

*Why we need new social structures -  
some basic thoughts*



*"Tasks, goals  
and contemporary social structures of an  
Anthroposophical Society"*

Created in connection with the "Members' Forums" thematic  
group of the same name

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This document is a working paper in development with passages that are still partly aphoristic. The statements were made in connection with the *member forums of* the General Anthroposophical Society 2023 in the working group "*Tasks, Goals and Contemporary Social Structures of an Anthroposophical Society*".

It would be nice if these remarks could be taken as a suggestion and lead into conversation.

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Further information on this topic can be found in Circulars 58 and 62,  
[www.wtg-99.com/Rundbriefe-Archiv](http://www.wtg-99.com/Rundbriefe-Archiv).

### **Preliminary remark**

With the 1923 Christmas Conference Rudolf Steiner intended to "*give the Anthroposophical Society a form such as the Anthroposophical Movement needs for its cultivation*". Even though we are not members of the Christmas Conference Society, but of the renamed Building Society, there is still the possibility and task of shaping life in the General Anthroposophical Society and its social forms in such a way that it can fulfil its task as a society for anthroposophy. In order to be able to take up this task in the present and 100 years after the Christmas Conference in a contemporary form, and to reshape the General Anthroposophical Society according to our strengths and abilities and to fulfil its tasks, it seems helpful to deal with certain fundamental questions, which will be explored in the following.

(Cover picture: Archangel Michael, Margarita Woloschin)

# Table of contents

<b>Part I</b>	<b>5</b>
1. What is the supersensible anthroposophical movement?	5
2 What is the mission of anthroposophy?	5
3 What is the task of an anthroposophical society ?	7
What does anthroposophy need a society for?	7
4. What are the tasks of its members (who want to be active)?	9
Living Conditions of an Anthroposophical Society	9
<b>Part II</b>	<b>13</b>
5 How did Rudolf Steiner want to shape the Anthropol.Society?	13
Some concrete indications from Rudolf Steiner on the shaping of the Anthroposophical Society	14
6 What is special about an anthroposophical society led by R. Steiner?	16
On the Nature of Rudolf Steiner	17
7 Which designs were only justified with him?	19
8 From what did Rudolf Steiner draw the social impulses?	21
<b>Part III</b>	<b>24</b>
9. Errors and misunderstandings	24
10 How did society develop after R. Steiner's death?	26
11 On the importance of "right" social structures	27
12 Ways to Create from the Living	32
Proposals for new social processes and designs:	33
The formation of a member-responsibility body	33
Ways to form a governing body from the periphery	36
School of Spiritual Science - Terms of reference for leaders	37
College - working on class lessons	38
Encouraging developments in society and future issues	43

# *Thoughts on "Tasks, aims and contemporary social structures of an Anthroposophical Society".*

## **Part I**

### **1. What is the supersensible anthroposophical movement?**

The supersensible anthroposophical movement encompasses the entire mystery wisdom of humanity of past times. For centuries, it had been presented and taught to the Michael-servants and Christ-seeking souls in cosmic imaginings before the eyes of the soul and spirit. This process culminated in a cosmic cult in which the Christian spiritual impulses that were to flow into human civilisation from the beginning of the Michael Age were carried out in a real and effective way - by those who had participated in this Michael School:

*"At the end of the 18th, beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there actually hovers directly adjacent, quite close - of course meant qualitatively - to the physical-sensual world, a supersensual happening, which represents supersensible cultic acts, powerful image-developments of spiritual life..." (GA 265, p. 119)*

*"What is Anthroposophy in reality? Yes, my dear friends, when you see through all the wonderful imaginations that stood there as supersensible cult in the first half of the 19th century, and translate that into human terms, then you have Anthroposophy." (8 July 1924, GA 237).*

### **2 What is the mission of Anthroposophy?**

This question can, of course, be answered in many ways, since Anthroposophy is so vast and its elaboration in all areas of life so inexhaustible. Here is an attempt to hint at the central point from which everything else can arise.

According to Rudolf Steiner, the entire development of humanity on earth will not suffice to understand the central event of earth development, the Mystery of Golgotha. The mission of Anthroposophy is to lead humanity to the understanding of Christ and to seeing Christ in the etheric. Only out of this understanding and seeing will humanity have a future. *"To understand this Mystery of Golgotha correctly in the sense of our time is the task of Anthroposophy". ... " the destiny of Anthroposophy shall be at the same time*

*that of Christianity...May our way to spiritual science through Anthroposophy be at one and the same time the way to Christ through the Spirit!"* Oslo, Pentecost Sunday 17 May 1923.

Rudolf Steiner formulated his own task in a letter to Hübbe-Schleiden of 16 August 1902: "... to bring spiritual pupils onto the path of development, that alone will have to be the meaning of my inaugural act". (GA 264/1984, p. 17) And in a letter of 14 September 1904: "*I have been instructed to cultivate the Christian element....*" (GA 264, P. 83). All writings and lectures ultimately served this goal. By taking into account the respective level of development of the readers and listeners, as well as the state of consciousness of humanity in general, the appropriate points of contact must be found and bases of understanding created. - The attempts of 1902 to encourage the members to "Practical Karma Exercises" failed, the training book for the development of supersensible abilities "Knowledge of the higher worlds" of 1904 was hardly taken up. The advice he gave in the esoteric lessons of 1905 on the great task of forming Christian brotherhoods and communities for the preparation of the future of humanity apparently also fell on deaf ears. And when he began to share the great revelations on the etheric Christ and the Fifth Gospel in 1909, which he had wrung from himself as a most precious possession and entrusted to the members with the request to guard it - he had to painfully experience how they were received in a superficial everyday attitude - and he fell silent. (Numerous other examples could be cited to illustrate the failure to take up his impulses). ***Thus, of necessity, work had to be done at a level far below that which was urgently needed at the time.*** Esoteric work was no longer possible after 1914.

The most significant spiritual event of the 20th century was the return of Christ in the etheric. (On the new etheric clairvoyance and the etheric Christ above all see GA 130, "Esoteric Christianity") Since the 20th century, the etheric Christ has become the "Lord of Karma" for more and more people - for those who connect with him. With his help, karma can be recognised and transformed. Anthroposophists seek connection with each other in an Anthroposophical Society in order to resolve and order their karma. (Karma Lectures). "*Unresolved karma strengthens the destructive earth powers.*" (GA 266/2, p. 265.)

With regard to the mission of Anthroposophy, Rudolf Steiner once spoke of the fact that the present civilisation, which is great in the technical field, lacks the soul, "*Anthroposophy wants to be this soul*".

In other words, the task of spiritual science can also be described as the vitalisation of culture in all fields of science and research, of the arts and of social life out of the spirit, as the *necessary spiritualisation of human civilisation in* the sense of the Michael Age, without which it can have no future.

### **3 What is the task of an Anthroposophical Society?**

#### **Why does Anthroposophy need a Society?**

Anthroposophy needs an "instrument", a "body", a human context, a form, a society, in order to become effective in human civilisation. *"Movements like our spiritual-scientific one have always been cultivated in such a way that an attempt was made to cultivate that which was to be imprinted on spiritual culture in general, first of all by means of a social association, a Society".* (GA 253, 1st lecture, first lines)

*"...but the whole of what is today connected with Anthroposophy cannot exist without the Anthroposophical Society, it needs the Anthroposophical Society as its vessel".* (GA 257 p. 22)

In this respect, the task for the leaders, responsible workers and members as a whole from 1912/13 onwards was to become aware of this task and responsibility and to shape living and working together in the Anthroposophical Society accordingly. (Which did not happen; on the contrary, a powerful counter-current and inner opposition to it arose from within the membership and leadership of the Anthroposophical Society).

In the first lectures of GA 253 "Problems of Living Together..." from the **crisis year 1915**, Rudolf Steiner describes this task in such a way that the members should develop a consciousness and learn to experience themselves as *members of a living organism*, as part of a community. This would mean not only taking an interest in the fate of others, but Rudolf Steiner admonishes us to also feel responsible for the whole society, and for what others do when it damages the reputation of the Anthroposophical Society in the public eye! - (This should apply even more if the substance of Anthroposophy is diluted and falsified or Rudolf Steiner is denied by members of the Society and its leaders). Tolerance towards human weaknesses should be unlimited, according to Rudolf Steiner - *but there is no tolerance where the substance of Anthroposophy is destroyed and - "To disregard the truth out of 'brotherliness' is the greatest evil there is."* (the latter from the preface to GA 139).

On **16 July 1918**, GA 181 *"We must arrive at higher concepts (than that of the living organism) if we want to comprehend the social structure. This can never be understood as an organism (alone): it must be understood as psychism, as pneumatism, because spirit works in every social coexistence of human beings..."*. To this statement belongs another one of importance: *"Beings, that is what one must come to in the end in all explanation of the world. For beings are solely and exclusively what is real"*. (GA 224, 2 May 1923) It leads to the task of awakening and cultivating the consciousness of the fact that one always "invites" beings through one's work and ***that it is up to us for which beings we as a society form a vessel, i.e. in which forms we live.***

In the **fateful year of 1923** after the fire catastrophe, he spoke above all of what is completely lacking in the Society and what it should have developed *independently and from within itself* since 1912/13 - that is, from the initiative of the leaders and responsibly active members: ***a common consciousness and awareness of tasks, a common direction of will - and a social ego.***

In summary, one could say that a *sufficient number of members should be aware of the task of the Anthroposophical Society, feel responsible for its healthy development and effectiveness in the world, and work together towards this goal - in the spirit, which Rudolf Steiner described at the Christmas Conference*. For it is only out of this spirit and by *"doing Anthroposophy"*, by experiencing the seriousness and responsibility of this task, and by placing oneself in the service of the cause, that the supersensible Anthroposophical Movement and Michael Movement can live in an Anthroposophical Society. *This would be the esoteric aspect of the Anthroposophical Society*. Only that which *really lives spiritually* in human beings and happens through them in the Anthroposophical Society can form a Society. All external forms would otherwise become empty shells which would have to be filled with beings other than Michaelic-Christian beings.

*"Anthroposophy is life, life flowing from the spirit" and it wants to be the "soul" of contemporary civilisation. Is it possible to think of its social form in any other way than threefold?* If it wants to work in a contemporary way and in the spirit of the times, its social structures would have to be continually renewed "out of life", out of the facts and necessities, out of the spiritual and earthly necessities, according to the real abilities, activities and relationships of its members. These motives were the basis of Rudolf Steiner's impulse for reorganisation at Christmas 1923. (See from Part II., Ch. 5)



#### 4. What are the tasks of its members (who want to be active)?

*Or:*

##### **Living conditions of an Anthroposophical Society and demands on its responsible members**

In the following, three directions of work are distinguished: Tasks within, tasks among- and with each other and outward tasks.

A few key words about the developmental tasks and the path of training that is of importance for those members who want to work responsibly out of and for Anthroposophy (representatives), certain "requirements" that Rudolf Steiner mentions in the most diverse places. The path of training is, of course, quite individual and a personal decision of each individual, so we can only point to some basic elements mentioned by Rudolf Steiner, which would be certain requirements for a representative of Anthroposophy.

##### *Tasks within: The individual training path*

- Study of spiritual science
- Independent learning of the anthroposophical contents, bringing them to life and internalise.
- Cultivating a relationship with Rudolf Steiner, the source of anthroposophy, experiencing him as a teacher and friend of the spirit.
- Deepening the content and practising, cultivating the substance, self-knowledge and meditation, learning to be in dialogue with the deities.
- Researching (A spiritual research already begins, according to Rudolf Steiner, where one brings together two of his statements and thereby establishes and recognises a new connection....) In other words, where one brings together the numerous different aspects of a question or a theme scattered throughout the complete work, looks at them together and gains new insights and creates connections. Another research path starts from the acquired concepts and views of spiritual science and from there specifically into the perception of phenomena (spatial) and symptoms (temporal) in order to reach "through the senses to the spirit". The soul-transforming power of anthroposophy becomes effective. *"Enthusiasm for the truth"*! Selflessness and continuous practice.

- Experiencing responsibility and putting oneself in service, "the laboratory table becomes an altar", one experiences the seriousness and sacredness of the cause, "*anthroposophy as service to God*".

### *Tasks with each other and among ourselves:*

(Keyword compilation)

***Spiritual level:*** Feeling more and more as a community through experiencing spiritual truths together (in branches and working groups and content work of all colleges etc.)

In this substantive work, awaken to the spiritual-soul essence of the other person, how they think, feel; want, how anthroposophy lives in them.

The task is to work together in the common substantive work in such a way that through the "*harmony of the hearts*" the community will become a vessel for higher beings, who can descend in it in an inspiring and strengthening way. (Meditation picture for the teachers of the Stuttgart Waldorf School, GA 269, p. 155))

In 1923, the year of the crisis, Rudolf Steiner spoke to the delegates that "The Anthroposophical Society as a whole" actually needed the subsidiary exercises! Specifically, he mentioned in this context the lack of impartiality, which the Anthroposophical Society as a whole needed.

***Soul-social level:*** taking an interest in the other person and their fate, sharing in their concerns, practising tolerance towards human weaknesses (not towards deeds where the substance of anthroposophy is damaged).

To feel responsible for the Anthroposophical Society, and thus also for what others do, if it has harmful consequences for anthroposophy and the reputation of the Anthroposophical Society in the public! (Ex. from GA 253)

General love of humanity, karma knowledge, realisation of current affiliations, ordering and resolving karma.

***Will level:*** Recognising and valuing the abilities of others, perceiving and processing work results, supporting initiatives and "*What one person works on must have a certain value for the other*" (7th letter to Society members).

In the sense of a living organism: a giving and taking and complementing each other, a working together in the service of the whole, the task of society, "*Anthroposophy is service to God*".

### *External tasks:*

In order to be able to make the impulses from anthroposophy fruitful for the spiritualisation of life and the most diverse fields of work and research, it needs

#### ***Initiative:***

"Become a human being with initiative!" Carry anthroposophy into all areas of life and research, cultural renewal, right into a threefold social organism as the only wholesome, contemporary and Michaelic-Christian form of society. Anthroposophists should lead the way and set an example.

***Representation:*** Standing up for anthroposophy and Rudolf Steiner, representing it uncompromisingly and truthfully out of its sources, no adapting, watering down, denying - otherwise one cuts oneself off from the source and essence of anthroposophy and the spiritual guide beings.

#### ***Discernment and courage***

Seeing through contemporary events with the trained power of judgement, right into their spiritual background. For: the incarnation of Ahriman cannot and should not be prevented, *but the further development of humanity depends on him being recognised by a sufficient number of people. Otherwise, the earth mission may be lost.*

To unite ***"the deepest esotericism and the greatest publicity"*** means, in everything one does, *"to feel responsible to the spiritual world at every moment"*, the deepest seriousness for the sacred cause - the greatest openness to the world and alert contemporaneity in which one represents anthroposophy.

***Dangers of*** seeing similar or related things in modern developmental tendencies or programmes (at that time, for example, in expressive dance). With regard to the apparent similarities, Rudolf Steiner points out that eurhythm is drawn from a completely different source, that it has its very own source of origin and is not "related" to anything that already exists.

Another kind of danger is to cooperate with currents or organisations which in truth represent the counter-impulses, and to do so ostensibly to protect anthroposophy from attack, while in the process denying and betraying its true essence - while deluding oneself that this is not the case.

### ***True Michael festive mood as a task:***

What Rudolf Steiner considered to be a fundamental prerequisite for the solution of the social need and the social chaos which prevailed at that time - and which is spreading again in the present due to the same forces - may be

surprising: that a sufficient number of people can be found - in his last address to the members on 28 September 1924 he spoke of 4 x 12, which, however, should have been recognised by him - in whom the Michael-thought lives so strongly *"that leaders for Michael-Feast mood arise from them"*. (GA 238) It needs a "renewal of the whole constitution of the soul", (GA 229, p.20) the complete "penetration of the will with spirituality" (GA 223, p.47), to become *a comrade of the "Michael-efficacy on earth"*. *"Today man is not merely permitted to engage in esoteric contemplations; today it is necessary for man to be able to do esoteric things in turn..."* (GA 223, p.39) - How can we learn this? How do we become mature for the shaping of true Michael celebrations?

A valuable collection of Rudolf Steiner's notes *"To the future Michael-Feast"* was published as a special issue of "Ein Nachrichtenblatt" on 16 September 2018 and is available from Roland Tüscher at [info@ein-nachrichtenblatt.org](mailto:info@ein-nachrichtenblatt.org).

## Part II

### 5 How did Rudolf Steiner want to shape the Anthroposophical Society?

Again and again, from the Christmas Conference onwards, he spoke of the *fact* that now *everything* will have to be shaped from the *living, from the realities, from the actualities*, not from ideals or in principles.

A basic principle for this is that of *initiative*, which can only become a reality when it is also affirmed and taken up by the community, when it finds the appropriate *resonance*.

The Christmas Conference and the reorganisation of the Anthroposophical Society, the assumption of leadership by him, were *his initiative* alone - out of a lonely decision, out of a moral intuition on the highest level - for the spiritual world was silent about it. He made this *decision as a human being*. *He formulated the statutes* - as a *narrative of what actually lived and was wanted by him, he chose his co-workers and gave them the tasks, he gave the indications of how to work now and what mentality and inner attitude to develop* - so that it could succeed. *The board he proposed and the assumption of leadership by himself had to be wanted and affirmed by the members*. And this also applied to all the following impulses:

***"The Vorstand will bring to the members what he sees as the task of the Society and if the members take it up, he will be the Vorstand. If they do not take it up, he will not be the Vorstand ..."*** Therefore, it is not at all a question of what exists in purely formal terms - theoretically and on paper. The moment its intentions are not understood and not taken up, the moment a sufficient number of members do not cooperate and put themselves at his service, which is synonymous with "service to the cause" - it would no longer be the Board. The physical-formal is *maya*. The spiritual realities alone matter. (It *should be noted here that when Rudolf Steiner speaks of "Vorstand" or "Initiative-Vorstand", he is speaking primarily of himself, for he also directed the Sections through the various Section leaders*. Only for Albert Steffen and Guenther Wachsmuth he formulated it differently, the possible reasons for this would be another topic). - *And nowhere is there even the slightest hint, not a single remark to the effect that what is discussed and decided now should also apply to all future Executive Boards!* - On the contrary: ***the statutes describe what is*** and what is wanted - and a procedure for an election of the Vorstand of any kind is not to be found in the statutes of the Christmas Conference Society.

All the life of the Society was to *come into being*, which is why he emphasised so strongly that this Christmas Conference was not to be taken like other conferences, that it was not yet complete, that it would only receive its content through everything that would be worked on from now on by the members. It was a beginning - and should have been a "***world-turning beginning***" - The Christmas Conference could also "evaporate" - if it did not receive its content anew every day through everything that would happen from now on through the members, above all through *how* everything would now be done differently - (feeling responsible at every moment towards the spiritual world, towards the essence of Anthroposophy and towards Rudolf Steiner and his impulses). - Already on 18.1.1924 he spoke the grave words: *If the impulse of the Christmas Conference is not taken up, then it might have been better not to have assembled at all.*

### **Some of Rudolf Steiner's concrete hints for shaping the Anthroposophical Society**

***The statutes*** were not statutes in the usual sense, not a codification of ideals or principles, not a determination for the life that was yet to begin, they were not meant to be statutes, but ***a narrative, of what is already alive and what is wanted.*** - Accordingly, they would have to be changed if circumstances developed further, "*in 10 years at the latest*" in any case. (handed down orally, source still to be found).

***The sections:*** not according to an idea or spiritual laws – e.g. there must be 7 or 12 - but: what people are there who work - with all their strength and selflessness in the service of the cause? - Edith Maryon was intended by him to be the head of the Fine Arts Section, but she died - and so there was no Fine Arts Section!

For the ***School of Spiritual Science*** and its leadership, the statutes only said that he would name a possible successor. - He did not name one.

***Communication*** among the members and between the periphery and the centre in Dornach should be like ***blood circulation and have a*** connecting effect, enable mutual perception and the perception of current events in a diversity - and thereby enable a ***common consciousness.*** The regular reports from the groups all over the world should also serve this purpose - *so that a member in Vienna could know what lives in the branch in New Zealand.* A common consciousness should also be able to emerge more strongly by working on the same content through the work on the guiding principles in all branches - in addition to the individual topics. - For the organisation of

branch life, there are numerous hints in the letters to the members. (Of course, this is no longer easily transferable to our present situation, for at that time the life of the Anthroposophical Society took place almost exclusively in the branches, whereas today we have a widespread movement and by no means all anthroposophists go to the branches. - However, the task of cultivating a common consciousness and community awareness has remained, and new ways have to be found for this).

The weekly reports from all over the world on current events, culture, etc. were to be sent to the editors of the weekly newsletter mainly from the ranks of the national representatives, but this did not happen. These people were supposed to form a kind of "**external Board of forces**". Those who stayed in Dornach were to be able to take part in Board meetings in an advisory capacity. This would have created a living **blood and breath rhythm between the centre and the periphery**.

Here it must be borne in mind that **Rudolf Steiner's leadership position** had to have a quite different character spiritually than any other executive before or after him could have. By taking on the **I-function for the Society**, he also had to permeate and lead the whole organism like an I, but in the sense described above of letting people go absolutely free, only on free will could he establish "**the most modern society in the world**". However, nothing was allowed to bypass his consciousness for the Anthroposophical Society, for he had to answer for everything before the spiritual world. (For further information see circulars 58 and 62, [wtg-99.com/Rundbrief-Archiv](http://wtg-99.com/Rundbrief-Archiv)).

**Research:** What **questions** lived in individual members and contained a need for research should be written to the Executive Board. The answer to this from Rudolf Steiner's research would then be communicated to all members.

The Anthroposophical Society was to be built on "**real human relationships**". From this it becomes understandable, for example, what he said about voting: *that even with 100 people actual voting is no longer possible (or meaningful)* because these 100 **cannot possibly** know the one person they are to decide on well enough to judge their suitability....

In November 1923, when the Dutch National Society was to be founded, there were obviously **different schools of thought in** the membership. There Rudolf Steiner gives Zeylmans von Emmichhoven the recommendation (mutatis mutandis): *You say what you want to do and how you want to do it, and those who want to do it join you - and those who want something else can form their own group.* Can we conclude from this that in an "emergency", if

no agreement is possible with regard to the representation of a larger group (such as a national society), there could be two or more "representatives"? A contemporary example is Japan, with about 300 members and two national representatives.

The formation process for the esoteric **"Youth Circle"** was very similar. From originally about 100 young people interested in forming an esoteric work, it was worked out in the course of time who had which intentions and impulses - and thus belonged together. For, of course, one can only work together with those who have the same goal!- If there are different aims and groupings, they can still work together for higher-level tasks. **"On spiritual-scientific ground one unites by differentiating, individualising, not by centralising!"** (GA 217a, p. 191, 28 February 1923)

During this meeting in Stuttgart Feb. 1923, where the conflicts were thematically central and the antagonisms between the so-called "old" and "young" escalated, there the young Eugen Kolisko tried again with a blazing speech to call for unity. And then, to everyone's great surprise, Rudolf Steiner put forward the proposal to found a new, Free Anthroposophical Society. -In the following pause, E. Kolisko addressed Rudolf Steiner: "but Dr. Steiner, why didn't you tell me what your plans were? Then I wouldn't have tried it at all.... **Plans?! I'm not making any plans! - Until now it was not necessary, now it is necessary...."**

**The wish of young people for a different conference design:** Rudolf Steiner had been asked to give lectures for the design of a youth conference. The initiators approached him with the cautiously expressed, special wish whether it would be possible this time not to determine all the topics in advance, but only the topic of the first evening. They had not reckoned with Rudolf Steiner's reaction, who responded joyfully to this request, yes, for once not a fixed programme, but one arising from life and the process.

## **What is special about an Anthroposophical Society led by R. Steiner?**

Already the Cologne Society of 1912/13 or its leadership should have independently recognised its tasks and impulsed and organised life in the Anthroposophical Society accordingly. (The opposite was the case - the Society emerged from the war *fractured*, esoteric work was no longer possible since 1914, an *inner opposition* to Rudolf Steiner increasingly began to boycott his work, the Anthroposophical Society was *in the process of disintegration* in 1923 and *"a shadow"*, *"Ahrimanicly riddled"*. What should have arisen as a



society by then through its own efforts, a common consciousness, social consciousness and task consciousness, in which the individuals feel themselves to be members of a living, animate and spirit-bearing organism, set themselves a task as a society, in the service of anthroposophy, and thereby develop a Society-I - all this had not happened.

*By Rudolf Steiner taking over the leadership of the Society, the members were given the opportunity to take up their tasks after **all, in** that they could now have recognised what was to flow into the Society through him from the supersensible anthroposophical movement and the will of Michael's Zeitgeist, and could have taken up his impulses of their own free will. He had "neutralised" powerful demon activity through his sacrifice, for a certain period of time. Now it was up to the members and especially the leaders to do their part.*

*What had now changed fundamentally was the **nature of the Society**. This now had to be understood: **"... because of course the Anthroposophical Society must be something quite different when it is led by me than when it is led by someone else."***

*This difference in essence is based on the nature of Rudolf Steiner himself and what happened to the Anthroposophical Society when he took over its leadership. (Also on this huge subject, only a few aspects can be hinted at here).*

Through him, the essence of anthroposophy was present in the Society at every moment, his individuality had taken the place of the missing I of the Society. This is hidden in the statement *"By taking over the leadership of the Anthroposophical Society at Christmas, the anthroposophical movement and Society have become one."* Therefore it could not now be other than "esoteric", through him. However, it *could* only have lived and become a spiritual reality if from now on "anthroposophy had been done" everywhere by its members. It could only have become a reality and realised this possibility if "a sufficient number" of members could have awakened to this "revealed secret" and placed themselves fully at *its* service out of free will and love for anthroposophy. The Christmas Conference **was to be a world-turning beginning**.

### **On the nature of Rudolf Steiner**

He had taken the decision to do so in a difficult, lonely struggle alone, because - the spiritual world and guidance of humanity is silent on questions concerning earthly organisations. - He acted in the spirit of the Philosophy of

Freedom from a moral intuition on the highest level. This meant at the same time that he could not know whether this deed would be accepted by the spiritual world! That is why he speaks of the two risks involved: One was whether this deed would be accepted by the spiritual world - the other was whether it would be accepted by the people.

The novelty and uniqueness of the Christmas Conference Society was that *an initiate, as a human being and on his own initiative*, placed himself at the head of an earthly society.

In order to bring the nature of this Christmas Conference Society more vividly to mind, some of Rudolf Steiner's characteristics are recalled here.

Through him, the impulses from the supersensible Anthroposophical Movement could flow continuously, according to the necessities of the time and the will of the Zeitgeist, into the souls and consciousness of men and into earthly life. Through him, all the different karmic and mystery currents of the Anthroposophical Movement were represented on earth. There was no unresolved karma on his part with the members, which could have influenced his behaviour. Free of sympathy and antipathy, he was able to recognise every human being in his deepest being, to see his pre-natal resolutions, his abilities and his karma. Accordingly, he was able to give them life-deciding indications and assign tasks in a spiritually justified way. He had an overview of the past and future of the development of mankind, as well as of the present conditions of time, right into the occult background. He lived in a permanent presence of mind and continuity of consciousness. While he was in conversation with a person, he could at the same time read the karma in his aura. This means - from the dimension of consciousness - that he was able to direct his consciousness simultaneously to several objects, both earthly and supersensible. As an initiate, he had to *have the adversaries permanently in his consciousness and see them in front of him*, because the moment he no longer sees them in front of him, they are inside him... "and that can be fatal for an initiate"... The spiritual authority from which he worked can also be guessed at if one visualises what he said about his creation of the Representative of Humanity. In order to be able to portray the two adversaries correctly, they had to sit in his model. - Lucifer did it gladly... Ahri-man refused - he never wants to be looked at and recognised. - *But Rudolf Steiner forced him to sit for him as long as he thought it necessary....(For which Ahri-man took revenge by, among other things, having one of the Goetheanum's cut glass windows cracked).*

(And so many other things could be mentioned that give an inkling of Rudolf Steiner's spiritual-moral rank).

Only an understanding of the nature of Rudolf Steiner and his mission could have made it possible to grasp the very different nature of the Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference, and awaken and strengthen the selfless will to place oneself entirely at its service. "*Anthroposophy is service to God*". This anthroposophy was expressed in Rudolf Steiner's words and intentions; he was the creator of this being.

## **7. Which designs were only appropriate with him in the role?**

Even when we arrive at moral intuitions and draw from supersensible knowledge, this will always remain "piecemeal" due to our human weaknesses and one-sidedness - and will have to be supplemented by others. Only Rudolf Steiner was able to draw from the consciousness of the spirit of the time, from the mystery sources and the total scope of the world of ideas what was necessary for the time.

Through him the essence of Anthroposophy had "come into the world". Through him and only through him could the words of Michael and the will of the Zeitgeist speak directly to the people. His I had taken the place of the missing social I, the Society was like his body... He now had to answer for all the actions and omissions and failures of the members before the spiritual world as if he had done them himself - which led to "*the most dreadful setbacks*" and ultimately to his so-called illness. He had not named a successor as leader of the Michael School. In addition, even when asked by Ita Wegman, he had not given any instructions or indications as to how things should continue after his death. In this respect, *the central leadership of the Michael School and Society and its spiritual guidance "from above" was only justified with and through Rudolf Steiner himself*. By returning to the spiritual world, the Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference ceased to exist, it became something completely different, "*for of course the Anthroposophical Society, when led by me, must be something completely different from when led by someone else*".

Thus "the rightly existing Michael School on Earth" could no longer exist in its original form. Rudolf Steiner did not name a successor. Only through his I and his being could Michael speak directly to people. (He once hinted at how it feels and what happens when *one wants to read in the conscious-*

*ness of an Archai...)* The spiritual material left behind could still be cultivated, but not further developed on Earth as a living-creative stream.

It should have been recognised that this Anthroposophical Society and School was only a spiritual reality in this form with Rudolf Steiner himself. It no longer existed when he returned to the spiritual world... Everything was to be formed out of life and realities, thus ruling out the possibility that after his death the **form** should have been preserved, which could only be filled with life through his leadership.

There were still people with pink and blue cards who *felt* themselves *to be* members of the Christmas Meeting Society, who were living more or less true to the spirit of the Foundation Stone meditation...and with the anthroposophical spiritual material. But was that the only thing that mattered? It is not the forms and outward signs that make it esoteric, but the degree of consciousness and awakened life in the spiritual world, the life with the spiritual beings who guide this movement. Who has been able to communicate with them? - Had it been possible to find the 4 x 12 in whom the Michael thought is fully alive - Rudolf Steiner could have lived on and fulfilled his mission and perhaps prevented the catastrophe of Central Europe. - *For it is not the form that matters, but what is really spiritually alive.*

The tragedy after his death: the **non-understanding and failure continued** by now trying to preserve the **form** and a misunderstood form at that... (See Chapter 9)

Of course, we also have the task and possibility to seek the relationship with spiritual beings, to study and practise; and to ascend to higher levels of consciousness. And - at every level - something is possible by uniting and working together harmoniously. "*When two or three are together in my name...*" - In the reverse cultus Rudolf Steiner described the beginnings of this path. At the Christmas Conference he spoke of the harmony of hearts, this will enable higher beings to descend to us and work among us and with us. - The meditation picture he gave to the Stuttgart teachers' college should also be mentioned here, so that they would become aware of how beings join their circle. (GA 269, p. 155)

Lili Kolisko passed on Rudolf Steiner's statement: "*If after my death even two people work selflessly and purely for the cause, I will be able to work through them.*" ("Eugen Kolisko, a Portrait of Life")

## 8. From what did Rudolf Steiner draw the social impulses?

*Anthroposophy is a human being...who walks among us invisibly, who wants to be questioned for everything we want to achieve on Earth.*

If anthroposophy is a human being and the human being is a threefold being, which should also shape social life according to this reality, *how else than threefold can the new social form of the Anthroposophical Society be thought of*, if it should become the body for the being Anthroposophia?

In the Foundation Stone laying address of 25 December 1923, the threefold human soul being is addressed in the most varied formulations and rhythmic structure - up to the moment when, under Rudolf Steiner's spiritual guidance, the threefold Foundation Stone could be formed and shaped - individually in each soul. - Life itself, flowing from the essence of Anthroposophy, could have had a socially formative effect through Rudolf Steiner and could have received a threefold community body. (The School of Spiritual Science; the Christmas Conference Society as a purely human association; and the renamed Building Society as an "umbrella" or external representative association with the 4 sub-departments of Publishing House, Clinic, Administration of the Members' Society and Administration of the Building Society).

We find indications of ***another source*** for the new, Christian social form in the following words about the building of the first Goetheanum that went through the fire.

*"...Just as the fire of Ephesus was used by Aristotle and Alexander when it flared up anew in their hearts, but first flared up in the outer ether, from which it again brought to them the secrets which could then be grasped in the simplest of terms, so the fire of Ephesus could be used; so it is incumbent on us, and we will be able to use that which - one may say it in all modesty - has also carried out into the ether as the flames of the Goetheanum that which has been willed through Anthroposophy and is to be willed further.*

*.... What was more or less an earthly matter before, that had been worked out and established as an earthly matter, has been carried out with the flames into the vastness of the world. Precisely because we have been struck by this disaster, we may say, recognising the consequences of this misfortune, that we now understand that we may not merely represent an earthly matter, but a matter of the vast etheric world in which the spirit lives. For the matter of the Goetheanum is a matter of the vast ether in which the spirit-filled wisdom of the world lives. It has been carried out into the etheric,*

and we may be penetrated by the Goetheanum impulses as coming in from the cosmos.

Let's take that as we want, let's take it as an image. But this image signifies a profound truth. And this profound truth is expressed in simple terms by saying that since **the Christmas impulse, the anthroposophical work has been permeated with an esoteric trait. This esoteric trait is there because that which was earthly, through that which was involved in the physical fire, but as an astral light which radiates out into the world space - because that in turn works back into the impulses of the anthroposophical movement, if only we are able to receive these impulses"** (GA 233a, p. 166).

These words can be understood more deeply if we visualise something of **the essence of the building:**

What was the unique, new and still future nature of this first Goetheanum? - Everything physical-material, earthly had been raised to a higher level through Rudolf Steiner's work, to the level of living reality, through him drawing from the being of the living Christ. In this building, Anthroposophy would have stood before people's eyes and souls in a pictorial-sensual way, up to the possibility that the forms could have awakened a karma-seeing, through the forms following the principle of metamorphosis. This first Goetheanum was "*built anthroposophy*".

Everything that hundreds of active members had lovingly carved and painted with their hands and given in labour and financial support had flowed into it. This substance of love had also contributed to filling the building with living substance, to making it the body of a living being. This being died a flaming death on New Year's Eve 1922. "*Our dear Goetheanum has died on us...*" were Rudolf Steiner's words after the loss.

The **spiritual Goetheanum** that had passed through the fire radiated back from the cosmos into the anthroposophical movement. From it Rudolf Steiner drew impulses for the "*most modern Society in the world*", receiving that which radiated towards him from that being transformed by fire.

The physical-earthly building had been raised into the living reality through the new Christian artistic impulse and through the active love and devotion of the members and their etheric and soul-spiritual substance, which they had gifted into the building. Now the impulses and formative forces for the *new social art* were to be received from the etheric and flow into the social formation of a human community on earth. Seen and received by Rudolf Steiner - they had to be understood, experienced from the heart

and wanted by the members. *The building could have been rebuilt as a social temple and as social art from Christmas 1923.*

*One of the archetypal design principles of the first Goetheanum was **the motif of equilibrium**. Visitors entering the building were immediately greeted by it when they went up to the Great Hall: it was the sculptural-artistic form of the organ of equilibrium from the inner ear, which closed off the handrail at the staircase. In addition, in the centre of the building should have stood the Representative of humanity, in his balance-creating gesture. In him, **balance** was represented **as a process**. Between Lucifer and Ahriman, out of the cosmic-human creative forces of the heart, the Christ as the humanity-ego unceasingly forms the centre as the "sun-space of freedom" out of flowing love.*

*It is precisely these two sources of social formation that remain contemporary and should guide the urgently needed reorganisation of the General Anthroposophical Society if, after a hundred years, we wish to return to Rudolf Steiner's impulses and to the Christmas Conference. (Concrete proposals for this in Chapter 12).*

## Part III

### 9. errors and misunderstandings

There are, *in* our view, several momentous errors and misunderstandings in which we as members of the General Anthroposophical Society have been living for the last hundred years.

On the one hand: Rudolf Steiner spoke of the "unified shaping" under his leadership that would now become necessary and of the fact that *"the Executive Board brings to the members that which it sees as the task of the Society...."*. By fulfilling the task of the I of society with his individuality, he had to permeate the entire society with consciousness like a body and was dependent on his impulses being taken up by the members so that life from the spirit could have flowed into the social organism. This is how the "unified leadership" by Rudolf Steiner can be understood anew; it could by no means apply to any successors. In addition, there was the misunderstanding that unified was confused with centralised, *with* the result that only the first half of the initiative principle was realised and the process of equilibrium remained unconsidered: *resonance*. It was overlooked that in Rudolf Steiner's initiative of reorganisation *everything depended on it being taken up by the members!* It was not really an aristocratic leadership - as all his successors, including the membership, understood it. *"The Board brings to the membership what it sees as the duty of the Society - and if it takes it up, it is the Board. And if it doesn't take it up, he is - nothing."* The consequences showed how seriously this was to be *taken - it was not taken up - and Rudolf Steiner left the earthly plan.*

If the principle of initiative applied to all members and if the question of resonance were valid today and taken to heart, the leaders would also present their initiatives to the members for confirmation - and if the consequence of rejection were drawn as clearly as Rudolf Steiner drew it... then a very different shape of society would probably result.

In accordance with this misunderstanding, since Christmas 1925 (after Albert Steffen had been elected first chairperson) all leaders have been "appointed" by *co-option*, a procedure practised in the Stuttgart Executive Council of all places, from which the very strongest "inner opposition" to him emanated, a procedure which he described as "inbreeding" - and which was incorporated into the Statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society in 1935, the year of the expulsions of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede from the Executive Council. This to the signature of this principle. The com-



position of the original Executive Board was part of Rudolf Steiner's initiative, in that he had the Executive Board placed at his side by *whom he believed he could carry out his intentions*. (GA 260a, p. 183) This principle cannot simply be transferred to all subsequent boards - which was not intended by him at all - there was no corresponding procedure in the Christmas Conference Statutes. - After Rudolf Steiner's death, the Society's leadership was conceived and carried out in a centralised, unitary manner, supported by the vast majority of members. Those who thought differently and asked questions were rejected or ignored.

Moreover, in the (*supposedly*) **centralistic leadership** by Rudolf Steiner, it was obviously completely overlooked on what a spiritual-moral height and level this individuality stands. Can a society led by "normal" people (who cannot be considered the highest initiates) actually be anything other than an administrative society for the cultivation of spiritual goods? (As Marie Steiner still wanted to found it in 1948, she never saw Albert Steffen as the legitimate head of the **School of Spiritual Science**). And *depending on how such an administrative society fulfils this task, it can become a living, animated organism and vessel of the anthroposophical movement in the sense that Rudolf Steiner had already hoped for the Anthroposophical Society founded in 1912*. Otherwise every centralistic and "unitary" form can lead to the angel beings left over from the 3rd cultural epoch working through it and influencing the human beings belonging to this organism accordingly. (see Newsletter 62). Perhaps the numerous struggles in the history of our society, exclusions and polarisation tendencies are an expression of this?

What changed **through Rudolf Steiner's death? The Society lost its ego**. However, it did not only become again what it had been before - an administrative society - much worse happened: now nothing could be done against the demons, they began their work of destruction from exactly the same forces that also wreaked havoc in Germany and Central Europe. (Also retarded angelic beings from Egyptian times?) Hatred and agitation raged against Ita Wegman. - **The Anthroposophical Society also lost its community soul through this**, for the conflicts and fights and the formation of camps split it apart. (In an esoteric lesson Rudolf Steiner said: *Hatred shatters the astral body*).

The living formative principles of the Anthroposophical Society led by Rudolf Steiner include as equilibrium processes: Initiative and resonance, the circulation of blood between centre and periphery through communica-

tion, and the threefolding of the social organism. They are *still "contemporary" and future* - and await realisation.

## 10. how did society develop after R. Steiner's death?

The further, tragic development is characterised not only by the conflicts, but above all by the fact that they led to the *exclusion of the very* people closest to Rudolf Steiner, his closest collaborators and esoteric students, as well as other influential personalities.

**Ita Wegmann**, co-director of the first class of the Michael School, initiator and co-founder of the new mystery medicine, was excluded from the Board in 1935. Likewise **Elisabeth Vreede, who was** expressly named by Rudolf Steiner in the various founding cycles of lectures (e.g. on curative education, the general study of man, agriculture) as the one who had to further explore these indications with regard to their cosmological dimension. One can only guess what significant cosmic aspects she could have contributed to the most diverse fields as head of the mathematical-astronomical section!

In the course of further development, **Marie Steiner** was also forced out of the leadership. From 1935, for example, Albert Steffen had the sole authority to sign for the admission of new members and all other decisions. Since neither **Guenther Wachsmuth** nor Albert Steffen were intended for the esoteric tasks of Rudolf Steiner's *School of Spiritual Science* leadership, one must conclude that it was precisely the esoteric (and female) stream that was forced out of the leadership of the Society. - The "residual board" then expanded by co-option from 1935 onwards. (To avoid any misunderstanding: this is not about judging **Albert Steffen's** importance as a spiritual personality! Or about misjudging his high poetic abilities, but that as an individuality he did not come from the "main stream" of the anthroposophical movement, but could actually have founded his own current, and that he had no inner relationship at all to the Anthroposophical Society as such, according to Rudolf Steiner in letters to Marie. In this respect it is a tragedy for both - for the Society and for him, who could not fully fulfil his actual mission - but at the same time was a great obstacle to the development of the Society for 40 years, though also through the non-understanding of the members, who virtually pushed him into his authoritarian role...).

After Rudolf Steiner's death, the esoteric main currents and those close to him were eliminated - and side currents or even counter-currents asserted themselves, if one wants to see the "will to truthfulness" as a characteristic of the anthroposophical movement. (Guenther Wachsmuth obviously had trouble with truthfulness... or a bad memory. He has demonstrably spread falsehoods several times as a member of the Executive Board. This in turn does not change his great merits for the building of the second Goetheanum!)

### **What social forms do we live in?**

From the point of view of social organisation: a hybrid *was* created in that the members thought they were in the Christmas Conference Society (with the name Anthroposophical Society), but at Christmas 1925, within the framework of the statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society or the renamed Building Society, they elected a first chairperson - supposedly for the Christmas Conference Society. (In the statutes of which there was no procedure for succession to the executive board!) One lived in the belief that the General Anthroposophical Society and the Christmas Conference Society had become one since 8 February. One lived with two statutes, in that the statutes of the Christmas Conference Society were called principles and felt to be the ones valid internally - and the statutes of the Building Society as the "official" ones for the outside world. The statutes of the Christmas Conference, of all things, were renamed "principles" - for better distinction. This was despite the fact that Rudolf Steiner said several times during the Christmas Conference that these could not be principles or statutes in the usual sense; he wanted to avoid precisely the defining character of "principles"!

## **11. the importance of "correct" social structures**

*The nature of the social structures is decisive for which higher beings can join them. Discord in the social sphere always has its cause in the "incorrect social institutions". It is immediately obvious that where the contemporary and the untimely impulses meet in people, disharmonies must arise. (R. St. e.g. in the lecture on Demons, Spectres and Ghosts in GA 102, 4 June 1908).*

Thus we must assume that social forms which do not offer the space for shaping the threefold human being, which do not allow for a free spiritual life, which do not allow for initiatives to help shape society, but which are centrally directed, cannot be suitable for the influence of the Michaelic and Christian angelic hierarchies in our time. It is primarily through the individual human being that the personal angel can work. However, it is only through communities that higher beings are attracted. ***Only when communities are formed in a contemporary way can beings work in the sense of progressive development.*** The more people turn to them consciously and of their own free will, the more fruitfully they will be included and will be able to have an inspiring effect. (The adversaries do not heed the freedom of the human being and work seductively or coercively through the unconscious. Their points of attack are human weaknesses where self-knowledge is lacking).

Here it is essential to distinguish between the individual ("private") human being and the human being as a member of a social organism. For of course anthroposophy can live in individuals and working groups at any time, whether within or outside society. Here it is only the quality of the work that decides whether the ***essence of anthroposophy*** can find its way in. ***In order for it to work through a social organism as a culture-renewing force, this organism must be shaped according to its essence.*** A body that does not correspond to its essence will have to serve the opposing powers through its structures, and the question arises whether the conflicts between leadership and members are the expression of this. That the General Anthroposophical Society has not been able for decades to develop a force for cultural renewal to the extent that it would have been necessary - will probably not be disputed by anyone who knows Rudolf Steiner's corresponding aims and predictions. - It is not overlooked here what has been and is being achieved by individuals! But Rudolf Steiner had quite different dimensions in mind than those that were urgently needed.

(To mention a few ***key words on the tasks still waiting***: If the impulse of the Christmas Conference were taken up, the number of members would triple to quadruple in a short time. In future, anthroposophists would be called in as advisors for all decisions on major political-social questions. - A particularly important task lay in the spiritualisation of natural science, since materialism would corrupt the warmth atmosphere of the earth. - Instead of film and television, completely different film techniques should have been developed, which would not undermine the powers of imagination. He also

spoke of the possibility of developing a telephone that would have made individual voice transmission possible, with the help of a flame...(these three references are taken from the book by Werner Schäfer, "Rudolf Steiner über die technische Bild- und Tonmedien", Widar-Verlag, p. 343, p. 396 and p.275). The Einsingen experiment was the beginning of a method of producing life ether. Rudolf Steiner said that it was urgently needed, as was the refinement of peat fibre to protect it against radiation. The biodynamic method of agriculture should have spread worldwide and become the predominant method of agriculture in order to obtain the food plants at all, which would still make a spiritual development of the human being possible. And even if this were to come into being, it would still not be enough, additional food plants such as the light root would be needed to compensate for the dwindling of the light ether. ...(What is already happening worldwide in terms of the destruction of the light ether through the flood of lies alone?)- Only recently I heard that Rudolf Steiner had also given the biodynamic farmers the task of creating survival space for insects and birds. This has hardly been in the consciousness, let alone happened? And now we have an insect and bird mortality of immense proportions. A great task fell to art and the new art impulses, where a dramatic loss of substance can also be observed. The plant colour impulse or his impulse for new stage lighting, for example (begun with Ehrenfried Pfeiffer), with auric and individualised, constantly changing lighting for each stage character, have hardly been taken up, or not at all. And so many other things could be mentioned that have not been created, or only to a small extent).

Since Rudolf Steiner's death, attempts have been made to continue what he started at the Christmas Conference. On the one hand, ***forms have been retained which could only be justified with him as an initiate***, such as the establishment and spiritual leadership of the School of Spiritual Science, and on the other hand, *precisely those elements of the structure which will continue to be in keeping with the times for a long time to come*, such as the threefold organisation of the Society and the principle of initiative and confirmation, affirmation and cooperation on the part of the members, have *not been recognised or implemented*.

Instead, ***the misunderstood form of an initiative principle*** from the leadership was established as an authoritarian-aristocratic form, whereas the essence of anthroposophy as "life flowing from the spirit" would correspond to the fact that the necessary forms form and in each case arise of their own

accord from the living together and working together of the members, from the spiritually present impulses of the people. If untimely forms hinder the initiative forces for shaping social life on the part of the membership for decades, it should not be surprising that the external anthroposophical movement has grown in the form of institutions, training and initiatives, while at the same time the Society has shrunk due to little or no attraction.

*The outmoded forms* are maintained by an interplay between leaders and members. In that the leadership represents an *authoritarian claim to leadership*, it is supported by all those members who would like to live in the continuation of the Christmas meeting and have an esoteric board. **Belief in authority** thus lives on both sides. Now, however, Rudolf Steiner speaks of the fact that where faith in authority prevails, Christian Rosenkreutz can never work. And we can add: Neither can Rudolf Steiner. For already in 1915 he spoke of this: What is to become of society if one always says "**he is the board, one must follow him, ...he will do things**"? He described this as an *impossibility*. (GA 254, p. 189f)

Up to the present day, those who do not agree with the views and decisions of the leadership and express this are seen as **opponents by** those who believe in authority. Here again an unconscious belief continues: for Rudolf Steiner as representative of the whole supersensible anthroposophical movement it was true that anyone who did not accept his impulses or boycotted them - even if only unconsciously - was a real opponent of anthroposophy! This was precisely the "inner opposition" that took away the ground for its work on earth. However, this attitude - "**Whoever is against the Executive Board is an opponent of Anthroposophy**" - lives on to this day, although the impulses of the opposing forces can work today precisely through the incorrect, outmoded structures both from the leadership and the membership. Added to this is the devastating consciousness-dampening effect achieved by the constant repetition of untrue, untruthful statements, in that almost the entire membership has lived in error and confusion about the identity of the Society for almost a hundred years. ("Wave of Confusion", AWW 10/23)

*The suffering from the conditions* has existed on both sides for almost a hundred years. Since the Corona period, an increased **awakening** has *begun*

and the will to change is palpable. This year has also seen the first hopeful developments.

What is heard again and again as a wish that *other people* should come into the leadership does not seem to us to hit the core of the problem and is not a solution, because for decades one could observe: With every new section leader or board member, the hope came alive that something would finally change about the grievances. Instead, one had to painfully watch how people changed as soon as they took office. ***Could it be that there are beings at work in the organisation and structure of society that are stronger than the individual who takes on their task with good will and the best of intentions?*** The old, aristocratic patterns work powerfully and have so far changed everyone there so seriously that long-time friends and well-meaning members had to realise after some time: this person has become unreachable. - If it is the case that in "Pharaonic" leadership structures the retarded angels of the 3rd post-Atlantean cultural epoch can work, then it becomes understandable that an individual cannot so easily assert himself against ahrimanic angels or archangels... And this phenomenon is also known: If one meets "privately", on a purely human level, one can communicate and understand each other and experience heartfelt attachment, mutual esteem up to a common will. However, as soon as one speaks "as a minister", from the function, this can change from one moment to the next. One finds oneself (mutually!) unreachable and as if behind walls. - Are we dealing with an occult imprisonment?

How do we achieve positive change together? Only through ***a step-by-step transformation of the structures***, and ***at the same time involving people who*** represent other directions from society than is currently the case through the leadership. *We can only realise the fullness of the anthroposophical movement through diversity.* And for this we need other structures. It is not a question of "weaning off" or of revolution, but of evolution, **in order** to arrive at a ***hierarchy of abilities and trust*** from all constructive and responsibly co-creating members, with the help of contemporary methods, where the leadership can be supported by the membership on a broad basis, because it grows and grows up "from below".

### **Conclusion:**

As can be seen from what has been presented, ***the uniqueness of the Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference with Rudolf Steiner***

and the impossibility of referring to his statements in relation to their shaping for the General Anthroposophical Society would have to be recognised in order to gain from there the readiness for a contemporary re-shaping of the General Anthroposophical Society. The centralised structures that are wrongly traced back to Rudolf Steiner and are misunderstood, urgently need to be dissolved and transformed.

This impulse is increasingly coming to life in many members, as the reports from the thematic groups at the Members' Forum on 9 September 2023 also showed. *Forms of member participation and co-design are being sought.*

The first and possible **short-term** step towards restructuring could be the formation of a "**member co-responsibility body**", which could be done, for example, according to the - possibly to be modified - method of "moving chairs", with which Harald Jäckel has a lot of experience.

For a building of the society from all interested members "from below", a similar process could take place in the **longer term**.

*"Thus, in the spiritual sphere, **individual initiative** based on individual abilities must be able to have a social effect; it must not be determined by the content of an overall will. This overall will must have an antisocial effect, because it deprives the community of the fruits of individual human abilities.*

*There is no other way to bring the fruits of these individual capacities to fruition than through **self-government**. Within this self-administration, the only condition that can come about is one in which there is not an overall will that suppresses the fruitfulness of the individual human beings for social life, but through which the individual human achievements are incorporated into the life of the whole for its benefit.*

*Within such a self-government, the points of view will emerge from spiritual life through which the right people will be brought into the right places and through which immediate living **trust** can **replace** law and decree." (GA 24, 1982, P. 207)*

In the following, initial proposals and ideas are set out in more detail, which should ideally be further developed in discussion with the other thematic groups.

## **12. ways to create from the living**

*As a preliminary remark, let us look at the positive:* we still have an anthroposophical society! Over the decades, individuals have done an immense



amount of work for anthroposophy. Numerous people have been able to find each other in it who wanted to and should meet for karmic reasons. Much collaboration has certainly been successful and the General Anthroposophical Society was able to revive after the war. At present, a new dynamic and positive development can also be observed in that, on the one hand, *a certain opening has occurred through the member forums and discussions and constructive collaboration is experienced in almost all thematic groups.*

On the other hand, *an opening in "Anthroposophy Worldwide" is already noticeable in that contributions from members can appear there on four additional pages.* -

### **Proposals for new social processes and designs:**

Developing new social structures requires a long-term process. In order to get this process going, however, impulses should already be set in motion now. In this sense, a distinction is made between short-term and longer-term approaches.

#### **In the short term: the formation of a member-responsibility body**

The past and present development of the society has shown that many members cannot identify with the direction taken by the leadership. The decisions that provided the direction were of great importance to members because of their consequences. Many of them members innermost conviction is that they cannot support this direction. Members were prevented from their free expression of opinion and free spaces for dialogue because the leadership went over them. (One-sidedness in the weekly magazine and at members' evenings). *In order to put the society on a broader basis and enable the different currents to work together, a kind of "members' body" could be formed, for example, from the people who are now involved in the discussion forums on the ground and online.*

*The motto could be what Gerald Häfner and Justus Wittich already formulated in 2003 in connection with the debate on the constitution of society at that time:*

*"The aim of these efforts should be a constitution of the Society which, in contemporary conformity with the intentions of its founder, can do justice to the intellectual tasks set for it as well as to the intentions of its members and the manifold demands of the present time. - If this task is to succeed, it must be taken up from the midst of the Society in cooperation with the Executive Board."*

## How to proceed?

It would be abstract and illusory if a new structure were first to be developed in thought and in writing in a process that would take years, and if it were to be agreed upon and then implemented. This would be a process that would contradict precisely how Rudolf Steiner proceeded: to take a first step out of present reality, out of actual life, then to wait for the resonance and effects from which the next step results.

In addition, it seems necessary to initiate a development process as *soon as possible that is* suitable to implement structural changes on the one hand and that enables the formation of a new basis of trust on the other hand - provided that a corresponding cooperation between initiative members and the leadership can be established.

It also seems necessary that the membership, from which this development impulse is initiated, is actively and bindingly involved in this process. This could be possible in the form of a member co-responsibility body, which is formed from the existing and established initiatives from the membership in a process in which - according to the existing legal form - the membership (as far as it is involved, actively or passively contributes). This is currently the general assembly in presence as well as the members participating online, even if the latter can only participate optionally.

### The idea of a membership body

Such a membership body - e.g. consisting of seven to twelve members - should be understood in the sense of an extended executive board and would have to be given corresponding responsibilities by the general meeting. This body would then have a binding role in key decisions. The main task should initially be to ***initiate and actively accompany the necessary development impulses***. The main focus should be on current issues, as they have become apparent in particular through the motions at the last general assembly and the topics of the members' forums.

For the time being, the current ***management*** would remain with the Executive Council and the Goetheanum leadership, as it would ensure smooth business operations.

The ***working methods*** and ***procedural rules*** of the Executive Council, extended in this way, would have to be made by the Executive Council itself and then announced to members. The same would need be done for the revisions or modifications to the procedural rules of the Goetheanum leadership.

The work could *initially be* set up for *three years*. This membership body should report regularly on its work, whereby internal matters worthy of protection and confidentiality are of course to be treated confidentially. Furthermore, it is *accountable to* the members, discharge is required as with the Executive Board.

### The image process

The formation process must on the one hand do justice to the legal framework of the existing social structure and on the other hand to the demands of a modern and contemporary social design. For an anthroposophical society, neither centralist unitary state nor abstract grassroots democratic structures can be the appropriate and sustainable ones. (Rudolf Steiner: *A real election is already no longer possible with 100 people*. Which is understandable, because these hundreds can only rarely know one person so well that they can *really* judge his abilities). We *need other methods, moral imagination and moral technology in order* to jointly form suitable governing bodies from the real circumstances and needs of all members committed to society.

In a certain sense, as a prerequisite for a promising formation process, *it is necessary to work out the criteria, the prerequisites, the competences and the basic principles of the working style of this member body*. The task of *working out the criteria* should be done transparently by the members through the member forums.

Since the nomination of individual personalities should in principle - though not exclusively - be based on the *initiative principle*, initial *proposals for* nominations could already result from this preliminary work.

If we want to develop into an 'initiative society', then the formation process of a membership body must also significantly - not necessarily exclusively - comply with the initiative principle:

Basically, the process should be based on the initiative principle: Those who want to commit themselves to the tasks described and consider themselves suitable for them (whether on their own initiative or on the basis of a proposal) must be prepared to undergo a process in which, on the one hand, they have to explain why they consider themselves capable and suitable. On the other hand, one must be prepared to *let oneself be mirrored and resonated by the members around*, i.e. to face the feedback from the assembly. A readiness that also plays an important role in the task to be accomplished and certainly has an extraordinary confidence-building effect.

A similar formation process could also be developed for the composition of the *governing bodies of the sections*. In this way, all section members would participate in such a formation process, they would become 'participants' instead of spectators.

A more detailed account of this and current supplements [www.wtg-99.com/Mitglieder-Organ](http://www.wtg-99.com/Mitglieder-Organ)

### **Longer term: Ways to form a central administration body from the periphery**

This takes time because first of all interest has to be aroused again and members have to show themselves who are willing and able to get involved. One way to stimulate this would be:

- All members receive all communication sheets and newsletters etc. on a trial basis, so that *broad, free and independent information is* possible.
- This could stimulate interest in the development processes of the Society and *groups* could be formed locally *all over the world* - or people could join other groups supraregionally if they live in isolation (partly successful through the members' forums, new connections can also be formed)- from those who are interested in the development of a thriving Anthroposophical Society and want to help shape it in the suggested way.
- Individuals from these groups can be commissioned and delegated to bring in their concerns and ideas and to discuss them further in a *second body* consisting of these representatives and "delegates", thus guaranteeing diversity and that everyone who wants to can get involved and feel represented. (The present shows that this is not always the case with the national representatives).
- From the second body, the most suitable could be found, who could represent the individual countries, for example, and *in the long term* supplement or replace the current *country representatives*. - A reasonable number would have to be chosen, depending on the size of the country and the number of members and currents. In this way, ideally, all members could feel represented, whereas at present this is only the case for some of them.
- In this way, the membership body and the Society would grow upwards out of real working relationships. In this way, everyone who wants to would have been involved in the processes and a *trusted network of*

people could emerge, *a trust hierarchy*, so that in the end all decisions and task delegations could also be supported.

Of course, this includes *transparent communication* about all steps and - oral reports by the delegates in their groups right from the start. - (All this has already been successfully tested on a small scale in anthroposophical self-government!)

### **School of Spiritual Science - Terms of reference for section leaders**

Described using the example of the Corona Crisis for the Medical Section as *if it already existed*:

- the members know that they can turn to the Section with their urgent *questions and need for information*, with their search for bases for judgement. (This is how it was intended by Rudolf Steiner, however the difference in the further process is that at that time *he* would have answered all spiritual research questions - in collaboration with the Section leaders. Today we have to seek the answers from the diversity of different abilities and in collaboration).
- There, the *questions are collected and bundled* and in turn sent to all interested members and professional colleagues.
- Reports, information, experiences and advice received by the Section from medical practitioners, biologists and other well-informed members, shall be *made available to all*.
- In addition, *information evenings* (internal to the society) take place everywhere regionally, where the situation moves together and spiritual and practical help is exchanged. -
- *Public information events* are offered for exchange and those seeking advice.
- Contacts with other "awake contemporaries" are sought, *cooperation with Michaelites*. (How can you recognise them?)
- The Section encourages or coordinates *research groups* (proposed by others) on the urgent questions. -
- *Contacts are arranged for* topic groups and members researching similar questions, etc.

This could have had a model effect - and can have in the future! *Lived diversity, free intellectual life*. - Then possibly numerous people seeking advice

would have come to the events and, above all, contacts would have been made with similar currents - an effectiveness against the madness of measures would perhaps have become possible. Above all - spiritual, seeking people could have found "us". The Goetheanum should be a shelter for all spirit-seeking souls! That they are numerous is shown by the sales figures of Thomas Mayer's book (which was trashed in the Weekly by the leaders of the **Medical Section**, obviously without even having read it completely). This book "Corona Vaccinations from a Spiritual Perspective" has been sold over 25,000 times.

A development process in which the membership worldwide can participate was started at the members' forums, which began in May 2023 and take place both at the Goetheanum in presence and online. The topics of the eleven groups include those concerns and motions from the General Assembly that were not put to a vote, as Ueli Hurter and Justus Wittich suggested working together on these issues in the form of neutrally moderated slide forums. The aim of these member forums is to present proposals for the further development and renewal of certain processes as well as the social structure of the Association for decision-making at the next General Assembly (end of April 2024), if possible.

For the thematic group "*Tasks, goals and contemporary social structures of an anthroposophical society*" it seemed to make sense to me to introduce a kind of basic paper in order to make the background visible, from which our impulses and proposals can become more comprehensible.

What is partly sketched in the following is further elaborated in the two newsletters of February and March 2023, Nos. 58 and 62 "**What else is happening in our Society.**"

### **On the nature of Rudolf Steiner's School of Spiritual Science and Michael School**

One area of the School of Spiritual Science was the establishment of the Sections, each of which was intended to provide supersensible research for specific fields of research and work, primarily through Rudolf Steiner. - The Medical Section was somewhat of an exception, since the paper "Fundamental Principles for an Extension of the Art of Healing" was written jointly with Ita Weg-man. It was she who had asked him for a renewal of Mystery Medicine. Eurythmy and the new art of speech had already been developed with Marie Steiner ten years earlier.

On the other hand, Rudolf Steiner's created *the first of three parts* of the first class. (Three classes were to be created). The aim was *"to return the free school as an esoteric institution to the task from which it was threatened to be snatched in recent years. (Volume I...)* This *"rightly existing Michael School on earth"* could only become reality with Rudolf Steiner. He received the words and actions from Michael himself.

Since he had not named a successor for the school leadership, but a true mystery school can only be established and led by a true initiate, after his death the members of the School of Spiritual Science were given the protection and care of the mantric property as their individual and collective responsibility.

Rudolf Steiner had appointed Ita Wegman as co-director of the first class. Marie Steiner also had a leading role in the Esoteric School, which existed until the World War and which had already been built up into three classes, within the framework of the so-called "Cult of Knowledge Department". In this respect, these two of Rudolf Steiner's closest co-workers would have been the only ones in a position to continue the esoteric stream with a certain justification - if they had been able to work together harmoniously in the sense of his words *"if after my death even two people work selflessly and purely for the cause, I will be able to work through them"*.

*(As a kind of basic work for an overview of the development of the work in the School of Spiritual Science, the book "Steiner's individuelle Esoterik einst und jetzt" (Steiner's individual esotericism once and now) by Johannes Kiersch is recommended, published by Verlag am Goetheanum Leadership, 2nd edition 2012).*

### **Living in unjustified leadership until today**

Due to the errors and misunderstandings described in Chapter 9, Albert Steffen was elected as the first chairman and later also took over the Leadership of the School. *Since then there has been a **Leadership of the School which is not legitimised by Rudolf Steiner and which therefore cannot be the "rightly existing Michael School on earth"**.*

One could describe the process as an *unintentional* or *"deliberate" self-empowerment and seizure of power...* For the authority and power that the leadership held on the basis of this supposed spiritual rank has shaped the entire development of the General Anthroposophical Society since Rudolf

Steiner's death until today. From its self-image as a leadership of the School of Spiritual Science, the leadership of the Society also has a kind of esoteric background. Even if it is repeatedly stated that one naturally does not see oneself as an esoteric leadership, the deeds speak a different language. Decisions of great significance for the whole society are made and carried out by individual leaders over and above the members or against the will of parts of the membership, out of the experience and self-image of being entitled and called to do so. -

If, with regard to the Michael School and the teaching of the mantras, the claim to be in the succession of Rudolf Steiner and the leadership of his School were to be abandoned, then the task of teaching the class lessons could be carried out according to a "free initiative" and, if there was a corresponding response on the part of the people, would also have its legitimacy, quite simply as esoteric work and care of the mantric good. The decisive factor here would be that the step of consciousness would be taken with regard to the real basis of the school and the fact that those who want to take responsibility for this task are basically equal with regard to the right to join with others in a work, to appoint leaders of their groups or also to bear joint responsibility for the work. Free forms of this kind already exist. (See the book by Elisabeth Wutte and Günter Röscher *"Perspektiven freier Hochschularbeit"*, Novalis-Verlag 2019, as well as the conference programme for *"Hochschule in Entwicklung"*, 10-11 November 2023 in Stuttgart at the Rudolf Steiner Haus).

What is needed is an understanding of esotericism that it can never be a matter of legitimisation "ex officio", but only of spiritual-moral empowerment and responsibility, in the sense of the free human being, who only has to answer to the spiritual world and Rudolf Steiner. A community cultivating esotericism can be based exclusively on the spirit working in it and not on formalities or offices. (On the contrary, the effect of the "structural beings" can often be observed here too. A mediator as a human being can be very suitable for this task on the basis of his abilities, but as long as he lives in the belief, i.e. in the illusion and the error, that he is in the real succession of Rudolf Steiner's Michael School and thus on a higher level than his listeners, whereas in truth Rudolf Steiner did not name a successor and also remained silent when asked how work should continue without him, the beings of the non-legitimised position of leadership will be able to work through this human being).



Is it not the case that only the individual ability and spiritual-moral maturity of a person can entitle him to a responsible task in an esoteric work? If these people join together, *an esoteric school can be built from the bottom up*. Building such a school in the sense of a community of responsibility from free individualities could be of great importance for the formation of substance and counteract the progressive loss of substance in society, in training and institutions, etc. The school could be built from the active and confirmed members of the community.

From the active esotericists, confirmed by other members and desired for this task, *a community could be formed for the protection and care of the mantric good, purely out of "initiative and resonance". - However, not "unconditionally"!*

### **Foundations of contemporary and communally responsible esotericism**

The basic and existential prerequisites for such a community of responsibility for anthroposophical esotericism are *those which Rudolf Steiner considered necessary and indispensable for membership in his esoteric Michael School*, and which apply to all work in which one seeks a living connection to the spiritual world and the guidance of humanity.

The first thing to be mentioned here is what he so often pointed out as an admonition, because it was lacking to such a great extent: *the necessary seriousness*. What is needed is a deep capacity to experience the "threshold air", the atmosphere of mystery, the fact that *anthroposophy is divine service*. - On the other hand, there has already been talk of "playful handling of the mantras". The everyday intellect should have no place here.

Secondly, *representation*: this means a courageous and uncompromising defence of anthroposophy in "the world" and the defence of Rudolf Steiner against attacks and slander - whether in private or in public. (Which is not to be confused with dogmatism).

And as a very essential third condition for a Michael Community Rudolf Steiner saw *keeping in touch* - precisely for this purpose such a community of responsibility would have to be formed and would be suitable for maintaining and coordinating the connection with all those interested. The tendency and danger of isolation and fragmentation is great and with it the weakening of the effectiveness of anthroposophy as a cultural ferment.

A fourth prerequisite and condition - which would actually be the first - to be able to belong to a Michael community, I see in the *"love of truth"*.

For without genuine enthusiasm and will for truth, a true relationship to the essence of Anthroposophy cannot develop. Anyone who is indifferent to personal opinions and views, *without a common search for truth*, without wanting to get to the bottom of controversial or research questions - in supposed tolerance and positivity, but in reality out of comfort and laxity - or who places solidarity with colleagues and friends higher than the truth, who therefore denies it in reality - cannot really be justified for leading tasks in an anthroposophical esoteric work. (And in addition, this would not fulfil the condition of the necessary seriousness or representation).

On the one hand, the once strict forms of leadership have already begun to open up and loosen in recent years. There are obviously groups that work without the "mediator" appointed by the Goetheanum Leadership as well as those that seek new forms of work with an official "mediator". Also, on the part of the leadership of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum, these developments do not seem to be rejected, but rather contact is sought with the groups. On the other hand, however, this opening and the attempt to integrate the free groups into the overall context will never be able to become really fruitful as long as an erroneous self-image - of being the leadership of Rudolf Steiner's Michael School - still forms the basis of the esoteric work for all those involved. The "heavenly institution on earth" could only exist with Rudolf Steiner, as could the unity of movement and society. - To think of the Michael School as an earthly institution in which the source of esotericism passes to the leaders (not appointed by Rudolf Steiner) or one is empowered *ex officio* is strongly reminiscent of the Catholic Church. Rudolf Steiner's already spoke at that time of the Jesuitical attitude which made itself felt as a dangerous current in the Anthroposophical Society. It is not only foreign to anthroposophy, but a deeply hostile current. Can it be that the source of esotericism will continue to dry up if this change of consciousness does not take place?

### **The present and the future**

Would it not be conceivable that what was given by Rudolf Steiner as our "higher self" and spiritual guidance could be achieved collectively through the quality of working together? "Where two or three are together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Would it not be possible to be each other's loving "guardians", to learn from each other, to mirror each other in a loving way, to be each other's "development helpers"? Not on a personal

level, but in relation to the esoteric quality of the work on the mantras. I remember the questions of a member at a discussion evening on the issue of the School of Spiritual Science: Why is it that one hour is full and dense and the presence of Michael can be felt - and another time this does not happen? What do I myself have to contribute? How does the esoteric substance come about? What part did the facilitator have in it, what part do I have myself? Can we not exchange ideas about the moment at which the experience of spiritual presence and substance arose? - Simply asking and moving such questions will be enriching and awakening and can set development in motion. Why not practise exchanging spiritual questions in a meditative, enquiring gesture of the soul, opening doors to the spiritual through the common questioning attitude?

It seems to me that a lot of potential, a wealth of experience, perceptive abilities and questions lie fallow - and that we could have the courage to practise and develop an esoteric culture of conversation in order to lift these treasures and make them fruitful for society and the movement. And if we "*work for the cause in selflessness and purity*", Rudolf Steiner himself could work through us, advising, inspiring, guiding. - Perhaps this is already happening in some places? Then perhaps all that is needed is more "networking" or better - "interweaving"?

We are in the time in which 3 x 33 years ago Rudolf Steiner perhaps still hoped every day that people would understand and take hold of the impulse of the Christmas Conference - because then he would not have needed to be ill, but could have continued to work on earth for a long time. With the honest will to clarify and clear up the central questions of organisation with regard to the common responsibility for the esoteric source and the mantras and for a new beginning in which the unjustified central claim to leadership would be given up, we can certainly count on his help.

### **Encouraging developments in society and future issues**

What began in January 2023 with the Extraordinary General Meeting in a conflictual and tense atmosphere, turned around thanks to the favour of the hour, good will and presence of mind through Harald Jäckel's proposal and offer to initiate and support dialogue processes.

In fact, eight dialogue forums have taken place since the end of January, as well as further moderated discussions between members and leaders and two conferences on the Constitution (initiated by Gerald Häfner). What ini-

tially felt like separate processes are now beginning to converge. In less than a year, a social climate has emerged that is characterised by mutual understanding, rapprochement and the beginning of cooperation.

At the second constitutional conference "*What has become?*", which took place as part of the Social Sciences Section at the end of November, a very special meeting space could be felt in which, despite all the differentiated perspectives, there was a benevolent, appreciative and warm atmosphere, characterised by the common good will for the necessary processes of change in the Society. And one can rightly ask: aren't we already in the midst of positive processes of change and reorganisation? - Doesn't this already show that healthy, new social structures and organs are emerging from the "life processes" themselves? In this case, through dialogue and the continuous, goal-oriented cooperation between leaders and members on specific tasks.

In this way, new organs can emerge from the members' forum and the "steering group" (consisting of representatives of the individual working groups) that has been formed in the meantime, as it is the concern of both the members and the participating Board members Ueli Hurter and Justus Wittich that *the members' forums* should be made "*permanent*" and continued after the upcoming Annual General Meeting as the body to which Management and members can bring topics and concerns for processing. In this way, proposals can be developed and decisions made jointly and the entire membership (on site and online) can be involved.

(Of course, it remains to be seen in concrete terms how to deal with issues where no consensus can be reached)

The General Meetings are also to be organised differently in future. *For the upcoming AGMs*, it is planned that the first day will begin with thematic group work in a similar way to the members' forums, so that members can familiarise themselves with the process and what has been developed.

At the *constitutional conference*, various contributions also mentioned motives and objectives that coincide with those of some of the working groups of the members' forums. To name just a few:

*We should become a consultative Society.*

*Overcoming power structures.* Because even if people do not **want to** exercise power, it still happens - through the structures themselves: Be it through the General Meeting, when instead of consensus decisions, majority decisions are taken that "outvote" some of the members or leaders, or when

individual leaders, the Executive Committee or the Goetheanum leadership as a small group make decisions that determine the overall direction of development of the Society or its public image, contrary to the will of other members. - This applies above all to active and School of Spiritual Science class members, who also stand as representatives of anthroposophy in the world. Neither type of exercise of power is in keeping with the age of the consciousness soul or the nature of anthroposophy. Here the association structure - which Rudolf Steiner did not want - acts as a constraint.

*Abolish the co-option* and replace it with another procedure that has yet to be developed. Tried and tested methods, proposals and approaches will be discussed first.

The need was also clearly expressed to **cultivate** more of a "**Christmas Conference atmosphere**" in our meetings and gatherings - including the **General Meeting** - (the actual "how" would be a topic in itself) so that a substantial and loving collaboration can develop. One of the prerequisites for this would be to **reorganise the "mixed entity" that is the General Anthroposophical Society**, to overcome the association structures and to develop the necessary space and procedures for each area. (An administrative organisation for asset management, for the Goetheanum, etc. would of course remain necessary).

## Outlook

Even if the developments are now hopeful and appear to be on the right track, it should not be overlooked that a consensus has not yet been reached on important, fundamental issues and that there are still quite conflicting views among the membership, but also among the leaders. We will have to deal with these in future directional decisions.

In order to provide something complementary to the previously one-sided views of the management in the Corona crisis, in the assessment of current events, with regard to benchmarks and links to the WHO, etc., and to introduce new development impulses, we propose - as described - the *formation of a member body* that could be involved in future decisions, *e.g. in the sense of an extension of the Board of Directors*. As mentioned above, it could emerge organically from the ongoing processes, e.g. from a combination of delegation (from the groups) and the principle of initiative from the participants in the members' forums. These would already be the first "sounding board" before it could be expanded on the first day of the General Meeting for all interested parties. People would be able to introduce them-

selves and get to know each other through the work on topics, so that an initial picture of the mood or a resolution in favour of the formation of such a body at the General Meeting would be conceivable.

### Tasks

The free coexistence and acceptance of the most diverse views and the first rapprochements through dialogue, as valuable as they are, can only be a first step for a Society whose lifeblood should be the search for true knowledge of spiritual realities. In the search for truth, *joint cognitive work*, a cognitive dialogue, should be increasingly striven for and practised, in which one goes into depth in terms of content and weighs up the spiritual-scientific points of view together. Rudolf Steiner cites the following motto as a remedy for conflicts: "Truth lies in accuracy and accuracy lies in truth! And: in an honest search for the truth, there can be no dispute. This only arises when unconscious intentions and an unconscious will to achieve results are involved.

Experiencing the *World Conference*, which took place at Michaelmas 2023 with hundreds of participants from all over the world, revealed another task that seems essential to me. We succeeded in creating a meeting space that was open to the heart, we made numerous new contacts and deep, intimate encounters were created in the working groups. There was a wealth of reports on initiatives from all over the world and substantial morning lectures.

Yet the question already arose during the conference: But where is the view of the dragon? On the apocalyptic developments in the world? On our Society? And where is the will to awaken and the courage to recognise evil - in ourselves and in the world? How can a conference without such a focus be in the spirit of the Michael age?

It became painfully clear to me: if only joy and enthusiasm prevail and the counterbalance is not consciously sought and created, then there is a danger that the sunniness of this festival of encounters will fall into Lucifer's hands. Don't we need more awareness of the Christian centre and balance for our future work meetings and conferences?

Further information in English from what is happening around our General Anthroposophic Society:

### ***What else is happening at the Goetheanum!***

A private Newsletter published by Thomas Heck und Eva Lohmann-Heck  
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