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# What *else* is happening at the Goetheanum!

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No. 69 / 23 July 2023

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## *Open questions of the history of our Society*

### *An Initiative for Clarification*

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#### **In this Issue**

We follow on thematically from the previous issue and present the announced initiative to try to bring the work in the colloquia on the Constitution (2019-2022) to a reasonably orderly conclusion. This has already been pointed out and I think we owe it to the Society and especially to Rudolf Steiner. Since this is a matter in connection with the Christmas Conference, which by no means concerns only the Society, I have decided to make a second attempt now in this form. The first attempt remained without answer.

If Sebastian Boegner does not want to participate in this clarification, perhaps someone else can be found for whom this question should be so important that he would be willing to participate in this proposed, possibly modified clarification attempt.

The first online event on the history of the General Anthroposophical Society has now taken place and the recording is available. The next date is Thursday, July 27, 2023, 8 pm. After a brief review, the focus will be on the actual constitutional event (see boxes on this and the next page).

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Dear Sebastian Boegner, dear friends,

I would like to attempt to bring our work in the colloquia, which I do not consider to be finished, to a conclusion, especially in the questions, which we were not able to clarify amicably. Whether we can come to the same results in these questions of knowledge may be and remain uncertain. Nevertheless, we should try.

*How could we think that we can make a productive contribution to the existential questions of civilization of our time, both in terms of content and socially, if we are not even able to bring the work of knowledge in central questions of history of our own Society to an appropriate conclusion?*

#### ***The History of the GAS***

##### ***Focus on the "Constitution"***

##### ***Presentations and Discussions - online***

##### ***Schedule:***

We will continue this work on dates to be announced (Thursdays at 8 p.m.) Sessions will be in German only. Registration and further information:

<https://wtg-99.com/anmeldung>.

The sessions build upon each other, so continuous participation is advantageous. Recordings of the sessions may be made available on the Internet.

Participation is free, voluntary contributions are welcome (Bank details on Page 4).

##### ***Topic overview***

- Developments before the Christmas Conference (ca. 1912 - 1923).
- The constitutional events from Rudolf Steiner's point of view (Christmas Conference - 1925 AGM).
- Presentation, evaluation and discussion of the various, sometimes contradictory views and traditions - both historical and current.
- The causes of confusion.
- Developments from 1925 to 2000.
- The 9/11 of the GAS: Re-constitution attempt in 2002. Further developments until today.

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#### ***Recording from 20. July 2023***

accessible at [www.wtg-99.com/videos](http://www.wtg-99.com/videos)

Further Information also available there.

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## What is at stake?

From the very beginning, there have been controversial views on the questions of the name, the legal form and the intention of a commercial register entry of the Christmas Conference Society. (Weihnachtstagungs-Gesellschaft). Some consensus has been achieved only on the name, but not on the other issues. At the beginning of 2022, Sebastian Boegner presented an approx. 20-page elaboration, which was supposed to prove both the legal form of the Association (as a legal entity) and the intention of the commercial register entry. This document has not been discussed, there were only three written reactions from Sivio Michel, Frieder Sprich and myself (see box on page 3). (Sebastian Boegner subsequently did not participate in the further work. Only months later we learned that the reason was our responses, through which he felt massively personally attacked. To this day, this is incomprehensible to me and was not explained even when asked for). Subsequently I had submitted an approx. 30-page elaboration, in which among other things the – in my opinion - crucial errors by Sebastian Boegner are pointed out; and is proven, that the Christmas Conference Society was not intended to be an Association in the sense of a legal entity and that such a body has not been created. These remarks were neither discussed nor mentioned in the last meetings and ever since.

The outcome of the work in the colloquia was to remove the open questions from the chronology as far as possible - earlier agreements to present them to the reader for his own judgment were not honoured by those responsible for the process. Even today, more than a year after the completion of the work, a publication of the chronology on the part of the Goetheum has still not taken place.

## Can a clarification be omitted?

Apart from the fact that such a renunciation would be an indictment for us as a Society, the following speaks for an attempt at clarification:

- The Society structure designed by Rudolf Steiner at that time has served and still serves as a standard and basis for the self-understanding of the Society's leadership. This became clear, for example, at this year's General Assembly by the motion of Michaela Glöckler, who said that, according to Rudolf Steiner's will, members had no right at all to make motions at ordinary General Assemblies.
- Decisive for a future design is the question whether the form chosen at that time could only last with and through Rudolf Steiner himself; or whether it was an archetypal design that should still be guiding us today. The essential characteristic of an Association as a legal entity is the will to exist independently of the respective actual people, both of the membership and of the leadership. Such a form could be understood as an indication of a primordial structure.

- The clarification is also a question of truthfulness, because the assumption that Rudolf Steiner had wanted to found an Association and have it entered in the commercial register would mean that he had not expressed this clearly and had downright concealed the commercial register entry from the membership. In addition, he would not have had the necessary powers of action transferred to him by the General Assembly and would thus have acted on behalf of the Society without having legally transferred powers to do so. Additionally, he would have acted imprudently and amateurishly, disregarding the Law on Associations and formulating erroneous bylaws on June 29, 1924, and subsequently placing himself in a situation where he would have been incapable of acting. (These are conclusions that follow from the facts of the case, but cannot be substantiated at this point. Corresponding proofs and explanations are available to the colloquium participants or can be obtained from me - in excerpts - see last page).

The discussion in the colloquia certainly reached initial levels of conflict, so that clarification was no longer possible in the given constellation. In this respect, the outcome was not satisfactory, but at least it did not escalate further.

We should not get stuck now, in the time 99/100 years after the Christmas Conference, especially in these - as I think -- essential questions and make a - perhaps last - clarification attempt for the Society, because the whole work in the colloquia was, after all, an effort to recognize the intentions of that time - insights that we urgently need today.

## Suggestion

I think I may say that Sebastian Boegner and I were the essential "opponents" in the decisive questions, which is shown not only by the extensive written statements that have been produced. In this respect, an attempt at clarification could start with us as deputy protagonists, moreover, in essential areas of the question, we were definitely able to come to concordant conclusions and therefore, from my point of view, there are real possibilities of common understanding. (Possibly, however, someone else could take his place).

- A preliminary personal discussion involving a mediator may be necessary or helpful.
- In preparation, both shall present their point of view in writing on max. three A4 pages, without detailed explanations. References may be made to appendices or earlier papers or sources.
- Written comments can be made on these statements.

- The actual process could consist of two, at most three, approximately five-hour meetings (which can probably only be organized online), in which the different points of view are discussed in a neutral, moderated manner. The moderator will be free to intervene in an investigative and clarifying way.
- An observing circle of e.g. 12 persons will be formed. Sebastian Boegner and Thomas Heck will agree on the composition of the circle. This circle is meant to be a witness, but also with the possibility to ask questions or give hints (details below).
- The entire process will be recorded and either a documentation will be created from it and/or made available as a recording for general availability (e.g. in the internal member area on the Internet).

The following are thoughts on a possible process, not definite, but so that an idea can emerge. The first meeting could proceed as follows:

- 60 – 90 Min. Clarification of the issue and moderated discussion
- 30 Min. Break
- 30 – 60 Min. Exchange, mirroring and conversation by and with the observing circle
- 30 Min. Break
- 30 – 60 Min. Further moderated discussion
- 30 Min. Review, conclusion and further agreements

### The Observing Circle

The circle should include in any case Justus Wittich and Gerald Häfner. The others should be chosen or agreed upon by Sebastian Boegner and Thomas Heck, at least partly from the circle of participants in the colloquium, but also freely chosen. A sufficient occupation with the topic, in particular also the newer announcements, should be a pre-condition.

### Topics

- The name of the Christmas Conference Society: Even if there is agreement on this, we should deal with this topic briefly and as a substitute, since it is still - and currently again - claimed by leaders that the "General Anthroposophical Society" was founded at the Christmas Conference in 1923.
- The legal form - Society or not a Society - in the sense of a legal entity.
- The entry in the commercial register. (This should also be dealt with if we conclude that the Christmas Conference Society was not an Association).

### Conclusion

I think that we should undertake such an attempt out of responsibility for our Society, but also for Rudolf Steiner. In view of the November meeting of the Social Science Section on the Constitution, it would be good if the process proposed here were completed by then (or find its conclusion there?). Thus, a decision should be made and dates agreed upon as soon as possible. Therefore, I am asking for feedback by **August 15, 2023**.

However, perhaps this is also a suggestion to make one or more contributions in other ways before the November meeting and especially before 100 years of the Christmas Conference, or to provide material for one's own judgment in general.

In this spirit, I look forward to your feedback.

Thomas Heck, Dornach, 23. July 2023

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### Documents and Evidence (in German language only)

Correspondence mentioned in text: [www.wtg-99.com/2307](http://www.wtg-99.com/2307)

To the colloquia especially Rundbrief 42, also 24 and 27: [www.wtg-99.com/Rundbrief-Archiv](http://www.wtg-99.com/Rundbrief-Archiv)

Chronology of the Constitution [www.wtg-99.com/Chronologie-2020](http://www.wtg-99.com/Chronologie-2020)

Further Information in the books  
on the last page

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## *Imprint*

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### *3 x 33 Jahre Weihnachtstagung und die Krise der AAG*



Thomas Heck

### **3 x 33 Years Christmas Conference and the crisis of the GAS**

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Thomas Heck

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## **The Constitution of the GAS**

### **Its significance – a question of its future?**

**New**



Compilation und publishing: Thomas Heck

The book contains a collection of articles and longer explanations that were created in particular in connection with the two-year constitutional work. Above all, the topics that are always controversial are addressed, such as: Form of the Christmas Conference Society, commercial register entry, name of the Society, implied merger, etc.

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