



NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL OF SPIRITUAL SCIENCE

Published by the General Anthroposophical Section
on behalf of the Goetheanum Leadership

NR. 4 – EASTER 2023

For the ongoing work on this newsletter for members of the First Class of the School of Spiritual Science, which is published at Michaelmas and Easter, we would appreciate donations to the account of the General Anthroposophical Section at

<https://www.goetheanum.org/en/general-anthroposophical-section-donations>

The General Anthroposophical Section on the Internet:

<https://allgemeine-sektion.goetheanum.ch/en>

© 2022 General Anthroposophical Section of the School of Spiritual Science,
Rüttiweg 45
CH-4143 Dornach, CH

All rights reserved. No part of this newsletter may be reproduced without permission of the publisher.
For permission, please contact: allgemeinesektion@goetheanum.ch

Editing and Layout: Claus-Peter Röh and Nicolas Criblez

Translation: Christine Howard, Margueritte Miller, Douglas Miller

NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL OF SPIRITUAL SCIENCE

RESEARCH QUESTIONS, STUDIES AND EXPERIENCES OF THE
CLASS LESSONS

Published by the General Anthroposophical Section
on behalf of the Goetheanum Leadership

NR. 4 – EASTER 2023

CONTENTS

Editorial:	
Development arising from the comprehension of the whole	1
<i>Claus-Peter Röh</i>	
Towards Light in the Class Lessons	3
<i>Constanza Kaliks</i>	
Rudolf Steiner's Expectations for the School for Spiritual Science	9
<i>Peter Selg</i>	
Some reflections about the process of translating the mantras of the First Class into English	14
<i>Simon Blaxland-de Lange</i>	
Challenges and experiences in translating the mantras into other languages: Portuguese	16
<i>Sonia Setzer</i>	
Translation of the Class Lesson Texts and Mantras into the Hebraic Language	20
<i>Stefanie Allon</i>	
Authors	22

EDITORIAL: DEVELOPMENT ARISING FROM THE COMPREHENSION OF THE WHOLE

Claus-Peter Röh

In view of the approaching centenary of the Christmas Conference, the anthroposophical movement is faced with the task of shaping the present and future of the Anthroposophical Society and its School of Spiritual Science. The question of supporting impulses for further development after three generations leads to the challenge of perceiving and considering different levels in their spiritual and soul relationship to each other.

In comparison, the crucial year of 1923 after the fire of the first Goetheanum was also characterised by multiple layers of drama: In addition to the realisation of the spiritually active forces and counter-forces of contemporary events, there was also the question of what the deeper causes of the events were and, along with this, the painful, critical view of the development of the Society up to that point. As a third new element, those impulses emerged which could only be formulated out of the experience of opposites and tensions. Thus, in the summer of 1923, Ita Wegman posed a question to Rudolf Steiner about the way to reconnect with the esoteric sources of the movement. Rudolf Steiner later described this thoughtful question, posed with a view to the wholeness of the situation, to Count Polzer-Hoditz: “Therein lies the decisive significance of Dr. Wegman’s question when she asked me about the new esotericism. She did not only want to tie in with the old, but she asked the decisive Parsifal question about the new esotericism. This question alone made it possible to establish the Michael School on earth. In this School lies the core of the future as possibility”¹

If we relate the process of inquiry and reorientation

at that time to the burning needs of the present, it is no less important to develop spiritual references from a holistic view of different levels of reality. In this sense, this 4th newsletter for the members of the First Class of the School of Spiritual Science aims to describe the struggle for broader points of view from three different levels of work.

First, Constanza Kaliks explores the metamorphoses of light in view of the whole journey of the Class lessons. With each new mantric situation, the relationship between darkness and light transforms for the person who is searching and learning. In the immediacy of groping perception, the transformations and nuances of the light must be discovered anew again and again.

Continuing his contribution in Newsletter No 3. on the scientific tasks of the School, Peter Selg delves into the subject of Rudolf Steiner’s expectations for this School as a whole in its role as the esoteric core, the “heart” and “soul” of the Anthroposophical Society. He draws an arc from the supersensible Michael School and the Karma lectures to the task of the members of the School of Spiritual Science to place themselves with all seriousness and consciousness in the fate of the times. This growing responsibility led to a deepened kind of applications in September 1924.

The final three contributions focus on the challenge of translating class texts and mantras into other languages.

Simon Blaxland-de Lange describes the work of the Peredur group on the German-English bilin-

1 Thomas Meyer: *Ludwig Polzer-Hoditz. Ein Europäer* [Ludwig Polzer-Hoditz. A European]. Basel 2018, p. 669.: R. Steiner on P.-H., see also 2nd contribution by P. Selg.

gual edition. He describes the group's common struggle for a holistic, artistic understanding of the meanings, rhythms and metres of the mantras right down to the methodological steps.

Sonia Setzer from Sao Paulo follows in her work the concern to bring the formerly very "Germanised" translations into a more fluent Portuguese. Using real-life examples, she shows, among other things, the challenges of translating word combinations and sentence constructions into the richness of the Portuguese language.

Finally, Stefanie Allon from Israel describes the difference of the Hebrew language in sentence structure, style, vocabulary and musicality. This makes it possible to experience the great, almost unbridgeable gap between word and sentence fidelity to the original, but also the creative power of translation out of the laws and musicality of one's own language.

All three agree on one thing: the work on the wholeness of translation never ends. And it is precisely in this that an inexhaustible source of deeper understanding of the class lessons is revealed.

With heartfelt thanks to all the authors, we wish you, dear members, a lively study and exchange of experiences and thoughts on the contributions of this Easter newsletter.

TOWARDS LIGHT IN THE CLASS LESSONS

Constanza Kaliks

My dear friends, this is indeed the case. We should approach esoteric truths in such a way that it would never occur to us to think: 'Oh, I know that already.' For the essence of the esoteric lies not in knowing, but in direct, immediate experience, in life itself. Inwardly, at deeper levels of our soul-life than where memory is rooted, the esoteric truths shall take hold of us and be nurtured.¹

The meditative process largely eludes description (Sagbarkeit): Rudolf Steiner points out countless times that meditation needs a place of silence (Schweigens), not only an outer silence, but a silence within oneself² which can support inner work. Indeed, a conscious approach to mantric content can lead to a deepening and expansion of experience. The contributions to this newsletter are meant in this sense: as an exchange of thoughts and experiences with the contents of the Class Lessons.

For the work of the sections of the School of Spiritual Science, the fundamental mantric good can always be further understood, experienced and recognized in its multi-layered nature, effectiveness, potentiality and complexity. As living spiritual goodness, it is to be continuously discovered anew – an unfolding development that corresponds to the reality it is attempting to grasp is a task that is as important as it is difficult. It should not be confused with the practice of meditation itself, nor with the Class Lessons that takes place.

The following contribution is a short transcrip-

tion of a presentation within the last Class Holder Conference at the Goetheanum (October 2022).

As faculties of perception, seeing and hearing are of fundamental importance for cognition. They interpenetrate like two motifs conversing with each other throughout the nineteen Class Lessons. They guide the way through from the very beginning to the 19th Lesson. In recreating and tracing these motifs, one dimension of the path opens up, making it accessible: 'To know our relation to the world with true feeling - this is what leads us into genuine esoteric wisdom.'³

Below some of the passages in the Class Lessons are reflected upon, in which seeing, hearing and light are placed in the foreground.

At the beginning, the first tablet's verse penetrates the 'soul's ear': In the world of colours, forms and the abundance of living beings, the human being enters the dark, the cold darkness of his own being.⁴ The day darkens, the light disappears. From the night of the soul and the darkness of the spirit, the human being turns to the light that 'powers' the darkness: from the beginning, a powerful, effective and living light dwells within the darkness.⁵ The Guardian of the Threshold soon appears at this place. He prevents the full light of the spirit striking or even shattering the unprepared human being.⁶ Rudolf Steiner ends the first Lesson by looking ahead with remarks on the light in the human self. It is noteworthy how the promise of light is already indicated in the first appearance

1 Rudolf Steiner: *Esoteric Lessons for the First class of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum*. GA 270. Lesson 4.

2 Cf. for example to Rudolf Steiner: *From the Contents of the Esoteric Lessons*. GA 266/II, p. 7: 'One characteristic of what the spirit worlds give is that everything that appears as a symbol is not immediately understood by the pupil. He must let these symbols work on his soul - for days, often for weeks, in renunciatory silence towards himself. In complete peace and tranquillity of soul, without desire, without wishes.'

3 Rudolf Steiner: *Esoteric Lessons for the First class of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum*. GA 270. Lesson 6.

4 On the alienation of the human being from himself, see, for example, Rudolf Steiner. *Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*. GA 26.

5 Rudolf Steiner: *Esoteric Lessons for the First class of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum*. GA 270. Lesson 1.

6 Ibid, Lesson 1.

of darkness:

Now as to all that we shall discover when we go past the Guardian of the Threshold; as to what it is necessary for us to experience in thinking, feeling and will so as to pass the Guardian's light and find our way into those darkneses out of which, none the less, the light will spring in which we are to recognize the light of our own human self and so attain fulfilment of the utterance: 'O Man, know yourself!'; and as to what speaks to us from out of the darkneses that will soon grow light in spirit – as to all this, my dear friends, we shall be hearing more on Friday in the next Lesson of the First Class.⁷

At the end of Lesson 3, following the rhythmic experience of thinking, feeling and willing, reference is again made to the light in the darkness: 'If we want to turn towards that light that grows out from the darkness, we shall surely find it if we seek it along this threefold way, permeating ourselves with this inner life-blood in the soul – the soul that wants and wills to be upon the way to real knowledge, knowledge of the spirit, knowledge of God.'⁸

In the Lesson 4, the light becomes the perceptible reality of the Gods. Light becomes wisdom as the human being learns to love it. In the light, the powers of the Gods prevail – the light lives in the Gods in a completely different way than in human beings, who are exposed to the forces of the earth. When as human beings we become aware that we can love the light of the sun, the light of the stars, as 'warmly as we love a friend'⁹, the light becomes the 'garment of the Gods' for us – Gods journey across the earth in a garment of light¹⁰: 'Then what we experience with the light truly becomes wisdom within us. The Gods bring their wisdom into our hearts, into our souls.'¹¹

In the Lesson 5, the soul forces are connected to

the light, warmth and air. When we think, our being is in the light; when we feel, it is in the warmth; when we will, it is in the air. Thought is light present in the human being, light caught, both in the physically seeing and the physically blind. Thinking is a 'weaving and living' in the light. In that we think, the human being is not confined within, but experiences the light weaving through and throughout the world¹². In this way, the human being extends beyond himself and grows together with the surrounding world.¹³ If a being from another world body were to look at the earth, it would see all thoughts in a light sheath, in the light tapestry of the earth.¹⁴

On entering the Threshold, light becomes of the essence. Nature, quiet until now, begins to speak. The human being is seduced to lose himself in the light, to let himself be swept away from being on the earth to merge fully with the light. On the other hand, darkness threatens to separate him or her from all existence into uttermost loneliness. 'This is the mighty experience before the Guardian of the Threshold: that we stand face to face with the enticements of the light and the dehumanizing powers of the darkness.'¹⁵

The natural and the moral merge into one another, light and darkness are of the essence: this double temptation can be experienced in thinking. Inner courage is needed to experience how thinking is entangled in this struggle at the threshold.¹⁶

In the Lesson 6, the human being stands between Lucifer and Ahriman. In the experience of light, as well. Breath weaves through light and light connects with breath. 'For someone who has attained Imagination, thinking is a quiet, gentle breathing out, vibrated and illumined through and through by the light which the human being receives in-

7 Ibid, Lesson 1.

8 Ibid. Lesson 3, last paragraph.

9 Ibid. Lesson 4.

10 Cf. *ibid.* Lesson 4.

11 *Ibid.* Lesson 4.

12 Cf. *ibid.* Lesson 5.

13 Cf. *ibid.* Lesson 5.

14 Cf. *ibid.* Lesson 5.

15 *Ibid.* Lesson 5.

16 *Ibid.* Lesson 5.

wardly.¹⁷ At this point in the Class Lesson, we are told that everything that works through the senses, everything perceived through the senses, is light.

The temptation of Lucifer then appears to extract the human being from the earthly realm, through pleasure and sensuality. The Guardian warns not to forget the necessities of the earth, to reflect upon them: this contemplation can preserve the humanity of human beings.¹⁸

In the coming together of light and breath in the imaginative grasping of thinking, what will take place in further Class Lessons lights up: the convergence of seeing and hearing-speaking. It appears in this Lesson 6 as a being-form of thinking.

The closing words of this Lesson speak of the Michael School, of the Will of the spiritual world in the present, in which there is no longer darkness but light once again – a light that is not yet strongly manifest but is nonetheless present: ‘Yet the light is there.’¹⁹

Afterwards in Lesson 7, the Guardian of the Threshold allows the human being to see their own ‘Beingness’ beyond the abyss. In Lesson 8, he lets the human being look over the abyss: “Yet there, where man’s inmost being has its origin – there, on yonder side of the threshold – lies, at first, darkness, uttermost darkness.”²⁰

Until this point, the perception of darkness and the light that burgeons in it is the guiding principle for the meditative experience. Gradually, hearing becomes paramount for attention to sensation. In Lesson 10, the middle of the path, hearing begins to emerge, to resound: ‘[...] we begin to hear in the spirit. And when the Gods speak with us, then are we within the spiritual world.’²¹ In meditation a dialogue begins, a listening and inner speaking, as if emanating from the heart.²² The Gods now not only let us read, not only see, they speak, they

become audible: ‘Now comes the most sublime of all; where we feel ourselves as in dialogue with the Gods themselves; where the Gods not only allow us to read, but themselves speak.’²³ It is speaking and answering: ‘[...] speech of the spirit and the answering speech of the heart [...]’²⁴

Speaking and answering: not only does the meditating soul speak, but it also hears, it hears the sound that approaches it from the far expanses of the world. In Lesson 12, this event is depicted:

You have come to know mantras, my dear sisters and brothers, which are spoken quietly from within the soul. Such were the first mantras given during these Class Lessons. But then we went further. We advanced to mantras which only partly sound forth out of the human soul itself, and partly have to be thought of as sounding towards us, coming to us from the wide spaces of the world. In these we do not meditate in speaking inwardly; we meditate in hearing inwardly. We imagine ourselves transplanted into a situation where we hear what is spoken to us, whether it be from the wide spaces or whether it be spoken by spirit-beings.²⁵

At the end of Lesson 15, the light emerges: through the human being’s own strength the darkness gradually brightens. The spiritual hierarchies speak, and from their words the human being perceives the ‘becoming-light’. When the Guardian asks about the elements that supported, penetrated and awakened human beings, the Seraphim ultimately answer: human beings can awaken inward light in their divine and cosmic light. Beyond the abyss, still tentative, still feeling the surrounding world, the human being has to call forth strength from their own soul. From a ‘glimmering’ that is ever more luminous, the darkness brightens and will gradually be filled by the emerging light:

[...] so that gradually we may have going out from us, first a glimmering, then a lighting up, a spreading of the glimmering further into space, advancing further and further, until the glimmering becomes lighter and lighter, more and

17 Ibid. Lesson 6

18 Cf. *ibid.*, Lesson 6

19 Ibid. Lesson 6 - closing paragraph.

20 Ibid. Lesson 8.

21 Ibid. Lesson 10.

22 Cf. *ibid.*, Lesson 10.

23 Ibid. Lesson 10.

24 Ibid. Lesson 10.

25 Ibid. Lesson 12.

more luminous, more and more shining – until at length, through our own power, the night-enveloped darkness over there in the spiritual world grows light. So it must come to pass. So must we labour to achieve the kindling power of our own selfhood, the virtue of our inmost being, the power that kindles itself in the fire – for this is light in what at first was night-enveloped spiritual land.²⁶

The Self feels warmed through more and more. Through feeling one's own warmth, the glow, the brightness arises, where before only darkness could be experienced.²⁷

In Lesson 16, the human being should first imagine the brightness in the darkness. And then initially feel it, even before seeing it, that the darkness is gradually brightening. The great, sunlit field, filled with the beauty and greatness, experienced through the senses, is limited by a 'dark, night-enveloped wall'. 'Forebodingly' the human being experiences this darkness.

Deep, deep into the darkness we now feel our way. We feel our way into the darkness, probing to find whether there, perhaps, the light may be; whether there our true being may have its source and origin; and yet we cannot see into this darkness.²⁸

The emerging light should be felt, should at first be 'sensed': '[...] and there at first we feel – we do not as yet see – we feel how the darkness is emerging light.'²⁹ The human being finds himself in the feeling, glowing and emerging light. And feels their way to the Guardian: before the crossing of the threshold, s/he had seen him, but then he was only perceptible as speaking in the darkness, with admonishing, questioning words.

But now, this stern and questioning word has led us to where we feel something like weaving, moving, ever-working light – gentle, weaving light. Looking for help amid this weaving, working light, we turn to the Guardian of the Threshold. It is a strange experience: not yet light, but so that we feel that the light is present. And then, amid this light which we can

only feel, the Guardian of the Threshold manifests himself again. It is as though he were now growing far more intimate with us, as though he were leaning more towards us, and as though we were also coming closer to him.³⁰

Conversation and light are interwoven here in a wonderful form. No longer do the Guardian's words 'trumpet' majestically from the cosmos into the heart: the conversation now becomes intimate, as if the words are spoken softly in the ear. Hearing and seeing, word and the light are interwoven, a 'conversation in the weaving-working light':

What he now says is as when in human life someone says something very quietly, confidingly into our ear. What sounded at first so clear and resonant – the solemn word of exhortation from the Guardian of the Threshold that sounded with might and majesty like a trumpet-call from all quarters of the cosmos deep into our heart – now continues in a tender, intimate conversation amid the weaving, working light: a conversation with the Guardian of the Threshold, for now it is as though he is no longer speaking aloud to us but is whispering into our ear.³¹

In the mantra, the human being hears the Guardian's question for the understanding of their spirit. One feels in oneself the divine being that flows through our being: divine breath that pauses and prepares us for understanding.³² Here, too, breath and radiance, breath and light, weave through each other, through the Gods, within the human being.

The light felt thus far, is now slowly perceived in seeing in the Lesson 17:

The human being – now on the far side of the threshold of existence where the Guardian stands – feels himself to be within the living, weaving light. This light, which has only been sensed and felt, now gradually turns into light of which it can be said: The human being sees it. Out of the feeling of the light that weaves and wafts about him - light that he only experiences in grasping it spiritually, by thoughts - there gradually dawns the light that the human being can really see, can see with the opened eye of the

26 Ibid. Lesson 15.

27 Cf. *ibid.*, Lesson 15.

28 Ibid. Lesson 16.

29 Ibid. Lesson 16.

30 Ibid. Lesson 16.

31 Ibid. Lesson 16.

32 Cf. *ibid.*, Lesson 16.

spirit.³³

So that the light can be beheld, a word of warning from the Guardian is needed: Human beings are to see the great etheric colour arc and penetrate the mighty circle through their 'eyes of light-created power'.³⁴ Only then is the human being inside the light. Colour-flooding the cosmic chalice is the sun beyond the rainbow.

Then, precisely through the impression we receive, from yonder standpoint, of the rainbow as the chalice of the world – precisely through this, it becomes clear to us how the light gradually extends for us and spreads throughout the spheres which at first stood before us as night-enveloped darkness. Now we are within it. It grows lighter. This chalice of the world - with all its flowing tides of colour, seen from beyond the rainbow – is Sun.³⁵

The darkness brightens as the human being hears the conversation of the hierarchies, as he witnesses the conversation of heaven. A gentle, mild light penetrates the darkness.³⁶ The conversation becomes a choir of all the voices of the spheres of spirit and the human being hears that the world is Word, spirit-word, that the 'I' wills.³⁷ On hearing these words, it becomes light – the Word spoken by the creating hierarchies, which the human being hears, causing the light to manifest.

The spirit-word that wills the 'I' – this is the world. Now, even as we hear with our spiritual ears these words penetrating our human being, it becomes light in the spiritual world. The gentle radiance that was there before, changes to the full light of the spirit.³⁸

At the end of the Lesson, when darkness becomes light through the Word, the Guardian gently touches the spiritual eyes of the meditating per-

son. Having arrived in the light-filled space of the spirit, with eyes gently closed, memory of the sense world arises.³⁹

In Lesson 18, the hierarchies all speak in chorus. It is a conversation full of reciprocity, of mutuality, in which the spiritual beings receive from each other what they need to shine in human Thinking, to live in human Feeling, to work in human Will. The Guardian of the Threshold is silent. He spoke in the darkness, he was audible during the gradually emerging light.⁴⁰ In the brightness that has now arisen, he points silently to the speaking hierarchies. The human being witnesses how the Gods speak to each other.⁴¹

The Angeloi request the light⁴² and it flows to them from the Dynamis. The light received is a gift, a gift passed on by the Dynamis, which works and weaves in human thinking as a luminescence of the Angeloi.⁴³

In Lesson 19, the human being stands in the Spirit-Word, which weaves around and flows through his being. Just as it had become light and the human being could experience himself in the light, in the darkness that had become light, so the human being now stands in the Word:

Now we are really within the Spirit-Word, within the Spirit-Word that lies at the foundation of the world's creating. We feel the Spirit-Word about us. We feel the whole world permeated by the Spirit-Word. We feel ourselves woven around and all about by the Spirit-Word. We feel the Spirit-Word entering into our inmost human being. We feel this world-wide, all-embracing Spirit-Word pouring at last into our heart. With the fulness of our whole humanity we feel ourselves amid the weaving waves of the Spirit-Word. In spirit we feel ourselves within

33 Ibid. Lesson 17.

34 Cf. *ibid.*, Lesson 17.

35 Ibid. Lesson 17.

36 Cf. *ibid.*, Lesson 17.

37 Cf. *ibid.*, Lesson 17.

38 Ibid. Lesson 17.

39 Cf. *ibid.*, Lesson 17.

40 On the speech and language of the guardian cf. Peter Selg: *Die Sprache des Hüters*. [The Speech of the Guardian]. Arlesheim, 2020.

41 Rudolf Steiner: Esoteric Lessons for the First class of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum. GA 270. Lesson 18.

42 On the relationship between Angeloi and humans cf. Peter Selg: *Angeloi, Archangeloi, Archai: Der Mensch und die dritte Hierarchie*. [Angeloi, Archangeloi, Archai. The Human Being and the Third Hierarchy]. Arlesheim, 2022, p. 23-28.

43 Cf. *ibid.* Lesson 18.

the word-woven spirit of the world.⁴⁴

This Spirit-Word lets the 'I' arise. From afar, the Guardian asks, and the Hierarchies answer – with words through which the 'I' comes into being. In hearing the words, the flaming, blazing voices, the human being experiences the 'I am'.⁴⁵

The human heart and head and limbs find themselves in the 'primal founts of being'. The head is illuminated by the imaginative forces of the beings of the first Hierarchy. The light connects with the head, with the thinking.

In the speaking of the hierarchies, the 'I' becomes. Through the words of the first hierarchy, within the meditative path of the Class Lessons, the fulfilment of the becoming 'I' takes place: It is 'I'.⁴⁶

Seeing and hearing, seeing and speaking – or light and word⁴⁷ – form a very differentiated, transforming relationship during the course of the Class Lessons.

The path begins with the search for the light in the darkness we experience – the darkness that is experienced in bright daylight, in the radiance of the sun and in the glow of colours – by the human being who is searching for their own being. The light 'that emerges out of darkneses' is guiding and sustaining. Then, in the 10th Lesson, hearing and speaking begin to interweave with the experience of the gradually appearing light. A hearing of 'resounding from the world's expanses' begins. In the 15th Lesson, the human being hears in the speaking of the Gods that the light is slowly beginning to shine. The emerging light is not seen immediately – at first sensed, felt. Then the Guardian's speaking becomes quieter, more intimate, it becomes a whispering conversation in the weaving light: light and conversation enter into an ever closer, mutual relationship. Then, in the 17th Lesson, the light begins to become visible. Beyond the great rainbow, in the colour-flooding cosmic chalice, the human being is in the light. And he

hears the Hierarchies speak: the world is Spirit-Word. The light changes into spiritual brightness. The speaking of the hierarchies becomes a chorus: the human being witnesses the conversation of the Gods, the asking and the giving, the serving and the devotion. So that human beings can think, the light is asked for and offered. In the 19th Class Lesson, the human being stands in the Spirit-Word, he is enveloped and permeated by the creative Spirit-Word. In the words of the hierarchies: It is 'I'.

The path through the Class Lessons takes place in Light and Word. Darkness becomes light: the light that is present in the darkness becomes visible. The human being then experiences the Word meditatively. The world is Spirit-Word, creating, the 'I' willing Word.

In the creation story of the Old Testament, first the Word resounded, and then there was Light.⁴⁸ In the prologue of the Gospel of John as well, the Word is at the beginning, at the primal beginning: the Word was with God from whom all things came into being. Life was in the Word, and Life was the Light of humankind. The Light that was in the world shone into the darkness – and the darkness could not comprehend it.⁴⁹ Thus the Gospel of John goes from the Word to Life, from Life to shining and being Light in the world.

In the 'I' creation process that takes place on the meditative path of the First Class, the relationship of Word and Light is continuous and fundamental – perhaps even as the creative principle of the self-recognizing human being.

⁴⁴ Ibid. Lesson 19.

⁴⁵ Cf. *ibid.* Lesson 19.

⁴⁶ Cf. *ibid.* Lesson 19.

⁴⁷ On the Word in the Class Lessons cf. Christiane Haid: 'On the Being of the Active Word - Part I'. In: *Newsletter for Members of the School of Spiritual Science*, No.3. Ed. General Anthroposophical Section. Dornach, Michaelmas 2022.

⁴⁸ Cf. Genesis 1:1.

⁴⁹ Cf. John Gospel, 1:1-10.

RUDOLF STEINER'S EXPECTATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL FOR SPIRITUAL SCIENCE*

Peter Selg

The scholarly expectations Rudolf Steiner associated with the founding of the School for Spiritual Science were discussed in my essay in the previous issue of this newsletter.¹ (“We must appear before the world honestly with things that have the potential in them to stand before the world in a scholarly way. We have to have that, do we not?”²) Rudolf Steiner wanted the School to demonstrate scholarly accomplishments and to act based on them; he would not have used the concept of the School with its Sections as such—both before and after the Christmas Conference 1923/24—had he not connected specific research, teaching, and training activities with the Sections (as departments). Nevertheless, it was also clear to him that the majority of the School’s members were not researchers nor were they teachers at the level of the School—neither in the sense of his understanding of an original spiritual research nor in the sense of academic scholarship. Steiner also did not expect the majority of School members to engage in productive, scholarly efforts; nor did he expect them to establish publicly significant training institutions and facilities where such training could be put into practice. Instead, strictly speaking, he expected this to be taken up by those at the center in Dornach which was to be staffed and financed in a particular way for that purpose. He expected these things from the leading figures there, as well as from their professional colleagues, including from working relationships that were to be es-

tablished throughout the whole world. That said, *all* members of the School are seekers, “studiers,” strivers for knowledge—also for knowledge and insight into the path of schooling set forth in the nineteen lessons of the First Class. They are “Michael pupils,” and for them it is a matter of their becoming human in the true sense, as well as a matter of responsible engagement on behalf of anthroposophy, and of its “representation.”³ They want to engage in the various fields of life so that the anthroposophical understanding of the human being becomes a public body of knowledge.

In this way, the members are without doubt aligned with the intentions of the School founded by Rudolf Steiner—especially since one of his great expectations for the School involved the Anthroposophical Society and its further development into an effective civilizing, cultural organ of anthroposophy. As he emphasized repeatedly during and after the Christmas Conference 1923/24, the School for Spiritual Science is to become the “heart” and “soul” of the new Anthroposophical Society; it is to form the Society’s “esoteric kernel”

... that the School for Spiritual Science with its various Sections is to form an esoteric kernel for everything that in turn is to be active as the esoteric within the Anthroposophical Society.⁴

The karma lectures given during summer 1924—in which Rudolf Steiner describes the Michael

1 Peter Selg: “The School of Spiritual Science,” in *Newsletter for Members of the School of Spiritual Science*, published by the General Anthroposophical Section on behalf of the Goetheanum Leadership, No. 3 (Michaelmas 2022), p. 4–9.

2 Rudolf Steiner: *Das Schicksalsjahr 1923 in der Geschichte der Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft. Vom Goetheanumbrand zur Weihnachtstagung*. [1923—The year of destiny in the history of the Anthroposophical Society. From the Goetheanum fire to the Christmas conference.]. GA 259. Dornach ¹1991, p. 254.

3 Cf. Marc Desaulles: “Repräsentant sein: Rudolf Steiners Hochschulbedingung” [Being a representative: Rudolf Steiner’s requirement for the School for Spiritual Science], in Peter Selg/Marc Desaulles (eds.): *Die Freie Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft. Beiträge zum Verständnis und zum Weiterwirken der Weihnachtstagung* [The School for Spiritual Science. Contributions to understanding and furthering the Christmas conference], vol. 4 Arlesheim 2014.

4 Rudolf Steiner: *Esoterische Unterweisungen für die erste Klasse der Freien Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft am Goetheanum 1924* [Esoteric instructions for the First Class of the School for Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum]. GA 270c. Dornach, 2008. p. 12.

Movement after the turning point in time—shed light on the reason this is so important to him. Of great significance in this regard is his statement that Michael pupils developed “a yearning for anthroposophy” in the supersensible Michael School at the beginning of the modern era (when they took the “heavenly anthroposophy” into themselves⁵); at the beginning of the nineteenth century, on the other hand, they developed a “yearning for the Anthroposophical Society”⁶ through their shared enacting of the Michael Cultus. Together they made the decision to engage—from the end of the nineteenth century onward—in Michael’s confrontation with Ahriman for the destiny of human intelligence—as a society, and with a mission in this regard. One of the tasks of the karma lectures was to remind members of *this*: the shared decision to incarnate with this purpose. However, it is not only the karma lectures but the *Leading Thoughts*—and the lessons of the esoteric school as well—that lead to a deepened self-knowledge and knowledge of destiny, and to knowledge of a destiny as a member of an active Michael community. How often Rudolf Steiner speaks of seriousness in the Class lessons, of the seriousness of the situation of the times, and about the seriousness of the anthroposophical movement! Michael’s battle with Ahriman concerns nothing less than the survival of the human being—not “merely” biologically and ecologically, but also with regard to his humanity. Rudolf Steiner expected School members to be conscious of how wide-spread the potential for dangers is in the world—and to know how important new beginnings are in the fields of medicine, pedagogy, natural science, the arts, and social science. The Sections of the School form the means for engagement in this confrontation—and Rudolf Steiner expected *all* members of the School to view the significance of the Sections, as well as the significance of the Anthroposophical Society in the public realm, in this light. Members of the School are to develop an “active” seriousness and

see to it that step by step the Anthroposophical Society—to which they all belong—envisions and fulfills the tasks that are its destiny. According to Rudolf Steiner, if seriousness—rather than complacency—were to enter into the Anthroposophical Society, the Society would find its place and its tasks in Michael’s confrontation with Ahriman; additionally, the members of the Society would even better understand why their Society has a School with professional Sections that enable it to be active in the world. Since the Christmas Conference 1923/24,

anyone—without regard to nationality, status, religion, scholarly or artistic convictions—who sees something justified in the existence of an institution like the Goetheanum in Dornach as the School for Spiritual Science (may become) a member. ... The Anthroposophical Society regards the School for Spiritual Science in Dornach as a center of its activity.⁷

A further expectation of Rudolf Steiner’s—closely connected but not directly related to the Society—was and is related to the anthroposophical movement. The School, as Rudolf Steiner emphasized repeatedly, was to become the “esoteric center” of the anthroposophical movement; through its sectional form, it is to be “integrated” into the anthroposophical movement. As a result, it will be possible to bring a “new thrust” into the anthroposophical movement that will have to be formed ever more esoterically. What was meant specifically by this was shown not least of all in the way practical life unfolded during 1924, in the months following the Christmas Conference. Rudolf Steiner admitted into the First Class [of the School for Spiritual Science] the entire Stuttgart Waldorf school college of teachers as well as the entire group of “young medical professionals,” all the priests of the Christian Community, and the first curative education teachers.⁸ Steiner saw their entry into the School not only as a commitment

5 Rudolf Steiner: *Esoterische Betrachtungen karmischer Zusammenhänge. Dritter Band* [Esoteric observations on karmic connections. Vol. 3]. GA 237. Dornach ⁸1991, p. 117.

6 Rudolf Steiner: *Esoterische Betrachtungen karmischer Zusammenhänge. Sechster Band* [Esoteric observations on karmic connections. Vol. 6]. GA 240. Dornach ⁵1992, p. 179.

7 Rudolf Steiner: *Die Konstitution der Allgemeinen Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft und der Freien Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft. Der Wiederaufbau des Goetheanum* [The constitution of the General Anthroposophical Society and of the School for Spiritual Science; The reconstruction of the Goetheanum]. GA 260a. Dornach 21987, p. 802.

8 Cf. Peter Selg: *Die Freie Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft und die Michael-Schule* [The School for Spiritual Science and The Michael School]. Arlesheim, 2014, p. 121.

to be personal and “private” pupils but, bearing in mind the principle of representation, as a commitment to take up a professional membership. As a result, the above-mentioned “integration” of the School into the Movement—by which, in this case, Steiner understood the wide array of anthroposophical initiatives—was to be and could be accomplished. Activity alone was not asked for—but rather a *vita activa*, expressed in a specifically spiritual way. The School for Spiritual Science was and is an institution of the spiritual world *for* the present time. It is created by the will of the spiritual world for the age of light, or the age that is becoming light; according to Rudolf Steiner, as a “heavenly institution” it enters the existentially threatened world. The path to viewing the spiritual world and to *life based on the spirit* is to be found through deepening the soul. In the esoteric School the pupil is to learn to stand “eye-to-eye” with the spiritual world—he is to acquire the strength to do so in the School. “My dear friends, they stand—so to speak—face-to-face with the spiritual world when they become members of this School.”⁹ Rudolf Steiner speaks explicitly about the “Michael School” for the first time in the 14th Class lesson (31 May 1924) and in doing so designates the goal of the whole in the context of what he further elaborates in the karma lectures and *Leading Thoughts*. It is not without reason that this 14th lesson concerns the battle for the human heart and the spiritualization of intelligence. Steiner anticipated that these circumstances and aims would be increasingly understood.

The intensification of work on and with the esoteric lessons and their mantric content is part of Rudolf Steiner’s expectations in this regard—as he expressed it, the member of the School is to grow into the “full seriousness” of the esoteric. In London, at the end of August 1924, he concludes the lesson ritually for the first time; with the “seal” and “sign” he underscores the Rosicrucian and Michaelic dimension of the Class work, intensifies and protects the lessons. After September 1924, admission to the School itself was no longer accomplished in a written and thus formal form, but rather ritually. Candidates who had requested admission to the School and had, in principle, been

approved by Rudolf Steiner, were led by Gunther Wachsmuth into Rudolf Steiner’s atelier. There Steiner posed some additional questions and, if the responses were adequate, concluded by saying: “If you want to remain true to the Michael School, give me your hand. Offer your hand as well to Frau Dr. Wegman, who will lead the School with me.”¹⁰ Throughout their lives the approximately 200 people who were admitted to the School in this way during September 1924—with the Christ statue, the Representative of Humanity, nearby—never forgot this. Rudolf Steiner foresaw the apocalypses of the 20th century and the approaching times; the founding in Dornach—with its global effectiveness—was to help bring about a counterforce to totalitarianism and fascism, a counterforce to the impact of Ahrimanic destruction. It was to mark the beginning of a Michaelic turning point. Everything depended on whether the anthroposophical movement could spread vigorously and quickly—supported by an effective Anthroposophical Society, and imbued with and carried by the spiritual impulses and spiritual schooling of the School for Spiritual Science. Just weeks before his death, Rudolf Steiner told Graf Polzer-Hoditz that the esoteric lessons ought not be contorted into didactic lectures. Holding the lessons is much more a matter of enacting occult deeds through which the mantric verses are received, and of an inner connection to the Mystery nature of humanity. It was and is a matter of the power of Michael’s presence in the lessons that—according to Rudolf Steiner—is in no way assured but can be made possible by the way the lessons are formed. According to Rudolf Steiner, through the way the Lesson is formed Michael is able to consecrate and strengthen the holding of the lessons; he can be actively present with his spirit and his love—he is able to, but he does not have to.

It is nevertheless urgently necessary that this be the case—if the school as a whole is to become effective. According to Rudolf Steiner, it is a matter of its members learning to develop the strength to be able to pursue impulses that arise out of the spiritual world. The spiritual world wants some-

9 Rudolf Steiner: *Esoterische Unterweisungen für die erste Klasse der Freien Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft am Goetheanum 1924* [Esoteric instructions for the First Class of the School for Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum]. GA 270c. Dornach³2008, p. 161.

10 Cf. Peter Selg: *Die Freie Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft und die Michael-Schule*. [The School of Spiritual Science and The Michael School]. Arlesheim 2014, p. 76f.

thing from the anthroposophical movement in the present time—in the most varied areas of life. Rudolf Steiner expected the members of the School to feel responsible for these spiritual impulses and to pursue them. Members of the School are to school their capacities for spiritual perception and their will to enact deeds—and in the School they are to enable themselves to meet spiritual impulses with courage, clarity, and truthfulness; indeed, they are to enable themselves to bring these impulses into the earthly world. Members are to develop themselves so they can sustain themselves in Ahriman's world—despite all the “elements of destruction” and the approaching abysses. A different and stronger thrust is necessary if, as Rudolf Steiner said during the Christmas Conference, “the spirit that humanity needs is to enter in.” In another context, he said:

True meditation ... is an accomplishment of the spiritual will that carries the *Zeitgeist* in itself. Where such a meditation is practiced a spiritual power is able to enter into earthly events. Today spiritual worlds want to work into the events of the earth but they can only do so when space is created for that through human meditation.¹¹

Rudolf Steiner speaks in the Class lessons about the task of the School and its members to establish a “rock for anthroposophy.” With this, he did not mean the Dornach hill or the second Goetheanum as a “Michael fortress”—or at least not just these. This was and is much more a matter of human beings who can become helpers of Michael. At the turning point in time a “rock” was to be the foundation of a sacramental Christ-community, a “rock” that was also a *human being*—Peter. Michael needs “hosts of helpers” in order to be able—in and through human beings—to spiritualize anew the intelligence that “fell” from heaven. As Rudolf Steiner describes in detail in the *Leading Thoughts*, they—human beings—and only they are able to turn this around. They are able to act—or at least make a start of it with deeds that can be furthered by Michael. During the age of freedom, Michael cannot take action on his own, but he can support human beings. Rudolf Steiner expected

members of the School not only to know these details about the relationship to Michael but to internalize them existentially, and to carry them out in deeds—even when confronted by significant opposition in the members' surroundings. “We will continue to face very difficult times in regard to anthroposophy, and the members of the School must know that they have to deal with these difficulties. They are not merely anthroposophists; they are members of an esoteric school.”¹²

Among Rudolf Steiner's expectations is that step-by-step—without any sense of elitism—a “seed kernel” for a future humankind and future humanity will thereby be able to take form. He emphasized that the General Anthroposophical Section is there “for *all* human souls”—for every human being who seeks a deepening of his soul life. The time will come—and in the Johannine sense it already is already here—when sustaining what it is to be human requires further individual development. Becoming human can be understood as a principle of survival against falling prey to Ahriman and his time, a principle that counters the hollowing out and self-alienation of soul forces. If the human being does not take hold of his soul-spiritual development on the path and in the light of Michael, after the 20th century he will sink ever further down below the level of his original state of being. The humanity of the human being is no longer assured but must be actively won.

*

In the sense of the prologue to the Gospel of John and its teaching about the Creation—beginning with the Word and leading through the life and the light, to the body of the earth and of the human being—the task of the School for Spiritual Science can also be understood as a Michaelic turnaround on a large scale, as re-ascending from the body through the light and life to the Word.¹³ “And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.” (John 1:5) Yet, from out of the darkness of the material earthly world, the turn toward the creative Cosmic Word by way of the light and the life is now to be achieved. The

11 Rudolf Steiner: *Aus den Inhalten der esoterischen Stunden: 1913 und 1914, 1920–1923* [From the contents of the esoteric lessons: 1913 and 1914, 1920–1923]. GA 266c. Dornach 1998, p. 436.

12 Rudolf Steiner: *Esoterische Unterweisungen für die erste Klasse der Freien Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft am Goetheanum 1924* [Esoteric instruction for the First Class of the School for Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum 1924]. GA 270a. Dornach, 2008, p. 128.

13 Cf. Sergei O. Prokofieff: *Die Erste Klasse der Michael-Schule und ihre christologischen Grundlagen* [The First Class of the Michael School and its Christological foundations]. Dornach ³2014, p. 75ff.

Foundation Stone Meditation speaks of the “day radiant light” that rays in human souls, of the light of the world and the divine “I am.” The path of the Class is a path to the light and in the light; with the beginning of the Michael Age, in the Michael School the human being can himself become a source of light—and as a result can also experience in new ways the sphere of what is living and learn to take it in hand. The School wants to and must support, actively support, life—and it wants to do so on the basis of an inner schooling of those people who participate in the School. It is a matter of continuing the Creation—in accord with the cosmic thoughts of the spirit yet to be discovered in biology and agriculture, in pedagogy as well as in medicine. The human being has a responsibility to them; in the Michael schooling he must and can find the “cosmic creator might in spirit I.” In this way—and only in this way—can he work beneficially for the long-term. In March 1925, Rudolf Steiner told Graf Polzer-Hoditz, “*In this School is to be found the seed kernel of what the future holds as potential ... if only the member would understand this: as potential.*”¹⁴ The “divine healing forces” are spoken of in the Class lessons—the “healing forces” in the “world formation powers.” The “helpers of Michael” would like to come into relationship with them in order to genuinely realize a “heavenly institution on the earth”—a heavenly institution that speaks the great “Yes” to the earth, that wants the spiritual in the earthly, in contemplation of “the needs of the earth” and in love for the values of the earth. Learning to develop earthly will devoted to the spirit is one aim of the School for Spiritual Science—and is among Rudolf Steiner’s expectations.

Is this ideal of the School too large? Bearing in mind the human dimension, does it have to be scaled back so that it can be lived? Or is it much more a matter of enlivening this ideal anew and strengthening it? General anthroposophy tells us that the relationship of the human being to the angeloi is dependent on the strength and reality of ideal thinking, on the spiritual power of our ideals. It also speaks to the fact that the angeloi are a significant support in the creation of collaborative social utopias, in the creation of images of the future appropriate for the human being and

the world. The School for Spiritual Science—in all its greatness—is, however, also just such an “ideal.” If the human being pursues true ideals—even if their implementation overtakes and far exceeds his situation—he can, as Rudolf Steiner describes, experience the “gentle” and “warming” gaze of the angeloi, their “streaming gentleness.” But Michael’s “power of observation”—which, in a certain respect, is characteristic of the angeloi—can through neglect of an ideal also become a “searing reproach.” Rudolf Steiner urges us “to learn to feel the realness” in regard to ideals, likely in regard to the ideal of the School as well. The angeloi are helpful—also assisting us in continuing with this ideal after we cross the threshold of death. They—the angeloi—create the human being’s memory from biography to biography; they guide the human being after death. The ideal of the School will, however, become real only when generations of human beings—spanning centuries—work on it with the support of individualities who have died on the earth but are active in the heavenly spheres. They—the angeloi—create the relationship between individual development and the development of humanity. An aim of humanity such as the School for Spiritual Science needs the collaborative work of countless individuals, on earth and in heaven—and can only arise step-by-step in this way. The angeloi—but not only the angeloi—are thus profoundly interested in this; as Rudolf Steiner teaches, where the Christ-thought on earth is realized, they experience a kind of redemption from the pain the departure of the Christ from the Sun-sphere and His indwelling of the earth caused them. The School for Spiritual Science is most intimately connected to the Christ-thought on the earth.

100 years later is there still a viable hope of being able increasingly achieve and live the ideal of the School for Spiritual Science in the future—despite progressively more difficult conditions in the political, social, economic, and ecological realms? The power of hope, according to Thomas Aquinas, can develop between the polarities of despair and “presumptio,” the misleading anticipation of an illusory fulfillment. Spread out between them—between despair and false, warped anticipation—a broad expanse of hope exists, and with it an ide-

14 In: Thomas Meyer: *Ludwig Polzer-Hoditz. Ein Europäer* [Ludwig Polzer-Hoditz. A European]. Basel, 2018, p. 669.

alistic power of longing.¹⁵ At the dedication of the Glass House in June 1914,¹⁶ Rudolf Steiner speaks about “the healthful sense of falling short” as an attitude of soul that leads further, an attitude with which the building site for the School for Spiritual Science [Goetheanum] should be approached—in order to remain humble and yet goal-oriented and active. On 16 October 1924, Ita Wegman wrote from Rudolf Steiner’s sickroom to Anna Wager Gunnarson:

Try to manage everything with peace. It is important now to move the Michael stream forward. Just hold the Class lessons so that they have substance and are serious; then you will already be doing good work.¹⁷

15 Cf. Peter Selg: *Das Leben des Geistes in der Corona-Krise. Von der Hoffnung und vom Vertrauen in die Zukunft* [The life of the spirit in the Corona crisis. On hope and trust in the future]. Arlesheim 2021, p. 53ff.

16 Rudolf Steiner: *Wege zu einem neuen Baustil. „Und der Bau wird Mensch“* [Paths to a new style of building “And the building becomes human”] GA 286. Dornach ³1982, p. 62.

17 Ita Wegman Archive, Arlesheim.

SOME REFLECTIONS ABOUT THE PROCESS OF TRANSLATING THE MANTRAS OF THE FIRST CLASS INTO ENGLISH

Simon Blaxland-de Lange

The work of the so-called 'Peredur Group' – called thus because the meetings of the group took place at the Peredur Centre for the Arts, East Grinstead – began with a weekend conference from 22nd to 24th September 2017. A further meeting straddled the weekend of 30th June to 1st July 2018; and further revisions of both the mantras and the text of the Lessons were undertaken mainly through collaboration between Joan Sleigh and the present writer, culminating at the Summer Conference of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain in early August 2019. Much then remained to be done at proof-reading stage in the first half of 2020 under 'lock-down' conditions through postal liaison with the redoubtable typesetter in Germany, Sven Baumann.

Joan Sleigh spearheaded the English-language aspect of the whole project from the Goetheanum and proved to be a first-rate leader and colleague in this respect. The group was also fortunate to have the involvement of Johanna Collis, a professional translator who had also worked on the original English edition of 1994. Johanna did some light revision of the text of this edition, which it was decided otherwise to retain for the new (2020) edition; and she contributed to the work on the mantras. Crispian Villeneuve, a writer and researcher whose two-volume book on Rudolf Steiner in Britain (Temple Lodge, Forest Row 2004) has proved invaluable to many, had also previously made his own translation of the mantras which it was decided to include in the new edition. Shirley Noakes' participation in the group represented a tangible connection with the 'Edinburgh Translation' of the mantras, undertaken principally by Karla Kiniger and Christian Maclean, which we used as the basis of our common work. Diana Pauli, like most others in the group an experienced Class Holder, embodied the con-

siderable legacy of her father, Michael Wilson, to the Society and School both as a translator and as one carrying responsibility for the School in succession to George Adams and Cecil Harwood.

Some general principles underlying our work together were outlined in the introductory section to the first volume of the new bilingual edition, and I do not intend to repeat what was said there. Clearly, however, the intention of producing a new, modernised translation of the mantras which aims to express the subtleties of meaning, grammatical accuracy and poetic style, while remaining as close to the original sound and metre of the German mantric forms as possible' implies that one is seeking to achieve the impossible. Compromises were inevitable, and some people have commented especially from the side of semantic equivalence that the meaning of a particular German word has been imperfectly or even incorrectly rendered in order to accommodate the requirements of rhythm or poetic style.

Two areas that did not so much feature in this introduction may be mentioned in the present context: the nature and process of our work together, and the more general question of translating texts (especially mantric texts) of this level of inspiration.

It has to be borne in mind that only three members of the group were translators, and of those three Johanna was unable to participate fully and did not attend the second meeting. Nevertheless, we all had a fair to good knowledge of German, and each mantra would first be read usually several times in German before attending to its translation. Several English versions were to hand, but as the prior decision had been made to base our work on the so-called Edinburgh version (unpublished but cir-

culated in manuscript form), we would proceed to consider its merits line by line, focussing carefully on aspects of meaning, sound, rhythm and metre. A detailed discussion would then follow, and different views would frequently be expressed. Some differences of opinion, such as the use of the familiar 'you' and the more intimate and reverential second-person forms of 'thee', 'thou' and 'thy', were recurrent and entailed much mutual listening and respect, guided by the goal of arriving at a version that could be of service for English-speaking readers and speakers at our present time. A further area of difference and debate, which could broadly be described as the relationship between the meaning of words and the way that they are understood and interpreted in our present time, was highlighted in the introduction to the bilingual edition of 2020. One point that should be clarified here is that it had not proved possible to enlist the services of a translator from outside Britain and specifically from the USA, where issues of this nature are particularly stark and uncompromising. In the end, the only recourse was to make the commitment to include a version by an American scholar in the new volumes (and gratitude was extended to Michael Brewer for his thoroughly individual version together with his thoughtful introduction). A last comment that should be made about our way of working is that it was remarkably cordial and harmonious; and it can be hoped that something of this collaborative spirit is reflected in the published outcome of our work.

As for the wider question of translating mantric texts, anyone active in this field within the orbit of the English language will be aware of the outstanding contribution in this respect of George von Kaufmann, born in the eastern part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (as was Rudolf Steiner) in 1894 of a German father and an English mother and who later adopted his mother's name of Adams. In his introduction to *Verses and Meditations* (first published in 1961) he points out that 'if [the content of a meditation is] communicated directly from the spiritual world, [it] has a "mantric" character. There is virtue in the very sound – the rhythm of the lines, the vowels and alliterations, the repetitions. In meditation we live in the actual sound of the words, not only in their meaning. Meditation is not an intellectual reflection...' And he goes on to emphasise that 'translation obviously cannot be literal', and indicates that in his and his wife Mary's versions, following Rudolf Steiner's advice to try to be true to the genius

of the 'target' language, 'we have not attempted a word-for-word correspondence but have tried to be true to the spirit and integral effect of the original'.

To this it can only be added that – as George Adams himself well knew – the mantras of the Class texts involve strings of composite German nouns which in English have to be enlivened by a verbal element and the use of prepositions. In this respect, it is interesting to note that, for example, in our version of the first two lines of the mantras of Lesson 11 there is an enhancement of these aspects over the Edinburgh translation, where there was in turn a greater use of these verbalising, enlivening elements than there was in the previous versions of Michael Wilson and George Adams.

Finally, it should be emphasised that no translation can ever be regarded as final and ultimately prescriptive and that – to quote the introduction again – 'we invite those committed to working with the Class mantras in English to find, create or use the wording most suited to express their individual understanding and intended rendition of the content'.

CHALLENGES AND EXPERIENCES IN TRANSLATING THE MANTRAS INTO OTHER LANGUAGES: PORTUGUESE

Sonia Setzer

The first translation of the Class texts into Portuguese was done in the late 1960s, early 1970s. After that, it has often been improved upon and corrected. About 10 years ago, I was asked to do another revision. The text was, as we say, very ‘deutschuguisch’ [German-Portuguese-ish]; that is, many sentence formations and interruptions through interjections, parentheses, etc. were strongly German in character, so that it was not easy to get into the Portuguese language flow. In my opinion, there were also some errors of interpretation. So initially my main concern was to bring the text into a more fluent Portuguese.

It should be noted that Portuguese is a very rich language. A word in German can be translated by several other words in Portuguese, which are often used quite differently.

For example:

The German word *Wesen* [being]¹– in German it can also mean: that which exists– the most common translation into Portuguese is: *ser*, but also *essência* [essence], *natureza* [nature], *entidade* [entity]; Less common: *criatura* [creature], *caráter* [character], *índole* [kind], *própria essência* [own essence], *personalidade* [personality], *cerne* [core, nucleus], *ente* [entity], *própria condição* [one’s own condition]. I’ve tried using the word that fits best in the context. Other possibilities are also conceivable.

Besides, there are many words that have no direct translation into Portuguese; thus, different translators can have different understandings. For the mantras, I have created a special glossary, so that I always use the same formulation. However, other

words could also be used.²

Eigenheit [own being, sometimes, characteristic/trait] = *singularidade*

Eigensein [own being, sometimes, characteristic/trait] = *ser individual, individualidade*

Eigenwesen [own true being] = *ser*

Mahnung [admonition, warning] = ‘advertência’

Scheineswesen [world of semblance / semblance of being] = *entidade aparente*

Selbst [self, oneself] = *identidade própria*

Selbstheit [selfhood] = *própria identidade*

Selbstheitsein [selfhood-being] = *o ser da própria identidade*

Selbstsein, Eigensein [selfhood, your own being, be oneself] = *ser individual, individualidade*

Weltengeistesmacht [spirit-might of worlds] = *poder espiritual cósmico*

Even otherwise common words in German have no direct translation in Portuguese.

After looking up the various possibilities in the dictionary [on the internet: Linguee <https://www.linguee.com.br/portugues-alemao>] and in the Dicionário de Alemão-Português [German-Portuguese Lexicon] Porto: Porto Editora, 1985], I am still look in a Portuguese dictionary [<https://dicionario.priberam.org>] for the different synonyms and try to use the most appropriate one within the context. For example:

Empfinden [Feel, sense, experience] = *sentir, notar, perceber, aperceber*

If I translate each of these words back from Portu-

1 Translator’s Note: The original article is in German. German words referred to will be left as they stand, always an English translation in square brackets, and the Portuguese word will be in italics. For example: *Wesen* [being], *essência*.

2 Translator’s note: English words are the translations used – to my knowledge – in the most recent revised English Class Lessons - mantras and texts.

guese into German, the possibilities become even greater:

Sentir = fühlen [feel], spüren [feel, sense]; or, a synonym of *sentir*, namely *experimentar* = erleben, erfahren [experience]

notar = bemerken [to notice]; or another synonym of *notar*:

'*tomar consciência* = bewusst werden [to become aware, become conscious, to realize ...]

Perceber = erkennen, verstehen; or another synonym of 'perceber' is 'ter consciência de' Bewusstsein haben [to be conscious of]

Aperceber = feststellen [to ascertain, assess], aufmerksam gemacht werden [to be made aware], begreifen [to comprehend, grasp, understand], merken [to note, notice, realize]; or *tomar consciência* = bewusstwerden [to become aware, conscious].

Another word that gives me trouble is Mahnung [admonition, warning]. The most common translations into Portuguese are: *aviso* [advice, notice, warning], *advertência* [warning]. Less often: *admoestação* [admonition], *exortação* [exhortation], *alerta* [alert], *lembrete* [reminder]. These words translated back from Portuguese into German:

Aviso = Warnung [warning], Ankündigung [announcement], Hinweis [indication, note, hint, tip] Benachrichtigung [notification, information, communication]

Advertência = Mahnung [reminder], Warnung [warning]

Admoestação = Ermahnung [admonition], Mahnung [reminder], Zurechtweisung [rebuke, reprimand]

Exortação = Aufforderung [request, solicitation, prompt], Anregung [suggestion, stimulus], Ermahnung [admonition], Mahnung [reminder]

Alerta = Warnung [warning], Alarm [alarm]

Lembrete = Erinnerung [reminder, memory], Anzeige [indicator, notification], Mahnung [reminder], Erinnerungsschreiben [reminder letter]

The previous Portuguese translation has always been *exortação* [admonition], although I think *advertência* [warning] fits the context better.

Another big problem is a word compound like Menschenseele [soul of man]. It can be translated [which is very often done] as *alma do homem*. Then, if one would want to be precise, one would

have to translate 'Menschenrechte', [human rights - both nouns] as *direitos do homem* [translated back: 'the rights of man']. However, in Portuguese, it is *direitos humanos* [humane/personal rights], where *humanos* is an adjective, while *Menschen* [humans] is a noun. Furthermore, *homem* is *Mann* [man/male], although it can also mean *Menschen* [human being] and it used to be translated that way. Actually, it's like the English 'man'. However, nowadays it is politically incorrect [as it is in English], because the 'man' is contrasted with the 'woman', in Portuguese *mulher*. If you want to understand it precisely, then *direitos do homem*, it would mean Rechte der Männer [men's rights] in German [and English]. Therefore, I usually use *ser humano* [human being], in rarer cases *pessoa* [person] which is used for both genders. In the dictionary, for *Mensch* [human being], *pessoa*, *humano*, *ser humano*, *indivíduo*, *homem* is given.

This problem occurs right away in *O Mensch, erkenne dich selbst!* [O Man, know thyself]. The earlier translation was: *Ó homem, conhece-te a ti próprio!*. I had written *Ó ser humano, conhece-te a ti próprio!* simply out of habit. But because of the redundancy of the *te* and '*ti*', it should be corrected as follows: *Ó ser humano, conhece a ti próprio!*. This is how I feel with every translation: when I read a text that I have translated after some time, I see that I could have formulated some things better.

Already in the first mantra the words *Seelennacht* [night of the soul], *Geistesdunkel* [darkness of the spirit], *Geisteswort* [Spirit-Word] and *Geistesbote* [messenger of the spirit] occur. The earlier translation was: *noite da alma* ['night of the soul'], *escuridão do espírito* [darkness of the spirit], *verbo do espírito* [word of the spirit, spirit-word] (*verbo*, *Wort* [the Word] des *Geistes* [of the spirit] is actually meant as *logos*, but the dictionary gives for *Wort* [word]) *palavra* [word], *termo* [term], *vocabulo* [word]. *Mensageiro do espírito* Bote des *Geistes* [messenger of the spirit], taken exactly. Because of the sound, I changed the first three to: *noite anímica* [soul night], *escuridão espiritual* [spiritual darkness] and *palavra espiritual* [spirit word] even though *anímico* and *espiritual* are adjectives [literally, soulful/soul night and spiritual darkness, respectively]. But *Mensageiro do espírito* sounds good in Portuguese. How should one behave here? For me, the sounds are very important; if something doesn't sound good, it has a repulsive effect on me, it really hurts. Should I try and get

used to it?

A major difficulty is sentence structure. In Portuguese, the verb comes soon after the first words of the sentence [subject and then verb, as in English]. Since I am not poetically inclined, I have tried to translate it line by line as far as possible, even if it does not always correspond to the flow of the language. Example:

Line by line:

Wo Du selbst, o Mensch, das Leibessein
Dir aus Erd' und Luft und Licht erwirbst:
[‘Where you, O Man, derive your body
From earth and air and light:’]

*Onde tu próprio, ó ser humano, a existência corpórea
De terra e ar e luz adquires:*

The following would sound better and be more understandable when spoken, but I didn't do it like this:

*Onde tu próprio, ó ser humano, adquires a existência
corpórea
De terra e ar e luz
[Where you yourself, O human being, acquire bodily
existence
from earth and air and light:]*

Oder:

Da ertönt im Seelensprechen,
Da erleuchtet aus Geistgedanken
Das aus göttlichen Heileskräften
In den Weltgestaltungsmächten
Wellend wirkende Daseinswort:
O, du Mensch, erkenne dich selbst.
[‘There resounds in the soul's speaking,
There shines forth from spirit thoughts,
– Out of divine healing forces
In the power of world-formation,
The weaving, working Word of Being:
O Man, know yourself!’]

*Ali ressoa no falar anímico,
Ali reluz de pensamentos espirituais,
De forças sanadoras divinas
Nas potências que formam o cosmo
A palavra da existência, que atua ondulante:
Ó tu, ser humano, conhece-te a ti próprio.*

Better would be:

*Ali ressoa no falar anímico,
Ali reluz de pensamentos espirituais,
A palavra da existência, que atua ondulante
De forças sanadoras divinas
Nas potências que formam o cosmo:
Ó tu, ser humano, conhece a ti próprio.*

[A more direct translation from Portuguese into English of the above rendering:

There it resounds in soul speech,
There it shines with spiritual thoughts,
The word of being, which moves undulating
With healing forces divine
Within the powers that form the cosmos:
O thou, human being, know thyself.]

I wonder if one is allowed to transpose the lines as much. This would make the verses easier to understand, but that's not the point, otherwise Rudolf Steiner would have used different formulations. I really feel out of my depth here.

Rhythms in the mantras caused me particular difficulty. The most obvious example is in Lesson 3. With some lines, I have even managed to represent the rhythm of the original German, but not in all of them. It worked best with the iambic of the second mantra of this Lesson [I succeeded in four lines]. Those who had asked me to do this new revision told me, after I had handed in the work, that other friends would have tried to make the mantras more poetic. To my knowledge, this has not yet happened.

Another problem: Steiner uses the German Du form in the mantras, that is, the second person singular form of ‘you’. [Du in German [‘thou’ in old English] is used when speaking to one person and used to address known contemporaries, friends, close contacts, people younger than oneself and children. It is also used in prayer to address God, perhaps because it is more intimate, God feels closer and it makes Him feel more accessible].

In the texts, Steiner sometimes uses Du, and at other times the Sie form for ‘you’. The *tu* [Portuguese] second person form is no longer used in Brazil, with a few exceptions. Instead, for the third person form of German Sie, *você* is used [similar in English to our ‘you’], that the dictionary translates back as Sie. [Sie is the German polite form,

also used for unknown contemporaries and older people. It is used in the third person plural form and conjugates with regard to the verb when addressing both one person or several people as ‘you.’ [Old English: ‘ye’]. However in modern Portuguese, *você* is basically the same as *du*. In the mantras and verses, I have used the second person *tu* because I consider it more sublime than the more intimate *você*. My personal opinion is that *você* is also not wrong.

Here in Brazil we often say ‘traduttore-traditore’. This is Italian and means: a translator is a traitor. It means that the translator translates the text as he himself understands it, which is not necessarily the same as the author intends. On the first tablet, the earlier translation of *In deines Sinnes Seinserleben* [‘into your senses’ experience of being’] in Portuguese is *Na vivência do ser em teus sentidos*, where *Sinn* [sense] is understood as both sense and sense organs. When translated back to German, it would mean *Im Erleben des Seins in deinen Sinnen* [In the experience of being in your senses]. If this is the meaning of the thought, wouldn’t it be *In deiner Sinne Seinserleben* [In your sense experience of being] in the original? The word ‘sense’ is ambiguous in both German and Portuguese: sense organ, or, as mentioned above, *der Sinn des Gedankens* [the sense of thought], where *Sinn* [sense] means something like ‘meaning’, ‘significance’ or ‘value’. I felt uncertain about this and then changed the Portuguese to *No sentido de tua vivência de existir*, *Im Sinne deines Seinserlebens*, [In the sense of your experience of being]. I am asking for help here; I do not want to be a ‘traditore’.

As I mentioned above, when I read a text I have translated after some time, I want to change some things. Once I discussed this with a professional proofreader/editor who said to me: ‘This kind of work never ends; at a certain point you just leave it as it is.’ I feel the same about my revision of Class lessons: Much could be different and better, and I would appreciate any new possible formulation, any new possible word, any idea that could contribute to the clarity and comprehensibility of the Class Lessons in Portuguese.

At this point I would like to thank my husband, Valdemar Waingort Setzer, as well as Constanza Kaliks, for their help and suggestions.

TRANSLATION OF THE CLASS LESSON TEXTS AND MANTRAS INTO THE HEBRAIC LANGUAGE

Stefanie Allon

The little poem by J.W. Goethe 'Over all hilltops is rest ...' ('Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh ...') has already been translated into Hebrew more than fifty times. Those who know the German original cannot be entirely happy with any of the translations.

It is the same with the Class Lesson texts and especially with the mantras, which are indeed a poetic creation in themselves.

When translating – and I know I'm not saying anything new – one's first effort is to try and understand. This is a decisive and sometimes highly strenuous process: Do I understand what is written there?

A next step leads to the question: What do I hear? What melody, what sounds, what rhythms? All these factors are an integral part of the original mantras and create a certain image, a certain impression on the listener. Even the graphic image of the mantras – short lines, long lines, etc. – influences us in a certain way.

And finally, a look at the language into which the translation is to be made: Let us assume that we have understood the text, we are faced with the fact that Hebrew is a completely different language. It has a completely different sentence structure, a different style and a completely dissimilar vocabulary.

An analogy: As someone who is native to the Hebrew language, when you read Luther's translation of the Bible of the Old Testament, you can be quite shocked by how much of the richness and precision of the original language has been lost. And yet, we are indeed glad that we can read and hear the German texts and experience so much in the process.

By way of example, challenges for translation work

from German into Hebrew:

A first hurdle: do words that appear in the mantras even exist in Hebrew? Words like *Wesen* (being, essence), *wesenhaft* ('true reality of being', e.g. Lesson 1), *Raumeswesenlosigkeit* ('From space's spirit-emptiness' - Lesson 13), *ahnen* ('Tief in die Finsternis ahnen wir hinein' - 'Deep, deep into the darkness we now feel our way' - Lesson 16), *sein* (to be) are not as such available in Hebrew. Every translator will surely find other and further examples in this regard.

A second hurdle: The Hebrew language does not have these long, rambling sentences as in the German language. The word compounds that often occur in Rudolf Steiner's work are not common either: *Seelensühnekraft* ('atoning forces for your soul'), *Lebensflammenschrift* ('flame-script of your life'), *Zeitenwellenkreise* ('circling waves of time'), etc.

On the musicality of language: The expressive alliterations in Steiner's language such as *Wellenweben* ('weaving waves'), *Himmelshöhen* ('heights of heaven'), *Geist-Geburt* ('spirit-birth'), *Weltenwirken* ('cosmic working'), *Willenswelten* ('worlds of will') cannot be transferred in this way. Other sound creations such as *Sitze - Blitze - Hitze* ('seating, fleeting, heating') in Lesson 13 also lose their musical character in the translation into Hebrew.

One often wishes to rearrange the lines of the verses when translating to enable a better understanding.

Another concern: the rhythm of the language becomes completely different in the translation.

When translating, one moves within a wide span

between faithfulness to the words and sentences of the original, and while trying to remain true to its meaning, create freely out of the laws and musicality of the language of the translation. Another point of view: Languages change, they are alive through the people who speak and hear them. Translations must be revised again and again in this sense.

In addition to these challenges and difficulties, valuable discoveries are made in the process of translation:

- Here and there one has the experience that the translation is no less expressive than the original.
- The names of five of the categories of angels can be spoken in the original Hebrew language: Malachim (Engel / Angel), Malachei Elyion (Erzengel / Archangel), Kruvim (Cherubim), Srafim (Seraphim), Ktarim (Throne / Thrones).
- The beauty of translation: You have to work intensively with words, turns of phrase, content, form and expression. This often helps in diving deeper into the content and into the ever so special musicality of the language being translated (in this case the German language), as well as into one's own language.

On the work on Class Lessons in Israel

It is perhaps characteristic of our situation in Israel with regard to anthroposophical work that I cannot say in how many places the Class Lessons are being worked on, since we do not have a national society that could make such a synopsis possible.

There are already quite a number of different translations of the Class Lesson texts and mantras. We can report from the Hillel branch, Kiriath Tiv'on – between the Mediterranean and Nazareth: We have been holding Class Lessons there for over 25 years. Uri Ben David, who now lives in Germany, was very active here in the beginning and the Class Holder for many years. For many years now we have – in consultation with Heinz Zimmermann – opened up the reading of the Class Lessons to all participants. Anyone who has ever listened to and lived through the 19 Lessons may come forward and prepare for a Class reading. In this way, we always hear new voices in their own intensity. From

this, a strong sense of cooperation has emerged.

These are certainly just a few brief and still incomplete thoughts on the Class Lesson work and the question of translation.

With hope for increased collaboration with the Goetheanum, with other countries and languages, and with gratitude.

AUTHORS

Stefanie Allon, born in 1946, lives with her family in Israel. The doors to Anthroposophy were already wide open at the beginning of her life, since her grandmother was a branch member in Bern/CH and was still listening to lectures by Rudolf Steiner. Her father was personally accompanied by Rudolf Steiner (see Richard in the curative education course). Her path led her into education and curative education, in both of which anthroposophy seemed indispensable to her. From this impulse she became co-founder of anthroposophical initiatives for curative education and Waldorf education in Israel. At the same time she is co-founder of the Hillel branch in Kiriath Tiv'on and the class work there.
stef.allon@hotmail.com

Simon Blaxland-de Lange, born in Liverpool 1949, became a member of the School of Spiritual Science in 1984 after discovering anthroposophy through Emerson College, Camphill and the work of Owen Barfield. His working life has been mainly divided between curative education and social therapy, on the one hand, and, on the other, work in the field of the Humanities, especially translating from German and Russian. He is currently mainly engaged in translating volumes of the Gesamtausgabe for Rudolf Steiner Press. He has been both a Class Holder and a member of the Council of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain since 2013. simon@pericles.org.uk

Constanza Kaliks, born 1967 in Chile, studied mathematics and Waldorf education, doctorate in education with dissertation on Nicolaus Cusanus (University of São Paulo). Member of the Executive Council of the General Anthroposophical Society. Since 2020 member of the Leadership of the General Anthroposophical Section, since 2022 also of the Pedagogical Section.
constanza.kaliks@goetheanum.ch

Claus-Peter Röh was a teacher at the Freie Waldorfschule in Flensburg since 1983 and a member of the Initiative Circle of the Pedagogical Section in Germany since 1998. In September 2010 he moved to the Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum in Dornach/CH. From January 2011, in cooperation with Florian Osswald, he took over the leadership of the Section. Since Easter 2020 coleader of the General Anthroposophical Section alongside Constanza Kaliks and Peter Selg. claus-peter.roeh@goetheanum.ch

Peter Selg: Prof. Dr. med., born 1963, is director of the Ita Wegman Institute for Basic Anthroposophical Research in Arlesheim and co-leader of the General Anthroposophical Section of the School of Spiritual Science in Dornach (Goetheanum). He teaches medical anthropology and ethics at the University of Witten / Herdecke (Chair of Theory of Medicine, Prof. Dr. med. David Martin) and at the Alanus University of Arts and Social Sciences in Alfter (Department of Artistic Therapies).
sekretariat@wegmaninstitut.ch

Sonia Setzer, born in Brazil in 1945, studied medicine there and after further training in Arlesheim, Switzerland became a school doctor at the Escola Rudolf Steiner de São Paulo from 1972 to 1999, alongside an anthroposophical private practice. From 1991 to 1999 she was president of the Brazilian Anthroposophical Medical Society. From 1991 to 2019 she taught the Parzival epoch to Grade 11 students, resulting in two books: *Parsifal, um precursor do ser humano moderno* [Parzival, a precursor of modern man] and *Enfermidade e cura - o caminho do terapeuta à luz da cura do Rei de Graal* [Illness and healing - the path of the therapist in the light of the healing of the King of the Grail]. Since 1998 she has been director of the Rudolf Steiner branch in São Paulo, Brazil; since 2016 one of the three general secretaries of the Brazilian national society. sosetzer@gmail.com



School Conference 2023

School of Spiritual Science

The Foundation Stone of the Anthroposophical Society
and the Mantric Good of the School of Spiritual Science
1st - 5th November

The 2023 School of Spiritual Science Conference at the Goetheanum titled "The Foundation Stone of the Anthroposophical Society and the Mantric Good of the School of Spiritual Science", is dedicated to the Christmas Conference of 1923/24, the new beginnings associated with it, and the responsibility for the future. All members of the School of Spiritual Science worldwide are invited to attend. The meeting will begin with an advanced training for class-holders centered around the Rosicrucian words and the Foundation Stone meditation. The subsequent meeting of class-holders will address, among other things, the development of the form of the School of Spiritual Science and the Anthroposophical Society - as well as the special task of class-holders in this context. Then, with all the members of the School of Spiritual Science present, we will turn to the spiritual substance of the mantras, the Foundation Stone Meditation, and the tasks of the specialized sections - what are the spiritual challenges we face in various fields of work, and to what extent is the work of the "Esoteric school of the Goetheanum" (R. Steiner) indispensable for mastering them? How are the class lessons and the section work concretely connected? Fundamental aspects of the spiritual work will be further deepened through various working groups; topics include compositional aspects to the course of the 19 lessons, including Sergei O. Prokofieff, points of view on the understanding and practice of anthroposophical meditation, Rudolf Steiner's teaching of the Hierarchies, and the significance of eurhythm for the formation of the class lessons.

The entire conference will be held in German and English.

We are looking forward to your coming!

On behalf of the Goetheanum-Leadership,
Constanza Kaliks, Peter Selg and Claus-Peter Röh
(General Anthroposophical Section)

Registration School Members Meeting: <https://goetheanum.ch/en/events/hochschultagung>

Information about the registration to the Further Education and Meeting for Class-Holders will be sent via email