledge about ourselves. This in turn, “empowers” our participation in the world. “Know yourself in knowing the world” is the maxim of the project – with the view that, when we know ourselves, we are better able to grasp our motives of action, gradually becoming freer.

Since the Youth Section at the Goetheanum began (Re)Search in 2017, youth from around the world has seen some astonishing events for humanity, nature and the societies we live in. The Fridays for Future Movement, the debates about climate change and numerous wildfires across the world; the surge of the fourth wave feminism and LGBT+ movements; the increase in political polarization in, at least, western societies; the COVID-19 crisis and the events sparked by George Floyd’s murder in the US. These, amongst others, will possibly become landmarks of our epoch and young adulthood. How we participate in these, will shape future reality.

Already before most of these powerful milestones began to emerge, we were preoccupied with the life-stories of youth around the world, and in particular, with how they were leading themselves into the future by navigating life’s challenges and uncertainties. Within this special landscape that we are living in, we asked ourselves: what are the inner transformations that we

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4 “What is this project for? To give a direction to my life. Being a part of this research helped me be clearer in my mind. I was already doing something, recycling, helping others, but by focusing on the question it became clearer for me what I was doing and why I was doing it. I asked myself “is this ok? Is this something that I want? What happens next if I act like this?” I don’t necessarily do it for the outcome, but I will do it because I believe in it. Being a part of this research helped me to focus, to see clearly the directions of my actions, of my life.” (Participant (Re)Search in Times of COVID-19, 35, Italy [2020]

have been going through in our youth? How have we experienced our own aims and challenges? What meaning have we given to, or found in, the events that we have lived through? What has occupied our souls in these times of unrest and possibility? To confront these questions, we collected long life-spanning stories in interviews, short answers in written form, diaries and journals created over months – all kinds of reflections from hundreds of young people in the past three years.

In the first publication of this study (2019)<sup>5</sup> we already highlighted how youth lived consciously through processes of becoming. Everything - they told us - is in transformation, in flux, including one’s own self<sup>6</sup>. Young people who understand this, lead their lives knowing that we must keep ourselves on our feet, ready to play balance games – as if we were walking on a tight rope! Reality demands of us to be awake, to be conscious, to not become petrified<sup>7</sup>, to never stop moving.

*“Life was taken by an uncertain crisis, which affected all the uncertainties already existing in humanity. Suddenly, our collective experience was to experience vulnerability, and this requires courage”.*

Whereas before 2020 this was an idea that sustained young people through moments of difficulty or discomfort, this year brought the reality of dealing with crises, change and

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5 Available for free at [www.youthsection.org/research](http://www.youthsection.org/research). A new publication is scheduled to appear in late 2021.

6 “Everything is constant, you see what I mean? It’s all moving, it’s all constantly moving and that’s the constant.” (Re)Search participant, 29, United Kingdom [2018]. “We can’t see the past or future, it’s just a continuum, it’s the movement which I can feel, it’s alive.” (Re)Search participant, 23, Germany [2019].

7 “It is so important right now, in our present situation, that we do not allow ourselves to be petrified!” (Re)Search in times of COVID-19 participant, 16, Germany [2020].

uncertainty to a whole new level. We may have been able to ignore previous challenges, but COVID-19 has not been optional, we have to confront it. This new challenge irrupts in our lives, like a force breaking through every border and penetrating all the way through to the most intimate corner of our being. It has brought to us the experience of having to confront, in a karmic way, the question of freedom. As a participant put it “COVID is not about the world, it’s about how we deal with our own fears and demons. It’s about us.”

*“Life was taken by an uncertain crisis, which affected all the uncertainties already existing in humanity. Suddenly, our collective experience was to experience vulnerability, and this requires courage”.*<sup>8</sup>

Whereas before 2020 this was an idea that sustained young people through moments of difficulty or discomfort, this year brought the reality of dealing with crises, change and uncertainty to a whole new level. We may have been able to ignore previous challenges, but COVID-19 has not been optional, we have to confront it. This new challenge irrupts in our lives, like a force breaking through every border and penetrating all the way through to the most intimate corner of our being. It has brought to us the experience of having to confront, in a karmic way, the question of freedom<sup>9</sup>. As a participant put it “COVID is not about the world, it’s about how we deal with our own fears and demons. It’s about us.”<sup>10</sup>

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8 Quote by (Re)Search participant, Brazil [2020].

9 “Probably for many of us, for the first time in a long time, there was a real sense of freedom. The assignment was to stay at home and take care of one’s children. Any unnecessary consumption in the “outside world” was to be avoided, contacts were to be kept to a minimum. Isn’t it strange that we speak of freedom even though it was in some way restricting?” (Re)Search participant, 17, Germany [2020]

10 Quote by (Re)Search in times of COVID-19 participant, 27, Germany [2020].

When we look at the narrative across three years of research processes, we can see how questions of morality, ethics and freedom become more and more pertinent as time goes on. In late 2017 and 2018, we were mainly encountering individualised testimonies, where young people were mostly talking about individual experiences, longings and challenges that concerned them personally. We observed three clear areas that appeared across individual answers and were common to most; areas which youth wished to develop in the future. The first had to do with the capacity to be authentic to oneself; the second, establishing meaningful bonds with self, others and world. Thirdly, a search for Understanding, as one participant put it “with capital “U”.<sup>11</sup>

Later in 2019, a few common focus points began to emerge, with the most popular themes being the environmental crisis and the experience of polarisation in society, or, as a participant called it, the experience of “living in bubbles”<sup>12</sup>. The latter, makes it tremendously hard for youth to distinguish truth from error and what to believe in and who to trust is not clear anymore. Up until 2020, it was clear that our youthful souls were becoming more and more preoccupied with similar problems, but how we dealt with them remained different according to each one of us. This is why we began to study the motivations behind actions, asking ourselves about the source from which young people draw the motives for their deeds. In this year, when we were asked to confront the same crisis, it was even easier to distinguish the different beliefs and thoughts inspiring our activity.

At this crossroads, how has the spiritual striving of youth transformed? It has become

11 Quote by (Re)Search participant, 26, United States [2017]  
12 Quote by (Re)search participant, 26, Austria [2019].

intensified. And the intensification occurs in those areas of life that preoccupy youth the most: the shaping of meaningful relationships and how to connect with self and others;<sup>13</sup> the construction of one’s own identity and self-knowledge; and questions of morality and how to will the good<sup>14</sup>. If there is one thing to highlight about us and the changes that have taken place for us, is how the question of ethics and morality, which before was sporadically making an appearance in our discourses, has become a key focus point: the question is now what is good and how do I find it.

*“How do you recognise a good deed? Well, in my perspective a good deed is in the moment when the action is made with love, not just because it’s moral to do this, or because others are used to doing it. You do that action because you feel that the other person will receive your support and your love, it needs to be true. It needs to be made with love.”*<sup>15</sup>

*“I don’t know if there is one thing that a person can give and that will be deemed beneficial by the rest of the world; for what one welcomes like water in the desert, another might reject as an insult. In any case, what I can give is my time when it feels like we are running out of it. And as insignificant as one person’s time can be, it’s what I can commit to and what I wish we all had more of*

13 “COVID-19 made us totally change the way we were used to living, a disease that forces us to think about each other, that depends on the collaboration of all, so that all this passes as soon as possible” (Re)Search participant, age unknown, Brazil [2020]. “We are part of something bigger than us, bigger than any personal story and we share much more with nature and other species than with computers or anger and fear.” (Re)Search in Times of COVID Participant, 18, Romania [2020].

14 “It is up to us to all of us to place and direct the energy into right impulses” (Re)Search in Times of COVID Participant, 16, Germany [2020].

15 (Re)Search in Times of COVID Participant, 19, Romania, [2020].

*in a conscious dimension”*.<sup>16</sup>

We are finally at the turning point where, unable to escape the fact that we will be defined by how we deal with crises, the question “what do we long to see in the self and the world?” has become more important than ever. Knowing what one wants and grasping one’s own motives, or failing to do so will determine whether we merely react to the circumstances or respond to circumstances<sup>17</sup>. And it seems that more and more, young people are awakening to a new idea: it is not about making changes, but about willing the good:

*“I want to make good deeds, not changes, because changes can also be bad. When I’m thinking about change, it’s something vague, something I don’t know where to start from. However, when I imagine good deeds, I already have a lot of principles to start from, it’s much more effective and real”*.<sup>18</sup>

In these present times, this Michaelic age that we have come to live in, we are reminded of the need to awaken our enthusiasm and courage in the face of uncertainty. Inspired by Rudolf Steiner’s words<sup>19</sup>, let us develop two powerful tools to help us along the journey, and which we must learn to navigate with full awareness: the first tool is love for the good, the second is trust in one another. Although perhaps it has never been more challenging to embrace another’s reality due to the

16 Quote by (Re)Search in times of COVID-19 participant, 27, Spain [2020].

17 By reaction we mean an action caused by an external triggering event; by response we mean a free action, that is, an action that springs from the I in the given situation.  
18 Quote by (Re)Search in times of COVID-19 participant, 17, Romania [2020].

19 Cf. Steiner, R. GA217 “The Young Generation”, Lecture VI. In this lecture, Rudolf Steiner spoke to the young teachers about the importance of a type of pedagogy that would encourage the next generation to find inwardly a love for what is ethical and trust for one another.

separation that is being enforced, let us not lose trust in the others who are also trading their own path, alongside ours. Perhaps, to (Re)Search can help us do this, in some way:

*“The thing that I would say to someone about the research project is that here we could preserve our own personality and still connect with the others, connect with the differences.”*<sup>20</sup>

20 (Re)Search in times of COVID-19 participant, 19, Romania [2020]



# *Events*



Photo: spring 2019 during 'Courage'  
International Students' Conference 2019.



## Events

**Worldwide and at the Goetheanum in Switzerland, we organise conferences, gatherings, workshops, colloquiums, study groups and other events for groups from 10 up to 700 participants. Initiated by and for young people. Down below you will find an overview of the events we organised in 2019, 2020 and an overview of the coming events in 2021.**

### February Days 2019 — 'Art and Spirit: the role of the arts today' by Andrea de la Cruz

The 2019 February Days theme was "Art and Spirit: the role of the arts today". The motivation behind choosing this topic was to enable a discussion about ideas of art as a bridge in the path of knowledge between science and spirituality. The event brought together artists and experts of different disciplines, a variety of cultural backgrounds and even ages, to discuss questions such as why does the artist seek knowledge of reality out of an observation of nature and its revelation of the supra-sensible? What is the meaning of art in a spiritual path such as Anthroposophy? and of course, what is the role of art for our contemporary societies which are seeking and striving in new ways towards the spirit? As the programme began to take shape and the collaborators brought their own impulses, these questions sharpened and took new magnitudes.

*"From my personal experience, it was impressive to see deep questions arising among the participants, such as inquiries regarding the strive for spirituality and the urge for creating art in a materialistic culture that many times tends to discourage our*

*creative thinking. It was very motivating hearing from and speaking with people from different backgrounds and different parts of the world who share similar concerns as me. It was refreshing to realize that art can not only be a tool for self-development, but it can also act in a wider extension and lead to a huge transformation as a whole community".*  
Mayumi Matsumiya, Brazil.

The conference opened with the "Goetheanum Experience", a tour-session on the landscapes, architecture and art works housed in the Goetheanum. The leading question was "where can we discern spirit in matter?". Marianne Schubert (Visual Arts Section, Goetheanum) led an observation of the main and surrounding buildings, shedding light on the thoughtful processes that were involved in Rudolf Steiner's designs. We were also able to see models of the first Goetheanum and compare its shapes with the current building, allowing our own thinking activity to wonder about why two such different forms for the same spiritual school. This was a great example of how truly spirit and matter are not separated from each other, but in a constant creative dialogue, shaping and influencing each other and us in the process.

Benno Otter (Garden Park, Goetheanum) guided us through an experience that opened our eyes and hearts to the designs of the garden and its pathways leading to different resting and contemplative spots around the main building; all of which form the unity of the campus for the School of Spiritual Science. Here, it was possible to think of harmony as a central element of landscaping as art. Concepts such as balance between the distances and the introduction of foreign elements that are imbued with meaning, often can arise for the visitor of the Goetheanum's gardens.

With Caroline Chanter (Rudolf Steiner Painting School) participants observed and sketched The Representative of Humanity's wooden sculpture, and entered deep discussion about the beings represented in the art piece, their qualities and possible tasks: what can we learn about the ahrimanic and luciferic forces, and the human archetype, all of which live in each of us, by looking at the detailed work carried out by the artists? A final group worked with Christian Hitsch, who was responsible for the great painting and remodelling project of the Main Hall. He drew all their attention towards the painted ceiling, glass windows and sculpted columns that surround the main stage at the Goetheanum. Two hours was simply not enough to answer all the questions about the incredible details and narratives that are waiting to be discovered in every corner of what could be described as the Goetheanum's heart.

During Walter Kugler's lecture, we were impressed by early drawings of a young Steiner who clearly possessed a natural talent for drawing and painting. A thought-provoking lecture by Zvi Szir (Neue Kunstschnule Basel), asked the audience to confront full-front the question: what is truly art? Luciana Pinheiro, author of "As cores da Alma", one of the latest biographies of the painter Hilma af Klimt, delighted us with a moving lecture about the work of the artist and her connection to Anthroposophy. It was touching to learn about the precursor of abstract painting through her biography, learning how she herself as a young person also struggled with some of the questions we still strive to find answers to today, and how this led her to form alliances and friendships that defined her whole career as an artist in the early 20th century.

The wealth of knowledge presented at lectures was complemented by the offer of artistic workshops in painting, speech,

eurythmy, theatre and humour that helped us bring ideas and new learnings into practice. In the evenings we were delighted by beautiful performances from young artists; in the afternoons, we deepened our own questions in groups and left the conference with one very particular and powerful thought: is the search for the spirit what ultimately draws us to art?



## Worldwide Class Lesson Gathering — Oriago by Ioana Viscrianu

### Origin and future glances

After the Youth Sections Gathering Worldwide 2017 in The Hague (NL), a big part of the youth workers travelled to the Meditation Worldwide conference in the Goetheanum. During the pre-conference for members of the School of Spiritual Science, we gathered with a small group of young members. We discovered our shared longing to meet, share and exchange about the class content and how to deal with it as young individuals in becoming. Especially in a more and more challenging world. What is the world asking from us as young members? How to be a representative of Anthroposophy? How to deepen the Class content and connect it with our current time?

Out of our conversations arose the will to step into the initiative started by Jörgen Smit of annual gatherings for young members.

Our wish and intention since, is to meet annually for a period of seven years. Every year we work with three of the Class Lessons and deepen our connection and commitment. In 2018 we gathered in Dornach. 2019 we met in Oriago, Italy. In 2020 we planned to meet in Dornach again, however due the Corona pandemic we needed to postpone for another year. Therefore in 2021 we aim to meet in the Goetheanum, although it's still unclear if we can do so. In 2024 we will have our last conference, when the School for Spiritual Science will exist for 100 years.

### Team

Our team started to work under the wonderful guidance of Constanza Kaliks with Johannes Kronenberg (NL), Janna de Vries (NL), Carmen

Delia Tromp (NL), Ioana Viscrianu (CH), Milena Kowarik (CH) and Roi Schmelzer (IL). In 2019 Gaia Termopoli (IT) joined and in 2020 Frank Agrama (US) will join. Paul Zebhauser (CH) was of great help during several moments at the start of our work. This makes our initiative a shared effort from the Youth Sections of the Goetheanum, The Netherlands, Israel, Italy and the United States.

### Lectors / Class Holders

In 2018 we worked with Rik ten Cate (NL), Ron Dunselman (NL) and Constanza Kaliks (CH). Milou Dunselman (NL) shaped the artistic work. In 2019 we worked with Claudio Puglisi (IT), Elizabeth Wirsching (NO) and Constanza Kaliks (CH). In 2020 we will work with Martina Maria Sam (CH), Bart van Mechelen (BE) and Constanza Kaliks (CH).

In 2019, Elizabeth Wirsching, Constanza Kaliks and Claudio Puglisi accompanied the participants through a process to enable the deepening of the contents and ways of working with the topics of the first six class lessons. It was also possible to have open and inspirational conversations about the structure of the School of Spiritual Science and its tasks. The range of questions covered the general structure of the School of Spiritual Science and its sections, as well as specific questions about the connection of school membership with a section and the importance of such a decision.

Through social eurythmy, led by Daphnee Littman from Israel, we had the opportunity on the one hand to encounter each other as a group and on the other, to artistically experience contents that are present in class lessons and in the knowledge process.

### The Threshold - Shifting - Process of Knowledge

"The Threshold" as a necessary experience

and existing aspect of the process of knowledge accompanied us in our work, both in the various content-related talks, in social eurythmy and through geometric exercises led by Constanza Kaliks. The moment that follows the threshold experience - the shifting - was experienced through these exercises too. Every process of knowledge which is immanently participative, includes boundaries and turning points in the attempt to enter into dialogue with the realities encountered. The path of the class lessons shows how this dialogue can look in its diversity, and becomes a possibility to unfold forces that may support one's own being. Even if the process of knowledge on this path becomes more and more familiar, it is always necessary to go through it again and again.

### Love, Counterforces and Balance, Nature and "Sub-nature"

In the preparation for the meeting, the team dealt with topics that are deeply connected with the path of the class lessons and that contain very relevant questions of the present time. What is love and what role does it play on the path of knowledge? What role do the opposing forces play in this and what is their effectiveness? How is "sub-nature" expressed in relation to nature in the work "The Michael Letters" and where do we experience "sub-nature" today? How can we find an appropriate way of dealing with it? In short contributions, discussion groups and plenary sessions, these topics brought us to exchange personal experiences and gain new approaches for one's own questions. Thus, seeds for further work were sown!

### Commitment and future

In the final plenum it became visible how valuable it is nowadays to create spaces where an exchange can take place about the contents of the class lessons, the knowledge process as young class members and how

common ground can be experienced. Even new class members who were not at the previous year's gathering could immerse themselves in the contents in such a way, that it was not noticeable for them that they were there for the first time.

The wish for a continuation of this meeting is firm and the preparation group will soon start to work on the required next steps!



Photo: Cultural walk Basel during the International Students' Conference 2019. A special train was reserved to bring all the 650 participants from Dornach to Basel SBB.



## Courage - International Students' Conference 2019

### "Courage" by Constanza Kaliks

For the self-contemplation of a pedagogical movement celebrating its 100th birthday, it is important that the young preparation team of the international student conference 2019 chose the topic "Courage" as the basis for the encounters, the conversations, the perspectives into the future to be shaped together.

"Courage" includes the qualities of the heart and action: elements that could be experienced in the long time of preparation, in the thoughtful deliberations and decisions, and finally made it possible to welcome 650 participants from over 30 countries.

During the five days, the festivity and joy in the encounters, the attention and seriousness in the listening, in the conversations, in the perception of the contributions and the experience of what can generate and bring about courage were experienced. The courage to work for the environment and social change in the Egyptian desert landscape, to commit oneself to social change in the political arena, to stand for the uniqueness of each child, to develop one's own multi-layered identity, to take the diversity of society as a starting point for one's own actions. The courage of the other can become an inspiration to gain courage oneself.

Each day was accompanied by a question on the theme of courage: the questions inspired conversations and enabled statements to be made that were based on the wonderful - and

courage-giving! - wisdom of young people.

Courage could be experienced in many different ways: not least in the decision of many participants themselves to make the long journey to the Goetheanum: "Either all or none" was the maxim of a group of students from Chile who committed themselves with the school community to undertake the great – and very expensive – journey under the condition that it would be possible for everyone to participate. An example of courage and solidarity!

Organizational strength and a special train for the Goetheanum made it possible to travel with all the pupils to Basel and to create an open space for performances on the beautiful Münsterplatz above the Rhine. Music, dance, a common eurythmy Hallelujah in the large circle could be seen by the cathedral celebrating its 1000th birthday this year and the interested and astonished pedestrians. The expressiveness of a peaceful and creative gathering could be witnessed.

How much courage has been necessary through these 100 years for this school movement to become a worldwide reality! Parents, teachers, school co-workers - it has always been courageous decisions that have made an education possible in which the uniqueness of each and every human being can be acknowledged in their dignity.

To find the courage to re-found the world in its foundations – the kind of courage that Rudolf Steiner called young people to take up almost a century ago, was perceptible this spring in and around the entire Goetheanum. It generates hope and anticipates the future. A big thank you to all those who supported this project and made it possible!



## “A journey to yourself and to the world” by Ronja Eis

Courage - the theme of the conference has been unconsciously accompanying us both, Till and I, for a long time.

During our journey through Latin America (Sept. 2017 - July 2018), we felt neither courageous nor afraid but rather, we felt freely connected with the world and ourselves. Often however, we were confronted with a type of fear that we could sense in other people and our surroundings. I asked myself often, why is there so much fear of losing one's identity in a context of intercultural encounters? Whether it be losing “our western values” or “our eastern values” quite generally speaking, of course. How does the idea arise, that culture could be something threatening? How can we make something threatening out of it, when diversity is what makes us special and when it can teach us how to face the challenges of our time?

In conversation with our team, although asking different questions, we had found one common question which connected all of us: “Why? Why are there so many conflicts in this world? Why so much hatred and exclusion? Why so many right-wing parties in so many countries?” There is so much fear in this world. Fear of losing identity, of losing prosperity, of losing meaning and above all, of getting to know oneself and being confronted with one's own insecurities.

But a conference on fear? That would be little outcome-oriented. It was important to us to give courage and confidence, warmth and openness towards the world, oneself and others. So how could one face these fears, embrace them, let them go and what would one need for that?

Courage, trust, determination, a critical self-contemplation and a desire to act. To meet each other from person to person. As me and you in freedom and love. Or to put it in Rudolf Steiner's words:

*“To live in love towards our actions and to let live in the understanding of the other person's will is the fundamental maxim of free human beings.”*

Of course, these were not our thoughts one and a half years before the conference. Courage — that sounded to us like great heap of confidence and fighting for one's convictions. It meant “to dare to do something”. To dare to leave behind the old — something that we personally did not find so difficult, at least at that moment.

It took quite a while until we fully understood the depth of our theme and until we realised that it was present all around the world.

After our yearlong travel our journey was to be continued rather inside of us than in the outside world. We arrived in Dornach, a small village and a landscape only changed by the seasons. The same handful of people who we met daily and who slowly became friends. The conference now accompanied us daily and we spent many hours discussing about courage and writing down the content of our discussions. This went hand in hand with the process of asking foundations for support for our conference and promoting our event. As for this, we had to have a clearer picture of our topic and why it was so important that it would be worthwhile for participants to come on the one hand, and for foundations to support us in financing the conference.

The freedom within our work asked us to work in a very conscious way and to observe ourselves within this process in order to

critically reflect on it and us. The deeper we dealt with ourselves, the more we connected ourselves with the topic of fear and courage. What does it actually mean to critically reflect on oneself?

It meant confronting ourselves with our ideals and visions and facing the fear of being wrong. What if how I see the world does not fit with how my colleagues see the world? What happens when our ways of working together differ? What if I would have to rethink my whole world view? Suddenly there was fear, fear of not knowing. And then curiosity, which eventually developed into courage. When the outside world becomes more still, that is when I find and see what lives inside and then, I can become courageous.

Courage —it became a topic very close to us as we wanted to face the possibility to rethink our work again and again. Many of the decisions we had to make were based on our way of seeing the human being, our ideals and last but not least, our world view and our relationship to ourselves: On which bases did we want to work together with our team? According to which criteria did we want to grant scholarships to students from more challenging financial backgrounds? How could we manage to create a conference in which all our ideas and visions could become alive without pushing each other away? How to distribute work without imposing tasks? How to encourage everyone to bring their idea without having the fear of losing one's own?

Sometimes inside our team we felt uncomfortably pushed into a position as authorities which we did not want to be in. How did we get into this situation? Sometimes what you communicate non-verbally tells more than what you actually put into words. We had to critically look at

ourselves again - are we ready to embrace and welcome all ideas that want to come? We decided over and over again to express our wish and idea of collaborating openly and freely without hierarchies. valuing everyone's ideas and reflecting critically on them in the same way. Only in the end, I think, we were able to build up this working relationship in which this could actually happen.

### The organizing process

The organizing process of the International Students Conference “Courage” started about one and a half years before it actually took place in April 2019. Our first task was to find a theme that would guide us through the five-day event. It was our aim to find an important theme that would resonate with participants from all around the world.

The conference theme was organized to be outcome-oriented, and so we decided to first identify challenges of our world, and also their causes, many of which appeared to be fear. Our goal was to work with questions such as: ‘How do fears arise?’ ‘How can we deal with fears or work on dismantling them?’ and ‘What impact does fear and courage have on social and political development?’

Once we set the theme of ‘Courage’, we had many long discussions about its significance. The planning began as we invited our presenters and created a financial budget for the event.

We also wrote invitation texts that we published online on our conference website and sent to all Waldorf Schools around the world.

Another major task was fundraising i.e. writing requests to foundations and individuals asking for financial support and product donations. A design was created for flyers, posters,



online publications, conference readers and more.

In the team meetings we finalized the program and requested people to facilitate conversation groups and workshops. Throughout the process, there was an ongoing discussion about the topic of courage and how it could be discussed during the conference.

We formulated a question for every day of the conference to pose each morning, discuss together and harvest answers at night.

We booked an extra train and requested permission for the ‘Creative Intervention’ in Basel on the penultimate day of the conference.

In the weeks before the conference, practical things like buying food, packing bags and answering participant requests were the main work-focus.

After the conference there was a meeting to evaluate the feedback sheets discuss the results with the team. In addition to analysing and reflecting on the insights from the conference, the group documented all the steps taken to organize the conference, as well as how the content was developed.

### Meeting goals of the conference

One of our main intentions was to create connection and to hold the space for courage to arise in order to create future visions and the courage to realize them.

We are now in contact with students from Switzerland, South Africa, Chile, Russia and the Ukraine who are planning to organize students conferences in their countries, to do research work inspired by the research project that is taking place in the Youth Section at

the Goetheanum, to build up national student networks and councils or to start a Youth Section in their country. The conference met our goal to create connections and encounters and generate cultural exchange.

Not only could we experience this during the conference but also the vast majority of the students claimed in the evaluation sheet that they found the encounter with other students inspiring, helpful and or mind-opening.

We do have the feeling, however, that compared to the slightly smaller conference of 450 students two years ago we could not sense the same intimacy in the way of connecting to each other this time. It is of course always difficult to judge this from the outside but it is a question for us whether or not we want to keep the conference that size or find a way to make it smaller.

Regarding cultural diversity we are really happy to say that there were over 30 nationalities represented at the conference. It is a question for us how to have a more balanced ratio of students from different countries.

### The organization’s team

The conference was organized in cooperation by the Youth Section at the Goetheanum and the WaldorfSV (board of German Waldorf Student representatives). This cooperation started 4 years ago out of the wish of former WaldorfSV members to co-organize an International Students’ Conference. The team consisted of two main representatives of the Youth Section team and 7 WaldorfSV students who worked on a voluntary basis for the project. Several volunteers and other Youth Section co-workers also made this conference possible.

The WaldorfSV is the official student board representing all German Waldorf students. As a body of the „bund der Freien Waldorfschulen“, the basic task is to create a connection between the students, teachers and parents in order to guarantee an exchange between the three parties. Another major task is to have an open ear for all the students and to listen to their needs and interests, representing their point of view for the development of Waldorf pedagogy. To do this, the WaldorfSV cooperates with other Waldorf institutions and associations.

In order to create a space for the Waldorf Students to come together, the WaldorfSV organizes student conferences twice a year. These conferences enable students to exchange ideas, thoughts, and inspirations, discuss important topics and connect. Additionally, WaldorfSV collaborates with the organizing team of the International Student’s Conference in Switzerland, as well as with other Waldorf pedagogy related events in Germany.

However, the WaldorfSV’s concern is not limited to the work of representation and development but rather encourages students to connect to each other, to continue to question and actively shape the world that surrounds us.

### Guiding questions

What is courage? In what kind of situations are you courageous and where does this courage come from? What is the role of courage for us young people today? How do courage and fear affect intercultural encounters and personal or societal developments?

In her opening lecture at Courage, the 2019 International Students’ Conference, Constanza Kaliks spoke of the origin of the

word ‘courage’ which, literally translated, means ‘acting from the heart’ - a definition that resonated strongly with the audience.

In the Foyer of the Goetheanum, the students could write their answers to one “question of the day” on large placards and some of these answers were read out the next morning. Two examples of answers to the first question were: “Courage is breaking the norms” and “Courage is the absence of fear”.

Fear was also at the centre of the question that was asked one the second day. How do you experience fear and recklessness within yourself and in the world? Where are the boundaries between courage, recklessness and fear? Are there situations where fear and recklessness can be useful?

We need confidence in our thinking, which can protect us from recklessness, especially when encountering other people on an emotional level. This will help us learn to listen to what needs to be done and then know how we will need to act. In his Changemaker talk, Henning Kulak-Ublick linked this description of courage with the impulse and objective of Waldorf100.

Marina Helou, a state representative from São Paulo (BR), explained that for her, courage had to do with an impulse that comes from the heart but is then weighed by the head. If there is no choice, or no commitment to a particular decision or action, one cannot really speak of courage, because the person in question acts either out of fear or acts recklessly.

Here are some of the responses to the second question: “Recklessness is born from insecurity; insecurity comes from fear.” “I feel reckless or fearful when I lose control or when I feel alone.” “Fear is an instinct; courage is a



decision”.

The third question, “What would the world look like if what lives within you became reality and what would you do to make this happen?” was inspired by a question once posed by Rudolf Steiner. Some of the answers from participants included:

*“A place of balance between giving and taking”.*

*“A world where one can love oneself unconditionally”.*

*“Can we create a shared utopia? Could my utopia be another person’s dystopia [pessimistic image of the future]?”*

Connected to this question Jannik Howind, Hannah Malina Bar-Lev and David Czycholl, three young people from the global Changemaker network ‘You Move’ talked about their way of actively shaping our future, for example by fighting for a youth representation in the German national parliament. Many inspiring examples of performance art and activism were given.

Helmy Abouleish (CEO at Sekem, EG) spoke in his lecture of two future streams, Futurum and Adventus. Futurum means looking towards the future from the past and seeing the future as a series of logical consequences. Adventus means looking at our task from the future, or looking at what wants to come towards us.

The day was closed by an impressive piano concert by Aeham Ahmad and parallel readings from his book about his life during the civil war in Syria and his escape from the country.

## **A challenging freedom**

Working on these topics together brought us to a fourth question, the question of personal and shared identity. What is identity? What do we identify with and why? How can we develop an understanding of our self that no longer requires us to identify with external, mostly excluding, circumstances such as culture or being a Waldorf pupil? What is left to us to hold on to and orientate ourselves, as a young generation that has grown up with the challenging freedom of not having to obey social or religious norms and rules? What is left to identify with when we let go of everything that allows a ‘We’ and ‘You’ to emerge

The question as to ‘what identity means in relation to a group’ was also featured in the ‘Creative Intervention’ that was performed in Basel. Conference participants were invited to observe themselves as part of a group in relation to those outside the group. A great openness and warmth, noticeable from within and without, was emanating from the group. An unspoken conclusion could be that it is possible to be part of a clearly defined group and still enrich the life of those outside the group; that it is possible to have warmth within and carry this warmth outside, so that the question of inside and outside becomes irrelevant.

In line with this conclusion and the discussion of identity, Jana-Nita Raker, born in India and raised in Germany, described in her Changemaker Talk the complexity of the question “Where do you come from?” One could ask this question in a way that does not imply “you don’t belong here” or “you are different”. The question seems small and insignificant, but depending on the intention and how much warmth and openness there is in this question, it could be exclusionary or inviting.

The musician and journalist André Stern then spoke of freedom in child development, raising the question as to whether formal learning and educational institutions prevent this freedom. How does education and learning influence the way children find their own identity?

The day ended with group performances by students from different countries. One student from Brazil expressed her gratitude for Waldorf Education and for having the chance to unfold her potential freely in her school in Brazil.

## **Fighting for One’s Goals**

On the last day we returned to the first question: what is courage? After five days of discussion, some students presented the essence of what had lived at this conference. Lorena Carazzo from Spain said how important it was to critically question one’s inner attitude towards the world; If hatred of other people’s mistakes is the driving force behind my actions, the message of my actions can’t be one of love or true courage.

Pedro Munizaga Sgombich, a student from Chile, concluded the presentations with the encouragement to fight for one’s goals even in times of darkness and to see the darkness as a necessary counterpart of light and as a chance for oneself and for the world to develop further. Some answers to the question were: “Courage is taking a chance in order to bring about change”, “Courage is trust in yourself and in the world”, “Courage needs love and love needs courage”. The question we gave everyone to take along with them was “Can courage lead to freedom?”





Photo: In the big hall of the Goetheanum during the International Students' Conference 2019.



## Thoughts on the creative intervention Basel by Till Höffner

### Carrying conference content into the public sphere.

This was already a wish at several previous student conferences. It was primarily out of concern about the “not exactly low-risk” undertaking to go on a trip with hundreds of minors and the large organisational effort, that it was never realized before.

The decisive argument that led us to decide to do it this time was that Courage was the topic of the conference. Therefore, we were courageous and simply went for it! “Shortly afterwards we found ourselves in negotiations with SBB to rent an ‘extra train’, as this was the only answer to the question of how 700 people could all together move from the Goetheanum to Basel. After additional applications and long telephone calls with the cantonal police and various other authorities, a few months later it became clear that we were actually going to Basel with all the participants and march to the Münsterplatz, where we would spend two hours.

Realizing this, other questions arose: What will we do there? Are we looking for artistic performances or a protest? If so, for what or against what do we protest?

“Bringing conference content into the public sphere” always sounded so beautiful, so meaningful, so necessary. But how does one actually do that? What content is it about and in what form can it be shared with others? What role do we as organizers and what role do the participants play in the shaping of this space?

It was important to us that no message or

content was imposed on anyone, which would contradict what we could actually experience as ‘conference content’.

Free engagement with diverse topics, in great respect for our fellow human beings; common learning from each other; unconditional interest in the other, the otherness of the other. What would the world look like if a global dialogue also looked like this even in a political realm? We do not have a common opinion, nor a common goal. These were the aspects of the spirit we wanted to express. This special interacting in a free dialogue gets lost as soon as there is an attempt to express it in the form of a choreography, a speech choir or similar.

How can one nowadays bring opinions, impulses and questions into the public eye in a way in which they find a hearing? “Loud, scandalous and as outrageous as possible” seems to be a common answer to this question considering different activist movements.

“650 young people from over 30 nations gathered in Basel’s’ Münsterplatz to raise their voices for ....” The power of this headline, which we foresaw already, was a great appeal.

Due to the size and diversity of the group, everything we would take to the streets seemed to have significance and a reach, that perhaps young people are not necessarily used to when expressing their questions, impulses and ideas.

The only condition to achieve this significance and thus this reach seemed to be synchronicity in the said, asked, demanded.

“650 young people from over 30 nations gather in Basel’s’ Münsterplatz to engage in an open dialogue with each other and

passers-by and to represent their individual convictions”. This sounded rather less appropriate as a headline and also would not give a clear picture of the intention of the whole undertaking.

However, it was clear to us that our role in the planning of this operation could not be more than a frame-giving one. Deciding on a content would contradict all the values that can be experienced at the student conferences.

So, we decided to set up a corner at the conference where signs, posters, T-shirts and more could be painted. We rehearsed some songs, some Eurythmy and body Percussion together. We entrusted all contents to the participants.

On the penultimate day of the conference it kicked off. In pouring rain, equipped with megaphones and card board signs, we headed to the train station in Dornach-Arlesheim. Shortly thereafter we took the chartered ‘extra train’ to Basel. There we marched with the police to Münsterplatz - mostly in silence. Some attempts were made to start yelling a slogan through the megaphones, but it mostly trailed away after being repeated by some people a few times. Arriving at the Münsterplatz some workshop groups started performing their work after a brief singing together. Some tourist groups and other passers-by approached and were integrated into the events as if by self-evidence. Some, sang and danced along, others talked to students, others watched the whole happening from a distance.

It quickly became apparent that what was expressed in this action took place much more around the stages than on them. Many of the people I talked to were touched by the happenings. An elderly lady told me

to experience this, gave her ‘confidence and faith in the future’. I wasn’t quite sure what she was talking about at the point. My attention was focused on the stages and I was hoping for a big statement, a statement that could serve as headline in a retrospective article like this one. But that never came about. At least not on a verbal level.

What was experienced, however, was a free engagement with diverse topics, in great respect for our fellow human beings. A common learning from each other. An unconditional interest in the other, the otherness of the other.

Outsiders were included, faced with openness and respect. It was clear that it makes no difference where you come from. What was important here was what connected us, what questions, wishes and dreams we shared, where our views diverged and how we could learn from each other.

The entire event was neither loud nor outrageous nor scandalous. On the contrary, it was quiet, peaceful and harmonious. The atmosphere that makes the student conferences so special was carried into the public sphere by the students, the different questions and wishes of each individual and their admirable openness towards other people and the world.

A common eurythmic Hallelujah in the rain closed our “Creative Intervention” before everyone headed back to the Goetheanum. Satisfied and exhausted.

The reach of the event could certainly have been expanded by a large collective statement. However, looking back, the number of people reached by it seems much less important than how it has touched those it did reach.



What is courage? Follow one's heart impulse in harmony with the mind. A conscious action which you could choose to undertake and which you are committed to. This was roughly how Marina Helou described courage in her lecture. During our journey through the world, we followed our hearts and had many choices to take. It was not necessary to think everything through nor to commit ourselves. We chose to put our focus on the openness towards the world and to dive into the otherness, out of love and in love with the world.

*'I loved to be here with all that amazing people. It was a great experience and it opened my mind. At first I didn't know what to expect because I've never been to any conference but when we arrived I was just amazed about these wonderful people. I had a great time here in Dornach!'* Participant



Photo: North side of the Goethehaus during the International Students' Conference 2019.



## “Conference report from WaldorfSV” by Sophie Niemann & Vincent Eichholz

Arriving in Dornach, we were looking forward to the conference but we had no idea what it would look like in the end. For us as the WaldorfSV it was the first international students conference and of course we were very excited but still, there was a little bit of nervousness and scepticism left, because we were not quite sure if our ideas would connect with the students the way we expected. The conference started a week before with the beginning with the preparations. We had a lot of things to do like packing the conference bags, writing sponsors, designing all the prints, preparing the Goetheanum and the school and so on. A big challenge for us was to get to know each other better and to find out what every team member was best at. During the week there were really intense working days. We started mostly in the morning and sometimes we kept on working until late in the night. A very special moment was two days before the conference when the first people started to arrive. That was the moment where we started realising, that the idea of the conference became actual reality and it was so special because we were working on it and now the students began to arrive and started bringing the big concept to life. This special feeling that we had, increased with every student who signed in for the conference at the info desk.

Before we entered the WaldorfSV we also took part in conferences and we know the feeling as a participant. For us it wasn't as easy, with all the work we had, to really enter the conference spirit in the first two days. In these first days we really felt responsible to create a nice inspiring atmosphere to make this conference the best experience

possible for the participants. One of the best moments we had during the conference was walking through the rainy roads of Basel. But we were stronger than the rain. The bad weather couldn't make us stop from spreading courageous energy in the heart of Basel.

Then the conference came to an end and we were super exhausted but somehow full of energy, memories and inspirations for our life.

The conference for us as team members was probably the most intense time of our life. We learnt a lot about ourselves, about how to act in stressful situations and of course to be part of a big team and accepting every team member. We were super glad about the thankful atmosphere the participants gave to us. It was an extraordinary feeling which started spreading when we were on stage for the last time and people started applauding.

We really want to thank everyone who helped bringing this conference to life.

## “Future Visions of the Youth” by Andrea de la Cruz Barral

It can take a lot of courage today, to stand up for our own vision of the future and what we truly long for; and even more courage, to vow to make this happen. For it is too often that, when we express our dreams, ideas and expectations, we are confronted with a world that sees our aspirations as naïve illusions, as unrealistic goals that simply cannot happen. Sometimes, hopes for the future are even seen as a sign of being spoiled, for who has the time anyway to think about these things? One must spend their energy working, connecting, working again, keeping on top of things! No time for silence. No time for questions. No time for thought.

However, it is no longer optional to postpone our thoughts about the future we wish for to a later date. For the youth of today who - as we see in the Friday's for Future movement - is fully aware of the urgency to think about present actions in service of a sustainable future, certain dreams and ideas are not naiveties, but necessary objectives which are to be realised by all of us, regardless of the generation we belong to. A future for individuals, societies and the Earth that needs to come about if we want to speak of a future at all.

During “Courage”, we collected some of these visions through our research project's question: what would the world look like in 2030 if what lives within you becomes a reality and what will you do to make it happen?

“The world would be better because we would actually start taking care of both our homes: the earth and our body. We would live a more minimalistic life and more sustainably. I'm trying to live sustainably myself and I'm

telling my friends and family about it. We all should start to think about that and we should not stop inspiring each other”.

“I see a world in which each one of us is inspired to do what we are passionate about, and use it in service of others. As we find the courage to do this for ourselves, we allow others to do the same as they too will feel liberated from the pressure and expectations that society puts on us.”

“If what lives inside me is to be realised into the world, the world may become a dark or scary place. I would try and find the light and goodness within myself to prevent the darkness from becoming...”

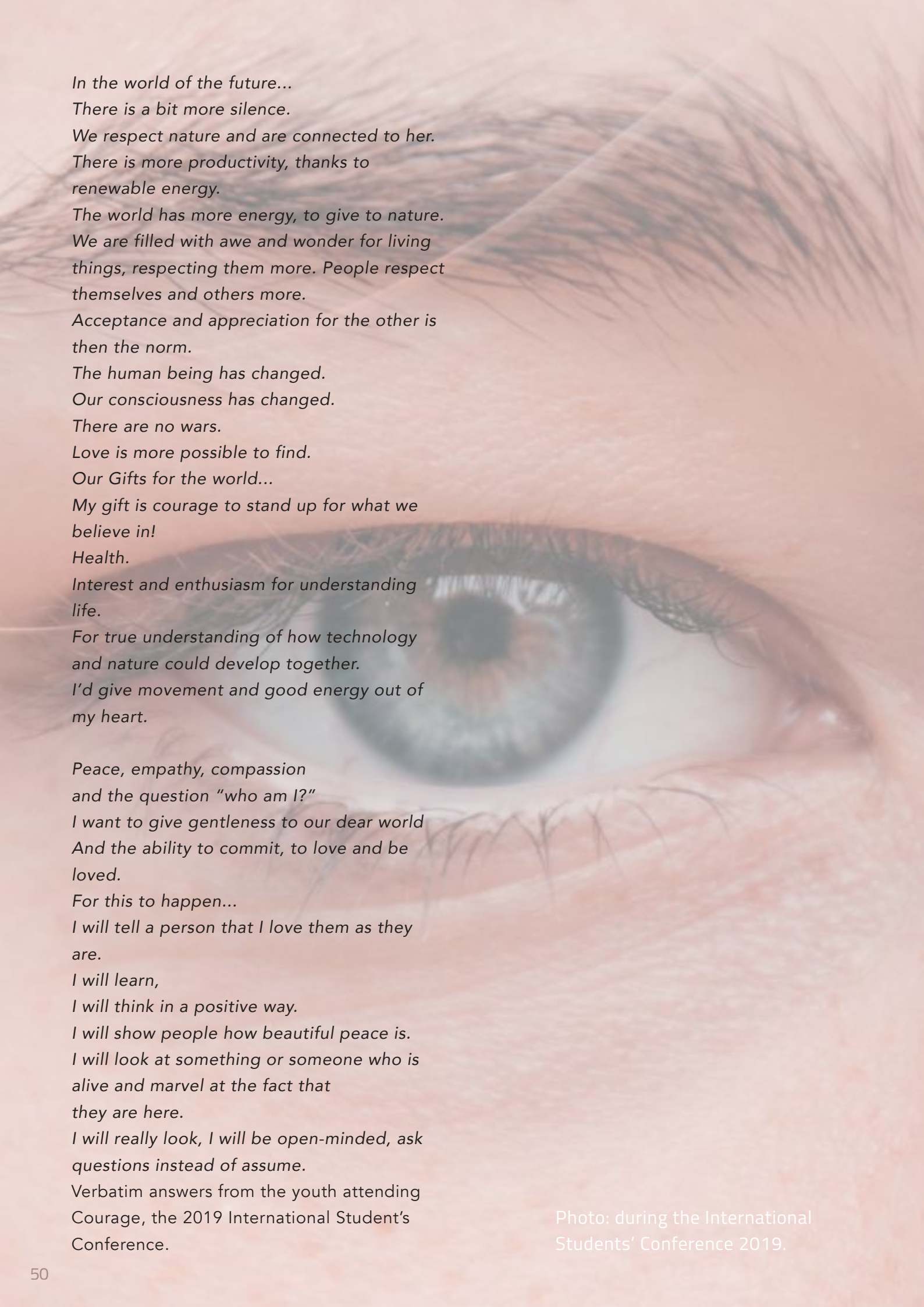
These participant answers and many others evoked a world that prioritises the respect for nature and the human being as a social, natural and spiritual being capable of evolving in freedom. How to realise these? Another participant had the answer:

“I am aware of myself and how I affect the world, and I try to improve myself every day.”

At the Youth Section we see it as one of our central tasks to give voice to the wisdom that lives in young people, and to foster the impulses and initiatives that come from this. After hearing the voices of the youth who attended the International Students Conference, I began to wonder, what would happen in the world if all of us took the initiatives that are living in these young people as our own? What if what lives within them became also our reality? What if we accompanied them in their actions to realise that future vision?

How can we ignite a common flame that warms the future that is waiting to arrive through our common human deeds?





*In the world of the future...  
There is a bit more silence.  
We respect nature and are connected to her.  
There is more productivity, thanks to  
renewable energy.  
The world has more energy, to give to nature.  
We are filled with awe and wonder for living  
things, respecting them more. People respect  
themselves and others more.  
Acceptance and appreciation for the other is  
then the norm.  
The human being has changed.  
Our consciousness has changed.  
There are no wars.  
Love is more possible to find.  
Our Gifts for the world...  
My gift is courage to stand up for what we  
believe in!  
Health.  
Interest and enthusiasm for understanding  
life.  
For true understanding of how technology  
and nature could develop together.  
I'd give movement and good energy out of  
my heart.*

*Peace, empathy, compassion  
and the question "who am I?"  
I want to give gentleness to our dear world  
And the ability to commit, to love and be  
loved.  
For this to happen...  
I will tell a person that I love them as they  
are.  
I will learn,  
I will think in a positive way.  
I will show people how beautiful peace is.  
I will look at something or someone who is  
alive and marvel at the fact that  
they are here.  
I will really look, I will be open-minded, ask  
questions instead of assume.*

Verbatim answers from the youth attending  
Courage, the 2019 International Student's  
Conference.

Photo: during the International  
Students' Conference 2019.

## **"Courage as a path to the realization of the good" by Ioana Viscrianu**

Courage —a search for change, the shaping of a character trait, or perhaps a virtue? This was the theme of this year's student conference at the Goetheanum, where 650 students had the chance to engage with the topic in a variety of ways and thus take impulses with them in order to increasingly find this human quality within themselves and make it visible in the world. One could witness an authentic search for courage in the many encounters, but also in the attention paid by the participants during the contributions.

Often, we associate courage with fear, anxiety or even the opposite —overconfidence. Almost always, however, we talk about courage in the context of a certain situation, in connection with things that sometimes even "urge" us to deal with them. The world today needs change. We need "courage to...", "courage for...". We can say that we awaken at the fact that we feel confronted with circumstances that we do not think are right. These situations become a gateway to the search for possible ways to transform them. Of course, we can ask ourselves what is the source of courage. This question would give indications about how we can find this source and draw from it in situations where we need courage.

As young people today, we certainly feel confronted every day with situations —in our personal environment but also on the social level— with which we cannot identify ourselves, which we cannot represent but also, which we want to change. Through the questions, statements and attitudes of the participants at the students' conference

it was possible to sense directly their vivid experience of this reality. Powerlessness or fear can thus be direct reactions in the best case, together with the intuition that a force is present in us which can bring about something in the direction of change. This leads to the question of courage. But what is it that tells us that the situation we are looking at is not right? That something should be fundamentally changed? Perhaps there is a natural search for the good that lies within each of us. We want the world to be good, we want everything to take place in the sense of man and nature, to re-establish a harmonious state of it. We access something that is in our hearts - the human search for the good. Thus, courage becomes a virtue, says Aristotle, "no more and no less than that". We become courageous when we have the good in sight, when we want the good to be more and more present in the world. And then we act "courageously" because it is part of it, because awakening to the challenges requires us to act in the sense of the good.

And so, we can say that courage is a path, a path to the realization of the good, and every challenge we are faced with is a possibility, a gate, to be able to walk this path, in the practice of courage. In order to be able to walk this path, we still need an important companion, a quality without which fear, recklessness or powerlessness can enter - that is hope. We need to hope that it will be good, that the courageous actions will be efficient everywhere in the world and contribute to the transformation. So, in Schiller's own words: "He who dares nothing, must hope nothing."



## **“Practicing Courage in the search for a new world” by Johannes Kronenberg**

On Friday 15th of March 2019, an estimated number of 1.8 million young people did not go to school. Instead, they filled the streets around our globe in an attempt to formulate what they felt, observed and wanted to transform: a world in existential need for renewal. It is the first time in history that this amount of young people occupied public space. They raised their voices to the ‘older’ generations, to act upon what is called climate change more drastically. A lot of these young people sense quite well, however, that there is more going on and that climate change might be just the top of the iceberg of something profoundly transformative about to happen.

Just about a month after this event took place, 650 high school students from over 30 countries did not go to school either. They exchanged their known homes for an unknown travel to Dornach, Switzerland, in order to witness and practice questions of Courage. Some of them were the first in their family to leave the country, others might have known that they would get homesick, and some of them put aside their savings for two years in order to come. “Courage” was calling them and they listened carefully.

It must be said that these students embody the work of 100 years of Waldorf education. A movement that provides students with the chance to ‘act from their hearts’, in a world that is actually less and less organised for the human being. An over organised world, where nature became something separated from human. A world where education does not equip its students for what is coming, but rather, likes to teach the past. Where

is the future (coming from)? This might be a “guiding star-question” for these young individuals.

Each single student attending was equipped with something perhaps not so obvious to themselves: in the fundamentals of the Waldorf movement, health and balance for the physical body, intimacy in the soul life and clarity of the spirit are nourished and practiced as core values in the space created for primary and high school education. This brings forward the ability to transform questions about fear into its counterforce of courage, as proven and practiced by the young organising team of this gathering. They worked and lived for one and a half year with these questions to prepare the conference. It was not a Fridays for Future event as such (like the one on the 15th of March), but a ‘Courage’ for Future impulse —an inspiration for the young generation to act from their hearts.

But what does it mean to courageously act from the heart and how can this make us sensitive for what wants to come from the future? This was key in the talk of Helmy Abouleish; not predicting the future from past experiences (Futurum), but rather leaning in the seemingly impossible coming from the future (Adventus). Ideals and visions that seem ridiculous now, might carry the spirit of what wants to come to birth. For this, the Courage conference became a microcosmic space of encounter, carrying powerful seeds for the young generation’s worldwide movement that seems to practice the courage to transform society from its foundations anew.



Photo: break around the Goetheanum during the International Students' Conference 2019.



## Youth Section Worldwide - Building Bridges Beyond Borders – a worldwide gathering from 28 - 30 June 2019 at the Goetheanum

In 2015 the Youth Section at the Goetheanum initiated the annual/bi-annual Youth Section co-workers gathering. These gatherings are meant to bring together co-workers from the different teams in each country where the Youth Section is active, to work and share questions about the nature and essence of the Youth Section Worldwide. In 2015 the meeting took place in Dornach; in 2016 it was hosted by the Youth Section of Great Britain in Emerson College; in 2017 the Dutch Youth Section carried the gathering and in 2019 the team of Youth Section at the Goetheanum hosted again. For this edition we had about 60 representatives from 19 countries and 5 continents.

We worked on three themes. Starting off on Friday 28th of June, we explored “dreams, visions and what wants to come from the future”. Small groups shared their insights and later in the next session, we used drawing to express our visions in a visual way.

Some results, themes and questions arising were: “The future is youth’s present”, “our mission is to do”, “we will create a culture of listening and silence”, “we will have the courage to take our individual and collective responsibilities”, “we will be more gentle”, “the feminine will mature more in all”, “the human-scale will be found and brought back into society”, “we will formulate a new story of the human being that replaces the old destructive one”, “the future can be read out of the current challenges”, “we will break with all the unhealthy vicious circles”, “transhumanism will be held in its place and

not override humanity”, “the environment will be taken care of and brought back in harmony with humanity”, “spiritual life will be much more integrated and present in society”, “we will be able to be more vulnerable”, “we will be much more able to point out and work with the forces that work in us as human beings”, “in meeting we become human”, “Diversity, Differ-sity”, “Anthroposophy will be open for all those wanting to engage”, “living in diversity will be accepted and stimulated in its own uniqueness”, “the Youth Section will create spaces of full and deep encounter”, “the generational gap will not exist any longer as it does today”, “encourage and inspire others through Anthroposophy in action”, “how to support others to become their own individuality?”, “how to break with stereotypes and the image of Anthroposophy being separated?”, “the quality of Anthroposophy to solve the ‘story’ of separation and go beyond nationalities” and “Spiritual Science living in mainstream thinking”.

Another main element of this day was the conversation about the School of Spiritual Science, its work, history and aims. Since the Youth Section is embedded as one of the 11 sections of the School of Spiritual Science, it remains a challenging task to place the Youth Section in relation with and in the context of the other sections, the society at large and the present young generation.

Saturday the 29th of June, we explored the theme “now, and how we work with the present age” by hosting short 10-minute presentations of all countries present at the gathering. We tried to connect the individual and local questions with the collective and global ones. A wide variety of experiences was shared. For instance, young people from Peru, Lithuania, Russia, Ukraine, Spain, Germany and Bulgaria presented their wish to

begin a Youth Section.

From Georgia there was a group who have been working together since the past four years and now want to take the next step. They will organise the bi-annual International Youth Summer Conference of the Goetheanum’s Youth Section close to their capital Tbilisi in 2020. Additionally, they have the wish to start an Anthroposophical cafe in Tbilisi in order to create a doorway to city life and culture like the Youth Section of North America is doing in Los Angeles.

The Youth Section of Great Britain is strongly connected to the inner life of young people and the big challenges they are facing. Loneliness, anxiety and the searching nature of young people were made very tangible and urgent by their presentation. These observations were echoed by others as well and are becoming more relevant and urgent every year.

Latvia and Belgium both have summer programmes. In Latvia there is an intensive youth training and in Belgium the Anthroposophy Summer School was founded 10 years ago, which is organised by a group of young people in collaboration with the older generations.

India has an active group which cannot see each other in real life frequently due the size of the country. Therefore, they meet through video call and mostly share their questions and strivings there. Ritika Arya from India combines the Youth Section work with her education foundations, working with vulnerable youth.

Argentina, The Netherlands, Italy, the United States, Israel and Romania all have groups that have been working together for some years. In Romania there are two groups who are studying and organising youth gatherings.

Israel has meetings in Harduf and the team has taken the initiative to translate the story of Parsifal into Hebrew. The United States are connected with a small group in Canada but also the rooted work in Los Angeles of the Threefold Cafe Elderberries and Free Columbia in Philmont. In Elderberries they are working, for instance, on the ‘poor people’s campaign’ and ‘social activism’. Apart from their daily work with the restaurant and the Have Seeds community house, they have engaged with the Black Rock’s protests and the Urban First Aid art initiative.

The Youth Section of Italy had big summer conferences, this year about the forces of Lucifer and Ahriman in our current world. The group of the Netherlands have a wide range of activities such as four conferences a year at Easter, Mid-summer, Michael and Midwinter; a meditation course, monthly evenings with themes such as organ donation, dealing with the effect of digitalisation, the internet and transhumanism.

The group in Argentina works since 2012 and currently lives with questions such as: “what do we want to do together? How do we relate with our surrounding youth? How do we relate to our Anthroposophical Society? What is our inner life as a group? How is our outer life as group? From where do we want to give?” In Switzerland there is a group that works with migrant youth and another with the School of Spiritual Science in the shape of local group work. They are very connected with the Youth Section at the Goetheanum due the work that happens already.

The Youth Section at the Goetheanum presented their four pillars of research, conferences and study, the worldwide work and the house. A prominent next theme for the winter is the second step in the youth-led research project (Re)Search: the spiritual striving of youth – shaping our reality and





Photo: Youth Section representatives from 21 countries during the Worldwide Youth Section co-worker meeting June 2019.



also the work on the theme of climate crisis. The February Days 2020 will be held under the title of “Bound to Earth: Freedom, Responsibility and Destiny in times of climate crises.”. Not present were Sweden, Brazil and Australia although they wanted to participate.

There is a significant number of new groups wanting to explore questions of youth whilst also connecting with the Anthroposophical Society in their countries and worldwide. This is not an urge to separate into own initiatives, but rather take the local initiative as a starting point to connect with the global youth and Anthroposophy and from there, seek and craft collaboration. The Youth Section’s aim is therefore to not institutionalise the different groups into one oiled machine, but to rather let it move and be single organisms that interrelate and act with the whole.

On Sunday 30st of June the theme “building bridges between the future and now”, intended to bring together the work of the previous days. We used an Open Space format to meet in smaller groups and work with suggested themes that were proposed up front and crafted in that same moment. The aim was to meet each other’s initiatives and questions, listen, share advice and possibly connect for future collaboration.

The groups, themes and questions were: Free Columbia in Philmont (USA) and the next step of opening an anthroposophical cafe in Tbilisi (Georgia), (Re)Search project of the Youth Section (Goetheanum), Class Lessons of the School of Spiritual Science (Goetheanum), how to discern and observe spiritual experiences (UK), how to start study and research groups (Argentina), challenges in the social, communal and relationship dynamics (Italy), meditation and inner work (The Netherlands), struggles of youth and Anthroposophical ways to deal with it (UK),

how to start space for youth (Russia), what are the most important and profound questions of youth today (Italy), fundraising (Romania).

The results of all the groups were shared in the bigger round and starting points for new collaborations and initiatives.

Epilogue: Our hopes and aims are that all the young co-workers feel inspired and held by our larger community of youth work, and that they will be able to find and manifest their individual strivings. This gathering was meant to do so and created lots of smaller and bigger encounters between the individual participants and country representative groups.

The next Youth Section Gathering Worldwide will take place in 2021. The location at this point is still open for suggestions.

Photo: group work during the Worldwide Youth Section co-worker meeting June 2019.





## Mystery Dramas — ‘Slowing down in an accelerated world’

Between the 29 of July and the 4th of August 2019, we co-organised a conference about the Mystery Dramas at the Goetheanum. With our preparation team we worked on the theme of ‘slowing down in an accelerated world’ in the context of Spirituality, Fear and Health, together with the Medical Section and General Section of the Goetheanum. About 80 young people attended the Mystery Dramas in a filled hall amongst other participants. In this way there was room to digest and work with the content of the Mystery Dramas between the performances, which gave a special opportunity to the Youth Section and young people to engage with this theatre play.

As part of our organisation we gave brief content contributions to the participants during the plenum sessions and offered a workshop that connected the seals of the Mystery Dramas with Eurythmy and drawing. Both younger and older participants found each other during this work and took the time to elaborate on what was given during the plays.

## February Days 2020 — ‘Bound to Earth: Freedom Responsibility and Destiny in times of Climate Crises’

“This conference provided me on the one hand with an overview of anthroposophical thoughts. On the other, it was a wonderful journey towards a deeper knowledge of my own power, towards feeling my own ability to act.” (Conference Participant, 18, Romania)

2020’s “February Days” – the winter youth conference at the Goetheanum - was devoted to the theme “Bound to the Earth - Freedom, Responsibility and Destiny in Times of Climate Crises”. The gathering, attended by over 200 participants from 28 countries, sought to explore a variety of practical approaches to the climate question based on Anthroposophy. Together we searched for approaches to a deeper understanding of the current question of the climate crisis, as well as for ways to define individual contributions to shape a future that is healthy for both people and nature.

The themes of the lectures ranged from human consciousness and the relevance of the way in which we shape our relationship to the world and to ourselves, to the connection that this has to the current social, economic and political situation in the world. We discussed the climate question as an inner crisis of mankind and learnt about practical projects and approaches in response to the climate challenges, such as the work in the Amazon rainforests and the Nature and Environment Festival worldwide

In discussion groups, workshops and artistic performances, the above aspects were deepened, and we opened a space to

develop and take away our own approaches to this issue.

Throughout the meeting, participants expressed this thought in various ways: that this conference gave us hope, as we met all sorts of people who are concerned with the same questions and who are committed to doing good; hope that a healthy future for people and nature is conceivable and can be shaped.





Photo: part of the organisation team 'Bound to Earth' winter 2020. Rocio, Roi, Stefan and Nicolas.



# Research in the Youth Section

How would the  
WORLD LOOK IN  
if WHAT I  
becomes a LIVES WITHIN ME  
to a REALITY AND WHAT



## (Re)Search

In addition to opportunities for informal learning and intercultural exchange - such as student and youth conferences - the Youth Section team began working on youth-led research activities in 2017. These offer young people the opportunity to scientifically address current individual and social issues that are important for them and their peers, by creating a space for reflection on the impact that human ideals and actions have in shaping the future. The insights gained are incorporated into the other activities, so that the work can be continuously enriched, developed and made available to the young people with whom the cooperation takes place as a basis for joint projects.

(Re)Search is a collaborative and participatory research that has two main branches of study: The first, focuses on learning about and understanding young people's reality. By opening up spaces of dialogue between peers and individual self-reflection, we listen to what youth have to say about their life experiences, the world they live in and the relationship between the two aspects. The second branch concentrates on the observation and development of research methodologies that enable an empowering process in participants to happen. By "empowerment" we mean the process of engaging critically with one's own life-narrative. As a result, the participant can gain a new degree of self-awareness, e.g. identifying patterns, the significance of certain biographical facts, the recognition of one's tools in the face of certain challenges, key motivations that presently guide them, etc. An increase in one's sense of agency may then also take place.

The fact that (Re)Search is a peer-led social study means that the investigators' experiences are also considered. How we

choose to collect, analyse and narrate data is also a statement on being young. The way in which we develop methodologies of empowerment is also an example of young people's initiative in action and what we seek to bring to the fields of social research and spiritual science.

Last but not least, the project metamorphoses according to the way in which it is received by third parties and the reality of the times in which it lives. That is to say, when individuals or organisations give feedback, ask questions or make requests, these are absorbed by the project as fuel for its development; when a crisis such as the COVID-19 arises in the world –with all its implications– the team takes it as an opportunity to deepen the two branches of study.

A first report following the completion of the first qualitative phase of the project is available since online<sup>1</sup>. This contains the first insights obtained after listening to more than 70 hours of recorded data with youth from 23 different countries and mixed cultural backgrounds. The authors portray, almost unedited, the answers given by the interviewees, thus giving readers the possibility to make their own observations about young people's testimonies. It also includes descriptions of the methods used, as well as reflections about the research process and how it impacts our perspectives of our peers and the world.

Researchers have also contributed with articles and interviews to various international publications and media channels<sup>2</sup>. They have

also presented the project at international gatherings and conferences for audiences of all ages. As a result, various groups around the world have taken up research activities of their own, working with the framework question of our study: what would the world look like in 2030 if what lives within you becomes a reality and what will you do to make it happen?

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1. Access online at [www.youthsection.org/research](http://www.youthsection.org/research)

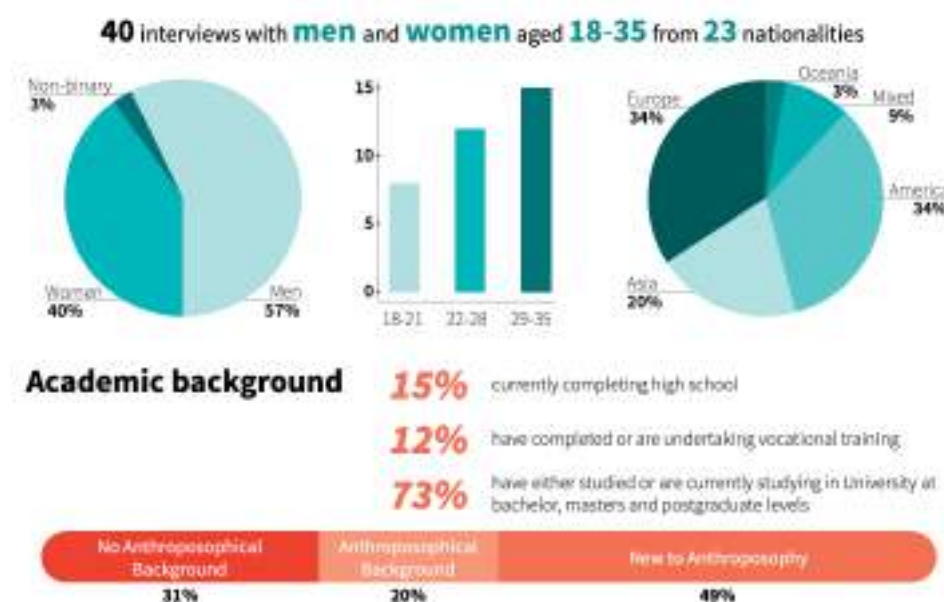
2. Articles in Die Drei magazine (2018), Erziehungskunst magazine (2019) and Anthroposophy Worldwide (2018 – 2019). Interviews in The Anthroposopher podcast (2018/19),



***(Re)Search: The Spiritual Striving of Youth – Shaping our Reality***  
***Youth-led research project by the Youth Section at the Goetheanum-School of***  
***Spiritual Science***

*Initial Results Summary – November 2019*

## 1. The project in numbers



When invited to talk about their experiences, young people described themselves within five areas of experiencing reality. According to them, it is within these areas that identity shapes and develops: **origins, education, profession & vocation, relationships** and **spirituality**.



All experiences, regardless of area in which take place, are permeated by a state of **“conscious becoming,”** that is to say, young people perceive life, which includes the above areas and their own identities to be in movement, in constant change and development. This asks of them to be awake and alert, learning to overcome fixations and situations where they become static, for these do not correspond to actual experiences of the quality of life.

It is important to highlight that the following themes were brought up by the interviewees themselves and that they were never directly asked about these by the interviewees, unless they had already spoken about them. Therefore, we refer to these themes/categories are directly an expression of the participant’s experiences of reality.

### Origins

A strong interest can be seen in young people’s search for **understanding their origins**, which include family and cultural history and how these have contributed to their identity building. This is even **more apparent** amongst those with **mixed cultural backgrounds and nationalities**.

This interest demonstrates a **longing to generate one’s own identity independently from one’s origins**, transcending that which is “known” to generate **new ways of relating** in an increasingly globalised world. For them, such globalized world that **asks individuals to confront the need of living with differences and multiculturalism**. To meet this request coming from the present times, they look at their own national, cultural and ancestral heritage.

Acceptance of one’s roots, understanding of their impact in their own identity’s building and a genuine interest to deepen knowledge in this area, are the key concepts permeating this category.

### Education

There are two discourses present in the area of education: 1) one’s own direct experience of education and 2) one’s own view of education beyond their direct experience. Generally, perceptions about both experiences of education are permeated by a **longing to contribute in the improvement of this area**.

Often interviewees choose teaching as a career, or mention the possibility of them contributing to educational institutions and activities as part of their professional activities. One of the factors possibly contributing to the increase of a positive opinion about education, is feeling that the **students’ questions and initiatives are taken into consideration by the adults being in responsible roles**. Thus, a positive education according to some interviewees may depend on the extent to which the young person’s enquiries are listened to by teachers and included in the curricular activities.

Another aspect increasing positive evaluation, is the **experience of being**



“seen” and understood by teachers as an individuality.

Profession and Vocation

Although challenges are often experienced and described to take place across all areas of life, it would be possible to determine the area of professional and vocational activity as being the **main area where contradictions and challenges arise for these young people.**

The difficulty in marrying one’s *vocation* (that which moves them to be active in the world) to their *occupation* (the activity in which their time is remunerated financially), appears to be central to be crucial in their experiences.

This is **particularly applicable to the young people comprehended between 22-35 years old**, as the younger ones are mostly engaged in their studies and not yet so strongly focused on work activities. It is as if young people’s vocations – very often connected with helping others or changing something already established – were difficult to realise through a professional activity. In the work space, they tend to experience **situations that do not allow them to fully unfold their interest and potential and equally receive the financial compensation they need to sustain themselves independent from others** (families, state, etc.).

In rare cases they overcome this challenge, managing to link these two aspects together. When this occurs a sense of success, achievement and

tranquillity is perceived in their discourses.

Relationships

Participants’ most meaningful experiences are very often described to take place in connection to relationships with others. This is the area which is denominated by interviewees as the most important for them and their self-development. Young people’s focus in this area is strong and decisive, with **relationships being possibly their number one concern at their present time.**

**Anything which hinders relating to others in meaningful ways is quickly set aside or decreases their level of engagement with that activity.** An urge to question best models of relationship, leads them to be experimental in this area, often maintaining a reflective attitude towards their experiences, as if seeking to constantly learn through trial and error. This leads them to form ever evolving relationships, which are always shaping, moving, developing. The values expressed as vital to meaningful relationships include **authenticity, honesty and transparency**, all of which contribute to a good communication, which is ultimately identified as necessary for their relationships. These values are not only applicable to relationships with others, but to one’s own relationship to oneself.

Interviewees describe how they experience their **relationship with oneself directly impacting relationships**

**they establish with others**, thus making these values transferrable from one type of relationship (with myself) to another (with others).

Spirituality (and young people’s questions)

The conversations taking place within this theme embrace a wide variety of topics from religion, beliefs, spiritual practices and paths and substance use to name a few. Comparing interviewee’s testimonies, it appears that **the individual spiritual striving (beginning of questions of transcendence, awareness of inner life) often kickstarts around the age of 13.**

Though most were critical of religious dogmas, they were open to activities that allowed them to explore spirituality (meditations, rituals, psychedelic

substances, interest in philosophy and a variety of worldviews).

That young people so quick and readily spoke about questions in search of meaning, beliefs, spiritual practices and transcending-self matters, has inspired the Youth Section at the Goetheanum to deepen enquiries in this area.

There are four main realms that contain the different questions expressed across interviews.

- Human nature
- 2. Self-purpose
- 3. Social concerns
- 4. Freedom and ethics

Questions can be directed towards oneself (first column) or outwards, in a more general manner, towards the world (second column):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who am I?</li><li>• Where do I come from?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What does it mean to be human?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What do I want and what is important to me?</li><li>• What is my task in this life?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the meaning of life?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do people perceive me?</li><li>• Can I be truly interested?</li><li>• What can I do for others who have not had the same opportunities as me?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What does friendship mean?</li><li>• What does love mean?</li><li>• What is good and bad?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Am I going to meet others expectations and why should I?</li><li>• Where are my boundaries?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is freedom?</li></ul>



## Blind spots – next steps for research

The research team now wants to turn from “what young people speak about” to the unspoken, yet present “phantoms” in the participant’s discourses. By “reading between the lines”, we have so far identified (tentatively) three main areas that could be affecting the way in which youth become active participants in the world, even if our interviewees do not refer to them directly:

**The generational gap:** some interviewees described entering young adulthood without role models. This is often a missing aspect for participants who described a wish to have had mentors, teachers, etc. who they could look up to and receive guidance from. At the same time, in some interviews, we were able to observe how young adults’ perception of the newest generations may lead to similar situations, as the interest of those in their 20s and 30s in the experiences of the younger ones, tends to be veiled by a generalised opinion on teenagers and not based on actual encounter. Could this generalised view on the other generations become an obstacle when it comes to forming inter-generational alliances and cooperation?

**The money problem:** constantly, interviewees described experiences of scarcity, financial difficulties and even poverty, yet never was the subject addressed as a problem/challenge by itself. The topic of “money” came up in relation to how it hindered most of the other aspects: relationships, living conditions, wishes, plans, expectations and of course, one’s own vocation. Young participants did not identify money to be a hindrance, but something to go around and deal with, accept, even ignore. Could we transform money problems if we take this issue as something that is possible to fully confront, deal with and shape for ourselves, like other areas of our lives? Could we then develop a different relationship to finance?

**The social question:** a clear disenchantment with political activity in our present times – closely linked with corruption – is present. Add to this a highly individualised culture amongst young people (with a clear emphasis or direction in developing one’s own individuality) and the mention of social forms, societies, is almost non-existent. Though relationships with others was identified as a key (if not the most important) aspect of these young people’s lives, this tends to limit to immediate circles and not to an overarching view of society as a whole. What kind of societies may evolve from this? If asked about it, what would be young people’s desired social forms?

To access the full report, please visit: [www.youthsection.org/research](http://www.youthsection.org/research)

Since its foundation in 2017, the research project of the Youth Section at the Goetheanum has been dedicated primarily to publication —writing articles and presenting the results of the research—, thus addressing the second pillar of the institution (contribution to the current discourse on youth), whereby encounter and dialogue among peers is seen as a central aspect of the participants’ discourse formation; However, due to the demand from individuals and institutions interested in the project, this activity was increasingly complemented by workshops and informal learning opportunities for a large number of listeners who were particularly interested in understanding the methods developed and applied for this social study.

In 2018, an international exchange began to take place in order to respond to requests from various individuals and organisations who wished to inquire specifically about the research design methods, interview techniques and analytical procedures of the project. This work gave the research team the opportunity to investigate and describe the interview process as a way of meeting and empowering young people, and to describe the contribution and impact of the application of spiritual scientific methods to social science contexts.

To date, there are groups in Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Taiwan, the USA and Great Britain who have been engaged in the research project and have developed their own forms suitable for their local needs and interests. In Argentina, for example, the research took the form of a week-long activity within a Waldorf school in Buenos Aires, in which pupils in Grades 8 to 12 took on the task of defining the questions that are currently most important to them. In Taiwan,

teachers and pupils from the university are trying to implement the research processes as part of the class 12 curriculum in the schools. Other examples go beyond the obligatory educational framework, where young adults themselves, inspired by the results and possibilities of coming together through the project, initiated their own projects and questions. In the Netherlands, the project was included in the curriculum of the Minor of Anthroposophy currently offered at Leiden University, and in Belgium it formed part of a summer university programme.

Common to all these requests and initiatives is a genuine interest in how the research processes proposed in this project can lead to transformative experiences for those involved.





Photo: online (RE)Search colloquium in December 2020



## Colloquium — focus groups

*“That’s why I find the project very appealing or interesting, because one is once again confronted with the questions, “what is life, togetherness, interaction with fellow human beings”. Not only what are your ideals or ideas, but what do you actually want to achieve in practical, everyday life? How do I actually get the connection to other people in this sense, yes, and how do I get my ideals put into practice in everyday life? And I think that it ultimately depends on the individual, so how do I place myself in life? So, the meaningfulness, that’s ultimately a question from this research. I think that’s good, because it’s like waking up, perhaps, where you’re faced with this question at first. How do I stand in the world and to the other humans before all?” (Female, 31, Germany)*

On 7 December 2019, the third Colloquium took place as part of the research project of the Youth Section at the Goetheanum. The world of the future —as a reality that we form in the present— and our own possible contribution towards making this possible, were central themes of the meeting.

In this phase of the research, the team investigates how to shape conversation spaces that enable young people to articulate their experiences in such a way, that new awareness about their reality may arise for them. This new awareness means reflecting and expressing specific experiences and their meaning in a way that was not there before the interview. The implicit value in such expression is that young people can then attain new insights by themselves, becoming thus more conscious about their life experiences, ideals, questions and longings.

After a presentation of the project in the

context of the Youth Section’s task, the participants were invited to participate in focus groups. Questions about the challenges of the time as experienced by the participants, one’s own position to these and also to one’s desired actions to transform the challenges, were the focus of the discussions.

*“One of the world challenges experienced by the participants was the separation from nature, which was expressed as a lack of attention to nature in the context of a complex phenomenon:” Ultimately, our task is to pay attention to nature and to be able to live in harmony with it, to understand it and not to exploit it in such a way that we actually destroy it more”. (Female, 31)*

Lack of time and the feeling of “ having to function “ were other challenges mentioned. “Yes, why is everyone so stressed?” (Female, 16), which brings up questions such as “What is man and what is he capable of? This can also lead to a feeling of «being lost», «as if one is truly alone, and cannot do anything about people being like that», or that «the world is now as it is».“ The world of the cities as a «cold, square world», where destruction is so present, is regarded by the participants as a great challenge of time.

Helplessness, sadness, loneliness, being in tension, the sensation of a great responsibility for which one cannot find any form of action — are some of the feelings that emerged in the conversations “These were my thoughts, that sometimes I find it sad that I have no voice, what do I have to do with this development? I think it’s bad, but how can I change that? (Female, 31). “I am sad that there is so much potential and so many possibilities to do something, but that few people use it. Most people just want to do their thing and few look for at the whole.” (Female, 16)

But the opposite is also very present in the discourses: “I carry the hope or perhaps the trust that people will eventually swing up there. But I find it very difficult because the opposite may be the case in this area. For me it needs a shake-up. Man, you have to do something for yourself. It’s actually the case that the feeling of a sense of awakening wouldn’t be bad. (Female, 31)

Solutions mentioned to transform the challenges were to develop «a different awareness», as one of the participants says. «Encounter and contemplation», «to reach the hearts of the people, to emerge, to find again the connection to the other people, to nature, to life».

A special emphasis on certain questions was needed from the facilitators in order to enable participants to develop deeds. It does not seem easy to find concrete places in life where the ideals, motives and desired actions can happen. To become a role model in one’s own social environment, through one’s own engagement with plastic, designing spaces for and with other people at the university, where thematic discussions can take place, to become active oneself and to give something to children in the kindergarten —these are some of the intentions mentioned by the participants. The longing to find people with whom one can act together remains. “And so, I think I can start out in a small way for myself and hope that something will develop out of it that can be brought together out of the reality of life.” (Female, 31).

For this it may be necessary to find places and moments where people have the opportunity to deal with this at all. “It needs to live through the process with other people. People with each other, as we are doing here right now, being able to live through this and then really enter this new space from another

consciousness. To grasp an openness and to give a day to all people who are not so happy to deal with these questions. To invite them to deal with it. So that the discussion or the ideas about how we want to shape the world can be carried to another level, where there is openness and sensitivity for others.” (Female, 20).

A detailed analysis of the focus groups will be part of the second publication of the research study. The colloquium had a good resonance in the team of the Youth Section and gave many impulses for the further development of the project.



## Ongoing (Re)Search & second publication

Following the first phases of research, the team has formulated new inquiries and in particular, wishes to assess the following:

What effects is engaging in a spiritual path leading to? Does it have an influence in the way we are shaping relationships?

In the first phase of research, young people described forming and experiencing meaningful relationships with self and others as one of the most vital aspects of their life. For interviewees, prosperous relationships rely on certain conditions and values, e.g.: good communication based on honesty and transparency.

One of the conditions indicated as a stepping stone to build such meaningful relationships was having a space and means to share and explore questions of a transcendental or spiritual nature, e.g.: what does it mean to be human? Who am I? What is the meaning of life and my task in it? These questions often lead them to spiritual paths and practices such as Anthroposophy. Thus, how does engaging in such questioning and spiritual practices impact the way in which young people choose, shape and experience their relationships, and how can Anthroposophical institutions support them in this?

To assess this, the team wishes to delve deeper in the 70+ hours of recorded material already obtained

How do young people evaluate their own generation's contribution to the world?

The researchers are interested in observing whether there is coherence between the perception of the participants' own experiences as a young person, and the way they observe others like themselves. This may shed more light on how these young people see their generations' influence in the world today and thus, their ideas about what it means to be young in the present time, with all its challenges and opportunities. To assess this, the team will focus on answers given in the first round of interviews; answers which have not yet been analysed.

What is the relationship between young people's strivings – wishes, ideas, hopes, motivations – and their acts of will?

In the first phase of research, some young people who participated in the interviews continued to live with the questions of the research for up to 5 months, creating a diary based on the research questions. This allows us to compare data (interviews and diaries) to observe the ideas and wishes expressed during interviews, and what was actually carried out as action in the participants' actual environment. This allows us gain knowledge of the experiences that young people have when striving to align their own intentions with their actions.

How does taking part in a peer research project concerned with the shaping of one's reality impacts young people's sense of agency?

The first phase of the research project provided some evidence about how, engaging in deep questioning about one's own capacity and responsibility in shaping the world, left young participants feeling encouraged and enthusiastic about pursuing self-articulated goals and objectives to shape

the future they long for.

Thus, young people's sense of agency in shaping reality may in fact increase after participating in an interactive dialogue such as the one carried out in the project's interviews; a dialogue that engages with questioning about one's own motivations, wishes and ideas for the future. This in turn may lead to an increase in committed participation in their own projects and initiatives.

To assess this, the team wishes to review current interviews to analyse how participatory dialogues based on questioning between peers, may inspire sense of agency in them. Additionally, researchers wish to carry out follow up interviews and questionnaires to assess how participants developed their goals and objectives after taking part in the interviews carried out since 2017.

### Expanding the sample – further encounters with young people

It is vital for this project's sense of achievement that young people wish to become involved in its activities. Participatory and integrative research processes can lead to transformative experiences of all participants, both individuals and groups, since the methods used can awaken the experience of the ability to act. The first sample considered in the 2017-18 phase of the project was made up exclusively of youth who had grown up in a context where education was easily accessible to them. The research team is now working towards expanding the sample to include other young people's voices from different educational backgrounds. We hope that, by including more diversity in the sample, the study will be enriched by the plurality of the young people's voices.

### Voices of Youth in times of Corona

After the sweeping events of the first half of 2020, we have designed within the frame of our research project an initiative that will span the second half of the year. It is about responding, as individuals connected to others, to what comes to meet us from the world that we have not chosen nor expected, and to transform it into something of value for humanity and planet.

The Youth Section Worldwide will be connecting once a month for the next half of 2020 to (Re)Search how we envision our future post-pandemic, and how to become agents of the changes we wish to see in the world. In the spirit of our research, the next 6 months will focus on living with questions and shaping initiatives out of the findings that arise from our asking. The Youth Section at the Goetheanum will act as the facilitators and gatherers of the young people's voices. The process will culminate in December at our Research Colloquium, where we will present the results achieved.

*"The world slowed down. Everyone around me retreated and looked inside. They did not rush around to jobs, holidays, after hours but spent time with themselves. People moved from panic and sadness, to discovering themselves and finding in new resources within themselves, becoming creative. On the other hand, a lot of people rushed towards new activities, only to find that they did not fill the void."* (Female, Romania, 30)

Previous to the first online gathering, we asked participants to live with the questions posed in our research project. We adapted the questions slightly to fit the present circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 crisis and collected reflections that brought to light the different aspects that these young



people find as vital needs and actions to take up now.

*“If I could give a gift to the world that would be the feeling of trust that we have the strength to create beauty, health and love as much as we want. That if we would allow ourselves to freely act out of our passions, that we would be able to develop ourselves, but also a world filled with harmony. With this strength we would not be restricted (in our general freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of knowledge or gathering), but we would be able to deal with the many challenges facing us and see the opportunities in them.”* (Female, Netherlands, 25)

Amongst the initial responses, it became apparent how for the young people of the Youth Section, deepening self-knowledge, self-development and engaging in one’s immediate surroundings is a key step in making a change for the world, so we asked ourselves: what is the link between inner change and societal change? How does change happen, what is the nature of it?

When it comes to connecting our individuality to others, the need to take our space within the institutions we are linked to was revealed, for they can be connectors between the individual and larger society as a whole. When it comes to change, we need to let go of pain and fear that being unable to predict brings about and in this, nature is the teacher that can shows us how to live with unpredictability. Changes causes us fear and pain. We need to respond to fear in the right way and become an example of how to do such thing for others.

*“If I would give a gift, it would be an awareness to the observers. An awareness, with it they will realize: the need to move, the*

*ways and targets. Not working on this now will give us and the next generations very dark periods of crying and complaining about this whole existence.*

*This awareness would be a tool for these observers to work on new systems, forming them and implementing them on communities, the small ones and big ones. The goal is to initiate the mentality of building the good instead of wasting the energy on fighting the bad. Building new systems, those will come over the current weak ones which will directly or indirectly eliminate them.”* (Male, Jordania, 28)

Corona brought fear and anxieties to the surface of our lives, but also an opportunity to reflect. One of the takeaways from our reflections is that this crisis has shed a light on the need to renew the basis upon which our interactions happen. Hence, improving ways of communication and healing links amongst disconnected and opposing parties, were some of the spaces to act in.

*“As I make the transcription of the call held in June, it appears like a puzzle to me. A puzzle created by many young people from different countries around the world, with different perspectives and backgrounds, of different ages and environments. (...) Looking back, I can highlight two main things: first, the impulse to overcome the walls that we face between ourselves and the others. Second, how connection would lead to action. Is the real encounter that we long for during this quarantine situation connected with the fact that we have faced our own inner world so strongly, with the fact that this inner world is now becoming visible externally? Is this why we are once again feeling this disconnection between what lives within us and what takes place out there, in the world?*

*When looking at our conversation it seems like there is a golden key sleeping behind*

*the landscape that we drafted. Would it be possible that our empathy for others lead us to the courage to do what is true for us?”* (Female, 25)



Photo: sunset during the Worldwide Youth Section  
co-workers gathering June 2019.

*Upcoming  
events*



## Preparations & upcoming events:

### Preparations of the February Days 2021, transformed into a joint venture.

After the February Days of 2020 which were dedicated to the climate question, the idea arose to organise the next winter conference in collaboration with the Agricultural Section around the same theme. The title and at the same time theme of the 2021 edition is 'Breathing with the climate crisis' and will take place between the 11th and 14th of February at the Goetheanum.

The signs reaching humanity from Earth are touching the foundations of our very existence. The climate crisis with the destruction of the earth's living forces, the social disruptions, and the loss of cultural and spiritual foundations are speaking to our global civilisation. It seems that it is not the human being himself who evokes this call of awakening, but the very environment around us. How can we breathe, listen to and see beyond this moment of crisis? How to act out of understanding in order to heal the lands, our common life and find a morality based on establishing our individuality in relationship to others and the world?

This call demands new stories and views to overcome fear and polarisation. In this endeavour we will work together to see how youth-striving, the wisdom of the lands and an understanding of our health can contribute to the grand paradigm shift of the time we live in. Practical experiences, natural science and spiritual science will be the guiding principles in this encounter. This will be a gathering intended where farmers and youth meet on common soil, where one can experience that

everybody actually is a farmer and where new horizons are explored.

### Preparation Worldwide Camphill Youth Gathering 2021

For the late spring of 2021 from 20st until the 23rd of May the Youth Section and the Newton Dee Camphill Community in Scotland are co-creating a youth gathering around the theme of metamorphosis. 'Community building — seeds for social and ecological transformation' form the base for this work.

The team is supported by young co-workers from the Camphill communities Esk Valley in the UK and Clanabogan in Ireland. It is the intention to build on the two former summer youth conferences that were organised by the two named Camphill communities. This impulse started in 2018 when young co-workers in Clanabogan came together around the question of 'how to carry on the flame of Camphill'. In Newton Dee there was the question on how to work and connect the young people living and the ones being interested in community live with the impulse of Camphill and anthroposophy. Therefore, Marjan Sikkell from Newton Dee in Scotland got in contact with the Youth Section at the Goetheanum and from there this collaboration was formed.

### Georgia International Youth Summer Conference 2020

Since the spring of 2019 the team had been preparing the International Youth Summer Conference with the Youth Section in Georgia. In the Summer of 2018, they as a group participated in the Summer Conference held in Dornach at the Goetheanum. After being part of this experience, they asked if

the Youth Section at the Goetheanum could imagine to co-organise such a gathering in Tbilisi, Georgia in the summer of 2020.

Between the 3rd and the 5th of May 2019, Johannes and Constanza from the team at the Goetheanum travelled to Tbilisi to work for a weekend with the Georgia team on this idea and co-crafted a theme program. In addition to the team from the Goetheanum and Georgia, Youth Section groups from Russia, Latvia and Romania were also part of the preparation work. We meet on a monthly basis through video calls in order to prepare the gathering in more detail.

Due the Corona crisis we could not let the gathering happen. Currently, the team in Georgia is rethinking their work and bought a piece of land near Tbilisi where they start rural educational work. The need to create something new instead of just applying the already created program arose. Next to this we decided to co-organise Faust in 2021 together with the Georgien team.

These dynamics are an example of how the Youth Section is working out of its vision: to create space for the initiative of young people in order to support them in shaping their strivings and endeavours.

## List of upcoming events

### February 2021:

February Days "Breathing with the Climate Crisis" with the Section for Agriculture  
11 – 14 February 2021 [Goetheanum]

3th Class Lesson Gathering Worldwide for young members  
25 – 28 February 2021 [Goetheanum]

### March/April 2021:

International Students' Conference 2021  
30 March – 3 April 2021 [Goetheanum]

Youth Section's Worldwide Gathering  
28 April – 2 May 2021 [England]

### May 2021:

Camphill Youth Gathering Worldwide  
20 – 23 May 2021 [Scotland]

### July 2021:

Summer School  
19 July – 25 July [Goetheanum]

Jugendfaust 'Die Erde verjüngen'  
30 July - 1 August [Goetheanum]

### October 2021:

Refugee theatre week  
1 – 9 October 2021 [Goetheanum]

### December 2021:

Research colloquium  
December 2021 [Goetheanum]



Photo: group work during the Worldwide  
Youth Section co-worker meeting June 2019.

# *Travels Contributions & partners*





## Travels, contributions and partnerships:

### New York — Research & conference ‘Questions of Courage’ by Andrea de la Cruz Barral

In 1924, Rudolf Steiner urged the youth of his time to be courageous and “stick together with iron will”. Almost 100 years later, these words still resonate with the youth of today, as we strive to find ways to navigate – individually and collectively – the uncertainties and challenges of our present times. This past summer in Spring Valley (NY), the conference “Questions of Courage” was an example of this striving. Over 100 young people, mainly from the US but also from other parts of the world (Netherlands, Japan, Germany, Spain), gathered together to explore peace, relationships, society, art, self-development and the future. At the heart of the conference: an impulse to master the art of being courageous to ask the right questions.

This I believe, is one of the most promising activities we can engage with as human beings today and one of the most healing acts we can perform for our current world situation. Why? Because something magical happens when we allow ourselves the time and space to delve within ourselves and find that question stirring within us; sometimes restless, sometimes unnoticed, almost always unavoidable.

Something even more powerful occurs when we meet another human being who also carries their question with such intensity, that they spark in us a burning need to set out on the adventure of seeking our own answers. The questions might differ, perhaps the

answers too, but the quest is the same. In the quest we are united.

It is dealing with meaningful questions that allows us to fully come together in an era where everything, we are told, is already answered. For in the answers we may already differ and be far from each other; but in the sharing of our innermost queries and reflections, we often find the starting point of a journey to be shared with each other in fraternity. As a young Filipino woman once told the Youth Section research team “we live in the era of information, but we should move towards living in the age of understanding”. The dialogue that ignites between young people when questions like “who am I?” “what does it mean to be human?” or “can I be fully free?” are shared, opens up doors to new possibilities never expected before; to understanding aspects of our reality that before seemed far from explicable.

In our research study “The Spiritual Striving of Youth: Shaping our Reality”, we have been observing for the past two years how, out of an invitation to engage with powerful questions, one is able to tap into a space of profound wisdom that lives within young people. A wide pool of knowledge that is ready, and yet awaiting, to be taken into consideration by others in order to transform our world. “Questions of Courage” was to me another example of Youth Section work in action. A team of young people, sticking together through the challenges that arise out of creating something together out of free will, in order to generate a meaningful space for all of our questions to be held, for genuine human encounters to take place and, out of these, our future reality.

### (Re)search in Oslo 23 - 24 of November 2019 by Andrea de la Cruz and Ioana Viscrianu

The research project was presented at the Rudolf Steiner College in Oslo, the main learning centre in Norway for Waldorf teacher training. During the morning classes, the students learnt about the Youth Section at the Goetheanum’s methods of research and about the first results of the study. After this, an open round of conversation took place, and the young people posed questions connected to their own striving.

As heard before in other meetings with youth, we heard questions and comments that seem to concern young people all around the world, perhaps particularly in Europe. For example, we heard about the struggle that young people face in knowing that what one is doing in relation to the challenges of the time is enough. They named a deep concern: what can youth from privileged backgrounds, that is, from areas such as Norway where the socio-economical life is stable and where one can enjoy security at so many levels, do to support others and the planet?

Some expressed a feeling of strangeness – of having access to so many resources and yet, having a difficulty to put their willing into action, in service of a worthy cause. Again here, the question of work, inspiring jobs and finding the possibility for one’s vocation to flourish came into the forefront of the conversations.

In the evening the research team had the chance to get to know the students at the Rudolf Steiner College and hear about their questions, which related especially to the connection between Anthroposophy and Waldorf pedagogy. Some of the young

people that we met, inspired by the processes at the Youth Section, decided to visit us at the Goetheanum and attend the Research Colloquium and the February Days conference “Bound to Earth”.

The following day, after a second presentation of the project, members of the Anthroposophical Society of all ages and people interested in questions about youth today, created a circle to discuss different topics based on the themes of youth, questioning and Anthroposophy. This was followed by dinner and continued conversation with some of the attendants at the Norwegian Anthroposophical Society’s headquarters. Here, we were able to visit the upstairs room where Rudolf Steiner himself held meetings and conversations with members in his time. A beautiful space open to receive people and their initiatives.

Through different encounters with people from all generations, we learnt about the Norwegian culture and what concerns some of its people at the moment. We got to know how young people in Norway relate and connect to Anthroposophy in a beautiful city, where the surrounding nature made a strong impact in the team.



## Belgium Summer University — Research workshop

From the 22nd until the 26th of July 2019 the Anthroposophy Summer University took place in the Belgium countryside. Johannes went to represent our team and provide a workshop about the (Re)Search project.

During this already more than 10 years exciting initiative, Dutch speaking participants interested to deepen their work with Anthroposophy, come together to work and meet each other for about a week. This initiative was founded by —and is still being carried by —a group of young Belgium members of the Anthroposophical Society in Belgium. Their work is very thorough and inspires around 50 people who come in a mixed and diverse constellation annually.

## Atlanta - (Re)Search at Facing Each Other: Freedom, Responsibility & Love – the annual conference of the Anthroposophical Society in North America.

At the end of 2019, we presented (Re)Search at Facing Each Other: Freedom, Responsibility & Love, the annual conference of the Anthroposophical Society in North America. In a keynote titled The Future of Our Society: Freedom, Commitment & Youth, and a workshop on Love & Devotion in Research, Andrea de la Cruz took participants of the annual conference through the methodologies, results and future steps of the Youth Section's social study.

In her talk, Andrea presented her task of connecting with the voices of young people

from around the world to find out what it is that is leading them into their future, what is living within them and what is motivating them to take action. She also shared her reflections on the Anthroposophical Society as an open model for relating out of freedom in service of knowledge. The article below is an edited version of her talk.

### Facing Each Other – and ourselves – through questions.

Like every other project at the Youth Section, (Re)Search is led by young people. The entire first report – published in the Spring of 2019 – was the result of young researchers getting together with other young people who voluntarily wanted to investigate what it means to be young today. This is a special situation: peers researching what it means to be young by looking at each other's situations, by recognizing oneself in the other. A truly "Facing Each Other" project.

To start with our investigative efforts, we needed a question that wouldn't impose on the people that were going to take part what we, the researchers, wanted to find out. We needed something that would open a vessel, very much like in the beautiful image of this annual conference, that would create a space for the wisdom of youth to come in. The question we shaped: what would the world look like in 2030 if what lives within me becomes a reality, and what will you do to make it happen? was perfect, as we were searching for a question that would allow us to engage in a process of dialogue with oneself and another. A question not to answer, but to live with.

Through this question we also wanted to create a space for young people to narrate their experiences of reality. Our model was very much based on looking at individual voices instead of sample groups selected

at random. This is how spiritual science comes at the heart of this research, by looking at each individual human being that generously participated as a carrier of their own voice, individuality and wisdom. Today, this might even be already a radical act in social research, to have the space for one to "actually name the things, to name the things for yourself so that they are in relationship with you", as an interviewee explained during our encounter.

An example of the wisdom arising from the questions posed during our interviews can be seen in the answer given by an 18-year-old student from Philippines:

*"If what lives inside me is to live realized into the world, the world might become a dark of scary place. I would try and find the light and goodness in myself to prevent the dark from becoming."* (Participant at "Courage" International Student Conference, Philippines)

Here's a young person voicing his own intention to work on self-knowledge so that "good may become" through him. He wasn't the only one. Over and over we heard young people speaking of the importance of developing self-knowledge for their future. This is a red line through the participants. In our interviews, a special sort of self-awareness seemed to arise during the dialogues we were hosting. This quote is an example of what might come when we are given the space to reflect about ourselves. In this space, consciousness arises of the things we still have to work through. This gives way to the responsibility, love and commitment for embracing oneself in becoming.

### Investigating the right conditions of encounter for a transformative process to take place.

The fact that (Re)Search is a project of the

Youth Section, does not imply that the question and the methodologies we deploy are only relevant and valuable for people aged 35 and under. During the research process we also took part in events and workshops with people of all ages and found out, that the question resonated beyond age and nationalities; it is truly universal! During the Facing Each Other workshop, we spent some time interviewing each other, endeavouring to create the right conditions for something new to arise. This was practiced to demonstrate aspects of our current research, which investigates which are the right conditions for peer-research, so that individual empowerment can take place through a dialogical transformative process.

Our interest in investigating the right conditions of encounter arose when we were interviewing the interviewers about their experience listening to other people's lives. They were telling us that they could experience how something "new" was coming in the interviews. They sometimes could feel that the information that they were receiving was something completely new for them as listeners, but also for the young people who were expressing it. It was as if in that vessel created through questions a kind of being, - a special knowledge that was impossible to imagine would come – was dropping in and leaving something that was truly new and future-oriented for both the interviewer and interviewee:

*"Thank you for listening it's actually just really lovely to be listened to. I have never come to some of those conclusions before. I can't believe I just described my life story! I have never done that before."* (Interviewee, 32, UK)

"In my second interview something really happened, something new and that's for me



the interesting thing, that you see people discovering, telling you and yourself new things which they did not know and they also don't know where they come from. But maybe that shouldn't be the goal of the interview, it should be about giving the space and just listen." (Interviewer, 27, Netherlands)

Perhaps our goal was not to create a vessel for something really new to come for the participants out of a shared encounter based on universal questions, but it happened. Thus, arose the question: what is it that our methodology is enabling to happen? What is it about this type of facing each other that is having this kind of impact? In spiritual science we talk about the future coming to meet us and us – human beings – having to make a space for it to manifest and speak to us. Is it possible that the future can show itself to us when we gather in this manner to (re)search ourselves in a dialogue with another? Perhaps this research was more than just hearing youth's testimonies, perhaps we were also creating a methodology of investigating that could bring about much more!

In our search to answer this question, we looked at different variables, starting with the nature of the questions we were asking: were they responsible for these magical moments? Yes, certainly, asking the right questions are important, but it's not everything. We followed by looking at the characteristics of the interviewer: what soul disposition does the researcher need to have? Devotion, interest, love towards the story of the other, were some of the aspects we could identify as needed in order to create the vessel for the new to come. But sometimes, even if the researcher was present and interested in the interviewee, the phenomenon did not take place. Was it about the inner development of the young people we were interviewing? Was it their connection link to Anthroposophy?

We looked at many variables in the search for answers.

### **The importance of coming together in freedom.**

One of our hypotheses was that what is vital to generate a vessel for something new to arise in the meeting could be freedom: the free act of saying yes to the meeting with one another for no other incentive than just to be with each other.

When, as an interviewer, I think of the encounters when I searched for something specific with a prejudiced mind, I can see that the "magic", so to say, did not take place in that interview. But when I forgot in the middle of the dialogue that I was with a special person and I simply was there, present in the meeting as if the meeting was all that mattered, or when the interviewee who had no reason for sitting for hours telling who they were, for no incentive was there for sometimes up to three long hours... why would someone do that? We are all really busy! It wasn't therapy, they didn't need it, we weren't giving out anything... There was no reason to come together other than for the sake of being together in the spirit of sharing our stories.

### **Freedom at the base of human encounter.**

How does this link to the Anthroposophical Society? No matter where we look at today as young people, it is difficult to find social forms, ways of being together that are truly free. But with the Anthroposophical Society, it is different: here the point is actually to come together, in freedom, out of a willingness to nurture the life of the soul and in recognition of spiritual science.

As a young person, and as a researcher, when I look at the testimonies given by youth about society today, when I think

about my own experiences, linking to society or to social forms, they are all uncomfortable, disappointing in some cases. Becoming a member of the society was also uncomfortable at the beginning. But now I understand that it is a space for coming together freely with others out of interest and love for our spiritual development. Steiner knew what he was doing, because he could see that the need would arise for freer affiliations between individuals in the future.

One can ask, what kind of societies might be wished by young people today? In our interviews, we collected quotes such as this, that denote the strangeness, for some young people, of living in our western societies:

I see a world and a future in which all of us are inspired to do what we are passionate about and use it in service to others. As we find the courage to do this for another, we allow others to do the same, as they would too feel liberated from the pressure and expectations that society puts on us. (18, nationality unknown, Participant at Courage, International Students Conference at the Goetheanum 2019)

Society can be experienced as a source of outs pressure and expectations; it is something to try to break through for the younger generations. And yet, at the same time, when we look at studies focusing on young people's longings, we can assert the importance of belonging, relationship forming and sharing with others when one is young. It is shocking in this context, to find statistics such as "1 in 3 young adults in the USA is suffering from loneliness". We have on the one hand, a sensation of being oppressed when belonging to a society and on the other, a deep wish to connect with others. Another report a few years back, indicated that the main challenge for young people – as defined

by youth up to 25 years old and youth workers in the UK – was "not being able to find their place within society". So, it is clear, youth want to turn to social forms, but they do not see themselves included or reflected in the possibilities that surround them.

### **The Anthroposophical Society: forming meaningful relationships by sharing the path of knowledge.**

The Anthroposophical Society, in this context, could be offering young people a form of society that they are craving. How? Two of the key guiding motivations driving young people's participation in the world according to our study were forming meaningful relationships and commitment to one's questions and pursue of their answers.

As a young member of the Anthroposophical Society, it seems to me that these are two aspects completely contained within the society structure that Rudolf Steiner envisioned 100 years ago. What is nurturing the life of the soul if not a call to meet others to share a journey of individual questions? What are the branches of the society if not spaces for people to gather and investigate together, igniting their own questions through each other's contributions? It is not about sharing the same question, but the fact that each of us carry a question within and that we walk alongside each other while we carry it; nurturing and supporting each other through encounter in the process of answering our inquiries.

Young people want to come together to search for answers to their questions. Spiritual Science and Anthroposophy, offer just that; but sometimes, the Anthroposophical Society is not visible for us. It is difficult to find open, concise information about Anthroposophy today and thus, it is difficult to take the step



to become a member of the Anthroposophical Society.

### **The future of the Anthroposophical Society.**

Perhaps it is not about maintaining a society created 100 years ago but instead, about generating within its flexible and future-like nature, an example of how individuals could bind themselves to one another in service of something bigger than their own individualities. When a group of young people was studying the Christmas Conference in Dornach, we learnt that the society was established to support the School of Spiritual Science, and to come together in the name of seeking for the truth and knowledge of the human being. The question now is, what can we do together, not to preach or become missionaries, but at least to open the conversation and say to other young people: maybe there is a way of coming together to shape what future societies might look like!

Once we asked young members of the society what they thought the Anthroposophical Society should be like. One of them said, that the Anthroposophical Society should be a lighthouse for others who are searching for their way, and a reference or prototype of what future societies should be like. Can we imagine our current society as an example for others? Probably not yet. What kind of work does it require from us in order to shape it into a lighthouse we are proud of, for others to find?

From our research at the Youth Section, it is clear to us the need to create spaces, vessels for Facing Each Other so that the future that wants to come begins to incarnate. Imagine what could happen if the Anthroposophical Society was an institution dedicated to generating these spaces worldwide, as a truly Michaelic impulse. What new possibilities could arise from our meeting each other for

a world that seems to be breaking apart? Everywhere we look there is polarization, hatred, division. What if we were an example of individuals of different opinion, background and development, coming together in search for the truth, freely?

### **A call for young people to take up their place.**

The social forms are not dead, they just need to be reborn. This should be done through many intergenerational dialogues. It is true that in the younger generations, there is a tendency to become increasingly individualized, but one cannot deny the longing we have for coming together. Youth is not antipathetic towards the idea of belonging to social institutions, but it is true that we are not finding ourselves in the already established ones. So how may we change them?

Perhaps it is not about “others” making space for us as youth (the older generations, are often criticized for not including young people in the institutions). Perhaps it’s about us igniting our courage and responsibility for taking our space. Belonging to society is not easy, and it shouldn’t be. Belonging to a society is not about friendship and meeting in similarities, it’s not about being in a bubble. It’s about being with each other as individuals and creating something; making that space for that which goes beyond you or me to appear, to occur, for the wellbeing of the planet.

## **Bridges between public life and anthroposophical work - Ioana Viscrianu**

In response to an invitation from the Youth Initiative and the Anthroposophical Society in Romania, Constanza Kaliks and Ioana Viscrianu flew to Romania for a weekend. A variety of encounters, experiences and lively themes made these days an intensive and enriching time for everyone involved.

Raising awareness and meeting the questions and concerns of young people in Oradea

The first stop on the journey was a town first mentioned in the Middle Ages, which heart is the Grosswardein Fortress. Today it is a public cultural place where various activities take place. This is where the Anthroposophical Society has its space – at the center of the city’s happenings.

About 30 young people were present at this meeting. Besides the group of young people who belong to the Youth Section in Romania, many students from the Technical University of Oradea were present. They talked about their regular meetings and their current concerns: the ecology, taking responsibility for the world, individual possibilities for taking action, and the role of art today, were some of the topics that were addressed.

Constanza and Ioana talked about the Youth Section’s task of creating spaces for dialogue and presented the research project. The Youth Section in Romania also reported how in different contexts (Waldorf Schools, conferences) they have posed the questions of the future that are connected with the research project, and what different possibilities for work have emerged from it.

The meeting opened with questions about the mutuality of the process of cognition and the spiritualization of thought. A discussion about the School of Spiritual Science and its current concerns followed the lecture.

After this rich evening and the Saturday morning organized by Constanza Kaliks, the two teams of the Youth Section (Romania and Dornach) made their way to Cluj.

From the question space of young people to anthroposophy to the established anthroposophical life in Cluj

A second meeting with people connected to the anthroposophical movement took place in the Waldorf kindergarten in Cluj. A similar programme to the one before including questions from the previous audience, was arranged by Constanza Kaliks.

The next morning there was another presentation of the Youth Section’s research project by Ioana. She was able to present it in Romanian, which contributed greatly to the quality of the discussion that followed. Questions and concerns arose from representatives of institutions in Romania, which could be a source of cooperation in the future.

The meeting ended in an extended circle of the Youth Section where activities, concerns and work challenges in the Youth Section were discussed.

The two Youth Section teams said goodbye with great pleasure and solidarity, as further support from each other was planned. With positive feedback, they made their way together to the city centre where, after a short cultural tour, it was time to return home.



**“We need a knowledge of that what is in becoming”  
Lecture by Constanza Kaliks  
during the annual Agricultural  
Conference 2019**

The picture that we have of others implies—often unconsciously – their ways of being in and with the world. How the person themselves thinks has consequences for their action – in relation to others, to nature, to themselves.

Is there a way that human beings can see and be in-and-with the world that grasps the process of becoming in such a way that it constantly develops anew through and with this seeing and being? – A seeing that becomes cognition and a being that becomes life are the expression of a spiritual reality. That kind of reality that is to be found in human beings and is needed in the human being as an active co-creator, is a reality in transformation that can become humanised – in all its relationships: in relation to itself, to others and to nature.

Today a cognition of that what is in becoming appears to be increasingly important, in fact necessary, for many areas of life. This requires a type of cognition that demands that the cognisor herself enters into movement in order to learn to see what is coming into being in the accomplishment of this process – so that what they see is more than what has already become.

Many young people nowadays are asking the question of how to live on earth if you take your own responsibility seriously. The earth is so polluted – we should not allow any more waste to be deposited – how will it be possible to live on and from the

earth? A conflicting feeling arises that was expressed for example at the conference at the beginning of the year in questions about climate change: on the one hand I do not want to make any impact, but on the other I have entered the world to exist there and do something for the future of the earth.

The School of Spiritual Science would like to make a contribution to these questions – for the cognition of that which is coming into being, that is always a relationship, is formed from relationships and that creates both relationships and connections. What kind of cognition can grasp life – that which is always changing? Spiritual science in this context is not knowledge of the spirit but spirit that becomes knowing in its living reality, through the living reality in which it takes part: a knowledge that arises in and through life. Rudolf Steiner talked about a thinking “[...] not [in] mere thoughts but [one] that sinks us into the things, that thinks with the things and events of the world.”<sup>1</sup>

There is currently an explicit question about a change in consciousness. If we look back at the development of our consciousness, we look back at change. A picture that can help us to understand this is that of the infinite sphere and the ubiquitous centre. God is – the tradition of this statement can be followed back to Hermes Trismegistus and was received and developed in the European Middle Ages – described as follows:<sup>2</sup> “God is the infinite sphere: its centre is everywhere; its periphery is nowhere.” Master Eckhart described this sentence in a sermon at Easter 1292, and at the start of the modern age

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1. Steiner, Rudolf. *Spiritual-Scientific Consideration of Social and Pedagogic Questions*. GA 192. Dornach: Rudolf Steiner Verlag, 1991. Lecture 3, 1st May 1919.

2. Cf. Mahnke, Dietrich. *Unendliche Sphäre und Allmittelpunkt*. Stuttgart – Bad Cannstadt: Friedrich Frommann Verlag, 1966.



Photo: portrait Constanza Kaliks, June 2019.



Giordano Bruno moved these previously divine characteristics into the world: now the universe becomes an infinite sphere whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere.

This transformation in consciousness at the start of the modern age indicates a great turning point: the human being begins to “objectify” the earth, to reify it, and it is therefore increasingly experienced as a possession. Human beings can understand the earth, it becomes transparent to them when they understand the relationships and can express this in a common language – the language of what can be measured, the language of mathematics. This allows man to increasingly conquer space with his knowledge, to the point where he can go to the limits of the earth and beyond, can even leave the earth and “look back” at it. The human being looks “back” at the earth from the moon – in 1969 for the first time, somewhat more than half a century ago.

The reification of the world and the associated way to know oneself in the world create continuous exclusion, destruction. The human being does what he wants with the world, with other people, with nature – from a consciousness that experiences itself at the centre of a world that is at his disposal.

Johannes Kepler discovered from measurements – initially contrary to his own assumptions – that the courses of the planets are elliptical. He saw the sun-centred system as a dynamic universe which remained in motion due to the relationship of mass and movement.<sup>3</sup>

There are two focal points in an ellipse to which all points have a specific relationship

3. On the work published 400 years ago in 2019 on the course of the stars cf. Held, Wolfgang. Das Goetheanum, Feb. 2020.

– the sum of the distances of each point of the ellipse from the two focal points is constant. The picture which arises is no longer a geometrical concentric one, but one determined by a distance ratio and in which the relationships of the elliptical courses of all planets stay in interaction and in mutual dependence as a whole moving organism. The relationships of all relationships give rise to the wonderful dance of the planets – the relationship is the constitutive element. The mutuality, the reciprocity is the constituting formative element: it appears as a condition of the “way it is” of the solar system.

Does this picture not correspond to the consciousness which is needed nowadays: to understand the human being in his connection, his constitutive relationship to others, to the world, to himself? His relationship to the world will determine the world, his relationship to human beings can help – or hinder – the human in the human being. It is a change in consciousness from a centric consciousness to an “ex-centric” one, in which a force field arises from the relationship, from a reality of constitutive reciprocity.

Rudolf Steiner developed a quest for knowledge that sought and recognised the constitutive element of one’s own development in the meeting with the world and others. The act of knowing becomes participation in a relationship – with the world, with nature, with the other and with oneself in a self-knowing perspective.

Understanding the other as a free human being poses the particular challenge of understanding the other by means of their own concepts, in other words, “we must take over into our own spirit those concepts by which he determines himself”<sup>4</sup> – according to

4. Steiner, Rudolf. The Philosophy of Freedom. GA 4. Tb., Dornach: Rudolf Steiner Verlag, 2016. Chapter XIV. “ [...]

Steiner in his “Philosophy of Freedom”. Here again it is mutuality that enables knowing – a space arises in the relationship which not only has a centre but which is formed from the relationship of both “focal points”.

This inclusion and involvement of the other in our awareness is a central aspect of the change in consciousness which started to appear at the beginning of the 20th century. The Copernican revolution did not happen at a single instant but extended over a long period of over 100 years: from the moment when it was thought to material evidence through measurements. It took even longer until it became universally influential for science. Maybe this change, that started to be able to be experienced and seen at the start of the 20th century, is also like this, still emerging, in search of its own language that will allow it to be expressed.

The experience that cognition participates in reality is common to all human beings: it does not appear to be linked to specific forms of education. The Brazilian teacher Paulo Freire, for example, describes work with people who as adults are unable to read and write. During a meeting in a cultural group in Chile, one farm worker said: “Now I see that there is no world without human beings.” To this the teacher replied:

*Let us for the sake of argument assume that everyone on earth dies, but that the earth itself remains with its trees, birds, animals, rivers, lakes and stars. Would all that not be a world? “No!” answered the farm worker emphatically, “because then there would be no one to say, that is a world.”<sup>5</sup>*

but if we are to understand a free individuality, we must take over into our own spirit those concepts by which he determines himself, in their pure form (without mixing our own conceptual content with them).“

5. Freire, Paulo. Pädagogik der Unterdrückten. Stuttgart – Berlin: Kreuz Verlag, 1971, p. 87.

This person knows that cognition of the world is not indifferent to the world: there must be someone there who says that there is a world.

Thus, the meeting with the world is not secondary but a constitutive reality of every human being. Every person lives in different, simultaneous, precise but nevertheless interpenetrative relationships which have him as the one, and nature, the others, the things, as the other multiple focal points of the ellipses that keep themselves in mutual relation.

The quality of the whole space changes fundamentally if this is no longer determined by only one centre and its sphere, but from an interaction of many mutually determining focal points which are each related to one another and are constituted from this relationship to the other points. The entire sphere then develops completely differently when formed from non-centric relationships: it includes the living. Getting to know this living reality space requires a different language than the one for what can be measured – the sections of the Free University of Spiritual Science aim to practise this language on the specific questions that arise nowadays, in the pursuance of a search for knowledge which tries to grasp the reality of what is in the process of becoming. The becoming that – according to Paulo Freire – is the vocation and the right of all human beings.



## “The Earth as a Mirror of the Human Being” by Johannes Kronenberg, April 2020.

It is a fact that we are going through an ecological crisis. We are all aware of measurable developments, such as rising temperatures and loss of species diversity. Nevertheless, it is not only a technological issue. Here Johannes Kronenberg goes in search of images and representations: what images do we have of the earth? And what images of the human being?

We have got into an imbalance with the earth. The oceans, forests, soils and living creatures can no longer cope with the tango of society in its present form. Neither can society keep up with its own acceleration and is stumbling as in “The Blind leading the Blind”<sup>6</sup> into the unknown. Awareness of this has been growing over the past 100 years. In recent years a rapid awakening has been taking place and this issue will at least occupy humanity for the coming 100 years. What does this imbalance mirror? How can we gain a deeper and more nuanced understanding of what is happening in order to be able to act in a balanced and healthy way? A question which is not easy to answer, but which presents a challenge for humanity in our time.

### Images of a Crisis

The situation in which we find ourselves as a global society has been termed as ‘climate crisis’ by the United Nations<sup>7</sup> and as of November 2019 has been updated to “climate emergency” by the European Union. Some of the politicians and some members of the scientific community are fixated on ‘calculating our way out’ of this

situation as quickly as possible. Thus, in the Netherlands it is discussed to reduce the maximum speed on the motorway in order to reduce the greenhouse gases so that then more buildings may be constructed for the growing population. Near Berlin the car company Tesla intends to fell 90 hectares of forest this spring in order to build a factory that is to produce half a million electric cars a year. However, Elon Musk, the CEO of this company, has agreed to ‘replant’ a million trees somewhere else. Many further examples could be mentioned that show that the earth is being considered and treated as a machine with replaceable parts. You take something away here and replace it somewhere else. The most conspicuous example perhaps is carbon trading, in which European countries can buy CO2 emissions rights from one another to enable further economic development. In this dynamic the business world preaches that ‘green’ economic growth is possible too without redefining western standards of living. Thus, our environment has moved to occupy the centre of debate and this brings a new polarisation with it. Well-known climate activists, such as Paul Kingsnorth<sup>8</sup>, are withdrawing and young faces are taking on the ‘battle’.

Left-hand picture: the head of the earth not only cool, also moist. Relative air humidity at 100 metres up; right-hand: vultures fly at a height of up to 11 km. over Africa – here the air movement at this limit of life.

Nevertheless, there seems to be more to this debate, as was described in the magazine “Das Goetheanum” last autumn<sup>9</sup>.

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8. Paul Kingsnorth is a British climate activist, who, after decades of protesting, has withdrawn to the countryside with his family. Now he is known as the author of novels and essays, which produce new narratives for society in the context of the Dark Mountain Project that he co-founded. The project appeals to others to join in and ‘write’ as well. More on this in the essay “Uncivilization”, 2009.  
9. Issue 36/2019 and 43/2019 with the texts of Andreas Neider, Renatus Derbidge and Hans-Ulrich Schmutz.

The necessity and the yearning for a new image of the world and horizon have been unavoidable for a long time. For this crisis is not just limited to the climate, where greenhouse gases and CO2 aspects are only symptoms, but is calling for an expansion of consciousness. The concepts of climate change, climate crisis and so on offer a limited understanding of what is happening. In the Dark Mountain Project, co-founded by Paul Kingsnorth, there is talk of ‘new narratives’ and images that should bring the entire world into a healthy rhythm and into balance. In this regard, what are the tasks or questions for the Goetheanum, the ‘house of the word’, in the global polylogue?

### The five Voices of Today

We need to first of all acknowledge the various voices in the debate before bringing in a healing voice into this shouting match over the climate. Currently, the debate is highly polarised and the quality of the discourse remains really limited. In the climate debate five dominant voices can be distinguished. The first is the voice of the so-called ‘climate change sceptics’, who are convinced that there is no warming of the earth occurring or else that, at any rate, it has nothing to do with human activity. A second voice comes from the ‘techno-optimists’ who claim they are able to resolve the whole question with more technology. The third voice is that of the ‘climate orthodox’, who are full of the idea that we have hardly any time left and have to do everything to reduce the emissions as quickly as possible and avert disaster. The fourth voice comes from the friends of ‘climate justice and system change’, who say that the crisis is connected to the economic, social and ecological system and the sole solution lies in a reform of the capitalist system, producing the CO2. The fifth voice is that of ‘climate disaster’ and is preaching that everything is too late.

Charles Eisenstein, who has researched these perspectives<sup>10</sup>, shows that there are correspondences within these polarities. The one pole says that everything is fine and the other that the end of the world has already begun. In this cacophony there is apparently at present little room for voices that try to view the earth and humanity in their interconnectedness and to create harmony.

### A new Enlightenment?

In 2018 Paul Kingsnorth, the above-mentioned climate activist, said in an interview<sup>11</sup> he has come to a new and (for him) surprising theory: the climate crisis is essentially a spiritual crisis. He interprets this spiritual crisis as a lack of connection with the life processes, but he does not take this sketchy description any further. Also, the Club of Rome made a similar statement in 2018 at its 50th year anniversary, describing the climate crisis as a philosophical crisis.<sup>12</sup> However, what this means was not developed here any further either. It stays as an idea that a new enlightenment or Renaissance is necessary in order to make progress.

Such statements are not new. In 1938 Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, the agronomist, described the same perspective in his book “Die Fruchtbarkeit der Erde” (Farming and Gardening: Soil Fertility, Renewal and Preservation) in relation to the ‘crisis in agriculture’, which had already begun. However, what do these statements mean with regard to a spiritual crisis, which is connected to our relationship to the earth? Just at this point a new chapter could be started and researched.

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10. Ibid.

11. Tegenlicht, De Aarde Draait Door, 16th December 2018.

12. In October 2018 I took part in the celebration of this anniversary and recommend the publication “Come on” of the Club of Rome.



“The hardening, the process of becoming more concrete, in the physical world is taking place at an enormous rate”.

### Unconventionality

“It is critical for the future evolution of humanity what image we form for ourselves of the being of the earth. Do we live and work on a planet that has decayed to the point of death, or are our thoughts and actions directed to a living being that is part of the eternal law ‘die and become’ (Stirb und werde)?”, Günther Wachsmuth writes in his book, published in 1945 “Erde und Mensch – ihre Bildekräfte, Rhythmen und Lebensprozesse” (The Etheric Formative Forces in Cosmos, Earth and Man)<sup>13</sup>. Wachsmuth appeals to people to see and research the earth as a living organism, in contrast to modern science, which tears reality into isolated fragments, reduces them and finally leads to seeing the earth as a machine. This goal of understanding the earth scientifically as a living being can be seen as a great challenge, especially after almost 300 years of ‘machine-like’ thinking, modern technology and industry that have extensively altered nature. Wachsmuth puts forward the proposition that “a certain degree of unconventionality is an important prerequisite for progress in the sciences”<sup>14</sup>.

Collaboration among the experts of, for example, meteorology, biology and medicine is necessary to research and understand the earth as a living being. A few years later, in 1951, Wachsmuth reminded us with an amazing prescience of the influence of human beings and technology on the earth. “Through the rapid development of technology, which involves us ... in having a greater impact on those regions of the mantle of air, not yet researched, we interfere

13. Guenther Wachsmuth, Erde und Mensch. 1945, p. 13  
14. Ibidem, p. 10.

with processes of the whole earth; gaining a sufficient overview of these as such is well beyond our present means”<sup>15</sup>. At that time, he already had an intimation of the current situation, including the present imbalance of the mantles and organs of the earth, which the EU portrays as ‘climate emergency’.

### Gaia is calling

In the decades following further authors and researchers have concerned themselves with this idea and image of the earth as a living organism. In 1962 the well-known-book “Silent Spring” by zoologist Rachel Carson was published, and engaged itself with the pollution of the oceans and soils through the application of chemicals in agriculture. The book came about in connection with the court case of Marjorie Spock and Polly Richards – both of them active at that time in the Anthroposophical Society of the USA. They opposed the government of the United States on account of the use of the insecticide DDT<sup>16</sup> in private gardens of New York<sup>17</sup>. Ten years later, in 1972, the renowned Club of Rome published the report “The Limits to Growth”, in which they warn for the destruction of the earth and of society through the pre-dominating consumer nature of the economy. A further prominent voice was that of James Lovelock, who is seen as a pioneer of the climate movement. He worked with the so-called Gaia hypothesis, likewise with the aim of approaching the earth as a living being. He describes his views in the book “Gaia: A new Look at Life on Earth” of 1979. Because of his belief and his conviction that atomic energy (about which Wachsmuth had already warned) could really help humanity, he was, though, a controversial figure among a lot of climate activists. Finally,

15. Ibidem, p. 12.  
16. Dichlordiphenyltrichlorethan  
17. Dan Mckanan, Eco-Alchemy: Anthroposophy and the History and Future of Environmentalism. 2018

in 1987, the United Nations met in Oslo to draw up the famous Brundtland Report “Our common Future”, from which the present definition of sustainability arose. A lot of government meetings have followed right up to this year’s climate conference COP26<sup>18</sup>, which is supposed to take place in Glasgow in November 2020. Wachsmuth’s view that the earth is not only an organism, but that it is living in a rhythm of “dying and becoming” is thus present in the undercurrents of the climate debate. Nonetheless, this needs to be more conscious, for, the reactions to the climate crisis are frequently aimed at more ‘sustainability’ and ‘emergency measures’ and still regard the earth as a machine that can be redirected and repaired.

Picture left: Just as varied as the coastlines is the warmth mantle of the earth. Here at sea level; picture right: Never still. The movement of the sea’s waves and temperature of the surface water.

### Crisis of techno-humanity

However, if we want to understand this situation as a spiritual crisis in dealing with the earth as something living, what perspectives arise? A possible view could be that we have not only lost our centre ground as a society, but that the original – spiritual and terrestrial – rhythmical processes of evolution have been radically accelerated. The hardening process, “concretisation”, in the physical world is taking place at an immense speed. It is missing its actual goal of getting to know the physical world and serving the living realm. One example of this, among many is: in modern cities the roads are not designed for people but for cars. This leads to an incentive to travel by car.

18. COP stands for “Conference of the Parties” and is a meeting of countries which signed the Convention on Climate Change in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and which have been meeting every year since 1995. Roughly 20,000 officials world-wide are involved in these meetings.

The materialisation of the living realm is moving so rapidly that soon human beings will fuse with the machines, at least, if it were to go the way of Ray Kurzweil, the chief programmer of Google. In his book “The Age of Spiritual Machines” of 1999<sup>19</sup> he sketches the theory that humans will develop machines that are more intelligent than themselves. Kurzweil describes this as “the law of accelerating returns”. In other words, this will result in the exponential increase in the quality and quantity of the technological achievements (knowledge is included as well). A lot of the climate problems are considered from this techno-optimistic viewpoint: as robot people (‘transhuman’) we will not need either clean air or clean water; care and health can be programmed and art and culture will become superfluous. The field of activity of individuals like Ray Kurzweil and companies like Google is not small; on the contrary, billions of dollars are being made available to turn technologically optimistic evolutionary thinking into reality. The fact that the loudest voice in the climate debate is the techno-optimistic one is therefore no surprise. By the way, these views can be very precisely identified in the current Corona crisis and in the measures taken.

### The Planet of Love

However, with the so-called climate crisis maybe the earth wants us to realise something so as to possibly mirror a different image of the future human being. Obviously, naively excluding technology does not present a serious option. Nevertheless, a

19. In “The Matrix” we can see how artificial intelligence keeps people in its grip and sends them to sleep in a kind of cocoon. Through chemical sensations in sleep all drives and pleasures can be experienced. Yet, people cannot ‘wake up’ any more in reality and move about freely. The super machine lives from the forces of the sleeping people and turns the whole planet into one huge machine that drifts through the universe.



living, free relationship out of our hearts with the real world of ideas should be nurtured, if humanity is to progress in a balanced relationship to technology.<sup>20</sup>

In his lecture cycle on the Gospel of St. John in 1908 Rudolf Steiner sketched how the earth should become the planet of love.<sup>21</sup> On the way to this overwhelming image, according to Steiner, we as human beings need to overcome our own egoism, mistakes, lies, and finally illness and death through our ego development. However, if we sense the heartbeat of our times, it is exactly to be seen that the earth is mirroring our fear, our egoism, errors, lies, illnesses and death processes. This could make it clear what it could mean to live in this spiritual crisis. Not only the connection with the rhythm of the earth or spiritual reality is getting lost, but also the awareness of the power and potential of our own 'I' is being overlooked, as is shown in the well-known film "The Matrix" – this film appeared, like Ray Kurzweil's book, in 1999. The question of what it means to become a loving human being — not a 'spiritual machine' — living in a rhythm with an earth that breathes, may become a connecting thread, a guiding Imagination in the midst of this climate global debate.

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20. See: Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts. GA 26, p. 183-185

21. Rudolf Steiner, St John's Gospel. GA 103, lecture 3, 20th May 1908

## Leiden Students — visit to the Youth Section

During fall 2019 a group of students from Leiden, The Netherlands, came to visit the Youth Section and Goetheanum for a week and to work together. They were following the newly founded 'Minor Antroposofie' program from Leiden University of Applied Sciences (embedded in the Bachelor curricula and accessible for all 3rd years Bachelors students in The Netherlands). In this context they explored the Goetheanum, took part in lessons from the Anthroposophical Studies, followed Research sessions led by Andrea from our team and went to the Alps in order to have a wide experience of Switzerland and the Goetheanum.

Out of this encounter the question came to the Youth Section to integrate the (Re)Search methodologies and process in their curriculum. The next generation of students visited us again in the autumn of 2020. Out of the first encounter, the Youth Section at the Goetheanum was asked to support the faculty to integrate the (Re)Search methodologies and processes in the Minor's curriculum. The second generation of students visited us again in Autumn 2020. Most of them experienced the Goetheanum for the first time and found out about a variety of anthroposophical aspects. Following a daily research-themed session with Ioana, they had the opportunity to work with Johannes on climate questions. The students also paid a visit to the Natural Sciences Section and learnt more about the Goetheanum and its surroundings. Many of them left wishing to visit again to dive deeper in Anthroposophy.



# *Youth Section House*



Photo: Dorneckstrasse 1, the Youth Section guest house.



Photo: view to the garden to the west from Dorneckstrasse 1, the Youth Section guest house.



## Youth Section guest house

### The house and its initiatives by Rocio Ferrera

The Youth Section House is an open space where young people can find a place to meet. Here, we want to give the possibility to young people from all around the world to be able to stay for a donation in our house.

During the year 2019/20, many young people found a place to stay during conferences, internships or just visiting this special place. Many groups of students came to have an experience around the Goetheanum, sharing their backgrounds and sometimes finding spaces of work together.

The doors of the house were open during the day and people could use the coffee machine, the place to study, make music and encounter others.

During the year many students brought life to the house. And with the new initiatives started to arrive through long conversations. We started cooking once a week with the students of the Anthroposophical Studies, and it was clear how much interest there was in many different topics. We created for example, two study groups. One about the Karma of the Anthroposophical Society and another one about Rudolf Steiner's Economic Course. Also, we discovered how many people didn't know how to knit! So, we started with Selma a craft afternoon. Today we have a group made up of people from China, Russia, Slovenia, Denmark, Argentina, Germany, USA, Spain and New Zealand, and we already saw sweaters, socks and scarfs!

Just like there was a space to knit, there was also space for debates about political world

situations and a dream circle was offered, too. On Advent Sundays we shared stories, sang together and made Christmas crafts.

We had our Thursday Evening events and this year counted with the collaboration from many people with special interest. We held evenings related to biography, Astrology, creative writing, debates about climate questions, game nights, movie nights with popcorn, art therapy, conversations with the young members of the First Class of the School of Spiritual Science, an encounter between the general secretaries and the young people, music & art nights, etc.

Many people who came to the house are asking things that used to happen in the past, like the shared dinners that used to happen before Thursday evenings started. So, we made it happen! DemEster took place every Thursday, with Ester, a student from the course, cooking for us a warm meal. In this way we could also create an encounter space before the workshop started.

If one would arrive to our house right now, one could find many paintings all around. Art was waiting for us to let it in. Marina and Mariana organized art exhibitions and later, Mariana moved her atelier into the house. Since then, not only the common space but also the rooms and the stairs, started to be full of life! Also, thanks to the help of friends who were coming in to renew a bit the space, we held a day's work and we created a new shelf, new living space, and many other little details.

Thanks to Johannes' ideas and hands, a beautiful aromatic garden arose! Now, you have the possibility to look for some fresh spices next to the sunflowers if you are cooking here.

From the end of March 2020 our house was forced to close the doors due the corona restrictions and it was at this time that the house took a bath! Deep cleaning, painting walls, new designs, and re-ordering took place.

We are looking forward to hosting the postponed Thursday evening like "what is after infinity", "what is time", and a night through the secret passageways of the Goetheanum or working with the Platonic solids in clay, now that the house is again open.

### Weleda & Youth: working and living with Anthroposophy by Andrea de la Cruz Barral

For two consecutive years, the Youth Section at the Goetheanum hosted the Weleda representatives coming to the Goetheanum on their biannual training week. The group, which travels to the Goetheanum to connect with the roots of Anthroposophy and Weleda itself, had a chance to connect with young people working and living with Anthroposophy and get a picture of the new impulses coming out of spiritual science today.

The youth section facilitated two evenings, one in the Autumn (2018) and another in the Spring (2019) with different aims. In both, eurythmists, scientists, public relations specialists, project managers and researchers came together, regardless of age and background to share with each other what made anthroposophy special to them.

During the first one, after music and shared snacks at our Dorneckstrasse house, youth and co-workers of Weleda met around questions about Anthroposophy, their

understanding of it and how it is present in their lives. For the young people of Dornach, it was interesting to hear how the co-workers of Weleda had met Anthroposophy, often through beginning their work at the cosmetics company. For the co-workers, it was interesting to see the commitment and dedication that young people can have in their own fields of applied Anthroposophy.

Some of the Weleda representatives had not been to the Goetheanum before and some were only just finding out about Anthroposophy. Some shared how for them, coming to Anthroposophy through researching the history of their workplace had been one of the most natural occurrences in their life. A Weleda worker shared with us how, after studying Philosophy in university and moving on to corporate jobs in her early career, she had found fresh air and meaning in working for a company like Weleda. Another, who after years in the cosmetics industry was searching for an ethical and coherent workplace, found in Weleda and its values "a home". This resonated with the youth living in Dornach, who could very well remember for themselves, that feeling of "coming home" when finding Anthroposophy through their own disciplines.

The evening developed in lively and critical discussion. Some of the questions that were put in common included: what makes a Weleda product truly special, is it the ingredients, or the consciousness of the business and the people who run it? What compromises is Weleda having to make and how is it ensured that Anthroposophy can still be found in its core? How do young people deal with dogmatic attitudes often found in Anthroposophy? What is a normal day like in the life of a young anthroposophist? What is the responsibility of Weleda and the Goetheanum to each other?



The second evening, in Spring, was dedicated to the Youth Section's research questions. We asked young people and Weleda representatives to come together in small groups to ask, each from their perspective, what the world could look like in the future if what lives within them, and their company, is able to become actualized for societies around the world. With a mood of responsibility and a looking forward to future encounters, the youth of Dornach waved goodbye to the Weleda representatives who will be visiting again in the Autumn of 2021.

Within the event 'International Curriculum' organised by the Culture and Identity Department of Weleda, Weleda managers learn and discuss the company's identity and basic values. The event also includes a visit to the Youth Section at Goetheanum. Experienced Weleda managers who deepen their access to the anthroposophical background of Weleda and young anthroposophical-inspired people with less professional experience but a clear anthroposophical orientation, meet each other. The idea was: To bring these two qualities into dialogue - and to say it in advance: this idea has been a complete success - intergenerational dialogue at its best. Uwe Urbschat (Head of Culture & Identity at Weleda until November 2019

The stay at the Youth Section was very impressive. The young adults gave Weleda's colleagues a warm welcome. Candlelight spread over the tables in the Youth Section accompanied the touching encounters in a very pleasant way. The Youth Section introduced itself and its work at the Goetheanum. The choir of the Youth Section sang songs in different languages. The music opened the space for honest, interested conversations in duos and trios. People in different phases of their biographies

talked about ethical business practices, the awareness of Weleda products and about their work. In plenum we brought together what had been discussed. Critical questions were also posed to Weleda's management, e.g. on the subject of packaging - and in good dialogue a meaningful broadening of perspectives was achieved on both sides - Weleda and the Youth Section. This was experienced as valuable. An inspiring, interested dialogue between the generations: this should definitely be continued. A big thank to Youth Section for having welcomed Weleda. Katja Schüll (Weleda, Manager Culture & Identity at Weleda).

## General Secretaries

Working towards generational transition: Young people come together with the Leadership of the Goetheanum, General Secretaries and Country Representatives of the General Anthroposophical Society – by Andrea De La Cruz Barral

Since 2018, the Youth Section has become more involved with the happenings of the General Anthroposophical Society. This means that when the General Secretaries and Country Representatives of the Society come to Dornach twice a year, we seize the opportunity to share some valuable moments together and ask them questions, present our initiatives and propose our ideas.

Meeting for dinner at the Youth Section House has been a tradition for many years now and since 2018, we also host meetings to hear and share thoughts on the state of the society. This was initiated by a group of young members, who came together as individuals to research and understand the origins of the society and some of the conflicts present since its foundation. The Youth Section served as a host for this encounter to take place.

As meetings developed and grew, central questions began to arise: what is the significance of esoteric and exoteric work present in the Society's foundation? What is the role of the Anthroposophical Society in relation to the School of Spiritual Science and the First Class? How should the Executive Board relate to the members and do democratic processes have a space in a spiritual society – not a political one?

Other concerns shared by young people and country representatives included the necessity to communicate the importance of membership to younger generations – without preaching – to raise awareness of the significance and wonder of taking the step towards officially recognizing the importance of Anthroposophy and the School of Spiritual Science for the world. We asked ourselves why we became members, what changed through this action and what this meant for the future.

As "new" members, young people often have questions about the past and development of the Society, an impulse that for some has translated into actual research. As such, it can be truly meaningful to establish contact with the Executive Council and Leadership of the Goetheanum, the country representatives and General Secretaries of the Anthroposophical Society. As youth, living experiences is what we seek and in the encounter with those who have been involved in this path for much longer than us, we can always find enriching information to set us in a new line of inquiry.

Many of us in the Society, regardless of age, is aware of the seemingly huge gap between the generations. Many have expressed the difficulties in finding oneself in groups within the anthroposophical movement because of generational differences: for the young,

the old seem not "active" enough, or too "theoretical"; for the old, a need to teach the youth inevitably arises and often they find their good counsel and advice drop in a broken sack. In this context, it seems important to find a way a new way of working together.

We are all members, each with their arsenal of different experiences, energies and longings for the future, which are influenced, of course, by the life-phase we are in. And yet, perhaps the question we need to be asking is: what needs to arise now within the Society? Well, perhaps, what must come from the future, can only be realized out of a working together of fresh and veteran, where we leave aside for a moment our particular visions to set ourselves freely a common task that is enriched by each in an individual manner. Perhaps in this way, all of us and the Society with us, will grow into its next stage of development.

If we talk about the importance of diversity in gender, culture and religious background – what about generational diversity? If Anthroposophy is to develop in the world and accomplish its task, it must transform through the transition from the one generation to the next. What is required at the individual and also at the institutional level for that transition to occur? Meetings like the ones with the Country Representatives and General Secretaries of the Society allow young members to widen our perspective of our peers, their experiences and their contributions to a movement that most of us have only just began to be a part of.

The world happenings taking place in 2020 meant that the Annual General Assembly in Spring had to be postponed to a later date (October 2020). However, the conversations about the state, meaning and impact of a Society like ours have not stopped amongst



young members. We certainly look forward to hosting more encounters to discuss the relationship between world situations of today and the task of the Anthroposophical Society.

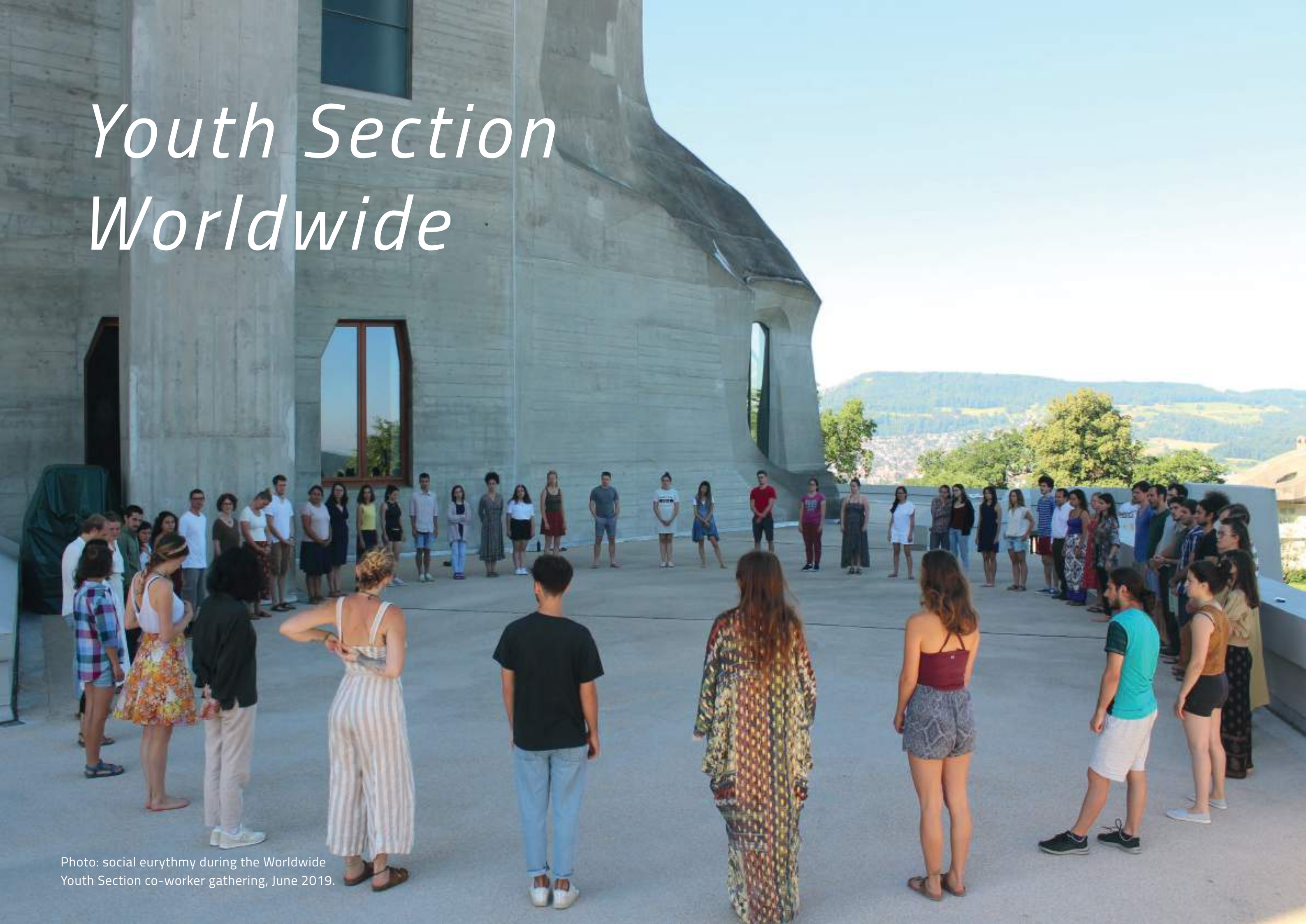
Photo: guitar play at the terrace of the Goetheanum during the Worldwide Youth Section co-worker gathering, June 2019.





# *Youth Section Worldwide*

Photo: social eurythmy during the Worldwide  
Youth Section co-worker gathering, June 2019.





# Youth Section at the Goetheanum & Worldwide

## Youth Section Worldwide

The Youth Section Worldwide is a vibrant network of young people all over the world, currently active in 22 countries across five continents and consisting of over 60 representatives. We work together in different constellations and shapes and meet each other on an annual and bi-annual basis. Our next worldwide co-workers gathering will take place in Great Britain between April 28 and May 2 in 2021.

The intercultural exchange of the different groups is an essential part of the current Youth Section work. Since we are living in a highly globalised world, the encounter of this 'global' generation takes place within all our activities. Economic background and financial means thereby should never be an obstacle to be able to come. In all our initiatives we work with fundraising in order to offer travel support for the young people that are interested to come.

The Youth Section has active groups in the following countries, in case you want to contact a specific group:

### Europe:

- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Germany
- Greece
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- The Netherlands
- Romania
- Russia
- United Kingdom

### Middle East:

- Georgia
- Israel
- Ukraine

### Asia:

- India
- Philippines

### North America:

- Canada
- United States of America

### South America:

- Argentina
- Brazil
- Ecuador
- Peru

# Finances & Sponsors

As example of our financial flows; the turnover in 2019 was CHF 407,000.00. In addition to the amount of CHF 124,000 provided to the Section by the School of Spiritual Science, CHF 273,253.41 was financed by foundations, free donations and contributions from participants at events. A milestone was the support received for the first time from Movetia (part of the EU youth mobility programme) and the Mercator Foundation, in addition to financial support from the Anthroposophical Society in Germany, the Federation of Independent Waldorf Schools, the Cloverleaf Foundation, the Anthroposophy Support Foundation, GLS Treuhand, Iona Stichting, the Mahle Foundation, the Software AG Foundation, the Edith Maryon Foundation, the Evidence Foundation and the Waldorf Foundation.

To all those who support our work, who participate in it or who are interested in it, we would like to express our sincere gratitude - without this support the work would not be possible! And a special thanks to the members of the Anthroposophical Society and their free support, which always accompanies us!





Photo: during Youth Section  
co-worker gathering, June 2019.



[www.youthsection.org](http://www.youthsection.org)



School of Spiritual Science