



General Anthroposophical Society **Anthroposophy Worldwide** 1–2/18

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■ ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Anthroposophical Society 2018 Annual General Meeting

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Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede

Towards rehabilitation

At the 2018 AGM a motion will be voted on that intends to heal a sore spot in the Anthroposophical Society's history: the exclusion, in 1935, of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede from the Executive Council. Justus Wittich is sketching some stages in the developments from Rudolf Steiner's death to the present.



Directly after Rudolf Steiner's death in 1925 the history of the Anthroposophical Society took a tragic turn in the way people worked together, a circumstance that has hardly been mentioned for almost three generations. With all the outer successes that were achieved, such as the building of the second Goetheanum (1928), the staging of Goethe's entire Faust (1938), artistic highlights and a growing membership, life within the An-

throposophical Society has been riddled with conflicts, fragmentation, quarrels and legal illusions. It is almost a miracle that, despite all this darkness and thanks to the work of the same individuals, anthroposophy could grow and become effective in civilization, and that the Anthroposophical movement and Society have gradually begun to heal together again over the last twenty or thirty years. > *continues on page 2*

■ ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Growing tension and hostility

The new Executive Council that was proposed by Rudolf Steiner and confirmed by the members at the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924 consisted of Albert Steffen, Marie Steiner, Elisabeth Vreede, Guenther Wachsmuth, Ita Wegman, and himself as president. After Rudolf Steiner's death in April 1925, the individuals left on the Council were understandably not equal to the situation they found themselves in. They could not see a way of working together or agree on how to continue the immense work left behind by Rudolf Steiner, or on how to take the Anthroposophical Society into the future.

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The growing tension, hostility and forming of factions and groups, which culminated in 1934–35, made the work of the Executive Council impossible. The initiatives and actions of Elisabeth Vreede and Ita Wegman were not understood, or misinterpreted as opposition, from the moment Rudolf Steiner died. Both women were more and more isolated in Dornach and not consulted in any decision-making processes.

The exclusion

In the end the only way out of this quandary seemed to be separation and exclusion. This step became legally effective in 1935, after a first attempt in 1934 had failed due to formalities. During the annual general meeting of 14 March, for which 1820 members came together in the still unfinished second Goetheanum, a group of members, supported by the remaining members of the Executive Council, moved that Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede be excluded from the Executive Council and divested of all duties, including their section leaderships. The motion had been preceded by a «memorandum» published and disseminated by the membership which aimed to support the motion in question and contained false and defamatory accusations. The movers also demanded the exclusion of various leading members from Great Britain, the Netherlands and Germany, as well as the exclusion of the British and Dutch Anthroposophical Societies and other groups that had come together in an association of independent anthroposophical groups. Ita Wegman, and particularly Elisabeth Vreede, were not able to continue their work for the Society and their Sections and were left with nothing. The decision effectively split the Anthroposophical Society in half.

The dismissals and exclusions did, however, not resolve the conflicts within the Anthroposophical Society. It was not long before they raised their head again in different ways, involving other people. With the ban and persecution of the Anthroposophical Society in Germany and the Second World War almost all the anthroposophical work came soon to a standstill.

Seeking clarification

Seventy-five years ago, in 1943, both Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede crossed the

threshold: Ita Wegman died on 4 March in Arlesheim (CH), at the age of 67, and Elisabeth Vreede on 31 August in Ascona (CH), aged 64. After the disastrous World War the first, slow and reluctant, efforts were made to reverse or heal the events of 1935. However, the resolutions leading to the exclusions were not rescinded during the corresponding discussions, for instance at the ACM of 1948. In 1960 the excluded Dutch and British Societies decided to return to the Goetheanum and to the Anthroposophical Society – «because this is what we want» (according to the then Dutch general secretary Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven.)

In the 1980s and 90s various individuals – among them Executive Council members Jörgen Smit and Manfred Schmidt-Brabant – tried to establish a more objective picture of the five members of the 1923 Executive Council but chose not to dwell on the conflicts and quarrels. The existing archives were difficult to access, and the Goetheanum Archives were kept firmly under lock and key. When Emanuel Zeylmans, the son of the former Dutch general secretary and a Christian Community priest, started his research into Ita Wegman's biography in 1980, he continually met with obstacles and refusals. His efforts were not at all supported by the Executive Council. ›

In 1986, a first overview was published by Bodo von Plato («On the History of the Anthroposophical Society») – at that time still a daring step to take for the Goetheanum. But the archives remained closed because it had only just become possible to take the first small and slow steps towards bridging the deep gulf that had been caused by all the violations, conflicts and legal disputes between the different factions, and to find new trust.

Necessary groundwork

It was not until 1990, however, that Emanuel Zeylmans, based on his painstaking research, though still unable to access the Goetheanum Archives, traced Ita Wegman's life and work as well as the conflicts surrounding her in a two-volume biography, followed by a documentation in which he collated all the documents available on the conflicts and exclusion of 1935, which were therefore also relevant to Elisabeth Vreede (a fourth volume followed later).

Thanks to this historical research with all its obstacles – which the writer of this article, an occasional visitor in Reutlingen, was able to witness in passionate discussions – the first necessary groundwork was laid for Ita Wegman's (and Elisabeth Vreede's) spiritual and moral rehabilitation.

Later, the Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland devoted several years to accumulating material on the individual members of the original Executive Council; various biographies appeared over time, and in the minds of the third generation of anthroposophists the formerly excluded Executive Council members Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede lived on as unblemished participants in the foundation and further development of the Society.

A significant moment arrived when Peter Selg – just before the Wegman archives were about to be lost to direct anthroposophical research – was able to incorporate these archives (and other legacies) into the Ita Wegman Institute for Basic Anthroposophical Research, which was founded in 2002. Since then much more research has been done, above all within the Institute, that casts light on the historical context and details of the human relationships at the time of the conflicts. One of these works is a comprehensive biography of Elisabeth Vreede which came out in 2009.

Over the last decade the Medical Section, helped by Peter Selg and others, has been able to establish a diverse and objective picture of Ita Wegman's work during the Section's major annual conferences at the Goetheanum.

Further steps

Although these formerly excluded Executive Council members have arrived in the twenty-first century unblemished in the minds of most members today, they have never been officially rehabilitated.

During preparations for the 2016 Goetheanum World Conference Gerald Häfner repeatedly asked to commemorate the Society's history and the various injustices committed and to begin working through them and to also instigate legal steps. The impulse was, however, not taken up by the Goetheanum Leadership at that time.

Despite all this, the resolutions of 1935 were never rescinded. During studies he conducted into the history of the Anthroposophical Society in 2016, Thomas Heck

became aware of this situation and decided, together with other members, to prepare a motion for the 2017 AGM (Motion 6, Anthroposophy Worldwide 3/2017, p. 6) in order to rectify the omissions of 1948, because both the members and leadership of the Society thought that the resolutions had long been revised. (Uwe Werner, *Nachrichtenblatt* 51–42/2002, p. 375).

This motion met generally – and among the Goetheanum Leadership – with a positive response, but there were also those who thought that the resolutions had become historical fact and it was therefore illusionary to think one could overrule them decades later. These reservations were unfortunately not expressed until just before the AGM, which meant that a public discussion was no longer possible. On the day before the AGM, however, a heated debate on the question arose during the conference of the 32 general secretaries and representatives. A simple resolution was not enough, said – among others – the Dutch General Secretary Jaap Sijmons, considering the very serious consequences the exclusions had for the destiny of those involved. Concerned that these differing views on the importance of such an overruling of resolutions would «divide» the AGM, Gerald Häfner, who had looked into these questions before, drafted a motion overnight, which he submitted to the AGM as a concern (*Anthroposophy Worldwide* 5/2017, p. 11). In his letter, he described the resolutions as regrettable and wrong, honoured both Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede, and proposed further steps toward their rehabilitation.

The motion, as well as Gerald Häfner's initiative, was discussed by numerous speakers, including Peter Selg, and other considerations were brought up, such as legal questions regarding the consequences of such a rescindment. A majority of members proposed to wait with voting on the decision to revise the historical resolutions that was suggested by the motion in question. Because the situation was so unclear, however, the proposers withdrew their motion, and the AGM supported, with great majority (in a show of hands) and only a few votes against, the concern formulated by Gerald Häfner and read out to the meeting.

What has happened since the 2017 AGM

After the Annual General Meeting the Ita Wegman Institute took on the task of com-

piling a documentation for Ita Wegman's rehabilitation, which will be published in the spring of 2018. The Section for Mathematics and Astronomy at the Goetheanum is looking into providing a complete edition of Elisabeth Vreede's works and letters, and people in the Netherlands intend to have her written work translated and published. The newly (re-)purchased house of the Anthroposophical Society in Riouwstraat 1 in The Hague (NL) was inaugurated on 20 January 2018 as «Vreede House». During the forthcoming Annual Conference and AGM from 22 to 25 March 2018, an evening will be devoted to each of the two women.

The Executive Council had moreover promised to investigate the legal situation, and whether and under what conditions the resolution made at the 1935 AGM could be reversed. The relevant results were available in December 2016 and were confirmed by a legal investigation conducted by the Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland. According to this research a former resolution made by the general meeting of an association can be rescinded in Switzerland but would only be effective from the date of the new resolution. When the Goetheanum Leadership and the General Secretaries' Conference met in early November 2017, they therefore agreed to make, at the forthcoming AGM, a decision regarding the rehabilitation that was as comprehensive as possible, and thereby respond to the 2017 motion and the subsequent concern that had been supported by the general meeting.

In the meantime, the proposers of the motion have founded (last summer) an initiative for the rehabilitation of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede (www.wegman-vreede.com; *Anthroposophy Worldwide* 12/2017, p. 21) and have collected more than 1200 signatures online.

On 14 December 2017 and on 11 January 2018 discussions took place on the motion for rehabilitation in the premises of the Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland, with representatives of the proposers of the motion, of the Goetheanum Leadership and the Council of the Swiss Anthroposophical Society. The result of these talks was that the Swiss Council, the Goetheanum Leadership and the Conference of General Secretaries will support the motion at the 2018 AGM (p. 6).| *Justus Wittich, Goetheanum Executive Council*

The Executive Council at the Goetheanum

Reaffirmation of Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato

It was decided in 2011 that Executive Council members are no longer appointed for life. Every seven years their position needs to be reconfirmed by the Annual General Meeting. In 2018 this moment has come for the two longest serving Executive Council members: Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato.

The Executive Council of the General Anthroposophical Society and the Section Leaders together form the Goetheanum Leadership and are together responsible for the School of Spiritual Science, which was founded by Rudolf Steiner as the «soul of the Anthroposophical Society». For it to fulfill this task its constitution is decided through cooptation after consultation with the section leaders and the general secretaries, with a view to the required skills and experience, and the given constellation of individuals.

At the same time the Executive Council is, as a body of initiative, responsible for the development of the Anthroposophical Society all over the world and for the Goetheanum in Dornach. It represents the Anthroposophical Society in public and is the port of call for concerns of the members and of the Societies in the various countries. Its individual members are confirmed by the Annual General Meeting of the association, which is registered in Switzerland.

Composition and orientation

Since the Statutes were amended in 2011, following a proposal by the Executive Council that was passed by the Annual General Meeting, the members of the Executive Council are no longer appointed for life, but need to be affirmed by the AGM after a period of seven years. This guarantees a regular inner and outer examination of the Executive Council's composition and orientation as a collegium in which the skills of the individual members complement each other. Any proposals of new appointments or affirmations are first discussed and confirmed within the Executive Council, then in the Goetheanum Leadership and finally in the Conference of General Secretaries, before they are submitted to the Annual General Meeting for affirmation. At the 2018 AGM the council members will be

- **Paul Mackay** since 1996, re-affirmed in 2011
- **Bodo von Plato** since 2001, re-affirmed in 2011

- **Seija Zimmermann** since 2006, will step down at the 2018 AGM
- **Justus Wittich** since 2012
- **Joan Sleigh** since 2013
- **Constanza Kaliks** since 2015, also leader of the Youth Section
- **Matthias Girke** since 2017, also leader of the Medical Section

The 2018 AGM has been preceded by an intensive decision-making process regarding the reaffirmation of Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato. This process started in June 2017 within the Executive Council, before continuing in several meetings of the Goetheanum Leadership, and then, in November, in the Conference of General Secretaries. (General Secretaries are sent by Anthroposophical Societies that have more than 500 members; they are listed here according to membership numbers: Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, USA, Sweden, Italy, Great Britain, France, Brazil, Australia, Norway, Finland, Austria, Denmark, Belgium, New Zealand, Canada and Japan.

In these consultations the question of age and length of membership in the Executive Council was discussed frankly and extensively (experience and continuity versus emphasis), since both have worked at the Goetheanum for many years. The differing views regarding the future route of anthroposophy are reflected in the question of new appointment versus reaffirmation. It was also discussed whether certain skills and experience would be missing from the Executive Council in future.

As a result of these consultations and with a view to the given constellation of individuals, the Executive Council, supported by the Goetheanum Leadership and the Conference of General Secretaries, proposes to reaffirm Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato for another term. The proposal also has to do with the Goetheanum in Development process that started with the Goetheanum World Conference at Michaelmas 2016. The two personalities in question have been instrumental in this process and should be there to lead it into the future.

Allocation of tasks within the Executive Council

Whilst preparing for the reaffirmation, the Executive Council has worked with the Goetheanum Leadership and the General Secretaries on fundamental aspects of the anthroposophical work, the School of Spiritual Science and the Anthroposophical Society; in December 2017 it proposed the following new allocation of tasks for the next years:



Paul Mackay is the longest-serving member on the Executive Council. He has so far been responsible for Human Resources and the Building Administration and has also

been a management member. He is president of the board of directors at Weleda and as such involved with the imminent steps in Weleda's future development. In January 2018 he took over from Virginia Sease as the person responsible for the class holders and new admissions to the School of Spiritual Science. If reaffirmed he will be co-leader, with Joan Sleigh and Bodo von Plato, of the General Anthroposophical Section. It is intended that Paul Mackay will gradually withdraw from the management part of his duties at the Goetheanum and devote himself increasingly to the School of Spiritual Science and the formation of a faculty within the General Anthroposophical Section. He also continues to be a faculty member of the Section for Social Sciences at the Goetheanum.



Bodo von Plato is co-responsible for Studies and Further Training, as well as for the Goetheanum's Communication and Documentation Departments (Archives, Library and

Art Collection). If reaffirmed he will lead the General Anthroposophical Section with Joan Sleigh and Paul Mackay. He has recently described the new tasks that need doing in the context of this development in a contribution to a book about the Goetheanum, the School of Spiritual Science and the history and research of the Sections. (Goetheanum – Freie Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft. Geschichte und Forschung der Sektionen. Goetheanum Press 2017). He has also been instrumental in the Goetheanum's Meditation Worldwide initiative and the Cultural Impulses Research Institute at the Goetheanum.

In addition, he is very active travelling as a lecturer and seminar leader, bearing particular responsibility for the francophone countries.



Joan Sleigh has been co-leader, with Bodo von Plato and Paul Mackay, of the General Anthroposophical Section of the School of Spiritual Science since January 2018; her main area is the English-speaking world and the fostering of contacts with the class leaders there. She oversees the English Studies in the Goetheanum's department of Studies and Further Training, as well as the English-speaking Societies worldwide. In April 2018 she will succeed Seija Zimmermann as head of the Membership Office. She travels extensively in Africa, Asia and the English-speaking countries. Joan Sleigh is a faculty member of the Section for Social Sciences and co-initiator of the World Social Initiative Forum.



Constanza Kaliks is the leader of the Youth Section within the School of Spiritual Science. She is also responsible for the Anthroposophical Studies in Spanish and Portuguese and for questions of further training at the Goetheanum. In addition, she is in charge of the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries and for the first conference of Romance languages that will take place at the Goetheanum in 2018. Constanza Kaliks is a faculty member of the General Anthroposophical Section and travels widely as a lecturer and seminar leader.



Matthias Girke became leader of the Medical Section (with Georg Soldner) in 2016 and has joined the Executive Council in March 2017. He has been instrumental in restructuring the Annual Conference and the 2018 AGM, in a way that will make more apparent how the whole Society is fertilized by the School of Spiritual Science. He is a faculty member of the General Anthroposophical Section.



Justus Wittich has been treasurer of the General Anthroposophical Society and the School of Spiritual Science since 2012. He is a member of the Goetheanum management and oversees the Finance and EDP departments. He represents the editor of the weekly journal *Das Goetheanum* and of *Anthroposophy Worldwide*. In addition, he is a faculty member of both the General Anthroposophical Section and the Section for Social Sciences.

The Executive Council and Goetheanum Leadership ask the Annual General Meeting to agree to the reaffirmation of Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato as members of the constellation described above and as instrumental contributors to the Goetheanum in Development project. | *Justus Wittich for the Executive Council at the Goetheanum*

2018 Annual General Meeting

Invitation and Agenda

Dear members,

you are warmly invited to the General Anthroposophical Society's Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting which will be held from 22 to 25 March 2018 at the Goetheanum. A programme for this event is included below. For the first time this invitation has also gone out by email to our English-, French-, and German-speaking members. This year's meetings will see a new format for our annual gatherings. We are looking forward to seeing you all!

Please note that registration is essential for the smooth running of this extensively prepared conference!

The General Anthroposophical Society's AGM – for which you will of course only need your membership card – will be included in the Annual Conference. This year it will deal with important questions and decide on a number of motions submitted by members. As a trial, the 2018 AGM will be guided through three steps of conscious judgment-forming (with a night between the individual stages):

- 1 information** (Thursday)
- 2 conversation and discussion** (Friday)
- 3 decision-making** (Saturday)

The agenda items will be dealt with as follows

AGM part 1
Information (22 March 2018, 5.15 to 6.30 p.m.): Statements and financial report Proposal for the subsequent confirmation of Executive Council members Explanations and queries regarding the motions and concerns submitted in writing (first reading)

AGM part 2

Conversation (23 March 2018, 2.30 to 4 p.m.): Open discussion of the reports and the motions and concerns submitted by members (second reading)

AGM part 3

Decision-making (24 March 2018, 2.30 to 4 p.m.): Presentation of decisions to be made Decisions on the motions submitted (third reading and vote)

Proposed agenda for the 2018 AGM

- 1 Beginning of AGM** (22 March, 5.15 p.m.)
- 2 Executive Council report and discussion** (22 March, 5.15 p.m., and 23 March, 2.30 p.m.)
- 3 Statement of 2017 accounts and auditors' report** (22 March, 5.15 p.m.) discussion (23 March, 2.30 p.m.) approval of 2017 annual accounts (23 March, 2.30 p.m.)
- 4 Election of auditors** (24 March, 2.30 p.m.)
- 5 Application** to discharge the Executive Council (24 March, 2.30 p.m.)
- 6 Affirmation of Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato** for another term in a separate and secret ballot (24 March, 2.30 p.m.)
- 7 Motions and concerns** submitted to the 2018 AGM, explanations (22 March, 5.15 p.m.), discussion (23 March 2.30 p.m.), decision-making (24 March, 2.30 p.m.).
- 8 The AGM concludes** (24 March, 6.30 p.m.)

If you have not received the programme of the Annual Conference by email: please let the Membership Office at the Goetheanum (sekretariat@goetheanum.ch) have your email address so that future information for members can be mailed to you. You can unsubscribe any time. | *The Executive Council at the Goetheanum*

General Anthroposophical Society

Motions and issues of concern for the 2018 AGM

Dear members of the Anthroposophical Society,

The impulse for renewal, born at the Goetheanum World Conference at Michaelmas 2016, will see its first practical manifestation in the restructuring of the Annual Conference and AGM. More than 30 Anthroposophical Societies worldwide will be represented and there will be opportunities to find out and have conversations about all the developments within the anthroposophical movement. A number of resolutions and motions are waiting to be discussed and decided on by the meeting. Please read the motions and concerns with their statements of reasons carefully so that they can be assumed to be known at the AGM.

In accordance with the Statutes we would like to introduce the following differentiation of concerns and motions:

- 1 Matters lying within the sphere of the members' rights.
- 2 Requests and wishes to the Executive Council for the AGM to vote on.

Article 8 of the Statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society specifies that «All matters lying within the sphere of members' rights (e.g. amendments of the Statutes, endorsement of the appointment of the president or other members of the Executive Council, membership fees, acceptance of the balance sheet) are to be determined by the Annual General Meeting. | Issues that concern the Society's spiritual goals and duties will only be dealt with in open discussion. They are not voted on. | The Annual General Meeting is chaired by a member of the Executive Council or by a chairperson appointed by the Executive Council. | The decisions of the Annual General Meeting are recorded in the minutes which are published in the Society's newsletter.» | *The Executive Council at the Goetheanum: Paul Mackay, Bodo von Plato, Seija Zimmermann, Justus Wittich, Joan Sleigh, Constanza Kaliks, Matthias Girke*

Matters lying within the sphere of Members' rights

The following concern submitted by the Nordic Societies is very important for the further development of the Anthroposophical Society worldwide. It is also evident from various responses to the earlier emailed invitation to the Annual Conference that the members are seeking new forms of participating in the life of the Anthroposophical Society.

Concern 1

Participation in the AGM of members who live further away

The designation «Global Society» should mean that it is made possible for members who live further away from the Goetheanum to vote on matters that concern the Society worldwide.

Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark together have 3,600 members. Travelling to the General Anthroposophical Society's AGM in Switzerland is too far and too expensive for most of our members. This means that we do not have the same possibilities as the members in Central Europe when it comes to having a say on matters of the Society worldwide or the situation at the Goetheanum. We feel disadvantaged by this situation and find it undemocratic. At a time when the whole world is interlinked the present way of voting seems rather outdated.

Our concern is that the Executive Council at the Goetheanum should look for ways of making it possible for all countries and members to also be actively involved in central matters of the Society worldwide.

The process as it is now gives us the feeling that we have no influence at all on what happens at the Goetheanum and this creates a distance between the Nordic countries and the Goetheanum; this is the exact opposite of what the present Executive Council strives to achieve with its Goetheanum in Development project.

We would welcome it if considerations in this direction could be started because we think that the Societies in other countries have similar views. We are more than happy to be involved in thinking about feasible solutions. | Oslo (No), 20 January 2018: *For Norway: Ingrid Reistad*

The Councils of Denmark, Sweden and - pending the next council meeting - Finland have subscribed to this concern.

The Executive Council hopes that first proposals can be discussed at the forthcoming Conference of General Secretaries as well as at the meeting of the Councils and Treasurers, all of which will precede the AGM, so that the first outcomes can be reported.

Motion 1

Proposal to affirm Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato as members of the Executive Council for another term.

See presentation on pages 4 and 5. | *The Executive Council at the Goetheanum*

Motion 2

Reversal of the resolution passed at the 1935 AGM and rehabilitation of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede

At the Annual General Meeting on 14 April 1935 the following resolution regarding Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede was passed with a great majority:

Items 3 and 4 of the Agenda: Motion I. The Annual General Meeting of the General Anthroposophical Society on 14 April 1935 pronounces that the two members of the Executive Council, Dr Ita Wegman and Dr Elisabeth Vreede, who expressed their defiance of the will of the Society with actions amounting to self-exclusion, will no longer be recognized as members of the Executive Council. In order to meet the legal requirements, the Annual General Meeting decides that «Dr Ita Wegman and Dr Elisabeth Vreede are dismissed from their positions as members of the Executive Council of the General Anthroposophical Society».

The Annual General Meeting considers it impossible for the two persons named to conduct any further activities on behalf of the General Anthroposophical Society.»

This motion was passed with 1691 votes in favour (76 votes against, and 53 abstentions). The reasons and declarations put forward in order to induce the members to pass this motion were based on misunderstandings and untruths that were actively disseminated within the Society. As a result of these decisions, not only the social standing, dignity and moral integrity of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede were violated and called into question, but their efforts for the central impulses of anthroposophy within the General Anthroposophical Society and the School of Spiritual Science were prevented and both women were separated from the areas of work and Sections entrusted to them by Rudolf Steiner – with unforeseeable consequences for the entire development of the anthroposophical movement, the General Anthroposophical Society and beyond.

The members present at the Annual General Meeting regret these past occurrences. Having gained knowledge of these past events through recent publications and wishing for a full rehabilitation, they feel that the wrongly taken decision of the past should be reversed and the personalities of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede fully and expressly rehabilitated – particularly with regard to their activities and support of the anthroposophical movement.

Proposed decision: We ask the 2018 Annual General Meeting to decide in favour of reversing the resolution of the Annual General Meeting of 14 April 1935 which led to the exclusion of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede from the Executive Council. This decision would be an important contribution toward the rehabilitation of these two members of the original Executive Council from the false accusations raised against them. | Dornach (CH), 31 October 2017 (edited on 22 January 2018): *Péter Barna, Pieter van Blom, Tatiana Garcia-Cuerva, Marion Fischbach, Lucius Hanhart, Marijcke van Hasselt, Thomas Heck, Eva Lohmann-Heck, Gerd-Mari Savin, Angelika Schuster, Leonhard Schuster, Ingrid Schleyer, Roland Tüscher.* **The Council of the Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland:** *Marc Desaulles, Clara Steinemann, Johannes Greiner, Peter Selg.*

Motion in support of Motion 2

75 years after the deaths of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede, and in continuation of the concern raised at last year's Annual General Meeting, the following leading personalities of the General Anthroposophical Society support the above Motion to reverse the resolutions of the 1935 Annual General Meeting. We ask the meeting to vote in favour of Motion 2.

With this decision the Annual General Meeting pronounces the recognition and rehabilitation of the two members of the original Executive Council from accusations wrongly raised against them in 1935. | **The Executive Council of the General Anthroposophical Society and the Goetheanum Leadership:** *Oliver Conradt, Jean-Michel Florin, Matthias Girke, Gerald Häfner, Christiane Haid, Stefan Hasler, Ueli Hurter, Constanza Kaliks, Johannes Kühn, Paul Mackay, Florian Osswald, Bodo von Plato, Claus-Peter Röh, Marianne Schubert, Joan Sleight, Georg Soldner, Justus Wittich, Seija Zimmermann.* **The Conference of General Secretaries**, which represents 18 Anthroposophical Societies in the world, as decided on 9 November 2017

Concern 2

Ida-Marie Hoek, Amerongen (NL)

In 2017 I tried in vain to defend, during the Annual General Meeting, my motion raised in connection with Thomas Heck's Motion 6 which had been sent off five days before in the Netherlands as well as in Dornach. I agreed, however, to the prospect of a deepened continuation of the rehabilitation initiative.

I do not wish to further interfere with the legal processes regarding the new Motion but am trying to contribute with my concern to the 'deepening' and understanding of the real, though still unsuccessful, process of reconciliation between the two anthroposophical groups that diverged in 1935, but that had failed even in 1925 to work together to administrate the Society without Rudolf Steiner's mediating presence. This could help us to be more successful – i.e. more united – on the way toward our goal of 2023. What is most important for me is

that we – aside from the necessary methods of dealing with the 'wrong decisions' of the past Annual General Meeting – try above all to understand the reasons why people could not work together then, so that we can also understand where we are today in this respect. Rudolf Steiner said much about the cause of this – when he tried to prevent World War I as well as after the fire and before his death.

1 The two Christian groups of the Catholic Church and the Johannine Rosicrucian School seem to have tried to become reconciled since 1600. But in the course of 1924 it became ever more apparent that this union could not be achieved on earth. Rudolf Steiner hoped to achieve this at the end of the century with the help of the Alexander stream: think of the Christian streams of Peter and Paul.

As a help in this process Rudolf Steiner gave the six subsidiary exercises as a minimum effort for the meditative preparation of the heart for the world situation. For this he condensed the sevenfold Chakra exercise into the three Aristotelian spiritual exercises of imagination, inspiration and intuition (GA 16/17 as a continuation of GA 10).

His entire philosophical and anthroposophical work between 1908 and 1922 served this guiding of the East towards the centre and the path of the West. In the end he answered the questions of the students of the Hochschul-Verein, saying that philosophy should build on the fundamentals of human threefoldness: his corrected and extended philosophy of Goethe, Franz Brentano and Fichte (father and son). It is certain that Ita Wegman was to learn all this in order to have real insight into and be able to support the First Class as the path of deepening self-knowledge. We can all read in Emanuel Zeylmans' book *Strengthening the Heart* (volume IV) how she was introduced by Rudolf Steiner to the historical-philosophical development of the knowledge of the human being. We could therefore really try today to establish the General Anthroposophical Section.

2 In Rudolf Steiner's indications regarding the threefold social institution of the Medical Section he gave concrete karma exercises so that the Section would get to know these spiritual streams. Unfortunately, the Goetheanum Leadership does

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not yet allow the Sections to be established according to Rudolf Steiner's intentions in a threefold human-social way, with the Executive Council as the heart, a core group as the head and the members as the limbs. One could, and should, try to establish this today so that the spiritual knowledge acquired by people could be included into the research and teaching.

3 Although it was possible as early as 1960 to unite the Societies of the various countries again, the reunion of the Sections that had become divided in 1935 was not yet achieved, because it relied on a deepened understanding of the task and possibilities of the School of Spiritual Science + the Michael School + the [Pflege Verein]. Thorough research should therefore first go into how Rudolf Steiner gave study material and spiritual (esoteric) courses to all the Sections after the Christmas Conference. | *Ida-Marie Hoek, Amerongen (NL)*

For reasons of clarity, the German original of the above text was slightly edited and abridged by Justus Wittich.

Motion 3

Amendment to Section 12 of the Statutes: introducing a qualified majority for affirmations of Executive Council members

We move that two thirds of the votes must be in favour when a member is appointed to the Executive Council or when their membership is re-affirmed. | *Gottfried Caspar, Ingrid Caspar, Dornach (CH)*

Statement of reasons: A fruitful working together for anthroposophy and its tasks will only be possible if the activities of each Executive Council member are understood and broadly supported by the membership. This is a matter of course that will be made binding by this Motion.

Motion 4

Amendment to Article 8 of the Statutes, last sentence: minutes should not only record decisions but procedures.

Proposed decision: We move to amend Article 8, sentence 5 of the Statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society as follows: «The course as well as the decisions of Annual General Meetings are recorded in procedural minutes which are published within two months in the Society's newsletter. The minutes need to be accepted by a majority vote in the next Annual General Meeting.» | *Heidrun Mathilde Scholze, Unterföhring (DE), sowie Jochen Baltzer, Herbert Braun, Birgit Breitfeld, Johannes Brink, Almuth Buchleitner, Walter Christ, Moritz Christoph, Anton Dembinsky, Helga Dörries, Elfriede Ganter, Dietmar Ferger, Ingo Hackel, Ulrich Hölder, Bronwen Imhoff, Barbara Janka, Erika Kaiser, Manfred Klein, Laurenz Kistler, Florian Konnertz, Elisabeth Krauß, Griseldis Krauß, Salvatore Lavecchia, Anneliese Lorenz, Mees Meeussen, Gerhard Meighörner, Cornelius Michael Oette, Kurt Pistek, Uta Schulz-Matan, Béatrice Vianin, Wessel von Loe, Elisabeth Wutte, Herbert Zettel, Robert Zocoll*

Statement of reasons: It has become apparent in recent years that the decision-based minutes stipulated in the Statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society do not sufficiently meet the members' wishes and needs for knowledge of and participation in the progress of Annual General Meetings. In fact, the minutes of the Annual General Meetings have repeatedly deviated from the stipulation of providing «minutes on decisions,» in order to give members who were unable to take part in these meetings access to important aspects.

Such partial recordings – which actually go against the Statutes – could elicit criticism from some members who were not present at the meetings, because they

might give the impression of arbitrariness. What is needed instead are neutral procedural minutes.

It is therefore our concern that the Statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society be amended in this point or adapted to the changed requirements and that, in future Annual General Meetings, procedural minutes are produced which reflect the progress of the meeting.

Many members are interested not only in the results of the consultations, but also in the developments leading to these results. Additionally, the minutes should report on discussions that did not result in a decision, such as for instance the treatment of concerns raised by members. And there is also the aspect that it is important for future generations to be able to follow, in outline, based on the AGM minutes, the development of the Society.

In order to provide an adequate picture of the progress of meetings for present and future members, it seems appropriate to present the course of events unfiltered. The minutes should not – out of a questionable desire for harmony – be smoothed over by subsequent changes or be presented one-sidedly. In order to keep our movement strong and vibrant, the minutes also need to record failed motions. One should have the courage to make the strengths and weaknesses of the meetings visible. Proposals for future work should be documented, even if they do not lead to formal decisions. If there are working groups, their discussions need to be minuted and included in the overall minutes of the meeting.

While procedural minutes are more difficult to record and need more input, they will make the members feel included in the processes. They will stimulate a lively exchange that can result in diversified and fruitful ways forward.

Under these conditions it is possible to have the minutes, as is generally customary, confirmed by majority decision in the next meeting.

Requests and wishes to the Executive Council in the form of motions for the Annual General Meeting to vote on

The initiatives in the context of the «Goetheanum in Development» project have provoked a number of queries from members as well as a need for information, especially in relation to the further development and future possibilities of the Goetheanum Stage.

Motion 5

Wishes regarding the Faust production planned for 2020

The Members' Day on 3 November 2017 which focused on the Faust production has uncovered considerable ambiguities and discrepancies regarding the question as to how Rudolf Steiner's artistic impulse – in this case in connection with the mystery arts of eurythmy, speech and drama – is understood and implemented at the Goetheanum. It has become apparent on this occasion that, although it was announced that the Executive Council and the Goetheanum Leadership would closely oversee the evolving Faust production, this never happened. This was neither explained convincingly nor was anyone prepared to take the responsibility.

In the Executive Council's statements of September 2017, it was for the first time admitted that the material had not been sufficiently penetrated artistically or spiritually (Bodo von Plato). The first expressions of concern from the membership regarding the style of the production had reached the Executive Council as early as two years previously. Paul Mackay's answer to the question why the Executive Council had only now arrived at this insight was, «It has just taken us that long.»

The contradiction arising from Bodo von Plato's statement that it had never been decided not to include Rudolf Steiner's indications, and the obvious fact that Rudolf Steiner's speech impulse as well as his spiritual-scientific explanations and indications regarding a production were almost entirely ignored, could not be resolved.

Equally unresolved was the incongruity that Christian Peter was appointed as director because he had more than 40 years of experience with the Faust at the Goetheanum, although it was known that he did not wish to include, but rather free himself

from, Rudolf Steiner's explanations and indications for a Faust production.

Even before the Members' Day the decision was made to appoint Andrea Pfaehler as director for the future work on the Faust production. Ms Pfaehler trained at the Zurich Drama School and is – apparently – not familiar with the anthroposophical artistic impulse. She is not trained in anthroposophical speech or acting nor has she any experience with former Faust productions. When asked at the Members' Day, she was unable to say anything about her concept. Clearly, an appointment has again been made without sufficiently clarifying what the intentions are regarding Rudolf Steiner's artistic impulse.

More information on and evaluations of the problems regarding the Faust production can be found in *Ein Nachrichtenblatt* issues 25/2016 (Analysis of the Faust production), 24/2017 (The struggle between art and taste), and 3/2018 (in-depth report on the Members' Day, also available on www.gv-2018.com.)

The presentations of the Executive Council, which is ultimately responsible for the production, have failed to reveal how the obvious divergence from the anthroposophical artistic impulse can be overcome and how a spiritual-scientific penetration of the Faust production can be achieved.

Even if there have been noticeable positive attempts since January 2017 at bringing life to the speech and rhythms of the play, this does not change the fact that the basic intention behind the whole production remains the same. The question remains how a Faust production can be achieved that is appropriate for the Goetheanum in all respects, including direction, stage set, costumes and the suitable «artistic presentation of evil and the realization of mythological, poetic and historical figures and contexts in Faust part II» (from the Executive Council's statement in *Anthroposophy Worldwide* 11/2017), keeping in mind the shortage of available funds.

Proposed decision: In order to avoid that the results of the renewed efforts will only become apparent when the play is performed in 2020 and to make sure that there is sufficient transparency for interested members, the 2018 Annual General Meeting asks the Executive Council

1 to publish, by the end of September 2018, a detailed written concept of the future production (as regards direction, speech, stage set, colour scheme, costumes, description of the mythological figures and scenes), and to organize a Members' Day on a Saturday in October 2018 that offers time enough for conversations with the artists in charge of the production and with the Executive Council. A direct attempt on the part of the members at influencing the artists is expressly not intended.

2 To enable the Executive Council and interested members to gain insight into the progress of the production in good time, first performances of scenes and possibilities for discussion should be provided six months at the latest after rehearsals begin, in the form of workshop presentations or public rehearsals.

3 The proposers of this motion, or members appointed by them, should be actively and in adequate ways involved in planning and running the events proposed under 1 and 2. | Dornach (CH), 26 January 2018: *Péter Barna, Gabriela Cieslinski, Christian von Esbeck, Jan Fontein, Monika Gasser, Martina Geith, Thomas Heck, Monica Heredeu von Allmen, Andrea Hitsch, Andrea Jeserich, Sivan Karnieli, Brigitte Kovarik, Eva Lohmann-Heck, Martin Georg Martens, Ursula Ostermai, Marja Reinhard, Luise Rendtorff, Katja Rettich, Ingrid Schleyer, Angelika Schuster, Leonhard Schuster, Luise von Schwerin, Gerti Staffend, Angelika Strnad, Roland Tüscher, Anna Wadström*

The planned foundation of a World Goetheanum Association is another important initiative within the Goetheanum in Development project that aims at making the Goetheanum economically viable. Regarding this initiative, the following wish has been submitted as a motion.

Motion 6

Wish for information about the World Goetheanum Association

In Anthroposophy Worldwide 12/2017 it was reported that «On this day [28 September 2017] more than 20 enterprises, representatives of anthroposophical institutions and country societies met the existing Goetheanum Association project group in Dornach. The basic idea behind this initiative is to create a real partnership between what is estimated at more than 30,000 institutions and establishments which have anthroposophy at their source (including farms and doctors' practices), and the School of Spiritual Science.» Because this notice was not very enlightening, the proposers asked for further information and received the brief answer that, «The project is still being developed and we will report on it in detail once it has taken shape.»

It is certainly right and legitimate to develop ideas without including the public. But as soon as they become projects and are beginning to be realized, it cannot be right that the public is not informed or even rebuffed when asking questions. In the anthroposophical context the term «association» is closely connected with an economic approach described by Rudolf Steiner. This approach is characterized by the fact that all those included in the economic processes, including the consumers, are actively involved in them. The use of the term in a context from which an essential part of the Society – i.e. the Members – is not only excluded but not even informed, can be experienced as misleading and inappropriate.

In recent years the idea of a membership for institutions was seen by a majority of people as not appropriate for the General Anthroposophical Society and as incompatible with Rudolf Steiner's original intentions. In 2011 the members also rejected the idea of a Goetheanum Foundation. The question is therefore whether this Goetheanum Association is a similar project, of which the members are, however, only meant to hear more once «it has taken shape»?

Proposed decision: The Annual General Meeting may decide to demand that the Executive Council informs the membership immediately and in detail about the inten-

tions and the status of the Goetheanum Association initiative and to publish this information in Anthroposophy Worldwide. | *Dornach, 26 January 2018, Thomas Heck*

The project on Communications and the weekly journal Das Goetheanum is also part of the Goetheanum in Development initiative. Extensive changes are to be expected in this area in 2019. Three wishes to the Executive Council on this topic have been submitted in the form of motions.

Motion 7

Wish for clarification of the relationship between the members and the Executive Council/ Goetheanum Leadership

The following statements have elicited questions regarding the relationship that Executive Council and Goetheanum Leadership have with the Society:

1 At the Annual Conference of the anthroposophical movement in 2017 Claus-Peter Röh said repeatedly that the General Anthroposophical Society should become less of a Society of members and more a Society that facilitates initiatives. What does this mean? Why should the Society no longer be a society based on membership? Is the Society to be transformed into a foundation?

2 In the – presumably internal – «Goetheanum in Development» working paper of October 2017, which was clearly the basis of the eponymous article in Anthroposophy Worldwide 12/2017, it is said that «A major goal of all the projects mentioned is to make the Goetheanum economically viable within three years. The basis for this is trust in the Goetheanum and its development. An important impulse in this context is the initiative to strengthen and foster the relationship with the members. For the membership contributions continue to be an important financial foundation.» (The last sentence was missing from the article in Anthroposophy Worldwide). This «initiative to strengthen and foster the relationship with the members» is evidently more interested in the membership fees than in the members.

3 In the same working paper – albeit not in Anthroposophy Worldwide – mention is also made of a Communications project that is meant to contribute to «conveying a new image of the (worldwide) Goetheanum». For this, «the present situation from the point of view of the public [is to be] analyzed with the help of external experts» and the «need for change internally assessed (by the Members).» On the basis of this, «realistic guidelines» are to be developed «for the period between 2018 and 2020». What does developing a new image of the Goetheanum imply? Why does it need external consultants to assess or develop the situation and the need for change in the relationship between the Goetheanum and the Members? Why are we Members not informed of this? And why are the Members not actively involved in this question?

Further questions arise, such as for instance how the Leadership of the Society and the School of Spiritual Science sees its relationship with the Members. Usually, the members form the Society and the Council is given the role of presiding over the membership whilst being committed to the goals of the Society and accountable to the Members. However, the above quotations give the impression that the Society's Leadership sees itself as an autonomous and independent entrepreneur, the members as the workforce of the enterprise «Goetheanum» or «Society», and it accordingly seeks to shape and optimize its relationship with this workforce with the help of external consultants. The workforce may just about be informed of future developments, but it is not included in them.

Proposed decision: If the General Meeting agrees that there are important questions regarding the view of the Society and regarding the relationship between the Members and the Society's Leadership, it may decide that the Executive Council be asked to give, in regard to the above questions, a clear and in-depth written explanation of how it sees itself as the leadership organ of the General Anthroposophical Society and consequently its relationship with the Members, and to comment and answer questions on this at a Members' Day. To make it possible for as many Members as possible to attend such a Members' Day it should be held on a Saturday between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. in September or October 2018. | *Dornach (CH), 26 January 2018: Thomas Heck*

Motion 8

Wish for balanced reporting in the Society's organs

The problem of one-sided and partly biased reporting in the newsletter for members founded by Rudolf Steiner is part of the General Anthroposophical Society's history. There are numerous examples in the history of the Society that confirm the fact that this problem has been around, more or less pronouncedly, since 1925, and that it has become part of our Society's habit body.

One clear symptom of this are the «alternative» newsheets that have appeared over time, such as the AVS News (of the Swiss Anthroposophical Association), which were rooted in the 1946 conflict about Rudolf Steiner's legacy and were published up until Michaelmas 2017. A current example is *Ein Nachrichtenblatt*, which has been published since 2011, when the Newsheet founded by Rudolf Steiner was all but given up by the Society's Leadership (it was reduced from coming out weekly to ten yearly issues in 2011). This means that the Members have hardly any possibility now of becoming actively involved in publications that concern Society questions.

One-sided reporting has time and again led to preventing Members from having access to information needed to come to an informed judgement, for instance in connection with the conflict that culminated in the exclusions of 1935. In the 1940s and 1950s, important information could not be published in the Members' newsletter because of the conflict about Rudolf Steiner's estate, and this information could only be found in the AVS news, among others. The views regarding the Society's constitution, which emerged in the 1960s and did not conform to the views of the Leadership could only be published in the official newsletter from the late 1990s. One needs to consider that these views, which have by now been proven right in their essential points, and have also been acknowledged as correct by the Society, could only be published outside the Society's organs for members.

To this day it has remained impossible to gain, from the Society's publications alone, an objective view on the examples mentioned. There have always been authors who were denied the possibility to publish

their views even though, compared to today, a much greater number of membership contributions was published before 2011 in the Members' News [Mitteilungen für Mitglieder].

Particularly in recent months, the reporting has been experienced as very one-sided. Here are only a few examples, which cannot be fully presented here. More information can be found in the sources mentioned or online at www.gv-2018.com.

Example 1

Steven Usher, when criticizing the un-commented publication of a Zander quotation in the prospectus [for the exhibition] «Images of Rudolf Steiner», asked if the *Goetheanum* was still in accord with its mission when publishing this. The *Goetheanum* Leadership's response to his criticism was to criticize the step he [Usher] took without addressing the question raised by him. Their answer was that Helmut Zander's distorting and discrediting statement spoke for itself and printing it un-commented was a «more effective correction» than not mentioning it. It was alleged that Stephen Usher had interpreted the context of the quotation based on motives that were «very different from» the intentions of the organizers of the exhibition, and that he had deliberately held back his «indignation» (as Justus Wittich called it, Stephen Usher himself wrote that he was «shocked») in the conversations he had at the *Goetheanum*, only to spread his alleged «indignation» later by email and in *Ein Nachrichtenblatt*. It was obvious that this way of presenting things was incorrect, because Stephen Usher wrote, «At the end of a pleasant visit [...]»

It was therefore apparent from Stephen Usher's contribution that he had not seen the Prospectus yet when he had the conversations mentioned. And yet, he was pilloried 20,000-fold via the German edition of *Anthroposophy Worldwide* with this allegation, in front of a membership that was unable to judge for itself. Although Stephen Usher's response was published later, an active correction or apology was never provided. (For more information about the incident see the article «Erwartungen» [expectations] on www.gv-2018.com)

Example 2

Following the Annual General Meeting various incorrect accounts were published in

the weekly journal *Das Goetheanum*. Here are two examples:

1 «Benjamin Kolass from the German Anthroposophical Society said of the group's organ of publication [*Ein Nachrichtenblatt*] [he was referring to the proposers], that it was hardly in accordance with the anthroposophical culture to call for resignations in the Christmas edition.» There is no Christmas edition of *Ein Nachrichtenblatt*, in which a «call for resignations» was published. Instead, there was a call for resignation in September 2016 in connection with an appeal to Bodo von Plato to take responsibility for the publication of the discrediting Zander quotation mentioned above. Wolfgang Held quoted Benjamin Kolass without making sure that the statement in question was correct.

Although the error was pointed out orally and in writing, it has not been corrected, and the statement was recorded in the minutes of the Annual General Meeting without any indication as to its incorrectness. There has not been a correction to this day.

2 In *Das Goetheanum* 17/2017 Wolfgang Held summarized Peter Selg's contribution to the Motion to reverse the 1935 exclusions from the Executive Council as follows: «This [the rehabilitation of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede] has long happened.» Following this totally distorted presentation of Peter Selg's contribution, Justus Wittich was given, on 24 April 2017, a written account of what Peter Selg actually said. No correction followed. Peter Selg had to intervene in person so that the original minutes were replaced by a more precise summary of his contribution (as Paul Mackay, Justus Wittich and Oliver Conradt called it) in *Anthroposophy Worldwide* 6/2017. (For a more detailed comparison of the texts visit www.gv-2018.com.)

Example 3

Das Goetheanum 52–53/2017 published an article by Wolfgang Held about the rehabilitation of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede, where he writes, «At the 2017 Annual General Meeting this effort [Gerald Häfner's concern] – in addition to a motion submitted by members – led to an initiative of the *Goetheanum* Leadership, which was accepted by a great majority, to declare the

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resolution of 1935 to be «untenable and wrong from today's point of view.»

To the background of Gerald Häfner's initiative: In 2016, Gerald Häfner proposed several times to the Goetheanum Leadership, to commemorate the various injustices done in the history of the Society in a special act. This impulse was not taken up by the Goetheanum Leadership at that time. The «concern» submitted by Gerald Häfner, which is presented here as an «initiative of the Goetheanum Leadership» originated – according to Häfner – in the night before the 2017 Annual General Meeting. It was an attempt at mediation after Jaap Sijmons and other functionaries had, just before, expressed their concern about the motion. Gerald Häfner had therefore seen no cause for submitting a «concern» as late as a week before the AGM.

Things were consequently the other way around: In addition to the motion submitted by members, Gerald Häfner submitted his concern only at the AGM (Documentation of the 2017 AGM at www.gv-2018.com)

Example 4

The one-sided reporting and selecting of letters to the editor were particularly noticeable in connection with the current Faust production. Critical letters were not published nor were they mentioned in the articles about the production, although concerned and critical messages arrived at the Goetheanum very early on. Instead much was made of the audience's enthusiasm, and reports of audience members were published that were positive, above all, about personal preferences, the joy of the performers and the extraordinary achievement of the ensemble. Critics of the production were denigrated as detractors (see below). Letters and reports referring to spiritual-scientific aspects or to the content were hardly at all published in *Das Goetheanum* and *Anthroposophy Worldwide*. There were no statements by the Goetheanum Leadership on those critical voices. Instead one heard views like, «The production has been badmouthed internally as well as externally by those opposed to the artistic realization – what a shame!» (*Anthroposophy Worldwide* 9/2017.)

Example 5

An article entitled *Criticism Should Be Organic* appeared in *Anthroposophy Worldwide* 6/2017, written by Wolfgang Held as the «Goetheanum spokesperson», on behalf and in the name of the Executive Council and the Goetheanum Leadership. It starts as follows, «The Goetheanum is facing accusations and allegations which were also aired at the Annual General Meeting. Wolfgang Held explains the circumstances and calls for a kind of criticism that can facilitate conversation.»

The subsequent «description of circumstances» consists of incorrect allegations made by Wolfgang Held, as has been established by Leonhard Schuster in his correction based on his own research. This correction was not published, not even after repeated requests. It has by now been published in *Ein Nachrichtenblatt* 12/2017. The proposer has also investigated the actual circumstances and can therefore confirm Leonhard Schuster's account. Details regarding Wolfgang Held's criticism of perceived critics on behalf of the Goetheanum – which was entirely inappropriate considering the actual facts – cannot be provided here, but can be found on www.gv-2018.com, under the heading «Erwartungen».

Proposed decision: The Annual General Meeting may decide that the Executive Council, as the body responsible for the Society's organs of publication (*Das Goetheanum* and *Anthroposophy Worldwide*) and its information, and as the editor, should make sure that the General Anthroposophical Society's organs of communication provide balanced and truthful reporting, particularly when it comes to the reports of the Leadership, the editors, and the co-workers of the Society themselves, but also when it comes to selecting external contributions, especially letters to the editor; and that the staff members involved with the editing are committed to this approach. | *Dornach (CH)*, 26 January 2018: *Thomas Heck*

Motion 9

The wish to include texts by Rudolf Steiner in the *Goetheanum* weekly as a way of disseminating anthroposophy

Proposed decision: The AGM grants to the Executive Council of the General Anthroposophical Society the competence and responsibility to see to it that the editors of *Das Goetheanum*, the weekly journal for anthroposophy, perform their task which is to use the weekly journal to spread anthroposophy, i.e. Rudolf Steiner's spiritual science, in the world. This should be done by devoting a minimum of one page in each issue to words by Rudolf Steiner from his extensive anthroposophical/spiritual-scientific work, on a chosen theme and possibly with comments. | *Eckhart Dönges, Bern (CH)*

Statement of reasons: Although the journal's subtitle (*Wochenschrift für Anthroposophy*) clearly designates it as a «weekly journal for Anthroposophy» we have hardly seen any articles from the extensive anthroposophical spiritual science in recent years.

Disseminating his spiritual scientific insights among humanity was Rudolf Steiner's foremost concern. As we know, he described the effect of the suprasensible world in and on the physical world, for instance through the hierarchies, through Ahriman-Lucifer, through the constituent parts of the human being, in nature, in the arts; the effect of the event of Golgotha on all of evolution and that of the elementary beings on each process in nature; topics that relate to Rudolf Steiner's impulses and research into the natural and social sciences and so on.

What we find in the weekly journal are mainly interviews, conference reports, and current political and philosophical matters, often without any anthroposophical light being cast on them, book reviews etc. – many topics that one can find in any ordinary journal. It seems that the editors can hardly find anyone who writes about the topics mentioned for the «weekly journal for Anthroposophy.»

I therefore move that Rudolf Steiner be allowed to speak for himself.

Further wishes to the Executive Council

Collated by Justus Wittich

Motion 10

Wish to hold a conference on the question of science or pseudo-science

Proposed decision: The Executive Council of the General Anthroposophical Society may, as soon as possible, organize a conference on the topic «Is Rudolf Steiner's spiritual science a science or a pseudo-science?»

Statement of reasons: The relationship of spiritual science with the natural sciences was one of Rudolf Steiner's most central concerns. He saw his spiritual science, or his science of initiation, as the continuation of natural science in the realm of the supersensible (cf. Majorek 2011). In the eyes of his current critics, on the other hand, it is a pseudo-science or even a form of mythical thinking. One cannot simply ignore these voices.

Rudolf Steiner saw natural science as a central force in the spiritual life of his (and even more of our) time, and he was convinced that, if spiritual science was to have an influence on public life, it would have to be able to stand up to natural science. He provided numerous indications on how one should understand and represent the relationship of spiritual science to natural science. There is evidence that Rudolf Steiner's spiritual science is equal to the challenges modern natural science is facing today (cf., for instance, Heusser and Weinzierl: «Rudolf Steiner. Seine Bedeutung für Wissenschaft und Leben heute» [Rudolf Steiner. His significance for today's science and life], 2014; Majorek: «Rudolf Steiners Geisteswissenschaft [Rudolf Steiner's spiritual science], 2015. However, this question that is so essential for the effect anthroposophy has on the public seems to have disappeared not only from the public consciousness, but also from the consciousness of the General Anthroposophical Society. It would be the task of the conference, which we are asking for, to bring this question back to the heart of the anthroposophical striving. | *Marek B. Majorek, Latterbach (CH), and 14 other members*

Motion 11

Wish to set up an online Members' Forum

Proposed decision: The membership commissions the Executive Council to set up a members' area on the Goetheanum website to enable an exchange among members worldwide. Every contribution will be published; the member in question has responsibility for the content of his/her contribution.

Statement of reasons: The forum is meant as a pin board for members, for readers' letters, for sharing and for finding out what lives in the Anthroposophical Society; for sharing what lives in our souls. Or, as Rudolf Steiner put it at the Christmas Conference, «to simply write what one feels inside» (GA 260, 30 December 1923). Even before the Christmas Conference he said, «There really needs to be something so that one can find out about all that is happening. There is so much happening in the Anthroposophical Society, but individuals have no way of knowing about these things. [...] there should not merely be an outer, formal manifestation of an International Anthroposophical Society, but what happens in it should be organically circulated. Just imagine: once we will have an International Anthroposophical Society in this form, countless difficulties we have today will simply disappear.» (GA 259, 18 November 1923) | *Basel (CH), 15 January 2018: Karin Lanz, Frank Spaan and Moritz Christoph*

Motion 12

Wish to project the Representative of Humanity on to the stage during an interval at the 2018 AGM

Statement of reasons: Perceiving and experiencing the Representative of Humanity. What effect does it have on the stage, from a distance? How does it interact with the design of the Main Auditorium? What feelings are elicited by this sight?

A first projection was done during an «Open Working Group for the Representative of Humanity» within the Visual Arts Section and can easily be done. | *Basel (CH), 15 January 2018: Karin Lanz, Frank Spaan and Moritz Christoph*

■ ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY



René Becker (FR) learns something about viticulture from Fabio Brescacin

Anthroposophy was first absorbed in the highest circles; it took around sixty years before it was applied in practice in medicine, education and agriculture. The sun forces and aestheticism are at home in Italy. Rudolf Steiner loved spending time here – to gain strength and to look at art; he also lectured on Christological themes in Rome, Milan, Trieste and Palermo, and announced the Fifth Gospel. After World War I he turned more towards the north and west.

In connection with the above, we reflected on how one can discover, in the many local initiatives in the world, a wish to celebrate a Michael festival. We felt that this was something we could take on together (see p. 18f.)

We discussed the Goetheanum's target images and how they are to be realized in the European countries. The enduring question is how the School of Spiritual Science can be visible not only in Dornach (CH) but in the other countries, too; and how the members can find their connection with the School – out of their personal need and initiative. The Goetheanum needs to appear as human and beware of institutionalism. Working on the Foundation Stone as our annual theme (p. 20f.) is a step in this direction.

In touch with current needs

We then turned our attention to the AGM in March. The general secretaries decided last November that they would support the rehabilitation of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede and that a new motion should be composed together with the former proposers to reverse the resolutions of 1935 (Anthroposophy Worldwide 12/2017 and Motion 3 on p. 6f.). This will hopefully happen at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

If the Anthroposophical Society is to fulfil its mission, it needs to focus its efforts on developing into a global society. If it wishes to work more closely with the societies in the individual countries and to remain in touch with current developments it needs Paul Mackay and Bodo von Plato who have been particularly involved with this work. The Conference of European General Secretaries has confirmed again that we wish to continue working with both of them once they have been reaffirmed. | *Jaap Sijmons, General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in the Netherlands*

Italy: Meeting of European general secretaries and Executive Council:

Towards a truly global Society

From 12 to 14 January the European general secretaries and the Goetheanum's Executive Council met in Conegliano near Venice (IT). They visited the successful organic company EcorNaturaSi, explored the soul of their host country, Italy, and prepared the next Annual General Meeting at the Goetheanum.

For the rest of the world Conegliano is an ancient little hill-town with a castle, known as the birthplace of the Renaissance painter Giovanni Battista Cima (1459–1517). For us it is the place where around the Anthroposophical Society's vibrant Giovanni Battista Cima branch a large living community has sprung up and grown since 1987.

It all began with the purchase of a farm: San Michele. Its shop, Ariele, gradually joined forces with other shops supplying health and organic food, and became Ecor in 1998. It then merged with NaturaSi, an enterprise that had opened the first organic supermarket in Italy (in Milan). In 2008 Baule Volante was added. Today this is a large-scale enterprise with an annual turnover of 400 million Euros. 40 trucks leave the main warehouse daily; and many more supply 500 shops with goods from further distribution points. The enterprise is owned by a foundation which has funded the building of the Novalis Waldorf School with 13 classes and which donates funds to anthroposophical initiatives. It has close connections with the branch that enlivens and supports the whole enterprise spiritually.

Farm and Waldorf School

We were welcomed by Fabio Brescacin and Gabriele Navilli, the founders of NaturaSi. In the evening they introduced us to over a hundred anthroposophical friends.

On the next morning we visited the farm, San Michele. We learnt about the clay that is so difficult to work with and the famous Prosecco grapes that grow wherever you look. What you don't see is the huge amounts of pesticides (glyphosate included) the growers spray everywhere. ... San Michele tries to develop the biodynamic method as an alternative.

Then we went on to the Novalis Waldorf School which is situated on Via Rudolf Steiner in San Vendemiano. It has recently been extended by three kindergartens and a gym hall (which also serves as the school hall and stage). The school's approach to teaching attracts much interest and recognition.

In the end we visited EcorNaturaSi's warehouse and saw how modern logistics and the care for a healthy life work together. A technically even more advanced storage hall is being built in Bologna. Fabio Brescacin told us about the real problem that stands in the way of further development: sales prices are too low compared to costs.

Italy: a metamorphosis of Ancient Egypt

The discussions of the European general secretaries and the Goetheanum's Executive Council first focused on Italy's spiritual situation. Stefano Gasperi, General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Italy, presented Italy as a metamorphosis of Ancient Egypt.

New Zealand: The Goetheanum and the world

Periphery and centre

How you see the Goetheanum and the world depends on where you are. What do we know of the other? How do we know this? From them? From our own experience?

Noel Josephson looks at various levels of encounters and experiences of identity and speaks of the uniqueness of human individuality.

In this our age many people are crisscrossing the earth for work or adventure and distances for some are now far less significant than they would have been less than a century ago, but many people do not have the opportunities for travel. Imagine being a New Zealander living on one side of the earth and coming across anthroposophy with its centre almost diametrically on the opposite side of the earth. You build a picture of this centre in Dornach from Anthroposophy Worldwide and from other publications available in English, you hear others tell of their experiences in Dornach, you may visit the website of the Society and you may experience some of the occasional visits from members of the Executive in Dornach or those associated with them.

Future initiatives

The Goetheanum is from this far away a photo in a publication that you may have pinned to your wall and an image supported by the accounts of others. It could just as easily be a temple from another time or even a mystical place, but No, it is the centre for the Society Rudolf Steiner started and your life is now beginning to immerse itself in anthroposophy. If there is one place you must travel to in your lifetime, it's the Goetheanum, and so begins the quest.

The once in a lifetime journey may be by yourself, without any prearranged contact at the Goetheanum, but this is your mecca and you are on your way to the place that is the focus of your highest thoughts. The joy when you arrive, climb the hill and enter the building in your moment of 'coming home,' only to find a building with the activity of others going about their normal day, oblivious to your presence as you wander what seem to you like lonely corridors and rooms. But perhaps this is not your experience, but rather your first visit is to a conference or meeting with others from your profession. Instead you encounter the comradeship of others and their thoughts and experiences which fire your imagination with possibilities, and the exhilaration lifts you with so

many things that will create and unfold into this wonderful initiative you have now in mind for back home. You arrive back in New Zealand with 'Dornach Fever', from so much to tell others that it takes some weeks to find the earth and sort the reality and clear possibilities from the wild enthusiasm.

These are two real experiences in the realm of many but they ask the question of what constitutes the experience from afar of the Goetheanum and how does a New Zealander, and not just a New Zealander, see and experience the Goetheanum?

What if there were no Goetheanum, well then anthroposophy would not have grounded itself on earth and it would not be a reality, just an idea. Do we need a physical centre to hold the spiritual impulse on earth, a centre to provide focus, to hold it, and to be something to work with? A New Zealander in this context sits on the periphery and provides another viewpoint, a counter or a balance for the centre.

New Zealand's special location

We could see this in another geographical perspective. A new organism has formed across the Pacific over the last one to two centuries, and from several perspectives such as economic activity this is now the centre of the world, with New Zealand sitting between East and West, between China and the USA as a counter picture to middle Europe. New Zealand having maintained some ties with China through its isolationist years and having early free trade agreements with China is also tied into an American orbit of security and economy but able, at least symbolically, to stand up to the USA and ban nuclear armed vessels.

Is this another centre or just standing in the middle? Perhaps we bring more than a peripheral experience as we all stand at interesting physical junctures of the world.

New Zealanders bring other qualities such as in the rights sphere, being the first nation to give women the vote and the country that gave the United Nations

formulation of the Declaration of Human Rights some substance in the late 1940s, when Europe with its colonies and the USA with its racial segregation didn't have any real interest in human rights moving beyond a vague proclamation.

Then again isn't the world a myriad of various groups of peoples who all bring aspects of the human condition and human development to the collective whole (and since this article was conceived New Zealand has joined the group of nations in the developed world like Canada, France and Ireland who have elected relatively young political leaders which asks the question of what new impulses are now coming into the world which we need to acknowledge).

Each one a centre

I am also not just a New Zealander with experiences from a folk soul level but a human being with my individual life experiences that have contributed to my being, unique experiences in the context of my life that have formed my outlook.

So here I am in New Zealand looking to the Goetheanum and to bridge the distance between us. Can you see me? Can I see you? I stand in a unique position not only in the world but unique in myself as a human being. Is this not the same for everyone in the world in that we are all unique as individual human beings, we all stand uniquely at the centre of the world and we all look to connect with others?

| *Noel Josephson, Auckland (NZ)*

(A short address given during the visit of Bodo von Plato to New Zealand on our relationship to the Goetheanum as part of a program for the Annual General Meeting of the Anthroposophical Society in New Zealand – August 2017)

Noel Josephson has been a member of the Anthroposophical Society since 1981 and is currently chair of the Council for the Society in New Zealand. A merchant by profession, he is CEO of New Zealand's largest organic food company, Ceres Organics.



Study trip to India: Binita Shah's biodynamic compost in the Himalayas

Section for Agriculture: Trip to India

A truly global movement

From 3 to 16 November, after more than two years of preparation, circa 70 representatives of the worldwide biodynamic movement came together from six continents to embark on a study trip through India. Meetings took place of the Section for Agriculture's group of representatives, contributions were made to the Organic World Congress near Delhi, and experiences were shared.

In our open air meeting room on a biodynamic farm in India it is never quiet, not even when no one speaks. The sounds of birds, monkeys, dogs and the rustling of the tree-high bamboo stems are the unfamiliar backdrop to the meeting of representatives of the Section for Agriculture in November 2017. It is the first time that we meet outside Europe. Our host is Sarvdaman Patel, president of the Biodynamic Association in India. It is no coincidence that our meeting takes place on his farm.

The active human being as the centre

The biodynamic movement has experienced a change of perspective in recent years. Rather than focusing on one centre, the focus of the movement is in other places, wherever people are actively at work. We have also learned to join forces with other movements and thereby become a stronger presence in civil society, so that we can tackle the big question of what the future will be like for the earth and for humankind.

A request from Patricia Flores, the coordinator for South America of the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM), came just at the right time: biodynamic farming as an important member and active inspirer of the ecological movement should show a strong presence at the 2017 Organic World Congress (owc).

It started on 3 November with a meeting of the Section for Agriculture's group of representatives and guests on Sarvdaman

Patel's farm in Gujarat. We looked around the multifaceted, innovatively run farm, met the chairman of India's Biodynamic Association and heard reports of biodynamic initiatives. Here are a few examples:

- Coffee growing in Adivasi villages (India's indigenous peoples) in Araku Valley (Andhra Pradesh). Naandi Foundation: www.naandi.org
- The growing of healing plants and manufacturing of etheric oils in Madurai (Tamil Nadu) in support of social initiatives. Muhil Health Center & Kar-muhil Organic Farms: www.muhil.org
- Farming and socio-economic projects for the sustainable development of marginalized groups in Andhra Pradesh. The Timbaktu Collective: www.timbaktu.org
- The production of biodynamic products and BD training and the dissemination of BD by SARG, an organization in the Himalayan foothills: www.sargindia.org

On 8 November around 80 farmers and representatives of the global biodynamic movement met at the invitation of the Section for Agriculture in order to talk about topical issues, sample Indian biodynamic coffee, and for a meeting of members of the Representatives' Group and the biodynamic speakers at the owc in Delhi.

In Nainital (Uttarakhand) Binita Shah organized an event, Listen to the Farmers, where the international group of biodynamic farmers had the chance to share its experiences with Indian colleagues. We also visited Binita Shah's initiative and biodynamic training centre high up in the mountains. Biodynamic preparations for tens of thousands of farmers are made there and farmers are trained.

A strong presence at the Organic World Congress

The owc featured more than thirty contributions from biodynamic farmers and researchers. We established numerous contacts with the global organic movement, particularly with Indian farmers who were represented for the first time in large numbers at the IFOAM Congress.

The owc members were aware of the strong presence of biodynamic farmers and researchers which meant that the biodynamic movement will be able to position its important contribution to the organic movement more effectively in the future. This meeting strengthened our own impulses and led to greater openness towards other movements.

Strength, dignity and courage

We travel home carrying many impressions and impulses with us. Images of wonderful landscapes and a rich variety of animals and plants continue to resonate in us. Most impressive of all were the people with their strength, dignity, courage and strong commitment. All this is needed, especially in a country where the negative effects of our lifestyle are so immediately present: extreme poverty, toxic smog, polluted rivers and depleted soil. There is so much to do. We were able to meet remarkable representatives of the organic and biodynamic movements who have taken on impressive initiatives with many small farmers: a great hope for India and the world!

The journey has united the global biodynamic movement in ways that would not have been possible in Europe and that have brought us closer to the wider bio-organic movement. We were able to (inwardly and outwardly) take a step from quite a Euro-centric to a worldwide movement. Now we are on our way to becoming a truly global movement. | *Jean Michel Florin and Verena Wahl, Section for Agriculture*

Section for the Performing Arts:
Speech-Movement Conference

Speech as an effectual force

A conference at the Goetheanum from 2 to 6 April 2018, for experts and others interested in the topic, will explore the relationship between speech and movement.

In eurythmy and artistic speech, language is a means of artistic expression; in eurythmy therapy and speech therapy it is an effectual force. It is also a means of communication in a community and, at a higher level, an expression of the Logos. In its last Easter Newsletter (66/2017) the Section for the Performing Arts has explored the qualities of diverse languages. If a language is used in an artistic or therapeutic context the various sound properties need to be assessed. In a conversation with Wolfgang Held the eurythmy therapist Angelika Jaschke said, «We have eurythmy therapy in 40 countries now, but it often remains a European import. We work with European sounds in East Asia, for instance, even though these sounds are not part of the Asian language body and will therefore probably have a different effect.»

180 initiatives introducing themselves

Stefan Hasler, the leader of the Section for the Performing Arts, is looking forward to a «Dionysian» event: there will be a daily Marketplace where 30 initiatives introduce themselves every day: that makes 180 contributions altogether in six days. In addition there will be speech eurythmy demonstrations and performances in almost thirty languages. Martina Maria Sam and Stefan Hasler will report on the new [German] edition of Rudolf Steiner's Speech Eurythmy Course and their findings in the context of this project.

The purpose of the conference is to offer all those who work professionally with language or speech, or who feel passionate about the subject, the possibility to share their thoughts and questions about language and movement. The conference is being organized by the Performing Arts Section and the Education Section together. | *Sebastian Jüngel*

Information and registration
www.2018.eurythmie.net

Goetheanum Leadership: winter retreat

Practice research in the fields of applied anthroposophy

From 4 to 6 December 2017 the members of the Goetheanum Leadership came together for their winter retreat. One of their meeting days was dedicated to the Goetheanum in Development impulse and focused on practice research. Aside from organizational issues the leadership of the General Anthroposophical Section was discussed.

The ongoing work on the target images up until the summer break has been agreed: the Goetheanum Leadership will deal with each target image once in greater depth, devoting enough time to it. We have started this process during this retreat, focusing on practice research. Under the heading «The dignity of knowledge. Practice research as part of the section research» we tried to discover and promote practice based research in the areas of applied anthroposophy («fields of life»). The sections presented positive examples, such as:

- the Vademecum of Anthroposophic Medicines which began in 2005: www.vademecum.org (Medical Section);
- The study «What will the world look like in 2030, if what lives in young people today becomes reality?» (Youth Section);
- The Goetheanum Worldwide Meditation Initiative, www.meditation.goetheanum.org (General Anthroposophical Section);
- The research project «Eurythmy Figures by Edith Maryon and Rudolf Steiner» (Section for the Performing Arts).

The exchange about the actual projects has been experienced as positive and healing. The next task is to prepare the practice research for presentation and to introduce it into the life within and without the anthroposophical movement.

Restructuring the General Anthroposophical Section leadership

The relationship between the General Anthroposophical Section and the Executive Council at the Goetheanum was discussed in some depth. While the Executive Council is responsible for this Section because its primary field of life is the General Anthroposophical Society itself («Awakening in the other's life of spirit and soul»), it is also true that anthroposophy is being worked with all over the world today. The General Anthroposophical Section's field of practical application (field of life) therefore needs to be extended and there is some integrating to be done. The Executive Council

has proposed Paul Mackay, Joan Sleight and Bodo von Plato as leaders of the General Anthroposophical Section, and this proposal has been affirmed by the Goetheanum Leadership.

In addition to the eurythmy with Stefan Hasler and the ongoing study of Rudolf Steiner's book *Anthroposophy. A Fragment*, diverse basic and topical aspects were discussed.

Johannes Nilo, head of the Goetheanum's Documentation Department, presented a 15-page status report on the development of the Goetheanum Art Collection and basic guidelines for dealing with Rudolf Steiner's cultural heritage in the twenty-first century.

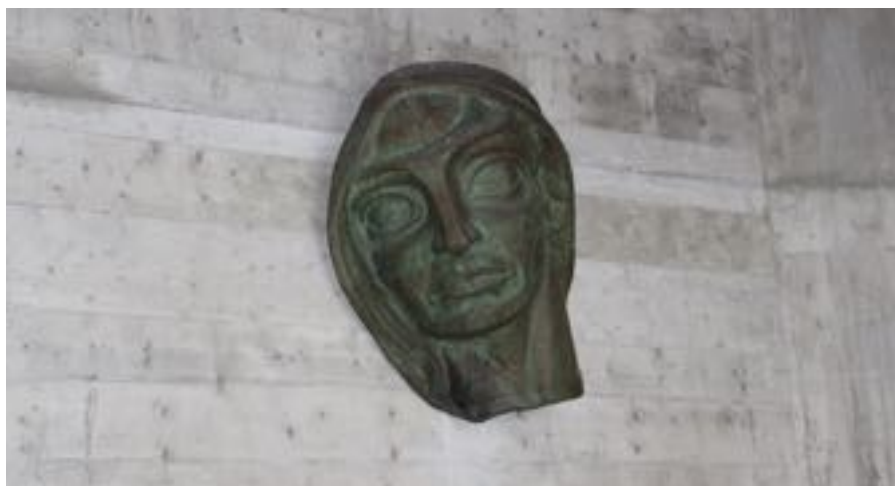
Paul Mackay and Stefan Hasler will be the Goetheanum Leadership's spokespersons for the working year 2018/2019. The question of Ita Wegman's and Elisabeth Vreede's rehabilitation was discussed.

Adjustments to staff pensions

Because the Swiss pension funds' conversion rate for old age savings will continue to drop, the pensions would decrease compared to the present amount if the contributions remained the same. It was therefore decided to increase the pension fund contributions from 1 January 2018. For the Goetheanum staff members this means that the future pension payments of the Abendrot Foundation will remain at today's level. In order to help the employees with the higher contributions, the basic salary at the Goetheanum has been raised by 30 Swiss Francs, starting from 1 January 2018. As a result the General Anthroposophical Society will spend around 80,000 Swiss Francs more per year on salaries.

At the end of our retreat we rose to express our gratitude and to say good-bye to our dear colleague Virginia Sease, who is stepping down from her active involvement in the Goetheanum Leadership. Virginia Sease came to Dornach in the autumn of 1984, when she was appointed as an Executive Council member. She will continue her activities within the Goetheanum Studies department. | *Oliver Conrath and Seija Zimmermann, spokespersons for the Goetheanum Leadership*

■ ANTROPOSOPHY



A festival culture

Human dignity as the heart of the Michael festival

Rudolf Steiner has left indications regarding the celebration of a Michael festival. At the Medical Section's Annual Conference at the Goetheanum in 2017 Stefano Gasperi spoke about the history of the concept of dignity and concluded that dignity would have to be the centre of the Michael festival.

On 7 January 1487 the Italian philosopher Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, who was 24 years old at the time, wrote his Oration on the Dignity of Man, which was not published until after his death because its content was considered heretical. In the passage on the Creation of Man Adam is addressed directly, «Impeded by no restrictions you may, by your own free will, [...] trace for yourself the lineaments of your own nature. [...] It will be in your own power to descend to the lower, brutish forms of life [...] you will be able to rise again to the superior orders whose life is divine.»

Pico della Mirandola also had a great yearning for peace. His time saw the beginning of the dramatic developments in the Mediterranean world that we continue to experience today. The Christian unity in Europe began to fall apart. Pico della Mirandola asked himself: Is unity possible despite the differences between peoples and human beings? He found the answer with the help of the thoughts expressed by Nicolaus Cusanus (1401-1464): by continuous comparison. Curiosity is needed for this, looking out and caring for others.

Human dignity under threat

Around 500 years later Gerhard Kienle (1923-1983), the founder of the [anthroposophi-

cally oriented] Herdecke Community Hospital and Witten-Herdecke University (DE) addressed the question of human dignity in his lecture of 3 November 1978 (his book with the same title was published by the Ita Wegman Institute). Never before was the issue discussed as widely as in the twentieth century, maybe precisely because the dignity of the human being has been violated so much in that time. Just think of the millions of victims claimed by World War I, the millions of dead of World War II, the millions of deaths caused by Bolshevism. Or think of the Holocaust, the civil war in Bosnia, and the many wars and conflicts worldwide today. Think of the practices of torture and capital punishment, the abuse of children and women; the complications resulting from technological progress; the difficult ethical problems related to birth and death, genetic engineering and so on. Complex social consequences arise for the refugees; there is the division between north and south, between poor and rich nations, and social problems in a multicultural world. These are questions that do not belong to the legal or political spheres.

Overcoming division

In ancient Greece human dignity was not yet an essential attribute. Dignity was gained by way of victory, fame, or hero-

For all of humanity, all peoples and each human being: the Michael Festival («The Countenance of Michael» by Walther Kniebe)

ism (Homer). Human dignity consisted in being healthy. Illnesses needed to be cured; if they were not the sick could be left to die. And yet there was something ambivalent about the Greek culture: total contempt for the individual on the one hand (the gods were so superior); on the other hand the emergence of conceptual thinking, which meant that truly dignified existence was realized in the mind that was beginning to unfold and be aware of itself. Philosophy and sculptures depicting gods in human form were preparing the conceptual tools and the inner images needed to understand the incarnation of the Son of God (the Christ) as the archetype of the true human «I».

A change due to Christ's deed

With Christianity came an important turning point. In parallel to the development of Christianity the «humanus» concept evolved. It signifies a waking up to oneself, to the other person, and to the responsibility for the future of the earth. God and the human being have become one through Christ's deed. That is the mystery of Christ Jesus' dual nature.

As a result of the institutionalization of Christianity by the Church (and the rejection of Greek philosophy) the division of mind and matter, of heaven and earth, of physical and spiritual work, has spread in the West and has led to pathological social processes: the conflict between individual and society began. Where human dignity equals self-determination, and self-determination equals self-realization, individual selfishness will be promoted and the community will suffer. And vice versa: If community alone counts, the individual will suffer. We see examples of this in Liberalism and Capitalism (egoism of the individual) and in Communism (egoism of the community). None of them has achieved dignified human existence or social peace.

In the modern natural sciences humanism becomes a caricature: the «humanus» is reduced to a «homunculus» (cf. Goethe's Faust). As a direct consequence, the spiritual and natural sciences are separated and an abstract spirituality and intellectuality emerges that cannot be healthy or effective in the world, and a natural science and cul-

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tural life that are void of both soul and spirit.

The Mystery of Golgotha integrates what used to be separate: a powerful universal healing process for each human being, for all times, for the whole earth and the world. In the new Michael Age Rudolf Steiner's Christmas Conference of 1923/1924 constituted a culmination. It is also a powerful impulse for integration and healing that, as a Christ impulse, seeks to spiritualize civilization (GA 186, Lecture 5). When Rudolf Steiner re-founded the Anthroposophical Society and the School of Spiritual Science he prepared a global society that can represent humanity. One of its tasks is to «nurture the soul life.» The General Anthroposophical Society can then become a new Noah's Ark that can salvage the universally human, and a new laboratory for the «humanus».

A Michael Festival

Rudolf Steiner thought it was an important task for the Anthroposophical Society and anthroposophists to create a Michael Festival for the world – not as an internal event but for all human beings; a festival to join the cycle of recognized annual festivals, political holidays etc.

Every festival has its particular character, its own images, stories, and rituals. I see human dignity at the heart of the Michael Festival. Michael is the spirit of time for all humankind, for all peoples – and for each person, who, because we are images of god, deserves dignity.

If we have the courage and enthusiasm to work spiritually as intensively as possible on this topic, we may receive the right inspirations for celebrating the centenary of the Christmas Conference. This healing power can only stream to us through the fiery enthusiasm of our ideals and our hearts. The Rose Cross symbolizes this: a black cross with seven red roses as the symbol of the transformation of the blood through our warmth, our enthusiasm for lofty ideals and our wonder at the divine in the world and in the human being. | *Stefano Gasperi, General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Italy*

Edited extract from a lecture on human dignity given on 17 September 2017.

Germany: «Morgenroete» – a musical

100 Years of Waldorf Education

The initiative *Weltenwandler* is looking for actors for its staging of the musical *Morgenroete (Dawn)* which was written and composed for the centenary of Waldorf Education.

It will be a hundred years in 2019 since the foundation of the first Waldorf School. The Waldorf School movement looks back on triumphs but also on bitter struggles and opposition. We, the teachers at *Eos Erlebnispädagogik* [provider of outdoor education] are in the process of producing a musical about the history of the Waldorf School impulse.

The musical *Morgenroete* describes the turbulent events leading up to the foundation of the Waldorf School. It shows how the School impulse was born from the wish that there would never be a war again, and how the oppositional forces did all they could to prevent its foundation. The storyline also includes the present and today's controversies around Waldorf Education.

A social project

For us this is a social project: everyone involved contributes something and gains a wealth of experience. The actors are young amateurs who work for free, although the costs for their board and lodging are covered. Participation is also free of charge. We were able to get Christine Veicht as director; the music was composed by Jukka Kuoppamäki and Simon Daum. A number of people will act as coaches for singing, dance, and circus skills. We are looking for people between the ages of 20 and 40 who are interested in the topic, who are good team players, have idealism (but no financial interests), and who would like to go on tour with us.

The skills we are looking for include acting, dance, eurythmy, circus as well as stagecraft, costumes and make-up. | *Michael Birnthal, Freiburg im Breisgau (DE)*

Morgenroete Musical Eos-Erlebnispädagogik, Wildbachweg 11, DE-79117 Freiburg, tel. +49 761 60 08 00. Information and application (by 31 March): roswitha.merazzi@eos-ep.de, morgenroete.org

Goetheanum Eurythmy Ensemble: «Between the worlds it happens»

Between the worlds

On 26 December the Goetheanum Eurythmy Ensemble (director: Margrethe Solstad) presented a programme with poems by the Basel poet Heidi Overhage-Baader.

Heidi Overhage-Baader's poems are like a treasure chest that springs open to release light, love, joy and hope. When presented in eurythmy these treasures become visible.

I was able to journey with them, from the «Dark Hour» to the «Voice of Silence» to «Morning's shores». A watchful severity resonated in the poem «Only now do we begin / to perchance wake up». Then, like an escalation, «A calling sound / goes through the world». And who would not know this mood of soul: «Bearing that it is as it is». And yet, «Inside the human soul», «where lovers know each other / where, unobserved, the future begins» – this is where the forces live that lead us into the future. Here lives hope.

In the poems «Like silver bells» and «Messengers come from far away» I experienced the splendour, the light, of Christmas – the angels were for me the «messengers from far away.» The programme ended with Christmas jubilation (Johann Sebastian Bach, BWV 1055).

The world has been cleansed and healed

Helped by the speakers Barbara Stuten and Dirk Heinrich, the eurythmists made the poems' subtle inner drama and spiritual breadth come to life, allowing them to shine. The music pieces by Dmitri Shostakovich and Riho Peter-Iwamatsu, woven into the program by Camerata Da Vinci and Hartwig Joerges (piano), formed a larger unit that resonated harmoniously with the poems. Everything was one stream, was created out of one soul space – and allowed me to immerse myself and let my soul dance «between the worlds». The subtle colour arrangements of the costumes were also a feast for the eyes. Afterwards I felt that the world had been cleansed and healed. The poet and painter Heidi Overhage was present and received standing ovations. | *Gabriela Jüngel, Dornach (CH)*

The eurythmy programme «A calling sound goes through the world», with poems by Heidi Overhage-Baader, will be shown at the Goetheanum on 1 and 6 April and 2 June

Annual theme 2017/2018: *«Light and warmth become freedom and love»*

The Foundation Stone Meditation and its three exercises

Rudolf Steiner gave the Foundation Stone Meditation to the Anthroposophical Society and movement as a spiritual basis, as a solid foundation on which we can stand in our anthroposophical seeking. How can the meditation become this foundation?

Rudolf Steiner called on the members to lay the foundation stone into their own hearts. «The soil we need to sink the foundation stone into today is the heart [...]» (GA 260, lecture delivered in the morning of 25 December 1923). How can this be done?

One way is to simply speak it, inwardly or audibly. If you do this over a period of time – in other words, many times – the speaking can become a kind of meditation: while you speak the words yourself, certain new feelings and movements, maybe also figures and images, emerge in the soul through your speaking. You don't create these images yourself, but they arise as an 'inner answer' to the words you are speaking. You don't even have to understand the deepest meaning of these words (one does not really know this exactly), but you can keep the ordinary meaning of the words in the background.

The repeated speaking that becomes meditation will make the true deeper meaning of the words slowly rise up in your soul. In the inner response the Foundation Stone reveals itself. «Sinking [the Foundation Stone] into your heart' could be something like 'making friends' with what we experience in our soul.

Different souls will go about this in different ways. What is certain, however, is that one always returns to the words of the Foundation Stone Meditation. The words are the 'objective' aspect of the Meditation. Everything we think about it or experience with it is already an answer from our own soul. The deepening, meditative process will continue, as long as we are prepared to 'forget' today, when we pick up the text again, what we experienced or discovered yesterday. This is of course true of everything that is said here about the Foundation Stone Meditation.

A new mystery word

When Rudolf Steiner spoke the Foundation Stone Meditation for the first time, he said it was a renewal of the ancient mystery word «Know Yourself» (GA 260, lecture of

25 December 1923, a.m.). How does this aspect of renewal appear in the Meditation?

If you see this Know Yourself as a task that you need to accomplish, and you then look at the Foundation Stone verses, you first notice the three appeals, to 'Practise Spirit Recalling', 'Practise Spirit Awareness' and 'Practise Spirit Beholding'. (I assume the reader knows the words of the Foundation Stone Meditation, or can read them up).

Often the question arises: what is the content of these exercises? Let us look at this question by focusing on the text. If we look at the text more closely we realize that the line just before the appeal to practise always ends with a colon. This colon is preceded by a set of four lines. They describe how the soul lives in a threefold way inside a threefold body. We live «in the limbs», «in the beat of heart and lung» and in the «resting head». These lines really describe, and put into order, our entire world of experience, including our body experience. It is described as just being there: we find it, like a present of creation.

This description ends, as I have mentioned, in a colon. A colon can mean that the following text will make explicit what has been described before implicitly, but has not yet been put into words – something is made visible that was not visible before even though it was already present.

The three colons in the Foundation Stone Meditation tell us: the three exercises are implied in the first four lines, are already contained in our whole experience of life. Therefore: our soul experience – in the «world of space», in the «rhythms of time» and in the «grounds of eternity» – implicitly contains the mystery word of Know Yourself, but now in a threefold way.

For the ancient Greeks the mystery word was one single sentence: Know Yourself. For us modern human beings it is differentiated in three parts: 'Practice Spirit Recalling', 'Practice Spirit Awareness', 'Practice Spirit Beholding'.

The three exercises are consequently not 'thought out'; they have not been added

to life from the outside, but they are contained in our normal life experience and we find them when we listen inwardly.

A threshold: from the soul to the world

As we read further we first find an indication as to how and where this practising can be done: «in depths of soul», «in balance of soul» and «in stillness of thought». These lines give a certain direction to our practising. If we follow this direction we meet a kind of threshold that leads us to a different realm: from the soul into the world. To make this clearer, look at the first two parts of the following lines: «where in wielding» and «where in surging». Both are like 'half messages'. Their other halves only follow in the next line. One can ask why the whole message was not given in one line, that is, «Where in wielding World-creator-being» and «Where in surging deeds of Worlds evolving». The separation creates a movement towards the next line, as we are reading the verse. We are keen to move on to the next line in order to read to the end of the message. These lines with their half messages become a kind of transition that leads across into another world: from the «depths of soul» to the «World-creator-being», and from the «balance of soul» to the «deeds of Worlds evolving», in other words, from the soul to the world. In the lines with the 'half' messages, we therefore cross a kind of threshold. The words «wielding» and «surging» depict the specific character of these thresholds: «wielding» denotes forces, «surging» movement.

This crossing of the threshold becomes possible when we really take these exercises on.

The human soul has an 'I'

Once we have crossed into the world we meet another aspect of our own being. While we were simply addressed as 'you' at the beginning of each verse, we now find the phrase 'your own I'. The human soul (You) has an 'I'.

If one wants to feel more deeply how this appears in the verse, one can vary these words and say «my own I» or «one's own I». You discover that 'I' and soul (you) belong together, but also that the 'I' is independent of the soul. It is a being in its own right and it lives in the world. It is as if the practising has enabled you to find something out about your 'better' or 'higher self'.



Practising and learning about one's higher self: blackboard writing by Rudolf Steiner (GA 260, 28 December 1923)

At the end of the microcosmic passages we are again addressed as «You». A future possibility for the human soul is pointed out to us: if we take on these exercises, we will be able to «truly live», «truly feel» and «truly think». This means that, in the future, the true human being (the human soul that truly is) can appear and unite with the whole cosmos. This possibility is shown to us; but we have to become active ourselves, with the help of the three exercises. They therefore teach us how we can unite ourselves again with the wider creation, but now as human beings that have become individuals.

The third verse

The character of the third verse is quite different from that of the first two. This is apparent from the second line because the iambic rhythm gives way largely to dactyls. Also, while in the first two verses «the limbs» and the «beat of heart and lung» are doing something with me – they «bear» and «lead» me – the resting head does something for me. It «unlocks» world thoughts for me, leaving me free in this pro-

cess. The head does this because it is resting; it seemingly withdraws and provides a stage where the human soul can meet something spiritual: the world thoughts.

Nor do we cross a threshold in the third verse. There is no line with a «half» message leading from the soul into the world. The corresponding line in this verse contains the full message, «Where the god's eternal aims». This line also forms a rhythmic unity. We do not cross a threshold «to the world» here, but something comes towards us. We receive a gift from a higher world, «light of cosmic being». This gift makes «free and active willing» possible, as the text reveals to us. This free willing is first realized in the thinking, and this thinking can become the starting point for free actions.

The third verse is only true for us modern human beings. We first live in separation from the spiritual world, but we have been given something that allows us to awaken to spirit being on this side of the threshold.

How striking the difference is between the three verses is noticeable when we look at the three verbs in the German original: «erwesen» [come into being],

«vereinen» [unite] and «schenken» [bestow]. They are in exactly the same line in each verse, but the subject ruling these verbs – «das eigene Ich» [your own I], «Welten-Werde-Taten» [deeds of Worlds evolving], and «die ew'gen Götterziele» [god's eternal aims] – moves one line higher with each verse. So there is a clear difference in the structure of the three verses.

The word «spirit» in the three appeals suggests the potential for developing towards truthfulness and goodness. You feel you want to awaken the spirit within you and let it guide you in life. The spirit not only lives in us, it connects us with the world around us. The effect or meaning of the word widens as we practise. It will continue to call our attention to the spirit in us and in the world. | Auke van der Meij, Driebergen (NL)

Auke van der Meij was born in 1951, studied philosophy and has worked in Dutch Waldorf Schools for many years. He is a member of the Council of the Anthroposophical Society in the Netherlands and co-author of the book *Imaginatie, inspiratie, intuïtie* (SWP 2011).

■ FORUM

Regarding the Faust Members' Day on 3 November, in addition to the contribution printed in *Anthroposophy Worldwide* 12/2017

Paul Mackay welcomed the circa 70 persons present. One member pointed out to him that, according to the motion, the members should have been included in the preparation and moderation. The passage in question was read out and taken note of without response. Seija Zimmermann, who has been responsible for the Stage since January 2011, began her report with an account of the developments. On 2 May 2011 a first preliminary discussion of the Faust Project took place with Margrethe Solstad and Christian Peter. The report said nothing about who commissioned the directors or what the commission envisaged in terms of style and aims. Her highest priority was to grant the artists latitude. Nils Frischknecht, Ilja van der Linden and Roy Spahn joined the team of artists. The group's core idea was presented to the leadership of the School of Spiritual Science. Nothing was said, however, of the content of this 'core idea'.

Differing intentions

When asked why Christian Peter was commissioned, who was known to not intend to include Rudolf Steiner's explanations regarding the Faust, but wanted to do everything new from scratch, Bodo von Plato said something to the effect that this was self-evident since Christian Peter and Margrethe Solstad had worked with the Faust for decades and had plenty of experience. When asked where the decision came from to not consider Rudolf Steiner's speech and drama impulse for the new produc-

tion, Bodo von Plato said there had never been a clear decision to not include Rudolf Steiner. – Another question was about the reasons for the lacking spiritual penetration of the material that was mentioned in the statement. Bodo von Plato explained that this had to do with the insufficient cooperation of the artists. Something had not come through in the human relations between eurhythmists and speech artists, and between the Goetheanum Leadership and the Ensemble. How could there be a fruitful cooperation considering the well-known oppositional intentions of the two mainly responsible artists (Goetheanum 9/2018)? Regarding the outcome of the cooperation Bodo von Plato said, «It was not enough.» Is not the Executive Council responsible for the commissioning and the objectives, and therefore also for the difficult process and its outcome, particularly since it had been announced repeatedly that the Faust project would be closely overseen by the Executive Council?

Pressure to justify

The question why Martina Maria Sam had withdrawn from the team so soon – she was the appointed dramaturg because of her extensive knowledge of Rudolf Steiner's spiritual-scientific explanations and indications regarding the performance of Faust – was not answered by the Executive Council but passed on to Christian Peter. His explanations remained unclear. When asked how it was possible that one had only now – two years after the first concerns and critical comments were made by members – arrived at the judgment about this production men-

tioned in the statement, Paul Mackay answered «It has just taken us that long.» While no one from the Leadership assumed responsibility or took the appropriate steps, the actors obviously felt under pressure to justify and made several contributions. This was not the objective or content of the motion, however, because the question had been about the responsibility and accountability of the Executive Council. Instead, the members found out that, even before the Members' Day, Andrea Pfaehler had been appointed director for the forthcoming 2020 production. When asked to comment on her concept and intentions, Andrea Pfaehler said she was not prepared for this question and nothing had been discussed or decided yet. It is therefore unclear what her relationship with Rudolf Steiner's artistic impulse is and what intentions she wants to realize when producing Faust.

No active involvement

Where is the much-cited openness for conversation and encouragement that *Anthroposophy Worldwide* expressly calls for? The members are not even included when the AGM has decided that they should be. We think that the objectives of the Members' Day and of the justification statement have not been met, neither in form or content. Justus Wittich pointed out that a minimum of five sold-out major events per year are required for the big stage to be financially viable. He said, he was enthusiastic about the 2017 Faust production and would do everything in his power to make a 2020 production possible. Starting the production from the very beginning was financially impossible.

The relationship with Rudolf Steiner's artistic impulse

Numerous former actors and speech artists of the Goetheanum Stage are also aware of the failure to work with Rudolf Steiner's speech and drama impulse. Instead of closing down the stage and the speech school in 2003, those in charge in the «House of the Word», had this been of genuine concern to them, could have decided to commission a new and consistent further training on a smaller scale. What is the task of the School of Spiritual Science in relation to Rudolf Steiner's artistic impulse? It cannot be to adjust to current tastes! Eurhythmics and speech are not arbitrary «artistic means», they are special arts, newly created out of the source of spiritual science. There are still experienced speech artists who could grasp this task anew, and members for whom Rudolf Steiner's artistic impulse is a heartfelt concern, in the sense of the words, «No, we will not compromise, [...] we will draw from the sources that we have worked hard to come close to [...]» (Rudolf Steiner, *Rezitation und Deklamation*, 1928 edition, p. 128 – [GA 281, an English translation of the book is available as *Poetry and the Art of Speech*]])] *Eva Lohmann-Heck, Dornach (DE)*

Short version of a more comprehensive report; signed also by Samuel Aebi, Péter Barna, Beate Blume, Peter Engels, Tatiana García-Cuerva, Jan Fontein, Thomas Heck, Andrea Hitsch, Brigitte von Roeder, Gerd-Mari Savin, Beatrice Schüpbach, Roland Tüscher, Monica Heredeu von Allmen, Ernst Felix von Allmen.

We have been informed that the following 121 members have crossed the threshold of death. In their remembrance we are providing this information to their friends. | *The Membership Office at the Goetheanum*

Charlotte Marx Bremen (DE), 2 April 1992
Gerhard Greuling Stuttgart (DE), 2 June 2016
Waltraut Hiess Vienna (AT), 17 November 2016
Ursula Liehr Iserlohn (DE), 28 November 2016
Mary Joan Fajardo Quezon City (PH), 12 January 2017
Salvatore Chimento Palermo PA (IT), 17 January 2017
Christine Münch Gernsbach (DE), 25 January 2017
Cinzia Balos Trieste (IT), 31 January 2017
Rosana de Campos Ribeiro São Vicente-SP (BR), 2 February 2017
Juliet Knox Gleniffer (AU), 15 February 2017
Edda Singrün Karlsruhe (DE), 16 February 2017
Klara Better Zurich (CH), 5 March 2017
Krystina Przedlacki São Paulo (BR), 30 March 2017
Holdherta Willich Bremen (DE), 18 June 2017
Brenda Freeston Sheffield (GB), 14 July 2017
Christiane Steffen Hildesheim (DE), 18 July 2017
Rainer Riess Münster (DE), 19 July 2017
Heinrich Seyfarth Gernsbach (DE), 20 September 2017
Anneliese Sinn Peoria/IL (US), 24 September 2017
Christoph Kranz Graz (AT), 28 September 2017
Willi Kuhl Dortmund (DE), 11 October 2017
Ursula Schübbe Dortmund (DE), 12 October 2017
Werner Lenz Ludwigsburg (DE), 13 October 2017
Cynthia Trevillion Chicago/IL (US), 13 October 2017
Marion Bruce Concord/CA (US), 17 October 2017
Hanna Wassmann Cuxhaven (DE), 22 October 2017
Trevor Smith Stroud (GB), 24 October 2017
David Suffolk Dudley (GB), 30 October 2017
Klaus Eckerle Gaggenau (DE), 31 October 2017
Sarah Simon Hanover (DE), 31 October 2017
Patricia Waite Devon (GB), October 2017
Alfred Höltschl Vienna (AT), 1 November 2017
Hans Rusterholz Würenlos (CH), 2 November 2017
Alexander Stevenson Napier (NZ), 2 November 2017
Kirsten Balonyi São Paulo SP (BR), 3 November 2017
Ruth Bruun Klippinge (DK), 3 November 2017
Jürgen Hamm Neckarsteinach (DE), 4 November 2017
Frank Assmann Hamburg (DE), 6 November 2017
Marianne Ehni Göppingen (DE), 6 November 2017
Petra Neumann Detmold (DE), 7 November 2017
Lars Fredlund Gnesta (SE), 9 November 2017
Hermann Kiessling Berlin (DE), 9 November 2017
Roland Kuerzdoerfer Tiny (CA), 9 November 2017
Gisela Laumann Hildesheim (DE), 9 November 2017
Sergej Minaschwili Tbilissi (GE), 9 November 2017
Doris Hoge Hanover (DE), 10 November 2017
Jenny Brüggmann Dortmund (DE), 11 November 2017
Ingeborg Burnham Wennigsen (DE), 11 November 2017
Gerd von Glasow Teltow (DE), 11 November 2017
Manfred Millenet Oldenburg (DE), 11 November 2017
Raimund Stich Lassnitzhöhe (DE), 12 November 2017
Ermo Harima Helsinki (FI), 13 November 2017
Elfi Heckel Badenweiler (DE), 13 November 2017
Marina Wouters The Hague (NL), 13 November 2017
Vera Basting Göttingen (DE), 15 November 2017
Violet Myrvaagnes Winchester /MA(US), 15 November 2017
Elisabeth Schwob Dornach (CH), 15 November 2017
Joanne Wheaton Polk City/FL (US), 15 November 2017
Jacqueline Floride Chatou (FR), 17 November 2017
Marjatta Pirtola Helsinki (FI), 18 November 2017

Ursula Dittrich Niefern-Öschelbronn (DE), 19 Nov. 2017
Klaus Puskala Turku (FI), 19 November 2017
Jean Hearn St Leonards (AU), 20 November 2017
Margarete Kresse Nussloch (DE), 21 November 2017
Volker Twesten Lübeck (DE), 21 November 2017
Ingeborg von Schilling Pöttmes (DE), 22 November 2017
Rudolf Jungen Steffisburg (CH), 22 November 2017
Nicholas Wrigley Boscastle (GB), 22 November 2017
Ilse Benecke Ahrensburg (DE), 24 November 2017
Annie-Paulette Clanché Chatou (FR), 24 November 2017
Marion Maas Driebergen (NL), 24 November 2017
Svetlana Obmelyuchina Nizhny Novgorod (RU), 24 November 2017
Gabriele Krauch Frankfurt (DE), 25 November 2017
Wolfgang Flaig East Grinstead (GB), 26 November 2017
Vita Horn Winterbach (DE), 27 November 2017
Renate Rautenstrauch Arlesheim (CH), 27 November 2017
Christina Schmidt Ammerbuch (DE), 27 November 2017
Erika Friedl Heidelberg (DE), 28 November 2017
Vincenzia Habel Bad Liebenzell (DE), 29 November 2017
Charlotte Blume Salzhausen (DE), 30 November 2017
Max Senn Zumikon (CH), 30 November 2017
Lioba Uhlenhoff Überlingen (DE), 1 December 2017
Jacqueline Lienhard Puylaurens (FR), 2 December 2017
Elisabeth Timmermann Hanover (DE), 3 December 2017
Irene Borgwardt Wuppertal (DE), 5 December 2017
Elke Kreitlow Nuremberg (DE) 5 December 2017
Erich Ries Borchten (DE), 5 December 2017
Christian Klingberg Stuttgart (DE), 6 December 2017
Bernd Wittmann Hamburg (DE), 7 December 2017
Heinz Eschmann Arlesheim (CH), 9 December 2017
Heidi Meiners Stuttgart (DE), 9 December 2017
Mrs R. Rienks Zeist (NL), 9 December 2017
Theodore Mahle Carmichael/CA (US), 9 December 2017
Charitas Moesch Arlesheim (CH), 9 December 2017
Michaela von Frankenberg und Ludwigsdorf Basel (CH), 10 Dec 2017
Karsten Schmock Sprockhövel (DE), 10 December 2017
Bärbel Bai Schlitz (DE), 11 December 2017
Jutta Vincent Grenzach-Wyhlen (DE), 11 December 2017
Frederic Stöckli Zollbrück (CH), 15 December 2017
Gisela Geering Basel (CH), 16 December 2017
Siegfried Berger Heidenheim (DE), 18 December 2017
Ingeborg Diederich Dortmund (DE), 19 December 2017
Seija Hämäläinen Helsinki (FI), 19 December 2017
Daniela Muraretto Eraclea (IT), 20 December 2017
Valerie Werthmann Bielside (GB), 20 December 2017
Irmtraut Fischer Überlingen (DE), 21 December 2017
Dagmar Wegge Lucerne (CH), 22 December 2017
Christiane Schuchhardt Hamburg (DE), 24 December 2017
Hans Schmidhauser Thalwil (CH), 25 December 2017
Volker Weyrich Dornach (CH), 26 December 2017
Pauline Wehrle Tuffley (GB), 31 December 2017
Noreen Jacobs Auckland (NZ), 2 January 2018
Heidi Fink Binningen (CH), 4 January 2018
Margot Harloff Malsburg-Marzell (DE), 5 January 2018
Olga Bauer Ruppertswil (CH), 5 January 2018
Freddy Kellenberger Lausanne (CH), 6 January 2018
Helen Snowden Christchurch (NZ), 6 January 2018
Dedo Säuberlich Niefern-Öschelbronn (DE), 8 January 2018
Katharina Grohmann Freiburg (DE), 10 January 2018
Freddy Kobberø Silkeborg (DK), 10 January 2018
Walter Frey Basel (CH), 15 January 2018

From 14 November 2017 to 22 January 2018 the Society welcomed 245 new members. 319 are no longer registered as members (resignations, lost, or corrections by individual Societies).

A false alarm in the era of fake news

Within a few months two missile-related incidents caused a stir in the world news: North Korea launched a ballistic missile over Japan and in Hawaii a warning went out by text message of an imminent missile attack – in this case a false alarm. How did people experience these incidents? What are they symptomatic of?



Japan

On 15 September 2017 a missile was again fired over the Sea of Japan towards the Pacific Ocean. It flew across Northern Japan, passing not far from our center of work. Friends reported that they did not know where to go – the national alarm system J-Alert was not triggered. This would be disastrous if there was an attack on a nuclear power station. Luckily, this was no nuclear attack.

On 16 January 2018 the national radio (NHK) broadcasted a warning that North Korea had launched a missile over Japan and that the population should seek shelter. This was a false alarm which was later corrected. But people here were extremely frightened.

Why does North Korea provoke these situations again and again? Because it is itself so frightened of being attacked by its surrounding countries! That is also why it conducts nuclear missile tests at home too. On the other hand, we are very awake and sober, as if it was all a dream from a faraway past. But a missile attack could become reality. It is a real spiritual signature: we should be aware that it could happen at any time. If a missile struck our country, there would be a counter-attack – and this could grow and grow, from Asia to the whole earth.

So that the earth can fulfil its mission

The Japanese government did not ratify the ban on nuclear weapons. If the situation escalated, it could mean the end of the earth – we would stand «at the grave of civilization» (GA 240, lecture of 24 July 1924). A flying missile can cause a third World War. A small mistake can cause a huge catastrophe today. The unspeakable fear could dissolve if loving trust could arise from the depths of human souls. This trust could of course be betrayed. That would mean that the earth no longer had a mission. We trust

in humanity so that the earth can fulfil its mission. | *Yuji Agematsu, General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Japan*

Hawaii

It was a beautiful, sunny Saturday morning in the Hawaiian Islands. The Waldorf Waves outrigger paddling team was on the beach preparing to launch their canoes in a regatta with other competing high school teams. At 8:07AM an Emergency Alert appeared on the smart phones of everyone in the state who had signed up for this early warning system (more than a half million people) that usually sends out flash flood, high surf, earthquake and tsunami warnings. However, this morning a very different alert was sent out.

Over the past few months, different sirens were twice tested, the first time since World War II, for possible missile attacks. But no sirens accompanied the phone alert this morning, which should have tipped-off people that something about the Emergency Alert was not right. Nevertheless, panic struck: people phoned their loved ones to say goodbye, screamed or cried on the streets, sped through red traffic lights in their cars, and the Waldorf Waves at the direction of their coaches gathered together under cover of a nearby building.

Stirring up distrust

Because the alert was mistakenly sent out during a test of the alert system it was known immediately by the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HEMA) that it was in error. However, because this was a new type of alert there was no text-page setup to recall such an alert, to announce a false alarm. Although different government officials were sending out text messages and HEMA posted on its Facebook and Twitter sites that it was a false alarm it took 38 minutes before the

Emergency Alert was actually cancelled.

Quite a different and unexpected fallout has followed this event. The HEMA employee who pressed the button has received death threats, increased sales of firearms have occurred, and the governor of Hawaii is not likely to be reelected. The anxiety and fear that have been stirred up by a lack of true world leadership and a distrust of one's fellow human beings has only been increased by yet another «Fake News» event.

Humanity's true emergency alert

This particular Emergency Alert might just as well be called a Threshold Alert; a warning that, yes, we have indeed crossed a threshold. Rudolf Steiner mentioned numerous times that the onset of World War I could not be explained away by conventional outer causes but only by understanding that a number of European leaders had their consciousness dimmed down, dulled to the point of not being able to think clearly and responsibly about what could be done in challenging political situations. We are confronted today with tremendous political, social, financial and environmental challenges and we struggle at this threshold to find truly human solutions.

We cannot necessarily prevent our national and international leaders from slipping into a dampened consciousness but we can strive through our own inner work and our outer deeds to be alert to the signs of our time. In this era of Fake News and false alarms we have an opportunity to practice clear and disciplined thinking, control of our will impulses, equanimity, positivity and openness, equanimity and calm discernment, as well as forgiveness. These characteristic steps (the Six Basic Exercises) along the path of self-development are contemporary humanity's true Emergency Alert. | *Van James, Honolulu (Hawaii/USA)*