Chapter 1

Waldorf Teacher Education: Methodology of the Study

Section 1

Introduction

1. Background information

The primary focus of most of the literature on Steiner or Waldorf Education ~ whether couched in ways variously intending to theorise, compare, inform, expound, or extol ~ has been on the question of how children (whether of early childhood, primary or high school years) should be educated. The main aim of this thesis is to explore the question of how Waldorf teachers should be educated. In order to begin to tackle this seemingly straightforward question it seemed logical to begin at the beginning, that is, with the theory underlying what Waldorf teachers were being educated for.

Steiner's educational theory is explicit in maintaining that education is about facilitating the process of becoming more human. But aren't we human enough already? What does it mean to become more human? How are human beings (for so long referred to as 'Man') constituted? What is 'Man'? In some ways the trend of the questioning is reminiscent of, and inevitably leads to, the Classical Greek injunction "O Man. Know Thyself"[1]. It was in contemplating these questions that the realisation came of what the underlying core of the thesis would be. Something had to be said about what Steiner believed the human being to be, and therefore how the education of the human being should proceed. More specifically still, how the teachers who were to implement the

[1] This injunction was engraved above the portal of the temple of Apollo at Delphi.

educational ideas would themselves be educated. But why make a study of what constitutes an ideal Waldorf teacher education? Why be concerned about the implications for teacher education of Rudolf Steiner's educational philosophy and its practice in Waldorf schools?

One goal of this study is to bring to the attention of a wider readership some of Rudolf Steiner's ideas. It is wholly appropriate that an educational philosophy as coherent and internally consistent as Steiner's, and a teaching method as comprehensive and thoroughly articulated as Waldorf pedagogy, should be more widely known and understood in educational circles. In Teacher's College or University library shelves, normally laden with books on educational philosophies, one can hardly find a reference to Rudolf Steiner or Waldorf education. Even in the context of progressive educational theory and practice the name of Steiner is barely visible amongst the more popular and somewhat revered figures of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Dewey, Neill, Montessori, and others. One would hardly be aware that the latter three educators were Steiner's contemporaries. Only a few within the stream of writers on progressive or alternative educational ideas have ventured to try to penetrate or discuss Steiner's educational work.[2]

Steiner education or Steiner schools and Waldorf education or Waldorf schools are used interchangeably in this thesis as well as in the Steiner or Waldorf school movement. In recent times the two names have been combined and the terms Steiner Waldorf education and Steiner Waldorf schools are generally used. 'Steiner' of course refers to the man who articulated the educational philosophy and brought it into

[2] A notable exception to those who omit to mention Steiner, among the 'mainstream education' writers, is the text by S. J. Curtis & M. E. A. Boultwood's *A Short History of Educational Ideas,* University Tutorial Press, London, 1953. Of the writers in the progressive education stream, a fair coverage of Steiner education is provided by W. A. C. Stewart, *Progressives and Radicals in English Education, 1750-1970*, Augustus M Kelley, New Jersey, 1972.

practical expression, and 'Waldorf' refers to the name of the very first school which opened on the grounds of the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory in Stuttgart, the founding of which will be discussed in detail in due course.

Knowledge about Waldorf schools varies widely around the world; for example, they are well known in Germany since Waldorf education began there eighty years ago, and constitutes the largest non-government school movement. However, this widespread knowledge about and acceptance of Waldorf schools is not the case in English speaking countries like Australia, Great Britain or the United States of America. There are at least four reasons for the relative obscurity of Steiner Waldorf schools.

- First: After the first Waldorf school was founded in 1919, it (and subsequent schools) did not become a member of the New Education Fellowship which, founded in 1921, included most of the progressive school movement at that time. It is probable that either the Waldorf school teachers did not know of the existence of the NEF, or they were not invited, Germany being the recently defeated WWI enemy. Hence their absence at NEF conferences probably contributed to their continuing obscurity among the wider community of progressive schools.
- Second: Waldorf schools largely kept to themselves, perhaps believing that they had a unique educational mission to accomplish, the aim of which was incompatible with many developments in a world which seemed increasingly to be adopting materialistic values. For example, the instrumentalist aims and greater dominance of the economy in education was compromising both teachers' and students' spiritual freedom. Waldorf schools were probably hoping to maintain, as

one Waldorf educationist wryly commented, 'an educational moral high ground…in an increasingly *laissez-faire* world'.[3]

- Third: After Steiner's death in 1925, the growth of Waldorf schools amounted to a cultural phenomenon, largely proceeding from a 'grass roots' level using local networks. There was no 'central headquarters' initiating or promoting the expansion of the Waldorf school movement, and therefore its growth around the world did not acquire a high profile.
- Fourth: The literature on Waldorf pedagogy was not readily available in English translation until the 1970s, and what could be purchased was not always digestible to readers outside of the Waldorf school movement.

Nevertheless, from the early 1970s there was a rapid growth in the number of Waldorf schools in many countries, including Australia. It was not until the late-1980s and beyond, with notable exceptions, that efforts were made within the Waldorf Movement to become less isolated from mainstream education and more visible to government funding bodies as well as the broader world of what came to be called 'the education industry', including teachers' unions and academia. Such attempts at bridge building could be seen in the efforts of a new generation of anthroposophists[4], including some Waldorf educators, who began publishing their own research in diverse fields, reinterpreting Steiner's original work or extending it. Some areas of Steiner's work, such as the Threefold Social Order, were revisited and found currency in such fields as Business Management, Economics and Social Science. For example, the theoretical justification for freedom in education could be found in Steiner's Social Theory, and

[3] Brien Masters, *An Appraisal of Steinerian Theory and Waldorf Praxis: How do they compare*, Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Surrey, England, 1997, p. 5

this theory could help support the resistance to the pervasive influence of economic rationalism.

Having been one of the founding teachers of a Waldorf school in the late 1970s, and further working as a classroom teacher for twelve years, educational administrator, Waldorf consultant and teacher educator, and having assisted Waldorf school initiatives to develop, and seen the number of schools grow from five to fifty in Australia in under twenty years, it became increasingly obvious to me, as I travelled around the country visiting new schools, that the continued value of Steiner's educational philosophy, and the integrity of the Waldorf school movement, lay in the quality of the education, both pre-service and in-service, undertaken by those working in the schools. This then provided the primary motive for undertaking this research: to interrogate the validity of my concerns by investigating them from both a theoretical as well as empirical basis.

2. Research questions

The various practical initiatives in the Waldorf School Movement ~ from Early Childhood, through to Primary and Secondary Education ~ provided a range of fields from which to choose an area of research. As mentioned above, from the late 1980s an increasing number of writers began exploring Steiner's ideas and started to review and reinterpret his views on child development, as well as his practical indications on the development of a wide range of curriculum areas.

However, little attention was given to the field of teacher education, despite the fact that its vitality, richness and effectiveness were crucial to ensure that the rapidly growing number of Waldorf schools could be staffed with trained Waldorf teachers. It appeared that developing a healthy education for children took precedence, and rightly

[4] The adjective derives from the noun 'Anthroposophy', which is the name Steiner gave to his

so, but how were the educators to be educated? What constituted best practice in Waldorf teacher education?

The essential starting point in pursuing these questions must be Steiner's educational philosophy, and his views and practice in training teachers for the first Waldorf school. From that starting point, it is also necessary to investigate how the preparation of Waldorf teachers proceeded after his death, and how Waldorf teachers around the world are trained today. What are the implications of his philosophy for teacher education today, over seventy years since his death? How does it relate to a very different society in which children are growing up? Has Waldorf teacher training kept up with the times, or has it kept itself isolated from the many developments made in conventional teacher training? Some of these questions have been raised by many Waldorf educators and observers, but I believe that this is a first attempt to investigate them in a sustained, coherent way, with particular reference to one country, but having implications for others.

In order that the research would be relevant and useful to Waldorf teacher educators in Australia, it was appropriate to focus on Australian Waldorf teachers, and with this focus a new set of questions arose. How did the provision of Waldorf teacher training develop in this country? Where did teachers receive their Waldorf training? What was the content and nature of the training received by currently practicing teachers in Australian Waldorf schools? What do they think about the quality of the training they received? What do they think were the gaps in their training? What would have to be added to future training courses to prepare new teachers for the demands of Waldorf teaching and Waldorf education today? How are they filling the gaps now that they are

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philosophy. Chapter 2 Section 2 will give a fuller explanation of Anthroposophy and its principles.

‘in service’? Have they undertaken additional training and in what kind professional development do they participate?

One final area of research was the connection (or using the more formal term, ‘articulation’) of Waldorf and mainstream teacher education. Could Waldorf teachers be effectively trained in conventional Faculties of Education in universities? If so, under what conditions? If not, why not? These were the main research questions which permeated and directed the study.

Chapter 1: Section 2

Literature Review and Existing Research

1. Categorising the literature

Over nearly eighty years, the Waldorf Movement, comprising almost 800 schools, over a thousand kindergartens and 64 teacher training institutions in 26 countries, has produced and published a considerable body of literature on various aspects of its educational philosophy and teaching methods, as well as biographical, historical and various descriptive accounts of its pioneers, founders, teachers, alumni, and the activities of coordinating organisations, like the Steiner School Fellowship in England and various Waldorf School Associations in Europe, North America, and Australasia.

The published literature can be grouped into five major categories:[1]

1) That written by Steiner or delivered by him in lectures and later published, usually without having been checked or revised by him. Works by Steiner relevant to this thesis have been extensively used and cited in the footnotes and bibliography.
2) That written by those who share Steiner's outlook and usually have much practical experience within the Waldorf School Movement, but who do not set out to substantiate their view or critique the Movement. Representatives from this category are too numerous to mention, ranging from the casual writer in a school *Newsletter* or contributor to a Steiner education *Journal,* to well known figures in the Waldorf Movement (though rarely anywhere else). For example, from England, Francis Edmunds, John Davy, Roy Wilkinson, Rudi Lissau and Brien Masters; Europe (in

English translation), the Norwegian Jörgen Smit, the Swiss Heinz Zimmermann, the Danish Frans Calgren; North America, Hermann von Baravalle, Henry Barnes, Werner Glas, René Querido, Alan Howard, John Fentress Gardiner and Robert Easton; South Africa, Ralph Shepherd; and Australia, Alan Whitehead. The authors named have generally written about aspects of Waldorf education but not specifically, or in any detail, about Waldorf teacher education.

- A relevant publication for teacher educators, though not specifically directed at them, is by Coenraad van Houten, an anthroposophically oriented adult educator. Van Houten wrote *Awakening the Will: Principles and Processes in Adult Learning* (1995) which introduces an integrated approach to teacher development. This innovative approach has been adopted by some schools in their in-service training courses, as well as being applied, for example in the Anthroposophical Schooling Course at Emerson College, England, and elsewhere.
- A publication by Peter van Alphen (Director, Centre for Creative Education, Cape Town, South Africa) titled "The Paradigm Shift: How can we make it happen?" (undated c. 1997) argued for a new approach to the education of South African Waldorf teachers (based on the van Houten approach to adult learning).

3) More scholarly works written by those in the same group as in category 2) for example, A. C. Harwood's *The Recovery of Man in Childhood*, and more recently, Brien Masters, *An Appraisal of Steinerian Theory and Waldorf Praxis: How do they compare?* This is an unpublished doctoral thesis submitted to the University of Surrey, England, 1997. Although Masters is a key figure in Waldorf teacher education in England, the focus of his dissertation is on the extent to which Waldorf

[1] Full acknowledgment is given to Dr. Brien Masters for this categorisation of the literature in four of these categories, in his thesis *An Appraisal of Steinerian Theory and Waldorf Praxis*, op. cit. p. 7

theory is practiced in Waldorf schools, so reference to Waldorf teacher education, while implicit in his elaboration of the theory and critique of the practice, is either indirectly or only cursorily mentioned. However, with apparent prescience, Masters advises, in an impressive list of recommendations, that 'research should be carried out into the full implications of Steiner's indications regarding teacher training'[2]

4) works by those who uphold and who basically advocate Steiner's approach in a 'critical' fashion, but who have not emerged out of the Waldorf classroom and, by that definition, lack practical experience in Waldorf education. This category is represented by Gilbert Childs (1991, 1996) from England and Richard Blunt (1995) from South Africa. Both authors provide a good theoretical overview of Waldorf education with ample reference material for teachers, and of interest to the novice or research student. Their sections on the ideals of some progressive educationists and Steiner's educational ideas in relation to more recent educational thought are also relevant to the student of comparative education.

- With regard to teacher education, Childs has little to say except that in Appendix Two of his *Education and Beyond* (1996) a two paragraph outline is given of the BA (Hons) Degree in Waldorf (Steiner) Education at Plymouth University.
- On the other hand, Blunt, in *Waldorf Education: Theory and Practice* (1995) includes a general but very useful sub-section on 'Preparation and Training' of Waldorf teachers. He provides a carefully referenced survey of various comments made by Steiner but does not attempt to connect these comments to their practical expression in teacher training centres in, for example, South Africa or elsewhere.

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[2] See Brien Masters, ibid., Recommendations of steps that might be taken towards 'achieving Waldorf', Appendix Q, p. 359.
The author recalls a conversation with Brien Masters at a World Conference for Waldorf Teachers in Switzerland, in 1996, during which the subject of our various research interests was discussed.

5) The final category includes literature written by those who appear to be alienated by Steiner's work, and look at the Waldorf movement with unsympathetic or sceptical eyes. Their writing is often a rationalisation or justification of what appears to be their view that Waldorf pedagogy (and whatever else springs from Anthroposophy), is by definition sectarian and therefore should be read or viewed with suspicion. Representatives of this outlook include Geoffrey Ahern (1981) and some commentators in Europe and the USA who publish articles criticising or condemning Waldorf education on several web sites on the Internet, often with the intent to 'expose' Steiner's views as occult, unscientific, or doctrinaire. Their writings contribute nothing of significance to the topic of this thesis. Steiner's philosophy includes a metaphysics which has elements of the mystical. It is not necessary to accept every aspect of Steiner's thought in order to investigate and evaluate Waldorf teacher education.

2 Existing Research

It is evident from the above review of the literature that there is an obvious absence of material specifically focusing on the education and training of Waldorf teachers. However, there have been three pieces of research which have come to the notice of the author and have a direct bearing on the field of Waldorf teacher education. These have influenced the writer in his decision to gather some 'hard data' about the nature of Australian Waldorf teacher training and the views of Waldorf teachers about the working conditions in their chosen vocation/profession.

- The first, German report, is the Teacher Training Report for 1995/96, by the Advisory Committee on Teacher Training, commissioned by the *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen* (Association of Waldorf Schools in Germany). The report examines

the discrepancy between Waldorf teacher supply and demand in Germany and raises questions about the nature and effectiveness of teacher training courses in that country with regard to both course content and structure.

- The second is a survey, titled simply *Alumni/ae Questionnaire*, conducted by the Teacher Education Committee of the Association of Waldorf Schools in North America (AWSNA) and published in 1995. The views of almost five hundred graduates of Waldorf teacher training institutes in the US and Canada, were surveyed. A wide range of topics was covered, including motivation for becoming a Waldorf teacher, assessment of the quality of instruction received in teacher training, and what were called 'burning issues' being faced by Waldorf teachers. Some of the more pertinent results of the questionnaire are presented in Chapters 6 and 8 of the thesis and are compared with the responses of Australian teachers to similar questions and issues.
- The third piece of research, which was commissioned by the *Vrij Pedagogisch Centrum* (Rudolf Steiner Education Centre) in Driebergen, Netherlands, resulted in a report titled *Career prospects for primary school teachers at Rudolf Steiner school* (1996). The researchers gathered quantitative data via questionnaires and qualitative data through in-depth interviews. The research report presented some alarming data on the work expectations and stresses on Waldorf teachers in The Netherlands. Some of the results were corroborated by the experiences of the author and by anecdotal information about the experiences of Australian Waldorf teachers, and therefore it was thought worthwhile to make further investigations. Implications might be drawn for the role that teacher education institutions could play in preparing prospective teachers for what could lay ahead in their work.

These three pieces of research, though isolated from each other, covered separate, though interconnected, teaching-training related issues:

- statistical data on teacher trainee enrolments,
- characteristics of teacher training seminars,
- feedback by ex-trainees on their training,
- the challenges faced by Waldorf teachers 'in the field', and
- the career prospects of Waldorf teachers.

The research was conducted in countries in which Waldorf schools have existed for seventy years or more, and in which there are over ninety schools (in 1998, Germany had 172 schools, The Netherlands 96, USA 91)[3]. This meant that their respective Waldorf school associations had become well established and sufficiently organised to conduct and fund some research relevant to their constituents.

The situation in Australia is entirely different, as will become evident from the historical developments described in Chapter 5. The Waldorf school movement is relatively small, and the executive of the Association of Rudolf Steiner Schools has been able to oversee developments via the personal interactions at Association meetings and conferences. Consequently, up to now, there has been no need for commissioning any comprehensive formal research. Nevertheless, some Waldorf teachers have independently begun, often as a result of embarking on post-graduate studies, to research various facets of the Waldorf movement in Australia. For example a special project researching the foundation and development of Waldorf schools in Australia was completed in 1995 by the present writer.[4]

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[3] From the *World List of Rudolf Steiner (Waldorf) Schools and Teacher Training Centres*, published by the *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen* (Association of Steiner schools), Stuttgart, February 1998.

[4] A. B. Mazzone, *'Islands of Culture': Waldorf (Rudolf Steiner) Schools in Australia: Their origin and development*. Unpublished Master of Educational Studies Special Project, University of Adelaide, 1995

Chapter 1: Section 3

Materials and Methods

1. The framework for the study

A study of the implications for teacher education of Steiner's educational theory and its practice in Waldorf schools could range widely, covering at least three major topics: 1) Steiner's philosophy, 2) his own practice, and 3) subsequent practice in Waldorf schools. Constructing a framework for the potentially large and diverse range of material which could be contained in the thesis required some reference points from which to view the whole work. These reference points include:

- Steiner's own writings on the subject of teacher education. This is crucial, especially if a comparison is to be made between what Waldorf teacher education programmes should accomplish, and what they have been able to accomplish in reality. The structure would have to be built from the pillars of Steiner's general philosophy, including his vision of a healthy social future towards which children would be educated.
- The nature of Waldorf teacher education in other countries, in order to make comparisons between the developments there and what has developed and is developing in Australia.
- An evaluation of the nature of the training received by Waldorf teachers in Australia, especially by including the views of teachers on the gaps in their training, as revealed by their practical experience in schools. The identification of the gaps would already lay a basis for possibly more effective future training programmes.

- A survey of prevailing government policies regarding schooling and the values and emphases which these impose upon mainstream teacher training courses, especially if the feasibility of including Waldorf courses within them was to be investigated.

Viewed from the perspective of those reference points, it might be possible to discern what aspects of present-day practices in teacher training programmes were, or were not, in keeping with Steiner's original theory.

2. <u>How the study was carried out</u>

The various threads, which have been called 'reference points' above, ran parallel throughout the length of the study. Some of them had been in mind well before the study was even contemplated.

- Distilling the essential theory and writing it in a more accessible language (without undue in-house jargon) occupied much of the first year, but continued to the very end. The background reading of Steiner's philosophy and educational thought reaches back as far as 28 years ago in connection with the writers association with the Anthroposophical Society in Australia, and 21 years since the first initiatives to found a Waldorf school in South Australia. Many of Steiner's educational lectures were studied during the 12 years of teaching in that Waldorf school. However, the disciplined re-reading of some of these, from the perspective of the purposes of this thesis ~ that of trying to discern the implications for teacher training ~ revealed much in Steiner's work that had been overlooked in the past. In addition to Steiner's writings, searches for relevant articles were made in all English-language Waldorf educational journals, theses, and other relevant literature by Waldorf authors.
- Research into the nature of Waldorf teacher training courses around the world took several forms. I attended two international Waldorf teacher education conferences,

the first in 1996 in Zeist, Holland and the second in 1998 in Järna, Sweden.[1] These were attended by representatives from training seminars from over twenty countries and provided a good venue for conducting interviews, requesting and collecting brochures and prospectuses as well as hearing reports on developments in Waldorf teacher-training programmes in a number of countries. Further, these journeys provided the opportunity to visit teacher-training institutions in several countries in Europe and the USA. For example:

- At the *Hogeschool Helicon* (Teacher Training Seminar) in Zeist, Holland, I sat in on some classes and spoke to students and lecturers about their courses.
- At the University of Plymouth, England, I spent a morning with principal lecturer and a group of mature age students doing the BA (Hons) in Steiner Education. At this specially organised meeting we discussed various curriculum issues, as well as the challenges encountered by being simultaneously enrolled in Steiner and main-stream education courses.
- At Sunbridge College in Spring Valley, New York, I was able to interview five senior coordinators including a retiring director of the teacher-training course and his replacement.

- In all (though not on the same trip) I visited ten training centres in Europe three in the USA.[2] Included are visits and interviews with teacher trainers in Australia and perusal of their prospectus and accreditation documents. These visits and documents have provided an overview of courses in a world context.

[1] The second Symposium on [Steiner-Waldorf] Teacher Education, 14-17 March 1996, Zeist, Holland, and Fourth International [Steiner-Waldorf] Teacher Education Conference, 13-17 May 1998, Järna, Sweden.
[2] See Chapter 4, Section 4 for more specific references to these visits and interviews.

- The third point of reference, that of the training received by practising teachers in Australia, was built up in several ways. A broad perspective has been gained by my involvement in the Waldorf school movement as a teacher and administrator. In all I have visited 24 Waldorf schools, all at different stages of growth, and as a consultant I have worked in seven schools, in which I have met teachers with a wide range of knowledge about and experience in Waldorf education. In some cases the one-week in-service conference that I conducted was the only 'training' which some very new teachers had received. Attendance at several anthroposophical and Waldorf teachers' conferences has yielded over a dozen interviews with teachers (about their own training and their views on what a pre-service training should include). Finally, a teacher training questionnaire (Appendix 2) was designed and distributed to over 80 teachers around Australia. Its analysis yielded considerable data, which will be presented in Chapter Six.
- The final reference point relates to the nature of main-stream teacher training in universities. Here again personal experience, at Flinders and Adelaide University and two campuses of the University of South Australia, has been the source of my information. This experience has included being a post-graduate student, lecturer, tutor, and supervisor of students doing teaching practice (including the conversations with their supervising teachers in schools). Data for this perspective was derived from personal observations, discussions, perusal of prospectuses and a range of course outlines. Included in this part is correspondence and documents received from the research officer of the Teachers Registration Board of South Australia.

Chapter 2
Rudolf Steiner's Thought

Section 1
Biographical Sketch

1. Early Life, Schooling and Work

Rudolf Steiner was born, in relatively humble circumstances, on 27th February 1861 in Kraljevec, then on the border between Austria and Hungary, now in Croatia.. His father was a railway telegraphist and station master and his mother was a "devoted and loving housewife."[1] At an early age Steiner showed an ability for learning and a devotion to knowledge which led his parents to give him the best possible education within their means. In 1872 he was enrolled as a student in the *Realschule*. He was regarded as a "good scholar" and, when only fifteen, was asked to tutor other boys in various school subjects. In his autobiography Steiner noted that, 'this experience compelled me at an early age to concern myself with practical pedagogy. I learned the difficulties of the development of human minds through my pupils.' [2]

The money acquired from tutoring was sufficient to enable him to buy books in Latin and Greek, subjects which were not included in the curriculum of the *Realschule*, and so he managed to gain for himself what he was denied through not having gone to the *Gymnasium*. Steiner entered Vienna Technical University in 1879 where he pursued

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[1]Rudolf Steiner, *The Course of My Life*, Anthroposophic Press, NY, 1951, pp. 2-3.
Steiner's autobiography, *Mein Lebensgang*, initially appeared in serial form arriving at the year 1907 before Steiner died in 1925, when it was first published in book form. Another edition titled *The Story of My Life* was published by the Anthroposophical Publishing Co., London, 1928 is also used.
[2]ibid. *The Story of My Life* p 28

a scientific course.[3] He helped to maintain himself by tutoring in both scientific and classical subjects. He studied German literature from the time of Goethe, and Schiller's life and works under Karl Julius Schröer[4], an expert on Goethe. It was during this period that Steiner realised his life's mission which he felt was 'to reunite Science and Religion. To bring back God into Science and Nature into Religion. This to fertilise both Art and Life.'[5] Schröer not only introduced Steiner to Goethe's work but also influenced his thinking on education.

> In regard to education and instruction [Schröer] spoke often against the mere imparting of information and in favour of the evolution of the full and entire human being.[6]

Steiner's association with Schröer led the latter to recommend him to the German publisher Joseph Kürschner, who was preparing a complete edition of all Goethe's published and unpublished works in the *Deutsche Nationalliteratur*. Steiner, at twenty-one and the youngest of the band of commentators working on the edition, had the task of editing Goethe's scientific works.

In 1884, once more on the recommendation of Schröer, Steiner became a private tutor to the four children of the Specht family in Vienna, with whom he remained for six years. The youngest son, Otto, was ten years old and had hydrocephalus. The orthodox medicine of the time could hardly do anything for such a condition. Otto was considered physically and mentally abnormal, and it was doubted as to whether he was susceptible to education at all. When Steiner arrived Otto had hardly mastered the bare rudiments of the three Rs and, in his autobiography, Steiner commented that 'even slight mental

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[3] His official university studies were mathematics, chemistry, physics, zoology, botany, mineralogy and geology.
[4] ibid. p 39. Karl Julius Schröer (1825-1900) Professor in German literature at the Vienna Polytechnic.
[5]Galbreath, R.C. (1970) *Spiritual Science in an Age of Materialism: Rudolf Steiner and Occultism* Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, p.185. cited in Richard J.S. Blunt *Waldorf Education: Theory and Practice*, Novalis Press, Capetown, 1995, p.4
[6]Rudolf Steiner, *The Story of My Life,* p. 69

exertion brought on headaches, loss of vitality, pallor and disturbing mental symptoms.'[7]

> I had the satisfaction of seeing the boy in two years make up the deficiencies in his elementary school studies and pass the grammar school entrance examination. His health too had improved considerably…I felt justified in recommending his parents to send him to an ordinary school.
> I thank the good fortune that brought me this personal relationship. For through it I gained first-hand knowledge of what constitutes the essence of humanity, such as I do not believe I could have gained in so tangible a form in any other way.[8]

Self training in observation apparently began here, interestingly at the same time as Steiner was immersed in Goetheanism, with its phenomenological approach to scientific research. One of the key-stones of the theory of Waldorf education, which was to be expounded at such length in the years to come, could be encapsulated as: 'Observe the child, and from that, its needs will declare themselves.'[9]

On the basis of his outstanding work in Vienna, Schröer brought Steiner to the notice of the management committee of the Goethe-Schiller Institute at Weimar. In the autumn of 1890 Steiner was invited to work there as a collaborator, and took charge of editing Goethe's wide ranging but lesser-known scientific works. During the seven year period in which Steiner remained at the Institute he met many of Germany's leading intellectuals, including Hermann Grimm, Ernst Haeckel, Hermann Helmholtz and the historian Heinrich von Treitschke. For the best part of his years in Weimar Steiner became once more a tutor, this time to five children (four girls and a boy) of the Eunike family. Frau Anna Eunike, who 'was very anxious for my assistance in the difficult task of educating her children.'[10]

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[7] ibid p. 71-2
[8] ibid
[9] Otto Specht, from having begun life with a severe hydrocephalic handicap, graduated in medicine.
[10] Anna Eunike, the landlady (recently widowed) became Steiner's first wife.

2. Steiner and German Philosophy

In Weimar, and later in Berlin, he read widely in philosophy, history, psychology, and sociology, and was involved with a variety of philosophical, spiritual and cultural groups. The general tenor of philosophical thought in Germany in the last two decades of the 19th century was in opposition to the idealist tradition, which had achieved a dominant position at the beginning of the century through the works of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel.[11] The erosion of the idealist tradition, largely the result of the rapid development of natural science, and of natural scientific theories, raised pressing questions for German philosophy about the status of philosophy as systematic knowledge, and led to a neo-Kantian revival.[12]

It was in this period that Steiner wrote his earlier philosophical works in which he laid the foundations of his own spiritual scientific views, and in which he vigorously challenged the prevailing Kantian view of knowledge. Serious questions about the objective nature of historical and social knowledge generated a debate about the distinction between the *Geisteswissenschaften*, or cultural sciences, and *Naturwissenschaften*, or natural sciences. Rudolf Steiner clearly placed himself within the tradition of the *Geisteswissenschaften* and also found more to admire in the idealist tradition of early nineteenth-century German philosophy than in the epistemological limitations of the neo-Kantian revival.[13] Steiner was awarded his Ph.D. by the University of Rostock under Professor Heinrich von Stein with his dissertation: 'The fundamental problem of the theory of knowledge, with particular reference to Fichte's

[11]See Robert McDermott, *The Essential Steiner*, Harper, NY, 1986; Stewart Easton, *Man and the World in the Light of Anthroposophy*, Anthroposophic Press, Spring Valley, NY, 1975.
[12]Christopher Schaefer, 'Rudolf Steiner as a Social Thinker', in *ReVision*, Vol 15, No 2, Fall 1992, p 54
[13]See Steiner's, *A Theory of Knowledge Based on Goethe's World Conception*, Anthroposophic Press, Spring Valley, NY, 1958; and *The Riddles of Philosophy*, Anthroposophic Press, Spring Valley, NY, 1971.

teaching. Prolegomena to the reconciliation of the philosophical consciousness with itself.'[14] This 'reconciliation of the philosophical consciousnes with itself' was the very thing which Goethe had never attempted. For all that Goethe's work contained for portents of the future, Goethe was for Steiner an end to which, 'by reflecting on thinking,' by the 'reconciliation of the intellectual consciousness with itself,' he proposed to make a new beginning. [15] The gist of his thesis appeared in 1892 under the title: *Wahrheit und Wissenschaft* (Truth and Science: Prologue to a 'philosophy of freedom'). *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity,* also translated as the Philosophy of Freedom, was published in 1894. This work embodies, purely in the form of thought, essentially everything that was to be the content of the anthroposophy that Steiner developed later, and therefore has become the accepted philosophical basis on which his subsequent work rests.[16]

In the seven years or so that Steiner spent at the Goethe-Schiller Institute in Weimar, he published ninety-five titles, among them seven volumes of Goethe's scientific writings, a book on Nietzsche, works on Fichte and Haeckel as well as his dissertation, mentioned above.[17] This enormous productivity indicates that Steiner was a very disciplined worker and writer. It seems remarkable that, during these years, he also continued tutoring boys and girls, and learned, as he wrote, 'how different were the ways that the two sexes grow into life.'[18]

3. The Berlin Years and the Theosophical Society

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[14] In German *Die Grundfrage der Erkenntnistheorie mit besonderer Rücksicht aus Fichte's Wissenschaftslehere. Prolegomena zur Veständingung des philosophischen Bewussteins mit sich selbst.*
[15] Johannes Hemleben, op. cit. p. 49
[16]ibid pp. 61-64; Alan Howard in Foreword of Francis Edmunds *Rudolf Steiner's Gift to Education: The Waldorf Schools*, London, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1975; Stewart Easton, *Rudolf Steiner, Herald of a New Epoch*, Anthroposophic Press, Spring Valley, NY, 1980; also, Schaefer, op. cit. p 55
[17] ibid Hemleben, p. 60

In 1897 Steiner moved to Berlin where he lived a lifestyle that was radically different from those in the Vienna and Weimar periods, for Berlin contained the avant-garde of the Bohemians.[19] Steiner purchased and became joint editor of the *Magazin für Literatur* (Magazine for Literature), was active in the circles of the Free Academy and the Giordano Bruno Society, among others, and made associations with literary and dramatic circles. From 1899 to 1904 he gave lectures and courses to the Workers' Educational Institute in Berlin. It was also in this period that he began to find a responsive audience among the Theosophists. In 1900 Steiner was invited to address the Theosophical Society, beginning with lectures on Nietzsche and Goethe. This developed into a course of twenty-seven lectures subsequently published in a volume entitled *Mysticism at the Dawn of the Modern Age, and its Relation to Modern World Philosophy*. In 1901- 02 he gave the Theosophical Society a further twenty-five lectures which were published as *Christianity as Mystical Fact*.[20]

In his autobiography Steiner wrote that from an early age he was aware of a supersensible world as well as the ordinary material world familiar to all.

> I often thought to myself how difficult it had been for me throughout my childhood and youth to communicate with the external world through the senses…Indeed I may say that the world of the senses was a world of shadows and images. It passed before my mind in images, whereas my communion with the spiritual world had all the true semblance of reality.[21]

Soon realising that his unusual perceptions were not commonly shared he remained silent for the best part of thirty-four years, during which time, feeling himself a citizen of two worlds, he worked individually as a 'spiritual researcher' (*Geistesforscher*) with the aim of establishing a 'science of the spirit' (*Geisteswissenschaft*).

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[18] Rudolf Steiner. *The Story of My Life*, p. 135
[19]Hemleben, op. cit. pp69-76
[20]ibid. pp. 78-79
[21] Cited in Hemleben op. cit. p. 58

Because he could experience the material world as well as observe the spiritual world 'as reality', he felt duty-bound to seek for a bridge between the two through philosophy. He studied mathematics and natural science 'in order to place their findings upon a solid foundation of philosophy'[22] but because the philosophy he learned from others could not, in its thinking, be carried all the way to the perception of the spiritual world, Steiner decided that he must formulate his own theory of knowledge.[23]

It appears, from an external perspective, that until nearly his fortieth year Steiner studied and worked in a relatively conventional way, developing an epistemological foundation in his philosophical work. However, much to the surprise of his conventional colleagues, his career path diverged in a new and surprising direction as a 'scientist of the invisible.'[24] When the Theosophical Society opened its German branch, Steiner was asked to be its Secretary General.[25] He accepted this position but made it quite clear that he would retain his independence of thought and actions and not subscribe uncritically to theosophical ideas.

> I did not subscribe to any sectarian dogma; I remained someone who expressed what he believed himself to have the power to express about his own experiences of the spiritual world.[26]

Three major publications based on his 'spiritual research' became available during his theosophical period. The first was *Theosophy* [27]which he published in 1904. Then began a series of articles which were eventually completed and published in 1909 as *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds. How is it achieved?*[28] and in 1910 he published the

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[22] Gilbert Childs, *Steiner Education in Theory and Practice*, Floris Books, Edinburgh, 1991, p 11
[23], Steiner, *The Story of My Life*, op. cit. p 41
[24]Hemleben, op. cit. p.65, and see also A.P.Shepherd, *A Scientist of the Invisible; An Introduction to the Life and Work of Rudolf Steiner,* London, Sydney etc., Hodder and Stoughton, 1954.
[25] Steiner was the leader of the German Section of the Theosophical Society from 1902 to 1912.
[26]Hemleben, op. cit. p 79
[27]Steiner, *The Story of My Life*, op. cit. p 87
[28]ibid. p 92

third major work *An Outline of Occult Science*, which introduced a 'general cosmology' including a chapter on the development of the world and human beings. [29]

A first lecture on the education of children, from the perspective of spiritual science, was given in 1907 and published as a booklet titled *The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy,* [30] a work which was seminal to all his later thought on education. Twelve years later these ideas were taken up more fully in the lecture courses leading up to the founding of the first Waldorf school.

Steiner's training in Western philosophy and science, and his independent stance, particularly his conviction of the central position of Christ in human evolution, clearly demonstrated a different orientation from that of more orthodox Theosophy. During his active involvement with the Theosophical Society, Steiner's publications were considered by his readers to be expositions of theosophical thought (albeit with his particular slant) but with the later formation of the Anthroposophical Society, much of the language used to describe his research changed. There was less use of Sanscrit terminology and references to Indian mysticism. However, his previous theosophical works are still considered by anthroposophists as being 'anthroposophical' because they bear Steiner's unique stamp of Western spirituality.

4. The Founding of the Anthroposophical Society

The break with Theosophy came when Annie Besant, the leader of the Theosophical Society, and other leading theosophists, proclaimed the boy Jeddu Krishnamurti to be the reincarnation of Christ. Steiner considered this belief to be preposterous and between 1912 and 1913 the Anthroposophical Society was established. A majority of

[29]ibid. pp. 94-95
[30]Steiner, *The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy*, RSP, London, 1975

the German Branch theosophists followed him and joined this new and independent movement.[31]

The first attempt to build a headquarters for the Anthroposophical Society was made in Munich. However this building, which was intended to be called the 'Johannesbau', did not succeed in receiving approval from the Munich City Council planners. As a result another building called the Goetheanum, in recognition of Steiner's esteem for Goethe was begun in 1913 in Dornach, Switzerland. It was designed by Steiner, made almost entirely of wood, and was planned to be the centre for Anthroposophical Society activities, such as lectures, festivals, dramas and other artistic projects. The cost of seven million Swiss francs was met entirely by donations and loans from members.[32]

In 1914 Steiner published *The Riddles of Philosophy*, an encyclopaedic treatise on Philosophy placing Anthroposophy within its context.[33] In this year the First World War began and Steiner lived alternately in Dornach and Berlin, continuing his lecturing and writing and contributing to the work on the Goetheanum.[34] After the War there was a period of revolutionary unrest in various parts of Germany, and an intensive public search began for means of radical change. Steiner began lecturing widely on the principles necessary for the development of a spiritually healthy State. The Association for the Threefold Organisation of Society was founded in Stuttgart with the object of putting his social ideas into practice.[35] The fundamental ideas behind his Threefold

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[31]Hemleben op. cit. p. 80

[32]Hemleben op. cit. pp 107-09

[33]Richard J. S Blunt,. *Waldorf Education: Theory and Practice.A Background to the Educational Thought of Rudolf Steiner*, Novalis Press, Capetown, 1995. p. 9

[34]Hemleben, op. cit. p. 160. Steiner advised builders and artists, gave lectures to workers as well as himself sculpted a large thirty foot high piece called 'the representative of humanity' which may be seen in the present Goetheanum

[35]ibid. pp. 117-120..

Social Order were incorporated into the Waldorf schools and will be discussed in due course.

Steiner's involvement in school education began in 1919 when he was asked by Emil Molt[36] to found a school for the children of his factory workers. Steiner responded enthusiastically to the opportunity and in August began lecture courses to prepare the first teachers to start an educational programme based on Spiritual Science or Anthroposophy. His contribution to educational reform continued and between 1919 and 1924 gave fifteen courses of lectures for teachers and educators in Germany, Britain, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.[37]

5. Contributions to Renewal in Practical Life

Following the introductory courses for teachers in 1919, the details of which will be given in a later chapter,[38] Steiner's application of the teachings of Anthroposophy mushroomed into many areas of human interest.[39]

> While the roots of [Spiritual Science] are the insights it affords into the spiritual world, these are still only its roots. Its branches, leaves, blossom, and fruits are to be found growing in every field of human life and endeavour. [40]

- In 1920 he gave lecture courses in different locations in Switzerland (Dornach and Basel) and Germany (Stuttgart) on Education, Physics, Medicine, Philology, and on Thomas Aquinas.

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[36] Emil Molt (1876-1936) was the owner and Managing Director of the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory in Stuttgart, a member of the Anthroposophical Society, and actively involved with the Association for the Threefold Organisation of Society.

[37] Blunt, op. cit. p. 9; Hemleben op. cit. pp. 121-126; A. B. Mazzone, *'Islands of Culture' Waldorf (Rudolf Steiner) Schools in Australia: Their Origin and Development,* Unpublished Master of Educational Studies thesis, University of Adelaide, 1995.

[38] See Chapter 3 Section 2 for a discussion of the content of the first teacher training lecture course.

[39] See A.C.Harwood (ed.), *The Faithful Thinker: Centenary Essays on the Work and Thought of Rudolf Steiner. 1861-1925* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1961) and Rudi Lissau, *Rudolf Steiner : Life, Work, Inner Path and Social Initiatives,* Hawthorn Press, Stroud, UK, 1987, p. 111

[40] Hemleben, op. cit., p. 117

- In 1921 he spoke in Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland on Astronomy, Scientific experiment, Therapeutic Eurythmy, Theology, Medicine and Education.
- In 1922 there were courses on Political Economy and Education, and the Christian Community was founded to 'renew the religious life of the Christian church.'[41]
- During the Christmas period of 1922/23, as a result of arson, the first Goetheanum burnt to the ground. This was a devastating event since eight years of labour, much of it voluntarily contributed, had gone into it, and the building symbolised so much for the anthroposophical movement.[42]
- The year 1923 was one of renewal. Preparations were made for the founding of the General Anthroposophical Society, a world-wide Society with its centre in Dornach, culminating in The Christmas Conference of 1923.[43]

In connection with the foundation of the Anthroposophical Society, the School of Spiritual Science was opened in 1923. Centred in Dornach, Switzerland, it was to be, and became, an international research community whose common ground lies in the anthroposophical path of inner development. While this is a path of individual self-development, it encourages inter-disciplinary research capable of bringing new insights into contemporary cultural, social and economic issues and challenges. The *Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft* (the College of Spiritual Science) consists of ten Faculties or Sections.[44] Article 9 of the Principles of the Anthroposophical Society lays down the linking together of the Anthroposophical Society and the *Hochschule*.

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[41]ibid. p. 161, p. 135. See also Alfred Heidenreich, *Growing Point: The Story of the Foundation of the Movement for Religious Renewal - The Christian Community*, Christian Community Press, London, 1965
[42]ibid. pp. 140-142; Blunt, op. cit. p10
[43]ibid, pp 144-148
[44] The sections of the School of Spiritual Science includes the Pedagogical Section.

> The purpose of the Anthroposophical Society is to promote spiritual research. The purpose of the free *Hochschule* for Spiritual Science is to conduct that research. The Anthroposophical Society shall reject dogmatism in any field whatsoever.[45]

Institutions serving the various fields (such as medicine, education, agriculture, social science, the arts, etc) are autonomous, and yet a common understanding of the nature of the human being and of the relation between this being, the earth and the cosmos forms an ideal link among them.

In 1924, despite an extremely painful illness,[46] Steiner maintained, even increased, his activities. In the first nine months before becoming bedridden he presided over the planning and early building of the second Goetheanum, a huge structure in moulded concrete, and lectured throughout Europe on Education, Medicine, Tone and Speech Eurythmy, Speech and Drama, Theology and Karma, as well as regular lectures for the workers at the Goetheanum.[47] He died on 30 March 1925 and was active with his reading and writing to the end.

6. Steiner's Legacy

In the course of the seventy years since his death, many of Steiner's ideas have been taken up. Professional training institutions and practical working centres exist in education, Bio-dynamic agriculture, anthroposophically orientated medicine, curative education and social therapy, architecture, ethical investment and community banking, Goethean Science institutes, churches of the Christian Community, artistic training in eurythmy, speech and drama, painting and sculpture. [48]

This biographical sketch has attempted to illustrate the major developments in Rudolf Steiner's life and some of the initiatives which he inspired. The books and

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[45] Principles of the Anthroposophical Society, Publication of the General Anthroposophical Society, Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland, p. 4, undated

[46]Blunt, op. cit. p 10 citing Galbreath op. cit.p 216

[47]Hemleben, op. cit. p162.

lectures referred to represent a small fraction of his work. Hemleben lists fourty one books and cites a survey[49] which identifies about 6,000 of Steiner's lectures and addresses as well as numerous articles.[50] Steiner's publications, in the authoritative *Gesamtausgabe* (Collected Works) edition in German, amounts to 354 volumes. By 1984 approximately 200 volumes had been translated into English.[51] Today many of Steiner's works are to be found translated in most European languages, Russian and Eastern bloc countries and most recently in Japanese and Chinese.

More than any other endeavour arising from the work of Rudolf Steiner, the Waldorf or Rudolf Steiner school movement is the most widely known.[52] A more detailed description of Steiner's educational philosophy, and more specifically its implication for teacher education, will be given in subsequent sections and chapters.

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[48]See Harwood *The Faithful Thinker*, op. cit., Lissau, op.cit.
[49]Hemleben, op. cit. p 170
[50]ibid. Bibliography of books and writings. pp 166-172
[51] McDermott,.op. cit. p. 359
[52]Mazzone, op. cit. pp. 16-18.

Chapter 2: Section 2

Steiner's Educational Philosophy

1. Anthroposophy and Philosophy

Waldorf Education has its theoretical basis in Anthroposophy and it is not surprising that Steiner insisted that the educational philosophy should not be separated from his *Geisteswissenschaft* or Spiritual Science.[1] The breadth of ideas contained in the range of topics in this section, on Steiner's educational philosophy, will demonstrate the necessity, for both Waldorf teacher educators and school teachers, to continue to study and deepen their understanding of the content of Spiritual Science.

Central to Steiner's work was a specific understanding of the nature of human beings and their relationship to the world. The name which Steiner adopted for his world view is Anthroposophy ~ from the Greek *anthropos* = human, and *sophia* = wisdom ~ or wisdom of Man. The term 'spiritual science' (*Geisteswissenschaft*) is used interchangeably with Anthroposophy. The central core of anthroposophy was developed over the course of Steiner's life, but his ideas originally appeared in a series of publications in the first decade of this century.

Steiner's general philosophical works fall into two main categories. The first contains those works which are of a more orthodox philosophical character, such as the three publications; *Truth and Science* (1891)[2], *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*

[1]Rudolf Steiner (from lecture 1921) "The Science of the Spirit, Education and Practical Life" in Paul M. Allen (Ed) *Education as an Art*, RSP, NY, 1970, p. 68
[2]Rudolf Steiner, *Truth and Science*, Mercury Press, Spring Valley, NY, 1993

(1894)[3], and *The Riddles of Philosophy* (1914)[4]. The second category includes his occult thought, and generally comes after he left the fold of orthodox philosophy at the close of the 19th century. Basic texts in this genre include *Christianity as Mystical Fact and the Mysteries of Antiquity* (1902)[5], *Theosophy* (1904)[6], *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds. How is it achieved?* (1904-1909)[7], and *Occult Science- an Outline* (1910)[8].

In his philosophical works and scientific writings, Steiner advanced a comprehensive critique of reductionist science.[9] He believed that natural Science only concerned itself with the physical world and ignored the soul and spirit, so that in effect it was dealing with a fraction of reality.[10] Anthroposophy placed the human being (Gk; *anthropos*) at the centre of knowledge.

> What takes place in man is not a matter of indifference to the rest of nature, but rather the rest of nature reaches into man, and what takes place in man is simultaneously a cosmic process; so that the human soul is a stage upon which not merely a human process, but a cosmic process is enacted. [11]

Steiner believed that this view of knowledge contrasted sharply with the philosophy of his time, which was derived from Anglo-American thought and in which 'man is reduced to being a mere spectator of the world.'[12] Steiner was awarded a PhD in the philosophy of science and always acknowledged his respect for the principles of

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[3]Rudolf Steiner, *The Philosophy of Freedom,* RSP, London, 1964, (Also translated as The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity)
[4]Rudolf Steiner, *The Riddles of Philosophy*, Anthroposophic Press, Spring Valley, NY, 1973
[5]Rudolf Steiner, *Christianity as Mystical Fact and the Mysteries of Antiquity.* RSP London, 1972
[6]Rudolf Steiner, *Theosophy*, Fourth Edition, RSP, London, 1973
[7]Rudolf Steiner, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds. How is it achieved?* RSP, London, 1969
[8]Rudolf Steiner, *Occult Science - an Outline*, RSP, London, 1963
[9]Rudolf Steiner, "Education and the Science of the Spirit" in Paul M. Allen (Ed.) *Education as an Art*, RSP, NY, 1970, p 37. See also Rudolf Steiner, *Boundaries of Natural Science*, NY 1983.
[10]Rudolf Steiner, *Waldorf Education for Adolescence*, Kolisko Archive, 1980, p.94
[11]Rudolf Steiner, *Study of Man*, RSP, London, 1966, pp 54-55
[12]ibid, p. 54; Blunt, op. cit. p. 14

scientific methodology. He claimed to have meticulously applied the principles of natural scientific research in his spiritual investigations. In the biographical sketch Steiner's early experiences as a teacher is described, however much of what he described in his later work, such as in farming, medicine, architecture, as well as education, could hardly have arisen out of personal or professional experience. Therefore at some point the reader of his works is confronted with the fact that Steiner claimed that many of his ideas were rooted in his metaphysical experiences, and it is evident that he was acclaimed by many of his listeners, followers and colleagues as one who could draw reliably on such a source.[13] Steiner claimed that:

> My knowledge of the spiritual - of this I am fully conscious - springs from my own spiritual vision. At every stage - both in the details and in synthesis and broad view - I have subjected myself to stringent tests, making sure that wide awake control accompanies each further step in spiritual vision and research.[14]

Not being content to have his spiritual research accepted on authority, Steiner related his later occult writings to his early philosophical works. In this way the occult ideas became accessible to reason and therefore become something more than a body of purely esoteric teachings. In the *Preface* to the 1918 revised edition of his *Philosophy of Freedom*, Steiner wrote that 'if anyone should be astonished at not finding in this book any reference to that region of the world of spiritual experience described in my later writings, I would ask [them] to bear in mind that it was not my purpose at that time to set down the results of spiritual research, but first to lay a foundation on which such results can rest.'[15]

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[13] Brien Masters 1997, *An Appraisal of Steinerian Theory and Waldorf Praxis,* op. cit. p. 56
[14] Rudolf Steiner *Occult Science*, op. cit. p. xiii
[15] Rudolf Steiner, *The Philosophy of Freedom* [1894] 1918; trans. and intro. Michael Wilson, AP, Spring Valley NY, 1964, p. xxiv

This linking of philosophy also helped to bridge the gap between orthodox educational thought and his own teachings on education, which are largely based on a spiritual scientific analysis of the human being and the world. For example, in *The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy* (1907)[16] in which he gives germinal indications for education, Steiner clearly bridges occult concepts and practical methodology. A further example can be found in the way that *The Philosophy of Freedom*, published 1894, contains the philosophical justification for the spiritual investigations on which is founded the contents of the *Study of Man* which were educational lectures delivered in 1919.[17] In these, and later pedagogical lectures, Steiner delivered information and practical suggestions for classroom management, curriculum delivery, child study as well as self-development, demonstrating an extraordinary capacity for practical esotericism: bringing together ideas derived by clairvoyant perception with the practical needs of classroom teaching.

2. <u>Steiner's views on the educational milieu of his time</u>

It is an enigma to the present writer and others[18], why Steiner's educational thought and work was not mentioned by his contemporaries. Likewise why, despite his wide ranging knowledge, Steiner did not refer directly to all the educational trends of his day. He did refer in fact, sometimes in depth others only in passing, sometimes aphoristically, and others very pointedly, to various educators or educational methods. The question ~ of why education under the Bolshevist regime but not to Reddie, to Comenius but not Piaget, to McMillan and Froebel but not Montessori or Dewey , to Pestalozzi but not Buber, to mention a few ~ cannot be pursued here. However, as for mainstream

[16]Rudolf Steiner *The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy*, RSP London, 1975
[17]A. C Harwood,. in Foreword of Steiner's *Study of Man*, RSP, London, 1966, p.5
[18] Brien Masters 1997, op. cit. p. 13. I am deeply indebted to Masters' articulate expression of this shared enigma, and have drawn extensively from his work.

education, Steiner attempted to answer the failings which he did identify, especially in Central Europe of his time.

He insisted that in order to do justice to the task of education one must go beyond the traditional emphasis on intellectual development, and in Waldorf education this concern was to be addressed, saying 'we shall do justice to our task only if we do not look upon it as merely an intellectual and emotional undertaking, but as a truly moral and spiritual one.'[19] He avoided condemning efforts which were being made to improve education, however and saw his contribution as deepening rather than opposing, such developments.

> Just because the science of spirit values modern science it has every reason to advise the excellent things that have been introduced into the world by the great educators and educational movements of the 19th and early 20th century. It does not seek to oppose any of this, but takes its own stand on the basis of modern educational thinking by deepening and broadening what has been done, by making use of what can be studied and discovered by Anthroposophy.[20]

Steiner believed that what prevented the education of his time from finding the kind of depth which Anthroposophy could offer was that it was trapped in intellectualism. He was highly critical of what he believed were the outcomes of a materialistic age which placed a disproportionately high value on intellectual development. Steiner warned that too great an emphasis on intellectual thinking could not possibly lead to a complete picture of reality.

For example, through the intellect one may, at one time, reasonably argue a case and reach a logical conclusion, and at another time prove the opposite position. Steiner argued that though 'the elaboration of concepts affords us a means of effective and

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[19]From Steiner's introductory remarks opening the 'Study of Man' conference, 19 August, 1919. cited in Henry Barnes et. al. (eds) *Towards the Deepening of Waldorf Education: Excerpts from the Works of Rudolf Steiner; Essays and Documents*. Published by the Pedagogical Section of the School of Spiritual Science, Goetheanum, Dornach. 1991, p. 50

[20]Rudolf Steiner, (From lecture 1921) "The Science of Spirit. Education and the Practical Life" in *Education as an Art*, edited by Paul M. Allen. Rudolf Steiner Publications, N.Y., 1970. pp.20-21

independent self-education, it can only do so because we are never disturbed, when we freely elaborate concepts, by the interference of reality.'[21] In order that reality may reveal itself, a thinking must arise which

- has become possessed of *wonder,*
- has learned *reverent devotion to the world of reality*,
- come to *know itself to be in wisdom-filled harmony with the phenomena of the world*, and finally having with-held its judgement,
- has developed a mood of *surrender* in which the reality may reveal itself to one's receptive awareness.

Steiner expected that to successfully apply this approach to research, a certain maturity of thought would have had to be acquired whereby the truth flowed to such researchers from the things of the world, coming towards them as a revelation and filling their whole being. [22] It was this disciplined approach that allowed Steiner to achieve such outstanding results in his education of Otto Specht in Weimar (see section one).

This approach, which Steiner largely adopted from Goethe, is clearly antithetical to making rapid judgements or producing instant conclusions. Rather, it demands a degree of self-knowledge and self-discipline, the exercise of which is not commonly required by modern research methods. This approach was later called *Goetheanism*[23] or *Goethean phenomenology* and became the basic methodology for approaching the teaching of science in Waldorf schools. The four steps 'in arriving at reality' are more or less consistent with the developmental stages of thinking and Steiner believed that they need not conflict with the scientific method. On the contrary, they develop greater

[21]Rudolf Steiner,(From lectures 1912) *The World of the Senses and the World of the Spirit*, Steiner Book Centre Inc., North Vancouver, Canada, 1979, p. 21
[22]ibid. p. 24
[23] Wolfgang von Goethe has been referred to as the Shakespeare of German literature. Steiner coined the term *Goetheanism* in 1884, in appreciation of the direction in which Goethe had taken scientific empiricism, regarding him as being on par with a Newton or a Galileo. (in Masters, op. cit. p. 150)

openness to the perception of reality and avoid having to adopt the mind-set of established ways of thought which may blinker one's vision of the actual phenomena.

Steiner further argued that, as a result of intellectual and materialistic thinking, human beings had lost their understanding of their own souls, that they did not know what took place within them when they were thinking, feeling and willing,[24] and when people spoke of developing individuality their words were empty because they did not know what individuality was.[25] He also maintained that people had lost their conception of the developmental unity of life, and consequently children were educated for short-term goals and not in ways to prepare them for the unfolding of the whole of life. [26]

Such a scathing critique of the educational methods of his time required a constructive response and a practical alternative. Steiner claimed that a pedagogy based on Anthroposophy could offer a renewed commitment to human values in education, and argued that intellectualism, dilettantism, and political manipulation in education had to be done away with if education was to develop strong human values with right regard to the spiritual, social and economic life.

[24]Rudolf Steiner, (lectures 1924): *The Kingdom of Childhood*. RSP, London, 1974. p 14.
[25]Rudolf Steiner (lectures 1919); *Education as a Social Problem*, Anthroposophic Press, NY, 1969, p 187
[26]Rudolf Steiner (lectures 1922): *The Younger Generation. Educational and Spiritual Impulses for Life in the Twentieth Century,* Anthroposophic Press, NY, 1967, p. 147. Also, see Section 4 in this chapter on the consequences of educational policy of economic rationalist theory.

Chapter 2: Section 3

Key Ideas Underpinning Steiner's Educational Thought

1. Introduction

Steiner's educational ideas and methods rest on a complex analysis of the human being which amounts to a spiritual anthropology. Steiner uses terms which may be foreign to readers who are unfamiliar with his writings, and which are peculiar to his own *Weltanschauung*. These terms are rarely identical to their use elsewhere. For example, the term 'soul' is used in a different sense from that of orthodox Christian teachings. Similarly his use of the term 'ego' is different from Freud's and the terms 'etheric' and 'astral' are not necessarily the same as those used in theosophical writings. An introduction to these concepts is therefore necessary and will be given below. Steiner lived at a time when the overarching explanations of Modernism reigned supreme in the West. He drew his essential educational thought directly from his concept of what constitutes 'Man'. Critiques of Steiner's position on this point, whether arising from Foucaultian notions on the 'death of Man' or Post-structuralist theory on the construction of reality, about which Steiner would probably agree, will not be considered here.[1]

Steiner's ideas about the nature of the human being and the world are comprehensively described in his basic books, cited earlier. For example, *Occult Science* gives a description of the evolution of the kingdoms of nature, the sequence of historical epochs, and the relation of the human being to the spiritual hierarchies. The

[1] Steiner was familiar with Nietzsche and his thought on constructivism. See Douglas Sloan, 'Imagination, Education, and Our Postmodern Possibilities' in *ReVision*, Vol. 15, No. 2, Fall 1992, pp. 42-53; David Elkind, 'Waldorf Education in the Postmodern World', *Renewal: A Journal for Waldorf Education*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1997, pp. 5-9, Association of Waldorf Schools of North America.

later pedagogical lectures are built on these ideas. The book *Theosophy* gives a full account of the threefold, sevenfold and ninefold nature of the human being. This increasingly subtle differentiation influences educational theory and practice directly, and the Waldorf educator should be well acquainted with it. A basic outline of what constitutes necessary and relevant knowledge for an 'anthroposophically well educated' Waldorf teacher will be included in this section.

2. Epistemology and the Philosophy of Freedom

It was Rudolf Steiner's view that many philosophical errors had arisen from the fact that recent philosophers had been too ready to enquire what we can or cannot know, without first enquiring what we mean by 'knowing'. This was an omission which he sought to rectify, and therefore his own philosophy is primarily an epistemology, a theory of knowledge.[2]

In his early work, *Philosophy of Freedom: The Basis of a Modern World Conception* (published in 1894, revised in 1918), Steiner pointed out the obvious and overlooked fact that setting principled limits to what is knowable has a significant consequence: It sets principled limits to human freedom. His epistemology challenges human beings to see that accepting mere belief where knowledge is possible, at least in principle, means surrendering one's power of agency in favour of obedience to authority. By insisting on the connection between cognition and freedom, Steiner connected epistemology on the one hand with politics and ethics on the other.[3]

The Philosophy of Freedom is directed at two questions: first, whether we can

[2] Owen Barfield, "Rudolf Steiner's Concept of Mind", in A.C. Harwoods (Ed), *The Faithful Thinker*: *Centenary Essays on the Work and Thought of Rudolf Steiner 1961-1925*, Hodder and Stoughton, London 1961, p. 13

[3] Gertrude Reif Hughes, "Rudolf Steiner's Activist Epistemology and Its Relation to Feminist Thought in North America",in *ReVision*, 1991, Vol. 14, No. 1, p. 43

find a starting point for epistemology prior to any decisions about what can or cannot be known, that point being itself not doubtable. The existence of such a starting point would mean, in principle, that certainty is possible. Second, it addresses whether human beings have free will ~ again, in principle ~ or are in some essential way bound to a will which controls them but sometimes gives the illusion of freedom. Steiner explained that in his *Philosophy of Freedom* '[a]n attempt is made to prove that there *is* a view of the nature of man's being which can support the rest of knowledge; and further, that this view completely justifies the idea of free will, provided only that we have first discovered that region of the soul in which free will can unfold itself.'[4]

It is clear that both an active engagement, and some effort, with these issues will be involved, and Steiner specified what sort of readers he means to address. Notably, those for whom the question of necessity and freedom arises as a serious concern. It is assumed by the writer that Waldorf teachers would number significantly among them. To these he provides an epistemology, a work about cognition that is at the same time an ethics, a work about freedom and thus about moral decision. His work shows that questions of cognitional certainty are also questions about who could set principled limits to knowledge. Who but a human knower, argues Steiner, could know the supposed limits to human knowledge, and what activity besides human knowing could identify them as such?[5]

To return to the question of the starting point about what can be known which is itself not doubtable, Steiner argued that *before anything else can be understood, thinking must be understood.*[6] We cannot start from something on which cognitive

[4] Rudolf Steiner, *The Philosophy of Freedom* [1894] 1918; trans. and intro. Michael Wilson, RSP, London, 1970, p. xxiii
[5] Hughes, op. cit. p. 44
[6] Rudolf Steiner, *The Philosophy of Freedom*, op. cit. p. 35

activity has already been expended, therefore we cannot start from the 'ego', or 'consciousness', or 'the mind', nor can we start from assumptions about the part played by the brain and the nerves or sense organs in the process of knowledge, because these concepts have already been thought, and therefore we are clearly not starting from zero.[7] Only if we start from *thinking* itself, no such objection can be made, for thinking is the very first possible move we can make in the direction from ignorance towards knowledge. We cannot think about anything at all without thinking.[8] '[O]nly with the help of thinking' wrote Steiner, 'am I able to determine myself as subject and contrast myself with objects. Therefore thinking must never be regarded as a merely subjective activity. Thinking lies *beyond* subject and object.' [9]

> It produces these two concepts just as it produces all others. When, therefore, I, as thinking subject, refer a concept to an object, we must not regard this reference as something purely subjective. It is not the subject, but thinking, which makes the reference. The subject does not think because it is a subject, rather it conceives itself to be a subject because it can think. The activity performed by man as a thinking being is thus not merely subjective. Rather it is neither subjective nor objective; it transcends both these concepts. I ought never to say that I, as an individual subject, think, but rather that I as subject, exist myself by the grace of thinking. Thinking is thus an element that leads me beyond myself and relates me to objects. At the same time it separates me from them, inasmuch as it sets me, as subject, over against them.
>
> It is thus this which constitutes the double nature of man. He thinks, and thereby embraces both himself and the rest of the world. But at the same time it is by means of thinking that he determines himself as an *individual* confronting the *things*.[10]

Thinking is not only the starting point for gaining certainty, it is also the site where freedom is possible. All too often people are found searching for freedom in the realm of the human will, or even in their actions. However, if they do not find it, they tend to deny that such a thing exists. If they do believe that it can be found there, they risk

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[7] Steiner acknowledges Descartes on this point: 'The feeling that he had found such a firm point led the father of modern philosophy, Descartes, to base the whole of human knowledge on the principle: *I think, therefore I am.* ibid pp. 29-30,

[8] Barfield, op. cit. p. 13

[9] Rudolf Steiner, *The Philosophy of Freedom*, op. cit. p. 42-43

[10] ibid

confusing it with arbitrary choice. Steiner insisted that freedom is to be found in the realm of thinking.

> Freedom lives in human thinking. The will itself is not directly free; what is free is the thought that energises will. That is why I had to lay such stress on freedom as an attribute of thought when I discussed the moral nature of the will in my *Philosophy of Freedom.*[11]

To answer the question of why we can be certain about thinking (and why freedom is possible there), we must realise that the problem of knowledge is always how to relate the knower to the known. It seems that there is one point where 'self' and 'world' coalesce, one point where 'the object of observation [thinking] is qualitatively identical with the activity directed upon it [thinking]'.[12] This is the exceptional situation that exists when we observe our own thinking: We observe our own thinking *by means of* our thinking, and so we 'add nothing to our thinking that is foreign to it, and therefore have no need to justify any such addition'. Steiner thereby identifies thinking as an exception to everything else in our ordinary environment and activities that human beings can observe and ponder. Thinking said Steiner 'is the unobserved element in our ordinary mental and spiritual life [life of thought]'[13].

But when and how can we observe our thinking? Can we ever really catch it before it becomes the 'already thought'? It is indeed impossible to observe our thinking with ordinary consciousness. At first, Steiner concedes as much. 'Productive activity and the simultaneous contemplation of it'[14] are impossible. But eventually he makes an exception of thinking. He holds that thinking is essentially intuitive, by which he means not instinctual or dimly felt but knowable without mediation. Steiner then makes a crucial pronouncement, 'only through an intuition can the essence of thinking be

[11] Rudolf Steiner, *The Course of My Life*, cited in Otto Palmer, *Rudolf Steiner on his book* The Philosophy of Freedom, AP, Spring Valley NY, 1975, p. 28
[12] Rudolf Steiner, *The Philosophy of Freedom*, op. cit. p. 31
[13] ibid, p. 26
[14] ibid, p. 27

grasped', and he characterises intuition as 'the conscious experience - in pure spirit - of a purely spiritual content.'[15] In short, intuition is radically self-reflexive and so is the activity of observing thinking. Only because thinking *is* intuitive can it be intuited. This intuiting of the intuitive is an activity independent of physicality. It occurs in 'pure spirit', yet one need not be a mystic or an initiate to have this experience 'in pure spirit'.[16]

Before closing this section, a brief consideration of the implications of Steiner's epistemology for the free individual will be given. His epistemology offers a way to see individualism as being not in conflict with freedom, not even as a means to freedom, but as the expression of freedom. In his analysis of the idea of freedom he made some radical statements (for the period in which he was living) about what he called 'ethical individualism'. In chapter nine of *The Philosophy of Freedom* Steiner defined ethical individualism as an epistemological as well as an ethical point of view. He based it on the idea that individuality expresses itself in conduct (behaviour) that is motivated by a particular person's intuitions as to what he or she should do in any particular case. Ethical individualism requires individual activity, just as observing one's thinking does. In fact it is the same individual activity, namely intuitive activity. Just as intuiting the intuitive character of thinking eludes our ordinary thinking and requires enhanced activity, so it is with the moral intuiting of conduct that befits ethical individualism.[17]

Steiner specifically and emphatically excluded obedience from his description of conduct based in ethical individualism. Accordingly, he would claim it a moral advance when a person no longer simply accepts the commands of an outer or inner authority as the motive of action, but tries to understand why a particular maxim of behaviour should

[15] ibid, p. 122
[16] Hughes, op. cit. p. 47
[17] ibid, p. 48

act as the motive in a person. Instead of the automatism of obedience Steiner went on to say that, only love for the action itself could motivate a free deed.[18]

> Only when I follow my love for my objective is it I myself who act. I act, at this level of morality not because I acknowledge a lord over me, or an external authority, or a so-called inner voice:….I have found in myself the ground for my action, namely my love of the action….Again, I do not ask myself, 'How would another act in my position?' - but I act as I, this particular individuality, find I have occasion to do. No general usage, no common custom, no maxim applying to all….no moral standard is my immediate guide, but my love for the deed. I feel….neither the compulsion of nature which guides me by my instincts, nor the compulsion of….moral commandments…[19]

Of course, students of Steiner's epistemology, Waldorf teachers and teacher trainees included, constantly and vigorously debate (or should debate) the concepts of free deed, love for the deed, moral intuition, and all the other features of ethical individualism. In grappling with such thoughts as the following, teacher trainees, and other students, clarify their own ideas and values: 'Man is free in so far as he is able to obey himself in every moment of his life', and 'Freedom of action is conceivable only from the standpoint of ethical individualism', and 'To *live* in love towards our actions, and to *let live* in the understanding of the other person's will, is the fundamental maxim of *free men*'[20].

Space does not permit a more comprehensive treatment of Steiner's epistemology. His many works explore the thoughts on the compatibility of individualism and socially responsible behaviour, a treatment of monism and dualism, generic thinking, and sexism to name but some. In summary, Steiner intended to demonstrate that human beings have a unique capacity that is largely unexercised. This capacity is freedom, and it takes the form of cognition (or knowing) performed by a process of uniting concepts with perceptions in an experienced perceiving. That process is called thinking.

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[18] ibid, p. 49
[19] Rudolf Steiner, *The Philosophy of Freedom*, op. cit. p.136

When we manage to observe thinking in progress we are intuiting our own individuality. Steiner's ethical epistemology argued that cognition, freedom, and individuality are three aspects of one reality. It is a spiritual reality, not a physical one, so it requires spiritual activity to cognise it. (For Steiner's use of the word 'spirit', see below). When that activity is practised the practitioner's freedom becomes more and more available, especially as its reality and its integrity with one's own being become clearer and clearer.[21]

3. The Threefold Nature of the Human Being

> In education we must comprehend man as a whole; and man in his totality is body, soul and spirit. We must be able to deal with the spirit if we would educate.[22]
>
> Our one and only help as teachers is that we learn to observe human beings: to observe the bodies of the children, the souls of the children and the spirits of the children.[23]

In a classroom of children around the world, teachers may observe physical bodies of boys and girls which express a wide variety of body type and ethnic or racial characteristics. These characteristics largely have their origin in the genetic inheritance of each child. Waldorf teachers are required to also become familiar with the idea and knowledgeable about the 'fact' that indwelling those young growing bodies is a developing Soul[24], a large part of which is shaped by their familial, social and cultural environment. However, in addition to the influences of nature and nurture, Anthroposophy proposes the presence of a third member which defines a child's identity. This is a Spirit which is considered to have lived many lives before, and probably bears a wealth of *a priori* knowledge and wisdom.

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[20] ibid, pp. 138-9
[21] Hughes, op. cit. pp. 50-51
[22] Rudolf Steiner, *The Spiritual Ground of Education*, (Oxford, 16th August 1922) p. 47
[23] Rudolf Steiner, *Human Values in Education*, (Arnhem, 18th July, 1924), p. 47
[24] The terms 'psyche' or 'mind' are more widely used for referring to this aspect of the human being. Steiner uses the word soul to mean all that people carry within themselves as their own private world, such as their thoughts, feelings and intentions, which are inaccessible to bodily senses.

Thus body, soul and spirit comprise the basic trinity of the human being which Steiner introduces in the first chapter of *Theosophy*[25] in which he describes the three sides of human nature as follows:

- Through our body's senses we perceive the world about us, thereby revealing our environment. The objects revealed to us by our senses are ordinarily accepted as facts.
- Through our soul we develop personal impressions of the world (which may not necessarily represent an objective reality) and with these impressions the world takes on a meaning for us. Pleasure and displeasure, desire and aversion, and other emotions in relation to the world are experienced in the soul.
- Through our spirit knowledge is recognised as a goal towards which we must strive and therefore seek to gain knowledge about the world. It is through the spirit that each individual experiences the world as an objective 'divine being.'[26]

In what way is this picture of the threefold human being relevant to a teacher? On which aspect or 'part' of the child does the teacher direct his or her attention in the educational process? In very simplistic terms, Steiner's response to these questions might be that the process of educating threefold human beings involves the recapitulation of their past (body), establishing a relationship to the present (soul), and developing a receptivity to their future (spirit). In this context the spirit of the individual is not considered to be the direct focus of education because the child's spirit must be left free to direct its own destiny. That is not to say that the spiritual nature is not influenced by education. Indeed

[25]Rudolf Steiner, *Theosophy*, op. cit. chap. 1, pp. 21-62
[26]ibid. pp. 24-25
Steiner's theory of human nature, as comprising of body, soul and spirit, is an affirmation of the original conception held by the Christian Church until this threefold conception was condemned as heresy by the Eighth Ecumenical Council held at Constantinople in 869 AD. See A.P. Shepherd, 'The Battle for the Spirit: The Council of Constantinople, 869 A.D.', *The Golden Blade* (1963), pp. 22-36

gaining knowledge about one's own spirit may be completely ignored by inappropriate or inadequate teaching.

For example, when a young child asks 'Where did I come from?' he or she may get a response derived from one or two discourses. The first is the 'heavenly' origin of the child's soul or spirit, such as in the blunt: 'You came from God', or the round-about 'The stork brought you'. The second is the earthly origin, such as the simple: 'You came from us' or 'we made you', upon which the sperm and egg explanation is given (varying from imaginative 'birds and bees' stories to direct physiological data regarding the process of procreation). The former narrative derives from the idea (concept-ion) that the child's spirit is welcomed from the spiritual world by the parents and borne to them (possibly by a guardian angel). The latter refers to the conception of the body. Both narratives have a reality which children understand and require because as human beings, Steiner argues, we comprise both spirit and matter and the denial or omission of one aspect leaves the child dissatisfied. The child's body and the child's 'I' (or Self) have different origins and eventually different destinations but the important reality for the child is that they come together and make up its identity.

Of the three aspects of the human being (body, soul and spirit), the physical body is inherited, and as such is the most fixed and unchangeable. The body, as a creation of the parents (the egg and sperm narrative), bears both the talents and limitations carried from the past through its genetic inheritance. Steiner's view, as well as many Eastern perspectives such as in Buddhism and Hinduism, is that the human spirit has a continuity through many lifetimes[27] whereas the body exists only for the present lifetime. Therefore in a child's education he or she may, at best, learn to

[27] Reincarnation is a central feature of Steiner's world view and will be explored in the section dealing with Reincarnation and Karma.

understand, care for and appreciate the body as a miracle of nature and a temple for the spirit. Beyond this, Physical education and Health and Hygiene cannot influence the nature and development of the physical body.

If the body is a given and the spirit must be left free, then it follows that fundamentally, school education must be concerned with the soul development of children and young people. The soul may be likened to a bridge, between bodily past and spiritual future, which connects the realm of the body with that of the spirit. Waldorf educators see it as their primary task to provide a curriculum that can lead to developing a reliable bridge between these two realms. By the careful cultivation of children's will, feeling and thinking, their spirit may develop strong, well-functioning faculties to use in fulfilling both their individual destinies, and for making a contribution to the common tasks of their generation. For indeed this is what education for life entails, and Steiner rejected theorising on the purpose of education when there was the obvious reality of the threefold human being to educate. Speaking to prospective teachers in England in 1923 Steiner explained that:

> [N]o education will develop from abstract principles or programmes - it will only develop from reality. And because man himself is soul and spirit, because he has a physical nature, a soul nature, and a spiritual nature, reality must again come into our life - for with the whole reality will the spirit also come into our life, and only such a spirit as this can sustain the educational art of the future.[28]

4. The Tripartite Soul: Thinking, Feeling and Willing

Having considered the threefold nature of the human being above, the threefold nature of the human soul will be investigated. For over two thousand years in the West, philosophers whose ideas have contributed to educational theory and who describe the human soul as a threefold entity include Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas

[28] Rudolf Steiner, *Education and the Modern Spiritual Life*, p. 22

and Kant, among others. Steiner too differentiated the soul into three major aspects, principles or faculties: Thinking, Feeling and Willing (or doing).[29] In addition he describes the bodily expression of 'soul activity' as manifesting in three great bodily systems. The Head System is the centre of Thinking, the Rhythmic System of Feeling and the Metabolic/Limb System of Willing. However, just as the three bodily systems have no rigid demarcations between them, so too Thinking, Feeling and Willing also interpenetrate each other. In Steiner's words,

> [w]e can only say that will activity is chiefly will activity and has an undercurrent of thought within it; and thought activity is chiefly thought activity and has an undercurrent of will. Thus, in considering the separate faculties of soul, it is impossible to place them side by side in a pedantic way, because one flows into the other. [30]

The psychological theories of his time considered these three faculties as all having their basis in cognition, because they were apprehended by the thinking brain. But Steiner did not agree, believing that the link to Thinking was indirect and that Feeling and Will had separate expressions in the physical body.[31] Table 1 summarises the connection between the various elements.

Human Being	Origin	Human Body	Physiological System	Soul Faculty
Spirit	Future	Head	Nerves/Senses (centred in head)	Thinking
Soul	Present	Heart	Rhythmic (centred in chest)	Feeling
Body	Past	Hand	Metabolic/Limbs (centred in abdomen)	Willing

Table 1 The Threefold Human Being

Steiner explained that the soul faculty of Thinking certainly manifests physiologically in the brain and central nervous system but does not originate from it. Likewise the

[29] Some contemporary taxonomies of education (such as Bloom's) speak of Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioural domains.
[30] Rudolf Steiner, *Study of Man*, p. 172
[31] In *Occult Science*, pp 279-80 Steiner states that when the soul undergoes spiritual training these three faculties become quite independent and have to be consciously ordered by the Ego. See also Steiner's *Spiritual Ground of Education*, p. 43

manifestation of Feeling could be found in what he called the Rhythmic System, and Willing in the Metabolic-Limb System.[32] The three systems fully interpenetrate and none acts in isolation from the other. The stages in which the three soul faculties develop in childhood and youth, and the order of development from will to feeling to thinking, are at the core of Waldorf educational method. This reversal of priorities is another area in which Steiner departed from conventional educational thought.

The groundwork for the educational principles of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was laid by Herbart (1776-1841) and Froebel (1782-1852).[33] One of Herbart's central aims of education, which Steiner shared, was the development of morality and character. However, their methods of achieving it are diametrically opposed. Herbart's pedagogy begins in cognition, based on the assumption that once children have the right concept (of morality) they will develop the right feeling, and then their moral will would be expressed through action. Steiner believed that morality must begin in the Will and then develop into Feeling and finally into Thinking, and his attitude towards Herbart's method is expressed in the following warning:

> A pedagogy like the Herbartian, which takes its start in a training of the faculty of thought and ideation, has the effect of ruining the child's body. This should be known by all who are engaged in education.[34]

5. Developmental Stages of Growth

It has been frequently stressed that Steiner saw education as being deeply connected with the whole of human nature. Therefore Waldorf teaching pre-supposes a familiarity with the nature of the human being, as set out in anthroposophy, with emphasis on those aspects which have special bearing on childhood and the education of children.

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[32]Rudolf Steiner, *The Study of Man*, pp. 114-5. See also *Spiritual Ground of Education*, pp. 42-44
[33] William Boyd, *A History of Western Education*, A. and C. Black Ltd. London, 1921, pp. 353-354
[34] Rudolf Steiner, *Waldorf Education for Adolescence*, pp. 36-37

In Waldorf education the curriculum and practical method is based on the teacher's understanding of the stages of child development. In Part 2 above, the constitution of the human being, as body, soul and spirit, has been described. Steiner maintained that each of these constituents has its own 'laws' of development, partly independent and partly connected.[35] Insights into the nature of childhood can be gained if these three aspects of the human being are placed side-by-side. From the point of view of bodily development, it is the usual pattern that there are four stages through which all pass.

1) an initial, formative growth stage
2) a growth, filling-out stage
3) a stage in which the bodily form and functions are mostly sustained, and
4) a period of decline leading eventually to death.

From the point of view of soul (psychological) development, Steiner describes three stages.

1) a formative stage, in childhood and youth (0-21)
2) a growth stage (21-42) and
3) a sustained stage but with further room either for growth or decline.[36]

From the point of view of the human spirit, Steiner held that the pattern of development was fourfold.

1) a preliminary or incarnating stage (birth to 21 years)
2) a formative, active stage (21 onwards)
3) a developmental stage (42 onwards), and
4) a sustained, developmental stage (63 onwards), possibly, though not necessarily, accompanied by a degree of excarnation until the death of the physical. Decline is not a concept considered appropriate to the spiritual nature.[37]

[35] See Owen Barfield, *The Case for Anthroposophy*, Anthropos. Pub. Co., London 1970, Section VII
[36] Rudolf Steiner, *Theosophy*, Anthropos. Pub. Co., London 1954, pp. 39-47
[37] Brien Masters, *An Appraisal of Steinerian Theory and Waldorf Praxis*, op. cit. pp. 315-17

Although each person is unique, of body, soul and spirit, human bodily development is the most predictable. The pattern of soul development is less predictable: The childhood stage can largely be taken for granted; similarly, though less pronounced, with the development between 21 and 41; but after that there is wide variation. The spiritual development is the most individual of all. That which is likely to follow a regular pattern is in the preliminary stage (childhood), but the rest of the human being's life is largely dependant upon the principle of self-development.[38]

6. Thinking, Feeling and Willing and the Seven-Year Stages

A more detailed study of Steiner's picture of the threefold aspect of the soul, as it pertains to the formative stage of soul development, denotes that the three soul faculties do not come fully developed at birth.. They gradually mature over the three seven-year stages throughout childhood and youth. The stages in which the soul powers of Willing, Feeling and Thinking become conscious tools for the incarnating Spirit correspond to the major phases of schooling, mainly the pre-school years up to approximately age seven, the primary school years up to age fourteen and the high school years. Table 2 provides a summary of the first three seven-year stages.

Life stage	Faculty of Soul Developed	Pedagogic mode	Schooling
Infant 0-7	Will	Imitation	Home and pre-school
Child 7-14	Feeling	Authority	Primary school
Adolescent 14+	Thinking	Freedom/ responsibility	High school

Table 2: Developmental Stages and Schooling

With regard to the stages in which the spirit incarnates into the developing soul, the table above gives an idealised picture, however this 21-year preliminary stage of the

[38] ibid

spirit's development can be further differentiated into three equal parts of 7 years but with nodal points in the third year (between age 2 and 3), tenth year (9/10), and seventeenth year (16/17). Bernard Lievegoed a Dutch psychiatrist and student of Steiner, elaborated Steiner's developmental theory further, and commented that the three nodal points of 'ego consciousness' (2/3, 9/10, and 16/17) indicate the transitions in the child's experience and summarised their significance as: 'self-awareness, self-experience, self-realisation'.[39]

For the soul, the first stage of life lasts until the appearance of the permanent teeth (which can happen over a range of years), and is the period during which the Will overrides the other faculties of the soul. That is, although Thinking and Feeling are present, they are dominated by the Will. The period from the emergence of the permanent teeth to the age of puberty is considered to be the age of childhood proper, in which the child's dominant mode of interacting with the world is through Feeling. That is, during this stage, both Thinking and Willing are subordinated to Feeling.

A third stage of development emerges with the appearance of puberty and extends to the age of young adulthood. This developmental phase is marked by changes in the 'head pole' and expresses itself as the 'reign of the intellect'. Young adolescents' Feelings and Will begin to be regulated by reason and logic, and it becomes possible for abstract ideas to be conceived. The changes, in the 'metabolic pole', are marked by the secondary sexual characteristics, and young people now achieve the capacity to conceive new life. Life and consciousness are the two principles which vie for supremacy in the soul of the adolescent, and begin to gain some balance in the 18th year. Table 3 summarises the changes in consciousness of the child and young person as the ego or spiritual individuality gradually incarnates into the body and soul. (This table will be

[39] Bernard Lievegoed, *Phases of Childhood*, Floris Books, Edinburgh 1987, pp. 132-37

referred to again in Part 7 below in the discussion on Recapitulation and the Evolution of Consciousness).

Age	Consciousness	Emancipatory Experience
0 - 3	Holistic ('all-one')	Self-will, experience of separation of bodily 'I'
3 - 9	Participatory	Self-Feeling, own feelings separate from group
9 - 14	Sceptical	Self-thinking, begins to think for oneself
14+	Detached ('a-lone')	separation of 'ego' from world

Table 3: Developmental Stages of Individual Consciousness

The seven-year stages do not stop at 21 of course. The developmental rhythms continue, but their expression, apart from obvious changes in the physical body, becomes more subtle. In the section outlining the 'Developmental Stages of Growth', various patterns of development were listed for bodily, soul and spiritual growth. While the concern of the pedagogue is with the phases of development pertinent to childhood, teachers should be aware that the various sheaths (called by Steiner physical, etheric, and astral bodies) in childhood and youth, are affected by such factors as accidents, illnesses, emotional environment, diet, education, religious practices, and much more, and their effects will have consequences for health and well being in later corresponding seven-year stages in adult life. This is mentioned here because it is an area which needs greater research and understanding by teachers, but a more comprehensive treatment of the correspondences between childhood, middle and old age is not appropriate here.

7. The Human Being and the Kingdoms of Nature

Humans beings, explains Steiner, have the capacity to look both outwards and inwards. Looking outwards they can behold the world of nature, as well as themselves as part of

that world. In his elaboration of spiritual scientific ideas, Steiner utilised the four classical elements of ancient Greece - Earth, Water, Air and Fire - in an exposition of the dynamics in nature and in the human being. The use of these terms, however, should not lead to the suspicion that Steiner was reverting to a medieval world-picture.

Steiner's spiritual science reviews four basic phenomena - *form, life, sentience* (a consciousness based on sense experience), and *selfhood* (an awareness of the Self). Traditionally, 'Nature' has been understood as comprising of the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, and according to neo-Darwinist thought, humans have the status of thinking animals. Anthroposophy takes a different approach. Humans share *form* with mineral, plant and animal. They share *life* with plant and animal, and they share *sensory experience* (instincts, desires, pleasure and pain, etc.) with animals. However, in the world of nature *Thinking*, or a reflective consciousness and an inborn sense of self (or the *I am)* is possessed by humans alone.[40] In a sense then, the *I am* of human beings makes up the fourth kingdom of nature.

As noted in part 6, above, the 'body', which is an expression of each of the four categories of being, was given a specific name by Steiner, namely the physical, etheric, and astral bodies, and the ego. For 'bodies', Steiner also used the term 'sheaths', which are like garments which clothe the human spirit or 'I Am'. The sheaths are inter-penetrating, such that the physical is sheathed by the etheric, which is sheathed by the astral, all of which sheathe the I Am. This corresponds to the kingdoms of nature, whereby the mineral kingdom is covered by the plant kingdom within which the animal kingdom roams, all of which the human kingdom oversees. The totality may be summarised in the following table.

[40]Francis Edmunds, *Anthroposophy: A Way of Life,* Carnant Books, Sussex, England, 1982, pp.38-45; Steiner, *Theosophy,* Chapter 2.

Element	Kingdom of Nature	Category of Being	Body or Sheath
Earth	Mineral	Form	Physical
Water	Vegetable	Life	Etheric
Air	Animal	Sentience	Astral
Fire	Human	Selfhood	Ego or I Am

Table 4: The Human Being and the Kingdoms of Nature

From this arrangement it will be noted that humans can be considered to be nature beings to a large degree, thereby inextricably connected with the natural world up to the point of self-consciousness, which can be likened to the peak of the iceberg. Humans are surrounded by the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms, yet in their innermost being they stand within their own kingdom which potentially leads them out of the necessity of natural law, and therefore of bondage to nature, towards free will and the realisation of the divine.[41] In the words of Francis Edmunds, a well known anthroposophist and Waldorf educator, 'responsive and responsible, the human being may gaze out at nature, yet be able to iterate the words: "my kingdom is not of this world".'[42]

8. Recapitulation and the Evolution of Consciousness

In Part 4 above, Table 3 gives a schematic picture of the stages of development undergone in the first three seven-year periods of life. Now the idea of recapitulation will be explored, that is, the notion that the broad sweep of developmental stages of individual children is a reflection of the stages in the development of consciousness of humanity. But first, some 19th century ideas on how the theory of evolution influenced educational theory, will be given to provide a context.

Evolution was not a concept contemplated by the Christian church. At least until

[41]Rudolf Steiner, *Theosophy*, p. 28

very modern times Christian thinkers were used to looking at human history, as a divinely inspired drama characterised by events such as the Fall, Incarnation, Redemption, and Judgement. This is in contrast to the perspective of the 'great recurring cycles of time' held by some Eastern religions. Essentially the Christian ecclesiastical outlook has static qualities, especially where the divine world is concerned, and there are no evolutionary developments proposed in eternity. Steiner is probably the first Christian thinker who fully accepted the reality of the evolutionary process. [43]

Steiner was convinced that the theory of evolution, of which Charles Darwin (1809-82) and Ernst Haeckel (1834-1910) were the pioneers, was worthy of being absorbed into modern consciousness. Even though the first attempts to portray the origins, in particular the assertions made about the effective causes of evolution, were relatively crude, Steiner accepted the fundamental notion of the evolution of life. [44] Although he was highly critical of Haeckel as a philosopher, calling him 'not merely a dilettante, but a child'[45], he saw the value in, and praised highly Haeckel's thought on evolution, especially his phylogenetic studies, commenting that his thinking on phylogenetics was the most significant fact of German intellectual life in the second half of the nineteenth century. This was irrespective of the fact that Haeckel himself clearly failed to arrive at certain conclusions arising from his theory.

> And there is no better foundation for occultism than Haeckel's theory. Haeckel's theory is great, and Haeckel the poorest commentator of it…We do the best service to culture… by demonstrating…the greatness of his phylogenetic thinking. [46]

Steiner could see in Haeckel's phylogenetic law a support of his own views on the evolution of human consciousness. For example in his *The Philosophy of Freedom*

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[42]ibid p. 42
[43] Rudi Lissau, *Rudolf Steiner: His life, work, inner path ans social initiatives*, Hawthorn Press, Stroud, Great Britain, 1987, p. 74
[44] Hemleben, op. cit. pp. 55-56
[45] ibid p. 56
[46] Rudolf Steiner, cited by Hemleben op. cit. p. 56

Steiner develops the idea of 'ethical individualism' and states that:

> Ethical individualism, then, is the crowning feature of the edifice that Darwin and Haeckel have striven to build for natural science. It is spiritualised theory of evolution carried over into moral life. The consistent evolutionist….cannot let the natural course of evolution terminate with the ape….in his very search for the natural progenitors of man, he is bound to seek spirit in nature; again he cannot stop short at the organic functions of man, and take only these as natural, but must go on to regard the free moral life as the spiritual continuation of organic life. [47]

Steiner's university studies in science, of which one subject was Zoology, would most likely have introduced Haeckel's phylogenetic thinking to him. In any case Steiner read widely and kept abreast of developments in scientific thinking. He was also alert to discovering how bridges could be made between natural science and spiritual science.

In previous sections the threefold nature of the human being, and the threefold nature of the soul were described. Therefore, it will not be surprising that Steiner also saw human consciousness as having a threefold quality ~ mainly *waking, dreaming and sleeping*. He maintained that adults, at the present time in history, are *awake* in their thinking, *dreaming* in their feeling, and *asleep* in their willing. Reference to Table 3 above will give an idea of the changing nature of a child's consciousness. Table 5 below adds to this picture.

Stages of Life	State of Consciousness	Active Soul Forces	Active Members
Infancy	Sleep	Willing	Physical/Etheric
Childhood	Dream	Feeling	Etheric/Astral
Adulthood	Wakefulness	Thinking	Astral/Ego

Table 5: States of Consciousness and Threefoldness

Steiner explained in numerous lectures on inner development and Spiritual History that these states of consciousness have not always been the same as they are now, nor will they remain the same in the future. Human consciousness has not always been as *awake*

as it currently is ~ for example, the capacity for abstract thinking, pure mathematics or theoretical physics, has historically only expressed itself in relatively recent times. However, of immediate relevance are his ideas concerning

- the development of the human being during a single lifetime,
- the development of the human species as a whole, and
- the correspondences and parallels between them.

According to Steiner there are distinctly discernible life-epochs within the span of a normal human lifetime which correspond to historical epochs over great lengths of time. This is consistent with his view that the human being is a microcosm reflecting the macrocosm, or that the smaller is reflected in the greater and vice-versa. [48]

This general view is not unique to Steiner but belongs in the context of nineteenth century thought on evolution. At this time, as a result of the strange hybrid of evolutionary biology, following Darwin's evolutionary theory, and embryology, following the discoveries of the German embryologist Karl Ernst von Baer, (1792-1876), there arose the theory of 'racial recapitulation', or 'parallelism'.[49] There was considerable debate on the theory of recapitulation, with some opposing views, but the chief credit for popularising it must go particularly to Ernst Haeckel, who formulated 'the fundamental biogenetic law':

> The two series of organic development, the ontogenesis of the individual and the phylogenesis of the tribe to which it belongs, stand in the closest causal connection with each other….As I have shown, *ontogenesis, or the development of the individual, is a short and quick repetition (recapitulation) of phylogenesis, or the development of the tribe to which it belongs, determined by the laws of inheritance and adaptation*; by tribe I

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[47] Rudolf Steiner, *The Philosophy of Freedom*, op. cit. p.169-70

[48] See Rudolf Steiner, *Occult Science*; *The Renewal of Education through the Science of the Spirit*, Chapter 4; Robert Easton, *Man and the World in the Light of Anthroposophy*, Ap, NY, 1975, Chapter 2; Gilbert Childs, *Education and Beyond*, Floris Books, Edinburgh, 1996, pp. 95, 99-100

[49] John Cleverley and Dennis Phillips, *Visions of Childhood*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1987, pp. 42-43 See also Rudolf Steiner, *The Philosophy of Freedom*, op. cit., where Steiner writes that his 'Ethical individualism, …, is the crowning feature of the edifice that Darwin and Haeckel have striven to build for natural science. It is spiritualised theory of evolution carried over into moral life.' p.169

> mean the ancestors which form the chain of progenitors of the individual concerned.[50]

The theory of racial recapitulation had great suggestive power, especially when applied to the twin fields of child study and education. The work of Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), especially his E*ssays on Education*[51], published in 1861, helped to spread recapitulationist views all over Europe as well as the United States, where it became immensely popular.[52] The German version of the theory became known to educationists as the theory of cultural epochs, and was disseminated in the latter half of the nineteenth century by Tuiskon Ziller (1817-83), a disciple of Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841), and by Ziller's own follower Wilhelm Rein (1847-1929) of the University of Jena. In 1893 Rein wrote:

> We find that this idea of the analogy between the individual and general development of humanity is a common possession of the best and most noted intellects. It appears, for example, in the works of the literary heroes Lessing, Herder, Goethe and Schiller; with the philosophers Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Comte; with the theologians Clement of Alexandria, Augustine, Schleiermacher; with the Darwinists Huxley and Spencer;…with the pedagogues Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Diesterweg, Herbart, Ziller and others. [53]

The theory of cultural epochs suggested that there was an analogy between the development of an embryo through evolutionary stages (Haeckel's *ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny*) and the growth of a child through certain cultural stages. This theory was taken seriously and soon appeared as a basis for school curricula. Subjects taught in each grade were coordinated by concentrating upon a core of cultural material which in successive years would draw the child along the path travelled by the human race.[54] In Rein's view, probably the most suitable material for instruction aimed at

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[50] Ernst Haeckel, *The History of Creation*, vol 1, ch. 13 (originally published in 1873), cited in Cleverley and Phillips, ibid p.44

[51] Spencer's *Essays* were translated into fifteen languages and by the end of the nineteenth century had sold over 50,000 copies in England alone, which in those times was 'a mammoth best seller'. From Dennis C. Phillip, "The Idea of Evolution in Educational Thought," in Edgar L. French, ed., *Melbourne Studies in Education*, 1965 (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966), pp. 93-98

[52] ibid, p. 47

[53] Wilhelm Rein,*Outlines of Pedagogics*, (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1904), cited in Cleverley and Phillips, pp. 47-48

[54] ibid, p. 48

developing character was the history and literature of the national culture. He suggested that this should be presented from its beginnings up to the present time, following a succession of cultural epochs that corresponded to the stages of psychological growth observable among children.[55] Rein's view of an appropriate course in the moral-historical side of education for the first eight years of the common school is set out in Table 6 below. Only the curriculum for German and English schools have been included. The source document also lists the curriculum guidelines for Religion lessons and stories for American schools.

School year	For German schools	For English schools
1	Fairy Tales	Fairy Tales
2	Robinson Crusoe	Robinson Crusoe
3	Thüringer Tales	Old English Legends
4	Nibelungen Tales	Settlement of England
5	Christianising of Germany	Christianising of England
6	Emperors; Kaiser Period	Great English Kings
7	Reformation	Renaissance, Reformation, Age of Discovery to 1763
8	Nationalisation	Nineteenth Century

Table 6: Curriculum and Cultural Epoch

This scheme was part of mainstream primary education in Germany (and beyond) in the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century as far as the 1950s. The general plan has elements that are remarkably similar to the *Lehrplan* for Waldorf schools.[56] It is probable that Steiner knew about Rein's curriculum scheme, because he was familiar with other ideas from the Herbartian school. For example, Steiner commented that Herbart's pedagogics 'was excellent in its day'[57] but speaks less favourably about some

[55] W. F. Connell, *A History of Education in the Twentieth Century World*, Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra, Australia, 1980, p. 57
[56] The *Lehrplan* is a curriculum plan for all subjects from Classes 1 to 8 compiled by Caroline von Heyderbrand, a founding teacher in the first Waldorf school, who reportedly collected details of what the then current teachers were teaching and tabulated the timetable into a curriculum plan.
[57] See Steiner's *Practical Advice to Teachers*, RSP, 1976, p. 38

of his psychological ideas, such as where he thought that Herbart had put the wrong emphasis on cognition instead of will in his approach to moral development. (See part 6 above)

Steiner was well aware of the ideas on the cultural epochs, and not only through Rein's curriculum, but because as a philosopher, he identified largely with the German idealists. He took the Renaissance and Enlightenment beliefs in social progress, in universality, and in regularity as the unquestioned givens of the natural, human, and spiritual world. With regard to social progress, he believed that children advance physically, intellectually, and spiritually in ways that roughly parallel the evolution of Western societies.[58]

He described the evolution of consciousness in the West as proceeding from (but not beginning with) the prehistoric Indian cultures, followed by the prehistoric Persian, and then the Egypto-Chaldean, and Graeco-Roman, culminating in the 19th and early 20th centuries in the cultures of Central and Western Europe. He predicted that there would emerge a world culture in the 20th century, and increasingly beyond it, which would be characterised by greater cosmopolitanism and individualism. Steiner maintained that as human beings 'we carry within us the work that has gone into the whole past evolution of the world, upon which countless generations of the spirit have worked'[59] [and that] 'behind the realm of sense-perception lies the all-embracing life of the spirit,…a hidden spiritual environment [which] carries even now in its womb man's future evolution.'[60] Thus Steiner described two fundamental principles upon which world-evolution and human evolution are founded. 'Man bears within him the past of

[58] David Elkind, 'Waldorf Education in the Postmodern World', in *Renewal: A Journal for Waldorf Education*, The Association of Waldorf Schools in North America, Vol. 6, Issue 4, Spring 1997, p. 5.
[59] Rudolf Steiner, *The Evolution of Consciousness: as revealed through Initiation-Knowledge*, RSP, 1966, p. 170
[60] ibid

the world; the outer world is the bearer of his future.' [61]

He stressed that differentiation was important, so as not to confuse, the two different aspects of the human being's development: the biological and the soul-spiritual. To confuse the two, he warned, would lead 'to a false trail'. In a lecture in 1920 to Swiss teachers[62] Steiner put to them the question: 'How could one justify a parallel between the soul-spiritual development of the individual human being and the biogenetic principle?' The idea that the development of the child repeats the development of the whole human race can be easily put forward, Steiner explained, 'but it is a flight of fancy which does not correspond to the facts.'[63]

> If one observes the human embryo from the 1st, 2nd or 3rd week on up to maturity,…,one can detect forms which show similarities with the shape of a fish and subsequently, with forms of other animals which become consecutively more complex and perfect. However, when observing the child during the first years, one cannot detect a repetition of aboriginal human conditions nor, as the child grows older, a repetition of later phases of mankind's evolution. In order to discover such features in the child, it would be necessary to introduce imaginary forces and processes into his development. It was a beautiful invention of [some] educationalists, when they asserted that during their development children passed through the same stages of barbarism as mankind did long ago; or that at certain stages of boyhood, the Persian culture was being relived. One can of course conjure up all kinds of poetical pictures of this kind, but they are nonsense because such ideas do not correspond to reality. [64]

Despite an enigmatic conclusion,[65] we see that Steiner's was not a naïve recapitulation theory - to the effect that the child repeats, in his or her individual development, the developmental patterns of human history - as outlined above from Haeckel to Spencer to Rein. In the view of David Elkind, a Piagetian psychologist, 'Steiner argued that the child's developing needs and interests are the best guide to choosing the curriculum

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[61] ibid

[62] Rudolf Steiner, *The Renewal of Education Through the Science of the Spirit*, (14 lectures to Swiss teachers in Basel May 1920), Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications, Forest Row, E. Sussex, UK 1981, Lecture 4 but esp. pp. 55-56

[63] ibid, p. 55

[64] ibid, 55-56

[65] Steiner continues "If one wants to discover a correspondence between the child's soul-spiritual development and the biogenetic law,.., then the Science of the Spirit will reveal that one cannot find such a correspondence at the beginning of life, but towards its end." Ibid. Steiner elaborates on what he means further on in this lecture.

materials for any given age period. It just so happens that the sequence of materials best suited to the child's developing needs and interests follows a roughly historical pattern'.[66] Brien Masters, a Waldorf teacher educator, believes that:

> Steiner's stage theory is not a direct child of Haeckel's studies…it has an inner connection that surfaces periodically rather than one of close contiguity that can be genetically chronicled….I believe that there is still mileage to be gained in Steiner's stage theory, provided it is liberally interpreted…[as] an Ariadne thread to take as something of a guide into the fascinating labyrinth of child development; whereas I suspect a hard and fast systematising would increase its being seen as dated and, worse, clamp the wheels of the creative pedagogue.[67]

The writer concurs with this view, believing that the idea of recapitulation is too valuable to be discarded, or to be dismissed as anachronistic. However, an injudicious or dogmatic application of the principle, could easily lead to the whole concept falling into disrepute. Much more research could be carried out in this area.

9. A Universal Christianity

It often comes as a surprise to people when, on their approach to Anthroposophy, they find that in the centre of Steiner's teaching stands the figure of the Christ. It is therefore assumed that, since Waldorf education has its basis in Anthroposophy, its teachers should pursue a Christian based spirituality. This conclusion is reasonable but the path to reaching it is not as straightforward as it appears. Steiner's approach to Christ and Christian spirituality cannot be judged by the traditional standards, established practices or dogma of the traditional Christian churches.

In his *Three Paths of the Soul to Christ*, Steiner speaks of how the human 'I', for example in times of personal travail, inwardly feels that it is in need of something

> that cannot come to him from human culture, [then] something can come over him from which he will recognise that, directly from spiritual worlds, something must stream out that penetrates directly into his ego. He does not know that this is called Christ, but he

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[66] David Elkind, 'Waldorf Education in the Postmodern World', in *Renewal: A Journal for Waldorf Education*, Vol. 6, Issue 4, Spring 1997, p. 5, The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America.
[67] Brien Masters, *An Appraisal of Steinerian Theory and Waldorf Praxis*, op. cit. p. 137

> does know that in his consciousness he can suffuse himself with it, that in his ego he can foster this that comes from the spiritual worlds….Men can have this *inner experience*.[68]

This passage is one of the clearest of many in which he tells that what may be thought of as the higher ego or self of each human being is in fact the Christ. He describes that the experience of the archetype of the human being is the experience of the Christ, and this experience is available to everyone, regardless of faith. 'This that comes from the spiritual world may be called whatever we like, that is not important, only the feeling is important.'[69]

As has already been described with respect to the evolution of human consciousness, Steiner believed that in the historical period in which we find ourselves, an increasing number of people are growing out of the need for guidance (from a church, or monarch or totalitarian government). Guidance by a higher authority is appropriate in the phase of childhood, but gaining human freedom is the responsibility of each person, and it will be individual freedom which guides our evolution. This individualisation leads to fragmentation, and at a time of fragmentation of humanity, it is ever more essential that human beings rise to an understanding of what is unifying. The notion of freedom (which is central to Steiner's philosophy) may find itself experienced most strongly in all people as the desire to be free to love whoever, and in whatever way they choose. A person who is not free, who is driven, cannot love. Steiner wrote, and many others before him, that 'Christ is the teacher of the love of Man.' As a being of love, Christ is not exclusive to a particular group of people. Whereas traditional Christianity has been necessarily particular in the past, the being of love is absolutely universal. The goal of the being of love is to make human freedom possible.

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[68] Rudolf Steiner, *The Three Paths of the Soul to Christ*, NY 1942, pp.18-19. Cited in Easton op. cit. p. 207
[69] ibid. p. 13

Steiner's interpretation of the Gospel highlights the central importance of Christ's incarnation as being to pave the way for human beings to transform the freedom of egoism to the freedom of love. The creation of freedom is the will of the being of love, and in that sense the freedom of the human being is the fulfilment of Christianity. The practice of ethical individualism, which Steiner introduced in *The Philosophy of Freedom*, comes about by interiorising and individualising the being of love. In this way, the centrality of Christ in Anthroposophy may be accepted in non-Christian based societies.

Clearly, all aspects of Steiner's Christology cannot be dealt with in a single part of a section, but enough of a flavour may have been imparted to indicate that the Christianity of the twentieth century, which Steiner proposes in his writings on the subject, is highly accessible to unprejudiced thought. Waldorf teachers need to understand this aspect of Steiner's Christology because Waldorf education is being successfully adopted in non-Christian cultures, such as in Jewish (at an Israeli kibbutz)[70], Islamic (the Sekem farm community 60km north of Cairo, in Egypt), Hindu/India, Buddhist/Bangkok, and Shinto/Tokyo. Increasingly in Western countries, children attending Waldorf schools practice a range of religious faiths in their homes. Because of these developments the schools have had to adapt to the changed socio-cultural conditions. The Eurocentric domination which held sway for most of this century has had to give way, as the movement spread across the world, to the reality of meeting the needs of local regions.

10. Reincarnation and Karma in relation to Body, Soul, and Spirit

[70] Shalom, M., ben, 'Jewish Festival Celebration: Some thoughts from the Waldorf school Harduf, Israel' in *Child and Man*, Vol. 22 No. 2 July 1988, pp. 8-9

In Steiner's book, *Theosophy,* one of the oldest of dogmas, that of Reincarnation and Karma, which still dominates Oriental philosophy today, is restated in Western terms. The Oriental idea of reincarnation is not the same as that put forward by anthroposophy, primarily because Eastern religious thought does not accept the notion of an individual ego. When Westerners first began to acquire individual self-consciousness (awareness of their own 'ego'), their notion of themselves was an extremely simple one: They were born, lived for a limited time on earth and then lived forever in a different form, in a condition of being that was scarcely imaginable ~ where there was eternal bliss for the saved and, conversely, eternal torment for the damned. Such pictures were becoming ever less credible to most people in the West and, under the influence of scientific materialism, the denial of the existence of soul or spirit and the insistence that death means, quite simply, annihilation, became more prevalent.

Steiner held that the time had come when men and women could learn to understand the complex, but logical, and in a sense, economical teaching of reincarnation and its companion, karma, in the way that the idea is explained by anthroposophy. In this passage both terms are related to the threefold human being.

> The human spirit must be reincarnated again and again; and man is governed by the law that he brings the fruits of his former life with him into the next one. The soul lives in the present. But this life in the present is not independent of the former life. The spirit that has been reincarnated brings its destiny with it from earlier incarnations. And this destiny rules his life. The impressions that the soul receives, the desires that are satisfied, the joys and sorrows that it experiences, depend on its actions in previous incarnations. The body is subjected to the laws of heredity; the soul is subjected to the destiny that it has itself created. This self-created destiny of man is called his Karma. And the spirit is subject to the law of reincarnation. The spirit is eternal; in corporeal existence, birth and death alternate in accordance with the laws of the physical world; the life of the soul, which is governed by destiny, provides the cohesion between the two during life on earth. [71]

The significance for the teacher lies in the different attitude which the adoption of this viewpoint necessarily leads; their attitudes towards their own lives, their colleagues and

the students they teach. The way in which the perspective of reincarnation is adopted, usually begins by developing a *theoretical* conviction. However, if on the one hand someone is theoretically convinced of reincarnation but draws no practical conclusion from it, nothing much will change. If on the other hand the perspective of reincarnation leads one to alter the way he or she meets, perceives and thinks about other people, then over time, reincarnation becomes a reality which changes one's life. Steiner presents not only theoretical considerations, but endeavours to show the practical consequences of adopting the perspective of Reincarnation and Karma.

The laws of Reincarnation and Karma add another dimension to the origin of children's abilities and disabilities, and extends the debate regarding the influence of nature or nurture on their development. Neither physical heredity nor environmental factors can account for the spiritual nature of individuals. Individuality expresses itself in something that reaches beyond present earthly influences.[72] This field contains rich possibilities for assisting children's development but deals with an aspect of children's lives with which the teacher should neither dabble, nor treat with the attitude of a dilettante. Steiner stressed repeatedly that working educationally or therapeutically with the reality of repeated earth lives is an area which requires great earnestness and a developed sense of responsibility.[73]

11. Summary

This section on Steiner's educational philosophy, has attempted to place it within the context of his overall philosophy. It has shown how the more orthodox philosophical work and his later more esoteric spiritual research came together and contributed to a new approach to the way that human beings were to be educated. Overall, the

[71] Rudolf Steiner, *Theosophy*, op. cit. p. 70

educational approach was intended to extend the existing educational methods and overcome the shortcomings of the conventional educational theories and practices of his time. Because many, if not most, aspects of these theories had their origin in a materialistic world view, Steiner's perspective added a dimension, the study of which required the educator to confront and apply concepts of an immortal spirit which relates to the body through the medium of the soul.

Waldorf, or Steiner's educational theory has the following attributes:

1. It defines its meaning within a Spiritual Anthropology. It operates out of an understanding of the human being that encompasses the spiritual as well as the material and psychological dimensions.
2. It has a clearly articulated Metaphysics, which describes the terms of reference for an understanding of the nature of the human being (as body, soul and spirit), the nature of the soul, the evolution of consciousness, the history of the earth, and more which could not be covered here. In other words it broadens the arena of what normally is understood to constitutes reality.
3. It has a Spiritual Psychology, 'a knowledge of the soul', which incorporates a developmental theory, life stages, rhythmical patterns of growth, the nature of thinking, feeling and willing, the stages of the will, and consciousness in relation to waking, dreaming and sleeping states.
4. There is an Epistemological foundation, which gives a clearly outlined process of how one may come to know for oneself the claims that are made. This includes a path of development that leads step by step to the apprehension of this wider reality without abandoning thinking or the scientific method.

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[72]ibid Chap. 2 "Destiny and the Reincarnation of the Spirit."
[73] Rudolf Steiner, *Curative Education,* pp. 46-47

5. It has a Social Theory, articulated by Steiner in the many lectures and publications on the Threefold Social Order. A vision for the organisation of Society that is grounded in the threefold nature of the human being. A fundamental Social Law which describes the healthy interdependent relation between the individual and the society. (See next section)
6. It has an Educational Methodology based on the above philosophical elements, as well as nearly eighty years of practical experience in a variety of geographical and cultural settings. Schools develop appropriate educational programmes for pre-school, primary, secondary as well as, in some cases, higher education.

However, it is not any one of these elements that makes Steiner's educational theory unique, since some common aspects can be found in other educational philosophies, rather, it is the fact that Waldorf theory and practice incorporates ***all*** these in a way that is integrated and internally consistent. The implications for teacher education are many, especially in the construction of a teacher training programme that will incorporate all these elements of the educational theory. Various attempts to do so will be investigated in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2: Section 4

Steiner's Social Theory

1. Background to Steiner's ideas for social renewal

In 1886 when Steiner was editing Goethe's scientific writings in Weimar, he published *A Theory of Knowledge Based on Goethe's World Conception*.[1] This slim volume provided a philosophical foundation for all his later work by addressing the relation between the inner world of the human being (that is of *thinking*) to the outer world which is perceptible by the senses. It also contained a number of significant thoughts about social inquiry. In the section on the spiritual[2] or cultural sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) he stated that the cultural sciences have as their object of study the human being: 'It is human actions, creations, ideas with which we have to do,' and that the task of these sciences is to 'interpret the human being to himself and to humanity.'[3]

Steiner gave the social sciences a dual focus, seeing the individual as the source of social creation and perceiving a pattern in the development of human consciousness in history and society. One can discern a Hegelian flavour in this dual emphasis, and in the underlying perspective of history as the drama, the unfolding of humanity towards greater understanding and freedom. As already mentioned in the section on his biography, Steiner was critical of both natural science (*Naturwissenschaft)* for its naive materialism[4], and of the cultural sciences for their implied relativism. His disagreement

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[1] Rudolf Steiner, *A Theory of Knowledge Based on Goethe's World Conception*, Anthroposophic Press, NY, 1968.

[2] 'Spiritual' is to be understood in the general sense of 'nonmaterial.' For example, ideas and mental pictures exist for us although not perceptible to our physical senses.

[3] Christopher Schaefer, 'Rudolf Steiner and Social Renewal: An Introduction' in *Newsletter of the Anthroposophical Society in America*, Michaelmas 1988, pp. 3-10,

[4] Rudolf Steiner, *The Boundaries of Natural Science*, Anthroposophic Press, Spring Valley, NY, 1986b.

with the major proponents of the *Geisteswissenschaft* is described in the *Riddles of Philosophy*[5] and rests on his sense of the existence of social laws and principles.

Steiner explained that the social sciences are different from the natural sciences and that the task of the Social sciences is understanding human consciousness as expressed in social creation. Laws, organisational structures, and political, social, and economic forms reveal the contours of consciousness: they are an external manifestation of the ideas and values of individuals and groups.[6] Since social and economic life is a human creation, reflecting consciousness, and social science has the task of interpreting human beings to themselves, the social or cultural sciences are in the highest degree sciences of freedom.'[7]

Taking the thought that nature is not created by us but the social world is, it may be reasoned that every social interaction, beginning with a conversation, or a relationship to a human organisation, is a social creation. The social world reflects our nature and our ideas and values as we continually create and recreate the fabric of social life. At the same time this activity shapes human consciousness. Steiner viewed all social entities, such as groups, organisations and even nations as living systems that externalise human nature, and which possess fundamental human characteristics such as a history, or biography. If we as individuals each have a body, a soul (in which thoughts, feelings, and intentions mingle), and a spirit, then in some sense so do organisations. They may be observed to have buildings and offices, a set of relationships, a culture, and also an identity. If human beings go through life phases from childhood to old age, then

5 Rudolf Steiner, *Riddles of Philosophy*, AP, NY 1973

6 'Rudolf Steiner directly aligned himself with social thinkers such as Max Weber and historians such as Dilthey and Rickert who argued for a separation in purpose and method between the natural and cultural sciences.' Schaefer, op. cit. p. 4

7 ibid

so do organisations undergo developmental stages.[8]

Steiner maintained that there were laws in social life as binding as the laws of mechanics. This dimension to his social thought makes it possible for him to respond to the charge of relativism because his fundamental sociological laws are framed as empirical propositions, accessible to reason and experience, as well as being capable of being tested.[9] For example, in 1898 (in his early Berlin years), Steiner formulated what he called the Basic Sociological Law:

> At the beginning of culture humanity strives to create social arrangements in which the interests of the individual are sacrificed for the interest of the whole. Later developments lead to a gradual freeing of the individual from the interests of the community and to an unfolding of individual needs and capacities.[10]

This law or principle exists in time, and if one ponders the sweep of history and the gradual emergence of individual rights from Greco-Roman times to the present, it appears justified and points to one of the central aspects of historical evolution, the emergence of individual consciousness. Such an evolutionary process of consciousness has a number of consequences: it enhances the possibility of human freedom but it also unleashes increased antisocial forces in the individual and in society. As we become more aware of self, of what we think, feel, and want as individuals, we can lose our 'social instincts, our natural understanding of others.' [11] Steiner believed that in our time and in the coming centuries, all social instincts will be lost and that we will increasingly be 'hermits wandering through the world.' [12]

This natural evolutionary tendency brings with it the possibility of self-

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[8] The following authors explore Steiner's idea further. Bernard Lievegoed, *The Developing Organisation*, Tavistock, London, 1976; Martin Large, *Social Ecology*, Hawthorne Press, Stroud, UK, 1984; and C. Schaefer and T. Voors, *Vision in Action; The Art of Shaping Initiatives*, Hawthorne Press, Stroud, UK, 1986.

9 Schaefer op. cit 1988, p. 5

[10] Quoted in Schaefer, 1988, op. cit. pp. 5-6

11 ibid

[12] ibid; See also Steiner, R. *Social and Antisocial Forces in the Human Being*, Mercury Press, Spring Valley, NY, 1982

knowledge and self-development, but it has the social consequence of separating individuals and groups so that they become strangers to one another. The forces of critical intelligence, of doubt, of our likes and dislikes, and of egotism in our motives and intentions can turn us increasingly into antisocial beings, desperately longing for love and understanding but incapable of offering it to others.

Steiner saw this development of consciousness leading toward increasing fragmentation and violence unless it was met by a variety of counter measures. One of these counter measures is critical for an understanding of his social theory. It is the need to develop new social forms that make visible our interdependency as human beings. He believed that the loss of social instincts in modern society would result in the loss of social creativity because true human meetings would become ever more difficult.

According to Steiner all hierarchical social forms, by dividing people into levels and highly specialised roles, would enhance the antisocial nature of the age. He not only felt that new organisational forms were needed to cope with this antisocial trend, but that a totally new societal structure was called for.

In 1905, while active within the Theosophical Society, Steiner formulated what he called the 'Fundamental Social Law' which states that:

> The well-being of a community of cooperatively working human beings is the greater the less individuals demand the proceeds of their work for themselves, or in other words, the more they make over these proceeds to their co-workers and the more their needs are met not by their own work but from that of others.[13]

This law represented an effort to make the principle of brotherhood and sisterhood practical within theosophical circles, and also to separate wages and work at a time

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[13] Rudolf Steiner, *Geisteswissenschaft und soziale Frage*, [Spiritual science and the social question] contained in his complete works (*Gesamtausgabe*) Volume 34, quotation is translated by Schaefer, 1988, op. cit., p. 4
Also, compare Steiner's formulation with Hegel's. 'The labour of the individual for his own wants is at the same time a satisfying of the needs of others, and reciprocally the satisfaction of his own needs is

when the German labour movement was concerning itself more with increasing the wages of its members than in seeking to abolish the commodity character of work, which Steiner considered to be wage slavery. He argued that when we treat labour as an economic category we obscure the real relationship between capital and the individual. Instead of buying labour it would be better to capitalise the individual. Steiner understood that the purpose of the economic sphere was to deal with production, distribution and consumption of goods and, by this definition, the areas of land, labour and capital were seen to belong outside the confines of economic activity.[14]

He explained that the economic process can only be understood when we realise that human beings, by their very nature, belong to two worlds - the world of nature and the world of the spirit. Economics accordingly has two tasks - to derive from nature the things necessary to human material life (goods) and to derive from the spirit the capacities necessary to individual development (capital). 'That a person has to work goes without saying. But it is not labour which is primary, rather it is the unfolding and development of the individual'.[15]

In a lecture in Zurich in 1912 titled 'Love and its Meaning in the World', are expressed a few significant thoughts on the struggle between the forces of egoism and love, of antisocial and social tendencies within human consciousness. This struggle between the social and anti-social forces became Steiner's fundamental concern as he experienced a Europe ravaged by World War I during which he continued his lecturing, travelling mostly between Switzerland and Germany.

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attained only through the labour of others.' G.W.F.Hegel, from *The Philosophy of Right and Law*, cited in Cleverley and Phillips, op. cit. p. 98

[14] Lissau, op. cit. p. 135

[15] Christopher J. Budd, *Prelude in Economics*, Johanus Academy of Sociology and Politics, Hoathly Hill, West Sussex, UK, 1979, p. 25

The period 1917-22 was the peak of Steiner's active engagement with the social questions of his time. The year 1917 can be seen as a turning point in modern history because it was the year of the Russian Revolution in which Lenin and the Bolsheviks came to power, and it was also the year in which the United States overcame its isolationist tendencies and entered the World War. In hindsight one can see how from this point onwards the United States and the Soviet Union were to play major roles in the evolution of Europe and the world.

Out of this war experience Rudolf Steiner conceived the threefold imagination of the human being and showed how this imagination could lead to healing social forms, because a threefold ordering of society provided an alternative to both capitalism and communism. In 1919 the Waldorf school in Stuttgart had already grown out of the activity of Steiner and the League for the Threefold Social Order[16], and it was hoped that other successful models would follow. At the end of 1919 a 'Stock Company to further Economic and Spiritual Values' called *Der Kommende Tag* (The Coming Day) was formed [17]. In time it was to embrace some 20 organisations, including farms, the Waldorf school, research institutes, chemical factories, two printing companies, and the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory.[18] This practical experiment in the application of threefold ideas is not well known in the English-speaking world.

In 1920 another step was taken when Steiner showed that the task of social renewal requires a path of individual spiritual development. The 'Motto of the Social Ethic,' previously mentioned, captures the essence of his work for social renewal,

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[16] The League was made up of a group of anthroposophists and businessmen wishing to put into practice Steiner's threefold ideas.

[17] Schaefer, 1988, op. cit. p. 8

[18] Schaefer, 1988, op. cit. p. 6, comments in a footnote that 'for an excellent review of the manifold political and social activities in which Steiner was engaged between 1917-22, see Hans Kuhn, *Dreigliderungs-Zeit:Rudolf Steiners Kampf für die Gesellschaft*, Philosophisch-Anthroposophischer Verlag, Dornach, 1978.'

showing that social life both reflects and shapes individual human consciousness. From another perspective this ethic is deeply Christian, both in its insistence on the freedom of the individual and in its readiness to accept totally the fact of human interdependence.

> The healing social life is only found when in the mirror of each human soul the whole community finds its reflection and when in the community the virtue of each one is living.[19]

It was not until 1922, in response to a request from students of Economics, that Steiner gave a course of fourteen lectures, later published as *World Economy: The Formation of a Science of World Economics*,[20] which demonstrate a new way of economic thinking consistent with his ideas about the nature and needs of human beings and the social order.

2. Social conditions in Germany in the aftermath of World War I

In the social unrest in Germany following World War I, an initiative group of small industrialists in Wurttemberg attempted to find new forms for their impulse towards self-determination and self-administration. Steiner tried to focus their attention on a more far reaching perspective with his 'Guidelines for a Threefold Social Organism.'[21] In his book *The Threefold Social Order* Steiner argued that the real causes of the First World War lay in the chaos and confusion which arose in 'one-fold states' when the three natural divisions of human life were not clearly separated.[22]

Steiner was convinced that much social unrest, and particularly the feelings of inferiority widespread among the working classes, was not due, as generally supposed,

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[19] Rudolf Steiner, *Verses and Meditations*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1985, pp. 116-117
[20] Lectures given between 24th July and 6th August , 1922 in Dornach, Switzerland. Published by Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1972
[21] Albert Schmelzer, "How the Waldorf Movement Began", in *Waldorf Education* Exhibition Catalogue, 1994. *Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners e.V.*, Stuttgart.1994, pp. 76-7
[22] Steiner, R. *The Threefold Social Order* Anthroposophic Press, NY, 1966, pp. 77-82, esp. p.81

to frustration on political and economic grounds, but from cultural deprivation.[23] He believed that it was the experience of an unworthy, meaningless existence that had brought a cry for reformation of human social relations in Germany in the aftermath of World War I[24], that 'many men no longer consider their value determined by what they are as human beings but by a rank they have reached in the hierarchy of officialdom,' [25] and that 'industrialism introduces something into our lives which in a higher sense makes man's will meaningless.'[26] 'Capitalism and the machine ... give the worker no substance with which to content his soul as a human being.' [27] His views were not popular with established political parties or trade union organisers who mostly thought in terms of communist theory with regard to the struggle for workers to own the means of production.

Steiner saw the 'invisible hand' doctrine and the concept of enlightened self interest, as formulated by Adam Smith in his *Wealth of Nations,* as a mental straitjacket that distorted the meaning of work and of economic processes. He held that we work for meaning, not only for profit, and although the motive power of economic production is essentially to serve human needs as efficiently as possible, at its heart, economic activity is a cooperative, communal activity and not a competitive struggle for profit and survival, as rationalist economic thinking would have it.[28]

In the *World Economy* course of lectures Steiner differentiated between 'capitalism' as a social order and 'capital economy' as a mode of economy. Capitalism was seen as a form of society based on three economic untruths - private property,

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[23] Frans Calgren, *Rudolf Steiner 1861-1925*, (3rd edition) The Goetheanum School of Spiritual Science, Dornach, Switzerland1972, p. 32
[24] Steiner, *The Threefold Commonwealth*, Macmillan, NY,1922, p.82
[25] Steiner, *Education as a Social Problem*, op. cit. p. 34
[26] ibid p. 37
[27]Steiner*, Threefold Commonwealth*, op. cit. p. 12
[28] Christopher Schaefer, 'Rudolf Steiner as a Social Thinker', in *ReVision*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1992 p. 59

labour as a commodity, and ownership of capital. The key feature of capitalism is the conferring of power on those who own capital, and therefore has nothing to do with a 'capital economy' in which the economic process has more or less freed itself from inclusion within the cultural and political spheres. It has as a concomitant the emancipated consciousness of the individual. Capital economy only finds its true setting in the social order when capital finds its way to individuals, solely on the basis of their capacities.[29]

In the decisive years after the defeat of Germany and its allies Steiner addressed himself mainly to Germans. He aimed to establish in Central Europe a diversified social entity which by its example might mitigate the rigours of Western capitalism and Communist tyranny. His aim for Central Europe was to break down the power of the unitary state before it became completely totalitarian. He wanted to stem the intoxification of nationalism and to prevent the Germans from establishing another *Reich*. He tried to make the Germans realise that they could only influence the world if they concentrated on what was universally human, pointing to the cultural treasures, such as Goethe and Novalis, whom they could call their own but who, having concerned themselves with the universally human, had transcended what is purely German.[30] Such attitudes made Steiner a target for German nationalists who made an attempt on his life. As a result towards the end of 1922 he stopped lecturing in public to German audiences.

Steiner's social intentions are incompatible with the ethos of capitalism and in many respects more unconventional than communism. His ideas were radical, egalitarian, and anti-nationalistic [31] but although he withdrew from his extensive public efforts to influence social, economic, and political events, and in 1924 the 'The Coming

[29] Rudolf Steiner, *World Economy*, pp. 84-95; Budd, op. cit. pp. 77-78
[30] Lissau, op. cit. pp. 130-31

Day' initiative finally closed,[32] the Waldorf schools continued to develop independently all over the world.

3. The development of the ideal of the Threefold Social Order

In eighteenth century France the call for *Liberty, Equality,* and *Fraternity* sounded forth from the revolutionary ranks. Steiner maintained that these three ideals continued to be sought in the society of his time and so developed a form for a social order that supported a life that would give to human beings a sense of worth and value. Steiner insisted that in order to thrive the social organism must reflect the threefold organisation of the human being. But where does freedom or liberty truly reside, and where do we find equality? And though the term fraternity or brotherhood/sisterhood is often heard, what does it signify and where do we meet it? Steiner explained that we meet it in the image of the threefold human being.

In the anthroposophical *weltanschauung* the human being is differentiated into three qualitatively very different modes of experience which are never isolated from the rest of world. The human form, as well as its various functions, is considered to be a microcosmic expression of ever widening forms and systems in the macrocosmic world. The form of 'threefoldness' may be encountered in a number of contexts. In 1904 in his book *Theosophy* Steiner describes the human being as a threefold being, consisting of *spirit*, *soul*, and *body*;[33] In 1917 he first gave out his description of the threefold organism in which he shows how the body consists of three distinct though closely related organizations, a nerve-sense system centred in the head, a rhythmic-circulatory

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[31] ibid, p. 131
[32] Schaefer, 1988, op. cit. p. 8
[33] Rudolf Steiner, *Theosophy*, RSP, London, 1973. See Chapter 1.

system centred in the chest, and a metabolic-limb system centred in the abdomen. He goes on to describe however that in the human body,

> there is *no such thing as absolute centralisation* ... and moreover, each of these systems has its own special and distinct relation to the outer world, the head system through the senses, the rhythmic or circulatory system through the breathing, the metabolic system through the organs of nourishment and the organs of movement.[34]

These three systems are co-active in every part of the body: where there is nerve there is blood, and along with the blood, respiration and metabolism. They represent three different principles: the nerve-sense system comprising brain, nerves and senses is related to the conscious life of *thought*; the rhythmic-circulatory system comprising lungs, heart and circulation as the centre of the rhythmic functioning of the body to the life of *feeling*; and the metabolic-limb system to the life of *will*. Table 1 below clarifies the relationship between the various elements.

Human Being	**Human Soul**	**Physiological System**
Spirit	Thinking	Nerves/Senses (centred in head)
Soul	Feeling	Rhythmic (centred in chest)
Body	Will	Metabolic/Limbs (centred in abdomen)

Table 1: Physiological Sites for Soul Faculties

This human threefoldness is deemed to be reflected in the threefold nature of the social organism. Within the threefold social order the ‘cultural’ sphere is that realm of the organism where the expression of individual freedom or *liberty* can find its rightful place. In the realm of the human soul freedom may be experienced in thinking, and this is expressed through the body's nerve-sense system. The political or ‘rights’ sphere comes into play where individuals live in relationship with others, and this usually entails relinquishing some personal freedom out of respect for the interests of others and for the sake of social harmony. The human rhythmic system, the physical basis for

feeling and where the air we breathe in common with others is processed, is analogous to the 'rights' sphere of society. *Equality* belongs to the political sphere of society, where the legislation of human rights is enacted in parliaments and enforced through the courts. The 'economic' sphere is concerned with what is most efficient and sustainable in the production, distribution and consumption of resources, such as goods and services. In reality, no one works for themselves alone, rather the work of each person helps to provide for the needs of others, just like the metabolic organs serve the whole body. The key principle in this sphere is therefore not liberty or equality, but *fraternity*.

> It will then be evident that human cooperation in the *economic* life must be based on fraternity. ... In the second member, the *civil rights* system, which is concerned with purely human, person-to-person relations, it is necessary to strive for the realisation of the idea of equality. And in the relatively independent *spiritual* sector of the social organism it is necessary to strive for the realisation of the idea of freedom.[35]

With this formulation Steiner integrates the various parts of the human body and the human soul and unites them with a profound integrity into the spheres of society of which we are a part and to which we are inextricably united. The table should clarify the interrelations between the various elements.

Soul Activity	**Social Attribute**	**Social Sphere**
Thinking	Liberty	Cultural (Spiritual life)
Feeling	Equality	Political (Legal/rights)
Willing	Fraternity	Economic

Table 2: Individual Soul Faculties and the Body Social

But a healthy social order, like a healthy body, is found when the three organisms are working harmoniously. That is, when the principles of *liberty*, *equality* and *fraternity* are working in their appropriate sphere. Where this does not occur and there is a

[34] ibid. p. 49
[35] Steiner, *Towards Social Renewal*, RSP, London, 1977, p. 59

crossing of boundaries in social principles, an unhealthy social order is the usual result. For example, when the ideal of *liberty* dominates the *economic* sphere, as in the cult of individualism in free market capitalism, the freedom of the few is often at the expense of workers whose exploitation results in a widening gap between rich and poor. By measuring every human activity by its degree of profitability, capitalism destroys not only our environment but also the cohesion of society and the morality of the individual. But Steiner most of all attacked the hallowed principle of market forces. In October 1919 he observed that the 'body social' had become unhealthy because the economic sphere was dominating the whole social organism, and as a result education, which belongs in the 'cultural-spiritual sphere' and therefore should be developed out of the ideal of freedom, had become subject to market forces.

> The economic aspect of life has to a great extent overspread everything, because it has outgrown both political and cultural life, and has acted like a suggestion on the thoughts feelings and passions of men. Thus it becomes ever more evident that the manner in which the business of a nation is carried on determines, in reality, the cultural and political life of the people. It becomes ever more evident that the commercial and industrial magnates, by their position alone, have acquired the monopoly of culture. The economically weak remain the uneducated. A certain connection has become apparent between the economic and the cultural, and between the cultural and the political organisations.
> The cultural life has gradually become one that does not evolve out of its own inner needs and does not follow its own impulses, but, especially when it is under public administration, as in schools and educational institutions, it receives the form most useful to the political authority. The human being can no longer be judged according to his capacities; he can no longer be developed as his inborn talents demand. Rather is it asked, 'What does the state want?' 'What talents are needed for business?' 'How many men are wanted with a particular training?' The teaching, the schools, the examinations are all directed to this end. The cultural life cannot follow its own laws of development; it is adapted to the political and the economic life.[36]

The passage is quoted in full because this analysis seems prophetic concerning the consequences for the education sector, of government economic rationalist policy, in the latter part of this century.

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[36] Steiner, *The Social Future*, AP, NY, 1972, pp. 19-20

The usual outcome when the ideal of *equality* pervades the *cultural* sphere is sectarianism and indoctrination. This may be seen in religious fundamentalism or uncritical promotion of say, communist ideology as in the 'Cultural Revolution' in China. Another example of a confusion of principles in the social order is when the ideal of *fraternity* dominates the *cultural* sphere. The consequences of collectivisation in both Soviet and Chinese society was communal ownership of the means of production but at the cost of the suppression of the freedom of the individual. For Steiner this one-sided tendency, in which 'the hand' ignores the needs of 'the heart' and 'the head', was anti-social because the needs of one aspect marginalised the other two. He believed that such one-sidedness was the consequence of miseducation, commenting that such

> anti-social conditions are brought about because people are turned out into social life not educated to feel socially. People with social feelings can only come from a mode of education that is directed and carried on by persons who themselves feel socially. The *social* question will never be touched until the education question and the question of the spiritual life are treated as a vital part of it.[37]

Thus Steiner saw education as playing a pivotal role in bringing about social renewal, stating that

> if we will to bring about a true form of society in future it must be prepared through people's education....We must strongly develop the forces that *can* be developed in children's souls, so that later on they harvest the fruits of their childhood learning.[38]

Considering the generally one-sided nature of the organisation of most Western countries, at the time that Steiner was actively involved in social reform, there have been various developments of the social order along the direction promoted by Steiner. This may be seen especially in the political or rights sphere with advances in social legislation: unemployment benefits, pensions and sickness allowances, health services, legislation dealing with such matters as the relationships between landlord and tenant, the problem of monopolies and restrictive trading practices, equal opportunity, taxation,

[37] ibid., p. xxiv

and improved social services. Here it would seem that the rights sphere (equality) has been acting correctly in its own particular province.

However, while legislating the rights of all children to an education, and securing a choice in schooling, both in state run as well as in the degree of freedom granted to a variety of non-government schools, the political sphere still maintains considerable control of the education sector via its power to control the funding to both schools and the further and higher education sectors. The rights-sphere and the economic sphere have yet to develop an independent relationship to the cultural sphere. Waldorf schools, in a microscosmic way, are attempting to lay the groundwork for a social future that is more consistent with human nature.

4. The Threefold Social Order and the Birth of the Waldorf Schools

Although no comprehensive national movement for a threefold social order ever developed in the sense hoped for by Steiner, the campaign for a new social order had been especially well received in the big Waldorf-Astoria cigarette-factory in Stuttgart, Germany. The employees there had heard Rudolf Steiner speak on questions of further education, and wanted a new kind of education for their children. The director, Emil Molt, supported them and on April 23, 1919, asked Rudolf Steiner to take on the planning and leadership of a school for the children of the workers of the factory.[39] This school was founded in September 1919 'in conformity with the ideas underlying the threefold social order.'[40] In regard to the founding of this school, Steiner states:

> At the foundation of the school I not only endeavoured to give shape to externals, corresponding to the requirements and the impulse of the threefold order. I also strove to present pedagogy and didactics to the teaching staff of this new kind of school in

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[38] Steiner, *Education as a Social Problem*, AP, NY, 1969 p. 45
[39] Christine Murphy, *Emil Molt and the Beginnings of the Waldorf School Movement*, Floris Books, Edinburgh, 1991, pp137-38; also Frans Calgren, op. cit. p. 33;
[40] Steiner, *The Social Future*, op. cit. p. 97

> such a light that the human being would be educated to face life and be able to bring about a social future in accordance with certain unconquerable instincts in human nature. ... The pedagogy of the future will not be a normal science. It will be a true art, the art of developing the human being.[41]

In developing the first Waldorf school, Steiner connected the three areas of social life (cultural, rights, and economic) and the three universally human ideals (liberty, equality, and fraternity) with the three main developmental stages of the growing young human being - infancy, childhood and adolescence - and the educational principles which should prevail at each stage, namely imitation, authority and independence.[42] Steiner refers to the aspects of the human being which are developed in the first three seven-year phases of life by the terminology 'physical', 'etheric', and 'astral' bodies.

> ...upon this threefold educational basis must be erected what is to flourish for mankind's future. If we do not know that the physical body must become an imitator in the right way we shall merely implant animal instincts in this body. If we are not aware that between the seventh and fourteenth year the ether body passes through a special development that must be based on authority, there will develop in man merely a universal cultural drowsiness, and the force needed for the rights organism will not be present. If from the fifteenth year onward we do not infuse all education in a sensible way with the power of love that is bound to the astral body, men will never be able to develop their astral bodies into independent beings. These things intertwine.
> Proper imitation develops freedom;
> Authority develops the rights life;
> Brotherliness, love, develops the economic life.
> But turned about it is also true. When love is not developed in the right way, freedom is lacking; and when imitation is not developed in the right way, animal instincts grow rampant.[43]

Life Stage	**Soul Activity**	**Pedagogic Mode**	**Social Sphere**
Infant 0-7	Willing	Imitation	Economic
Child 7-14	Feeling	Authority	Rights
Adolescent 14+	Thinking	Freedom/ responsibility	Cultural

Table 3: Child Development and the Social Spheres

With these comments Steiner indicated firstly, the importance of developing the moral forces in childhood and youth through an education which is founded upon the threefold

[41] ibid. pp.97-100

image of the human being, and secondly with developing a pedagogy aimed towards helping the children strengthen the qualities that would allow them to respond to the social ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. The implications of these ideas for a practical teaching methodology are covered in a wide range of books on Waldorf education listed in the bibliography and will not be detailed here.

5. Threefoldness and School Organisation

The school community may be considered a miniature society which also has a cultural, rights and an economic sphere. Steiner placed education within the spiritual-cultural sphere, insisting that all responsibility for the management of institutions within this sphere belongs to those directly involved in its day to day running. In other words the educational policy of a school should be formulated and executed by the teachers, since it is an institution of the free spiritual life, though social and economic policy will involve other stakeholders.

Although, according to Steiner, the school belongs to the spiritual-cultural sphere, the other two branches of the threefold order are necessarily present. School structures usually comprise the College of Teachers, which is made up of the teaching staff, a School Council or Board of Directors, and a Parent Association made up of the parents of the children who attend the school. While these three spheres of activity serve in common the whole school community, they are differentiated because they each have separate functions. The arrangement of the human organism into three systems, emphasises Steiner ‘is not a spatial delimination of the bodily members, but is according

[42] Steiner, *Education as a Social Problem*; Childs, *Steiner Education:Theory and Practice,* 1991, p. 5
[43] ibid. Steiner p. 17

to the activities (functions) of the organism…Nevertheless, the three functional types are, *according to their natures,* sharply separated.'[44]

As a result of many decades of experience, more recent literature in the field of organisational management of institutes which base their work on Anthroposophy[45] consistently supports the view that a threefoldness is indeed formed in intermediate social structures, such as Waldorf schools, art schools, adult education colleges, and institutions for people with disabilities. However, what the *spiritual-cultural* sphere, sphere of *rights,* and the *economic* sphere are for the whole social organism, a *spiritual life*, *social life* and *working life* are for the smaller social organism. [46]

The College of Teachers, which normally has the responsibility for directing a Waldorf school, has the primary task of ensuring that the students receive the education that it claims to offer, mainly an 'education towards freedom'[47]; secondly, it must maintain as paramount the staff requirement for academic freedom in order that individual teachers'creativity may be sustained; and thirdly, it must defend the freedom of the school from interference by the state or other interests, such as business or industry, in matters concerning curriculum and methodology.[48]

By virtue of the fact that these three groups, (College of Teachers, School Council, Parent Association) contribute to the health and well being of the Waldorf school community, they may be pictured as adopting the function of one of the three spheres of the social order, though naturally on a much smaller scale. But Steiner insisted that this freedom should not only apply to Waldorf schools.

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[44] ibid in Footnote p. 54

[45]See Bernard Lievegoed, *The Developing Organisation*, Tavistock, London, 1976; Martin Large, *Social Ecology*, Hawthorne Press, Stroud, UK, 1984; and C. Schaefer and T. Voors, *Vision in Action; The Art of Shaping Initiatives*, Hawthorne Press, Stroud, UK, 1986.

[46] Bernard C. J. Lievegoed, *Developing Communities*, Hawthorn Press, Stroud, UK, 1993, especially the section "The Organising of Cultural Institutes" pp. 165-192

[47] See Calgren, op. cit. Introduction.

> Even the schools which directly serve the state and the economy should be administered by the educators: law schools, trade schools, agricultural and industrial colleges, all should be administered by representatives of a free spiritual life.[49]

Thus, education, 'lying as it does at the root of all spiritual life, must be put under the management of those people who are educating and teaching'[50] and therefore rightfully becomes, in a Waldorf school, the responsibility of the College of Teachers. All members of the school community participate in its social life and therefore good communication between the various 'stakeholders' (teachers, parents, students, government authorities, etc) is crucial to insure that the *rights* or interests of all are considered. Participation in the daily working life of the school involves all the teachers, ancilliary staff, including bursar, book-keepers, office staff, and whoever else is in the school's employ.

Social Attribute	Social Sphere	School Sphere	Responsible Bodies
Freedom	Cultural	Educational policy (Spiritual life)	College of Teachers
Equality	Rights	Social policy (Social Life)	School Council (Parents + Teachers)
Fraternity	Economic	Financial policy (Working life)	Parent Association

Table 4: School Organisation

It is evident from the preceding pages that Steiner believed, and vigorously asserted, that through education the foundations can be laid for a new form of society. This foundation can only be strengthened if the social organism (or institution) which provides the education is itself a reflection of the form of society towards which it is striving . 'If this social organism [of the Waldorf school] is to function in a healthy way it must methodically cultivate three constituent members.'[51] This is a clear recommendation

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[48] Steiner, *Towards Social Renewal*, op. cit. p. 12
[49] ibid, p. 13
[50] Steiner, *The Threefold Commonwealth*, Macmillan, NY, 1922, p. 19
[51] Steiner, *Towards Social Renewal,* op. cit. pp. 57-8

that Waldorf schools should strive to structure themselves in a threefold way consistent with the impulse for social renewal that brought them into being.

6. Conclusion

Steiner tried, unsuccessfully, to influence the reconstruction of German social life towards adopting the Threefold ideas. In this chapter an elaboration of how these ideas were developed as well as the connection between the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity and the threefold human being (both physiological systems and psychological aspects) has been presented. An outline was given of how the threefold ideas became implanted in the educational and organizational forms of the Waldorf school indicating that the vision of a social future created by socially responsible individuals lies at the heart of the social aims of the Waldorf school movement. It also becomes fundamentally important that the teacher educator has a clear understanding and reasoned commitment to the threefold social order ideal. This ideal is yet another of the anthroposophical ideas which a prospective Waldorf teacher will have to study in order to more fully understand the implications of Rudolf Steiner education.

Chapter 3

Waldorf Teacher Training: Historical and Contemporary Aspects

Section 1

"Spiritually oriented teacher training"

Section three of the last chapter showed that Waldorf pedagogy and the Waldorf schools are inextricably bound up with Steiner's intentions for social renewal, and it was shown that the year 1919 was an intensively active time for him in this regard. For example, from January to April he lectured extensively on his concept of the threefold social order, in April his book *The Threefold Commonwealth* was published,[1] and Emil Molt asked him to take on the planning and leadership of a new school. It seemed inevitable, given his deep concern about the social upheavals, that in accepting this responsibility Steiner would relate his pedagogy to the social conditions of the time. During the summer months of 1919 Steiner stressed the connections between social demands and the rejuvenation of educational methods needed to meet those demands.[2] In August he gave a series of lectures in Dornach, Switzerland to members of the Anthroposophical Society, in which he made known his intention to bring his pedagogical ideas to realisation in the school to be founded by Dr. Emil Molt.

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[1] This book was clearly popular in Germany as it sold upward of 80,000 copies in the first year. (From the jacket of the book *Education as a Social Problem.)*

[2] Doris M. Bugbey in Foreword of *Education as a Social Problem.*

The lecture course, later published as *Education as a Social Problem*[3] was primarily concerned with the perceptible consequences of materialism in the culture of the time. Steiner emphasised that of the many social problems that had been under discussion during the lecture course, that of education was the most important. It is only at this point that the central thesis of his talk is stated: that 'within the whole complex of this subject the training of teachers is the most important auxiliary question.'[4] Not surprisingly, the fourth of these six lectures, called 'Education as a question of spiritually oriented teacher training', contains the most specific pronouncements on what constitute essential pre-requisites for a teacher training of the future.

In this lecture Steiner observed that the predominant characteristic in the development of culture since the fifteenth century was its increasing tendency towards materialism and said that 'nothing could have such a lasting effect as the permeation of educational philosophy by materialism.'[5] He cited the adoption of the latest educational method, that of the widespread use of the 'object lesson,' as an example of the lack of understanding by educators of children's natures, of what they need to nourish their souls, and how their learning can be most fruitful. Steiner's observation of the general uncertainty about what direction should be taken in education led him to ask what he calls 'the burning question.' That is: 'What then do we have to strive for in order to have the right teacher training in the future?…How can teacher training be transformed?'[6]

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[3] Rudolf Steiner, *Education as a Social Problem,* (Dornach, August 9-17, 1919), Anthroposophic Press, New York, 1969.
[4] Ibid p. 64
[5] ibid p. 65. In a lecture in Berne, given on December 12, 1918, called 'Social and Antisocial Forces in the Human Being', Steiner had elaborated on the development of materialistic thinking and its effects on human culture.
[6] ibid p. 66

It is a leading question for his lecture, and he went on to argue that the answer could not be found in the materialistic world outlook, nor in intellectual schemes but that a new understanding of the human being should become the basis for education in the future. This understanding should be based on a deepened knowledge of the spiritual forces at work in human life, and with it new concepts involved in the training of teachers. That is, concepts derived from what he terms 'an anthropology resulting from anthroposophy'.[7]

> Teachers must be permeated by the reality of the human being's connection with the supersensible worlds. They must be in the position to see in growing children evidence that they have descended from the supersensible world through conception and birth, have clothed themselves with a body, and wish to acquire here in the physical world what they cannot acquire in the life between death and a new birth, and in which the teachers have to help.[8]

Steiner was speaking to members of the Anthroposophical Society, and because they were likely to be already familiar with the spiritual research which he had carried on during the previous twenty years, he is neither circumspect in his comments nor unambiguous in his expectations of what would be required of teachers working from 'an anthropology resulting from anthroposophy'. Apart from the comments in the above quotation on the nature of a child's incarnation and requirement in life, Steiner went on to say that

- teachers must learn to see man 'in many respects as a threefold being',
- they must acquire for themselves an 'inwardly mobile thinking' so that they can understand the differences between the 'nerve-sense man, rhythmical man, and metabolic man' and

[7] ibid p. 67
[8] ibid pp. 66-67

- they must be able to work with these interpenetrating realities without needing to resort to diagrams which divide aspects of the human constitution neatly into separate boxes. [9]

The lecture cycle above was given in Dornach and finished on August 17, only four days before the initial teacher training course was due to start in Stuttgart. Between the 21st August and 5th September, 1919 Steiner conducted this "teacher's course", the structure and content of which will be considered in some detail in Section 2 as it may be seen as a model which influenced the formation of later courses.

[9] ibid pp.67-69

Chapter 3: Section 2

The Initial Teacher Training Course

1. The Structure of the 1919 Teachers Course

Three daily courses consisting of lectures, discussions and seminars later titled *Study of Man*, *Practical Advice to Teachers*, and *Discussions with Teachers* together form the basic material of the original training course presented by Steiner to the teachers of the first Waldorf school. These courses almost invariably are used as basic study material in the various teacher training centres for Waldorf teachers throughout the world. For convenience, this first training course henceforth will be referred to as the *1919 Teachers' Course.* The structure of the initial training course is summarised in Table 1.

Dates	Morning Course	Mid-morning Course	Afternoon Seminars
21st August 1919 to 5th September 1919	*Study of Man (Menschenkunde)*	*Practical Advice to Teachers*	*Discussions With Teachers*
6th September 1919	Curriculum Lectures	Curriculum Lectures	Curriculum Lectures

Table 1: The 1919 Teachers Course

The 1919 Teachers' Course, especially the lectures in *Study of Man*, is generally considered within the Waldorf school movement as a seminal course which contains the basic ideas and principles which underpin the educational philosophy. However they are not 'basic' in the sense of being simple. Rather, the content is very demanding and readers unfamiliar with the basic concepts of anthroposophy may find it perplexing or even unintelligible in places. In his biographical sketch on the

beginnings of the Waldorf school movement, Emil Molt described the preparatory phase in which the teachers received their training.

> On August 19th, 1919, I brought Dr and Frau Dr Steiner to Stuttgart for the teachers' course, which Dr Steiner wanted to hold for a limited circle of teachers and friends of the movement.[1]

Notwithstanding the fact that the *Study of Man* lectures are difficult and that the first teachers were privileged in several ways, there is a 'folklore' within the Waldorf school movement about the unique status of the first teachers. This is already suggested by the preceding quotation which refers to 'a limited circle of teachers and friends', who were invited to be present at the first training course. The implication seems to be that they were very well versed in anthroposophy, and that the course content was not as difficult for those people as it seems to be for many prospective teachers studying this course of lectures today. In the foreword of *Study of Man* this aspect of the folklore is supported by the comment of the editor that the participants 'were already familiar with Steiner's fundamental teaching as to the nature and evolution of man and the world'.[2] This folklore, has continued to be perpetuated over time, such as in the following quotation by a Canadian author and anthroposophist (who is well known within the anthroposophical movement).

> It should be recognised that these first teachers had been chosen by Steiner himself, and all had already at their disposal a fundamental grasp of anthroposophy, even if they lacked as yet teaching experience. The cycle *The Study of Man*, is therefore, quite naturally, exceedingly difficult for the beginner, and enters into matters far beyond the experience of the ordinary person who knows little or nothing about anthroposophy, however much teaching experience he has enjoyed.[3]

While having 'a fundamental grasp of anthroposophy' was clearly the case for most of the participants of the initial training course, it was not for all. Molt, the managing

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[1]Christine Murphy, *Emil Molt and the beginnings of the Waldorf School movement*, Floris Books, Edinburgh, 1991, p 142

[2]Rudolf Steiner, *Study of Man: General Education Course,* translated by Daphne Harwood and Helen Fox, revised by A.C. Harwood, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1966, p 14

director of the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory, described Steiner as broad minded in his choice of teachers. As an example, 'the sister of one of my acquaintances had applied to the Waldorf school. She was a teacher by profession but did not know the first thing about anthroposophy or of the personality of Rudolf Steiner. He spoke with her before the beginning of the course and then invited her to attend. She became a very able Waldorf teacher'.[4] Neither did the over a dozen who attended the course become teachers. For example, Molt stated that 'my wife and I were permitted to participate from beginning to end. It was a lofty and blessed time of learning for us'.[5] Neither Molt or his wife became teachers, though Frau Molt did become a housemother and later taught handwork. Steiner's inclusion of these special cases set a precedent for the future. The principles of remaining flexible about who is accepted into a teacher training course, and considering each applicant on their own merits, seemed to over-ride the use of established pre-requisites or fixed criteria for eligibility.

At the opposite pole were people who were thoroughly familiar with Steiner and Anthroposophy. One of these was Herbert Hahn who was a friend of the Molts, and had recently been engaged in coordinating the adult educational activity of the workers of the Waldorf Astoria[6] which had been 'set on foot by the Movement for the Threefold Social Order'.[7] Another candidate was E. A. Karl Stockmeyer, who had been teaching in a high school in Baden and 'had been acquainted both with Rudolf

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[3] Stewart C. Easton, *Man and the World in the Light of Anthroposophy*, AP, NY, 1975, pp. 409-10
[4] Murphy op. cit., p143. Molt does not name the individual in question.
[5] ibid
[6] ibid, p 136
[7] Herbert Hahn, "How the Waldorf School Arose from the Threefold Social Movement" in *A Man Before Others: Rudolf Steiner Remembered,* Rudolf Steiner Press, Bristol, 1993, pp 55-72 esp. p 61. Molt was a significant member and supporter of the Movement for the Threefold Social Order.

Steiner as a personality and with his teachings from the early days'.[8] Stockmeyer was given the task of looking for other teachers, some of whom were suggested by Steiner.[9]

In this way a provisional teaching faculty or 'collegium of teachers', comprising people from all walks of life, was brought together over the course of a few months. One of Steiner's biographers commented that in hindsight 'one is astonished at the abundance of teachers of more than average attainment who were brought together within such a short time to form the original teaching staff.'[10] Most of these people (see footnote) later distinguished themselves by publishing works on aspects of Waldorf education and Anthroposophy.[11]

The course of fourteen morning lectures were published in 1932 in book form titled *Allgemeine Menschenkunde als Grundlage der Pädagogik* (Study of Man as a Foundation for Pedagogy). The first English editions of the *Study of Man* (Rudolf Steiner Publishing Company, London, and Anthroposophic Press, NY) were translations from this German edition, and appeared in 1947. A second English edition (Rudolf Steiner Press, 1966) was a revised translation of the fifth (1960) edition of the German text. This detail is emphasised to highlight the fact that English speaking teachers did not have access to the translations of these original lectures until after World War II, and more widely until after the middle of the 1960s.

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[8]ibid p 64

[9]Murphy op. cit. p. 138

[10]Johannes Hemleben, *Rudolf Steiner: A Documentary Biography*, Henry Goulden, Sussex, 1975, pp121-22

[11]ibid. Some well known names, within the anthroposophical and Waldorf movements, who comprised the first Collegium are Karl Stockmeyer, Dr. Eugen Kolisko, Dr Walter Johannes Stein, Professor Hermann von Baravalle, Dr Hahn, Dr Ernst Lehrs, Dr Schwebsch, Dipl. Ing. Alexander Strakosch, Ernst Bindel, Ernst Uehli, Maria Roschl, Dr. Caroline von Heiderbrand, Max Wolfhugel (painter), Paul Baumann (musician), and others.

The second series of fourteen lectures delivered each day, following the morning course, titled *Erziehungkunst. Methodisch-Didaktisches* (Art of Teaching: Didactical Method) was first published in English in 1937 as *Practical Advice to Teachers* by Rudolf Steiner Publishing Company, London and Anthroposophic Press, NY. The 1976 translation by Johannah Collis, and published by Rudolf Steiner Press, London, is more readily available.

The third series of fifteen afternoon discussions, available in German as *Erziehungkunst. Seminarbersprechungen und Lehrplanfortrage* (Art of Teaching: Seminar Discussions and Curriculum Planning) was published in 1967 as *Discussions with Teachers*, translated by Helen Fox and published by Rudolf Steiner Press, London.

2. Content of the 1919 Teachers Course

Having outlined the daily organisation of the three cycles in the 1919 Teachers' Course, its content will now be examined in order to discern whether and in what way it has served as a model for the training courses which followed.

The Study of Man

The title of the morning lecture series, *Allgemeine Menschenkunde als Grundlage der Padagogik* (Study of Man as a Foundation for Pedagogy), suggests that the course deals with all that needs to be understood about the human being that will be the foundation or ground on which the pedagogy is constructed. This foundation is a general anthropology which, in this context, is all that is contained in Steiner's Anthroposophy. Further consideration will be given to this point later in the chapter.

The fourteen lectures in *Study of Man* are not only concerned with education. They contain Steiner's fundamental views on human psychology. His psychological

perspective takes into account the forces which play into the human being from the past as well as of future states of consciousness. Although these are potential states to be realised at a future time, Steiner believed that they nevertheless affect our character and destiny because 'it is in the balancing out of the past with the future that we escape determinism and find our true nature as free beings.'[12] This claim is important and because it is the theme of one of Steiner's early works *The Philosophy of Freedom,* Waldorf education has since been called 'an education towards freedom'.

Before beginning with the subject of education proper, Steiner's first lecture is an introduction to the task of Waldorf education. He begins by 'making a preliminary survey of what the educational task' of the teachers will be.

> Now much will depend on placing ourselves in the right relation to our task at the outset. We must learn to understand that we have to give a very definite guidance to our age - guidance which is of importance, not because it is considered valid for the whole evolution of humanity, but because it is valid just for this age of ours.[13]

Steiner explained that particular historical epochs had particular tasks, and repeated the position made in the previous week in Dornach when he gave the lecture 'Education as a question of spiritually oriented teacher training', that from about the fifteenth century the Western world has seen increasing egoism and materialism, and that these have been accompanied by a decline in awareness of the spiritual dimension of life. Anthroposophical spiritual science contributes a perspective which can counterbalance materialism and egoism because it embraces the spirit as a reality, and places human consciousness in a more realistic relation to the activity of spiritual beings. Indeed, many points in the first lecture of *Study of Man* are restatements, from a slightly different perspective, of statements made in the lecture cited above. Steiner emphasised the point that in education teachers must fill themselves with the

[12]Rudolf Steiner, *Study of Man*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1966, p. 15
[13]ibid

consciousness that 'here, in this human being, you, with your action, have to achieve a continuation of what higher beings have done before [her/his] birth.'[14]

Unlike the traditional mission of Christian education, which was to be an 'education for salvation' [of the immortal soul], Steiner, while embracing the existence of the human soul and spirit, drew the focus away from immortality and the after-life to the period before birth. He highlighted the importance of seeing physical existence not as just a new beginning at birth, but as a continuation of the spiritual existence in a new physical body. Therefore teachers are required to carry on 'what has hitherto been done by higher beings without our participation.'[15]

This is not the usual view held in our times in the West and may even, at first, be met with disbelief and rejection. In time the prospective teacher's feelings of reverence for the child, awe at the responsibility of the task, and a realistic sense of humility regarding one's capacity to carry on the task which higher beings began, may follow. Hopefully it will because, said Steiner: 'This alone will give the right mood and feeling to our whole system of teaching and education.' [16] But how do teachers cultivate this 'mood and feeling'?

Knowledge about and practical experience in this cultivation is another area which Steiner probably took for granted; mainly that an inner path of development through study, contemplation and meditation, in combination with working in the world, would be a normal part of one's life, and that developing an appreciation, and eventually a perception, of the spiritual dimension of life, was an integral part of

[14]ibid p. 17. The period "before birth" does not refer to a previous incarnation in a physical body, but to the life of the soul in the spiritual world between the last death and the present birth.
[15]ibid
[16]ibid

professional practice. Familiarity with another of Steiner's basic texts, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, would also have been taken for granted.

Whether prospective teachers see their task as a vocation or as a career often becomes evident in this area of inner development. The former is following 'a calling' while the 'career teacher' may perform professionally without necessarily having an inner conviction. Steiner might suggest that 'according to one's karma', the degree of commitment may change during one's life, or remain clear from the beginning. The key point is that 'you can only become good teachers if you pay attention not merely to what you do but also to what you are'. [17] Being a spiritually striving individual with an active meditative life will undoubtedly contribute to what one is.

Thus we see that the first introductory lecture explores a variety of issues pertinent to teaching, most of which is taken for granted. The second lecture begins:

> In the future all teaching must be founded on a real psychology - a psychology which has been gained through an anthroposophical knowledge of the world.[18]

The next four lectures deal with this 'real psychology' and contain instruction about the nature of the human being from the standpoint of the soul. The inner life of the 'soul' has already been described as consisting of the faculties of thinking, feeling and willing. In these lectures the nature of thinking, feeling and willing is elaborated in the context of the life before birth and after death, in connection with their anatomical and physiological expression, in relation to the natural world and the spiritual world, and much more.

From lecture seven the nature of the human being is described from the point of view of the spirit. An exposition of three archetypal states of consciousness - waking, dreaming and sleeping follows from this added perspective. The nature of

[17]ibid p. 23

thinking, feeling and willing is described anew but now from the point of view of the spirit, and some recognisable expressions of these states of consciousness in education are described. For example, the three different types of memory, the revelations of the twelve senses, and the three stages of logical thinking - from conclusion to judgement to concept. Developing an understanding of these concepts has been and ongoing function of inservice training, and continues to be up to the present.[19]

Many of the ideas which were only outlined in these lectures have since become whole units of courses of study in Waldorf teacher training seminars. What Steiner condensed in a two week course has since been elaborated into studies which are variously taken over between one and four years.

It will be noted, as we proceed with our analysis of different teacher training courses, that many have a component which introduces Steiner's exercises and meditations. These practises, which are designed to promote inner development, of course, can never be compelled. The teacher is encouraged to freely undertake them, not out of duty or as a result of external expectations but from a willingness to enhance their faculties of imagination, inspiration, and intuition; faculties which they understand to be essential for developing creativity and continuing to work creatively. Steiner insisted however that the development of such faculties should not be for personal gain (egocentric motives) but as a service to the greater task previously suggested.

Practical Advice to Teachers

[18]ibid p. 26

[19]For example, the focus of the 2nd International Waldorf Teacher Education Conference (Zeist, Holland, 14-17 March 1996) was to study certain aspects of the fourth lecture of *The Study of Man*.

Whereas the content of *Study of Man* presupposed a background knowledge, and established the basis for continuing study, the content of the second course of lectures, *Practical Advice to Teachers*, deals with issues which are of practical and immediate use. Topics range from dealing with the practical difficulties to be encountered in relation to meeting State requirements, to principles of curriculum development in relation to stages of child development, to sequencing of content for specific subject areas such as natural history, geography, drawing and painting, writing and reading, and much more.

Irrespective of the more practical focus, Steiner maintains the continuity of intention, begun in the morning lectures, that in employing 'our method' teachers will be dealing in a particular way with bringing harmony between the higher nature of the human being, 'the man of spirit and soul, with the physical bodily man, the lower man.'[20] Steiner goes on to emphasise that the subject content is only a means to a greater end, and the traditional purpose of education as the transmission of knowledge will not be the major focus.

> The subjects you teach will not be treated in the way they have been dealt with hitherto. You will in a way have to use them as means with which to develop the soul and bodily forces of the individual in the right way. What matters for you will not be the transmitting of knowledge as such; you will be concerned with handling the knowledge for the purpose of developing human capacities. You will above all have to distinguish between subject matter which rests on convention or tradition […] and knowledge founded on a recognition of universal human nature.[21]

The general tenor of the lectures indicates a concern for the most effective and beneficial means of educating while never divorcing the ideal from the practical means of achieving it. For example: 'In teaching children reading and writing we are working in the most exclusively physical domain; in arithmetic our teaching is already

[20] Rudolf Steiner, *Practical Advice to Teachers*, p. 9
[21] ibid. pp. 9-10

less physical; and in music or drawing or kindred fields we really teach the soul-spirit or spirit-soul of the child.'[22]

With great emphasis Steiner expresses the importance of teaching becoming an art and that the subject matter is only its basis.

> It will be our task to find teaching methods that all the time engage the whole human being. We should not succeed in this were we not to turn our attention to developing the latent artistic sense of the human being. …The fundamental flaw hitherto has always been that people have stood in the world with their head nature only, merely trailing the rest of their being along behind. …It is not just that the artistic element must be cultivated; the actual teaching of every lesson must be drawn from the artistic realm. Educating and teaching must become a real art. Subject matter must not be more than the underlying basis.[23]

Interspersed throughout these lectures are passing critical comments on various teaching methods proposed and used by contemporary educators, both to show what Steiner considered suitable and what was thought to be harmful, unnecessarily materialistic, intellectual or prematurely applied.

These lectures ended on 5 September 1919 but Steiner told the course participants that: 'Tomorrow we shall juxtapose the ideal curriculum and the curriculum that is at the moment customary in other Central European schools.'[24] Indeed on the following day Steiner gave three curriculum lectures in which he gave an outline of the aims of teaching in the different subjects during the different ages of the children in the various classes. In these lectures he also indicated how some subjects can be linked together, or using contemporary terminology "integrated", in the way they are treated. [25]

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[22] ibid. p. 10
[23] ibid. p. 13
[24] ibid. p. 189
[25] On 6 September 1919 Steiner gave the three so-called Curriculum Lectures. Based on them are the books *Curriculum of the First Waldorf School* , by Caroline von Heyderbrand, Steiner Schools Fellowship, 1966, and *Rudolf Steiner's Curriculum for Waldorf Schools*, by E. A. Karl Stockmeyer, Steiner Schools Fellowship, 1969.

As closing words to what was a very full course of lectures Steiner gave the prospective teachers some heartfelt advice. 'Something which I wish to lay upon your hearts. And this is that I would like you to keep steadfastly to the following four principles.' Although Steiner elaborated upon each of these, only the relevant principle will be quoted.

- *Firstly, the teacher must be a person of initiative in everything that is done, great and small.*
- *Secondly, the teacher should be one who is interested in the being of the whole world and of humanity.*
- *Thirdly, the teacher must be one who never makes a compromise in his or her heart with what is untrue.*
- *Fourthly, the teacher must never get stale or grow sour.*

These principles are widely regarded as fundamental ideals for teachers in the Waldorf school movement and underlie much of the rationale for ongoing in-service training in Waldorf schools.

As with the previous cycle of lectures, the content of the *Practical Advice to Teachers* cycle of lectures has been elaborated and now makes up the second major strand of studies in Waldorf teacher training courses, mainly curriculum development in relation to child development.

Discussions with Teachers

The third component of the 1919 Teachers Conference was a series of afternoon seminars the content of which comprise the volume *Discussions with Teachers.*

> In these afternoon sessions I shall speak informally about your educational tasks:- the distribution of work in the school, arrangement of lessons and the like. For the first two or three days we shall have to deal chiefly with the question of our relationship to the children…the important thing for us to bear in mind is the *diversity* of children and indeed of human beings as a whole.[26]

[26]Rudolf Steiner *Discussions with Teachers*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1967, p. 11.

A synopsis of the content reveals a wide ranging agenda including seminal indications on the nature of the four temperaments and their use in introducing and developing basic language and number concepts. Use of stories for pedagogical and therapeutic purposes, dealing with children who have specific social or learning difficulties, placing the human being in the centre as a fundamental focus in subject matter, and many suggestions on approaches to developing lessons for primary age children are included in these seminars.

The content of these discussions ‘arose spontaneously out of the practical tasks’ which Steiner had given the prospective teachers to work out.[27] While the content of the teachers' ‘homework’ was generally the basis of the discussions, [28] the book contains mostly Steiner's responses and contributions. The flavour of a seminar pervades the chapters of the book and reveals both Steiner's breadth of knowledge in a wide range of subjects, as well as more personal qualities such as his humour and teaching style. The relevant methodological point for teacher training is that the participants were given tasks to do, usually overnight, and had to give presentations to their colleagues.

Another significant element which was introduced in these seminars was the use of speech exercises. Steiner attributed great importance to the quality of the sounds of speech, and after the first few discussions he began every session with speech exercises. These exercises have since become a regular part of the artistic components of training courses, along with choral speaking, story telling, role playing, improvisation and drama.

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[27]ibid,Preface.

[28]The prospective teachers' names remain anonymous in this book because the questions or contributions are indicated by letters which bear no relation to their actual names.

The seminar/discussion format permitted individual presentations, feedback, discussion, and additional input from Steiner. This pedagogical approach seemed to be most suitable for adult learners at that time and since, and has been widely adopted in existing training courses.

3. Summary

An analysis of the structure and content of the 1919 Teachers Conference reveals that it contains the following strands:

*Philosophy of Education (Foundation Studies in Anthroposophy).

The basic ideas in Anthroposophy are taken for granted and a familiarity with "spiritual anthropology" is largely implied throughout, but especially in the *Study of Man* lectures.

*Psychology of Education (Child Development).

The nature of the human being, and especially the nature of the soul (psyche), is covered in detail in the *Study of Man* lectures and as appropriate in the other two courses.

*Methodology.

This occurs in passing in *Study of Man* and is dealt with in much greater detail in the other two courses. (Except in lecture four, towards the end of which Steiner emphasises the importance of repetition in the training of the will of young children).

*Curriculum Development.

Primarily dealt with in *Practical Advice to Teachers* and *Discussions with Teachers*.

The limitations imposed by lack of time in a two week course precluded the inclusion of further activities. However Steiner , as director of the first Waldorf school, regularly attended and actively participated in the teachers' meetings. From the founding of the school in 1919 until his death in 1925 Steiner attended seventy conferences with the college of teachers of the Independent Waldorf School that was under his direction, during which much that had been started was developed further.[29] Thus a relatively short but comprehensive and intensive course of study followed by ongoing in-service training, which arose from the practical necessities of the situation in the first school, provided a model which has since been used extensively in the Waldorf school movement for teacher preparation and development.

[29] Rudolf Steiner's *Conferences with the Teachers of the Waldorf School in Stuttgart 1919-1924 (Vols 1-4),* Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications, Forest Row, E. Sussex, UK 1987.

Chapter 3: Section 3

Further Indications for Teacher Training

1. The importance of Self-development

The following section covers some main points that Steiner made, additional to those already covered in the discussion on the *1919 Teachers Course*, in connection with teacher training. It was noted in Section 1 of this chapter that in 1919, while speaking in Dornach, Switzerland to a group of anthroposophists, Steiner stated that the rejuvenation of educational methods was the key to meeting the, then, current pressing social demands, and that 'within the whole complex of this subject the training of teachers is the most important auxiliary question.'[1] In 1921, lecturing to the teachers in the first school in Stuttgart, Steiner asked teachers to examine themselves and realise how far they are products of the age, and how deeply they have been called on to submit themselves - through long and arduous training at school and university - to the intellectual materialism of the natural-scientific point of view. This will have led them far from the, as yet, uncontaminated minds of young girls and boys.[2] Steiner reiterated how important it was that teachers rediscover what it is to be a child.[3] Later in 1922, when lecturing at Manchester College, Oxford, to a general audience without previous knowledge of anthroposophy, he made the point that 'the question of education is principally a question of teachers'.[4] Again in 1923, when lecturing in Ilkley, Yorkshire, Steiner stressed that it is essential that teachers realised 'how feeble our ideas have

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[1] Rudolf Steiner, (Dornach 1919), *Education as a Social Problem*, NY, 1969, p. 64
[2] Rudolf Steiner, (Stuttgart 1921), *Waldorf Education for Adolescence*, Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications, UK 1980, p. 74
[3] ibid. p. 104
[4] Rudolf Steiner, (Oxford 1922), *The Spiritual Ground of Education*, London 1947, p. 15

become in modern civilisation',[5] and in 1924, when lecturing on Curative Education in Dornach, he stressed that if teachers are to truly understand their students the first step is to conquer the vanity and sense of superiority with which intellectualism fills us[6], and then learn to bring our dead intellectual knowledge to life by permeating it with feeling and will, saying that:

> The whole of our being must work in us as educators, not only the thinking man: the man of feeling and the man of will must also play their part.[7]

Elsewhere Steiner said that the personal qualities and strengths of teachers in Waldorf schools were much more important than any intellectual knowledge or technical skills they may have,[8] and the teacher must cultivate the 'highest ideals of humanity' especially when engaged with younger children.[9] They should learn not so much to be engrossed in acquiring subject matter, 'but rather how to cherish and cultivate within [themselves] the *spirit of an education which bears the future within it*'.[10]

The development of the teachers' imaginative and intuitive consciousness enables them to awaken the children's feelings, and all this is carried over into artistic activities which engage the child's will. Therefore teacher training should be concerned with developing the teacher's artistic sensibilities.[11] Teachers should strive, 'not for obscure, nebulous mysticism, but for the courageous, energetic permeation of their being with spirituality' which ensures that when they speak of the physical world they will not be led astray by materialism.[12] They must develop moral intuition from their

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[5] Rudolf Steiner, (Ilkley 1923), *Education and Modern Spiritual* Life, AP, London 1954, p. 99. Also translated as A *Modern Art of Education*, RSP, London 1972.

[6] Rudolf Steiner, (Dornach, 1924), *Curative Education*, RSP, London 1972, p. 175

[7] Rudolf Steiner, (Berne 1924), *The Roots of Education*, RSP, London, 1968, p.13

[8] Steiner (1922), *Spiritual Ground of Education*, p. 59

[9] Steiner (1919), *Study of Man*, p. 41

[10] Steiner (1919), *Discussions with Teachers*, p. 77 (Steiner's emphasis)

[11] Steiner (1924), *The Roots of Education*, p. 56

[12] Rudolf Steiner, (Stuttgart 1922), *The Younger Generation*. *Educational and Spiritual Impulses for Life in the Twentieth Century*, AP, NY, 1967, p. 42

innermost self[13] and strive beyond 'the empty phrase' to a real grasp of truth; beyond convention to a direct relationship to their fellow human beings, and beyond routine to consciousness of every single action.[14] Finally, Steiner explains, it is love that must fill the teacher's soul: love for the child, but also love for education itself, the teacher's knowledge and method. Love can be seen as a tangible influence in education, and if teachers have such love, which is objective in character and not sentimental, it will be able to give the child genuine freedom.[15]

These injunctions, for how teachers should be and the qualities they should develop, place high expectations which are possibly unachievable for most people. They also seem to imply that the teachers who aspire to them will already be highly evolved morally and spiritually. Such idealistic goals will be attractive because they give a direction for a path of self development, but they would also be very daunting to most prospective teachers. However, teachers are only expected to strive towards these ideals, and not have achieved them before starting. Without an ideal to act as a beacon, it is often tempting to settle on the 'lowest common denominator' and forget the greatest responsibilities of the teacher's vocation.

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13 ibid, p. 58

14 ibid, p.56

15 Steiner (1922), *Spiritual Ground of Education*, p. 59

2. The *Konferenzen*[16]

Another very important, and less known, source of guidance for Waldorf teachers are the *Konferenzen*. These are reports of meetings which took place on those occasions when Steiner was visiting Stuttgart. This was not on a regular basis, though seventy such occasions have been recorded (by date and time of day) between September 1919 and September 1924, spanning the first five years of the Waldorf school.[17] The *Konferenzen* were published in English for the first time in the 1980s (though 'roneoed' copies could be acquired with difficulty before that). Given that Waldorf education in England began in 1925, these documents have only been available a very short time. It has been reported that, according to the publisher's stock-taking records, the first edition of the publication of the Conferences is till in plentiful supply.[18] Therefore, while teachers may be aware that such a resource exists, the evidence suggests that they have not been taken up and studied by Waldorf teachers to the degree that was hoped for. But why should Waldorf teachers and teacher educators become more familiar with the *Konferenzen*? Masters gives the following reasons, saying that the *Konferenzen*:

a) gave Steiner ample opportunity to extend what had been said in the foundation courses - adapted to what the theory looked ad felt like in practice;
b) offered a clearing-house in which the whole Waldorf method could be fine-tuned;
c) enabled the curriculum to be affirmed and extended;
d) provided a platform for which successes and mistakes became learning opportunities;

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[16] Acknowledgement is made to Brien Masters for his scholarly work in 'unearthing' these long neglected works and bringing them to the notice of English speaking Waldorf teachers.
(1) See Masters, *An Appraisal of Steinerian Theory and Waldorf Praxis, (1997),* op. cit. Chap. 5, pp. 64-124
(2) The English translation of the Conferences is in four volumes titled *Rudolf Steiner's Conferences with the Teachers of the Waldorf School in Stuttgart,* Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications, Forest Row. E. Sussex, UK,. Vol. I covers 1919-1920 (pub. 1986), Vol. II covers 1921-1922 (pub. 1987), Vol III covers 1922-1923 (pub. 1988) and Vol. IV covers *1923-1924* (pub. 1989)
(3) See also M. Bowron and B. Masters, *Concordance: Rudolf Steiner Waldorf Education*, Steiner School Fellowship Publications, Forest Row, E. Sussex UK, 1995.

[17] Masters 1997, op. cit. p. 65

[18] ibid, p. 68

e) gave stimulus from which plans for development evolved - and out of which further courses were instigated;
f) were the meeting point at which trust could be built up, enabling colleagues to benefit from a corporate mirror of reflection;
g) objectified the mutual encouragement and appreciation of one another's work;
h) could become the sounding board for new ideas;
i) were a semi-formal link with the Threefold Social Order;
j) made visible, already during the pioneer stage, the need for a World Association. [19]

From the above it can be seen what a key position the *Konferenzen* held for the teachers of the Stuttgart school and for teachers today. The agenda for meetings usually contained items prepared by Steiner, items brought by staff, and items that arose spontaneously. Although some of the issues on the meeting agenda were directly pertinent to that school at that time, many concern principles and practices highly relevant to Waldorf schools anywhere in the world today. The *Konferenzen* need to be taken far more seriously in the future and their use and promotion by teacher training courses is an important way to help bring this about.

3. A proposal for a model Waldorf training?

Caroline von Heiderbrand was one of the participants at the 1919 Teachers Course and went on to become one of the teachers in the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart. She is said to have designed an outline of a teacher training course which gained Steiner's approval. The short document[20] outlines the basic content of a teacher training course. and is reproduced here as an example of what is considered to be a desirable and necessary training for prospective Waldorf teachers.

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[19] ibid, pp. 67-68

[20] The document states 'As conceived by Caroline von Heiderbrand and approved by Rudolf Steiner.' Received from Mr. Ron Jarman, one time teacher at Michael Hall Steiner School, lecturer at Emerson College, officer of the Steiner Schools Fellowship, and international consultant to Waldorf schools, following an interview in July 1997.

General Work:

- *Study of the human organism as confluence of the Arts. (For teachers and students given by art teachers, doctors, and science teachers).*
- *Study of 'How to Attain Knowledge of the Higher Worlds' as a guidance book on self education.*
- *Learning the art of looking at artistic productions.*

Threefold Curriculum for Students

The Plastic Element
(etheric body - Imagination)
Modelling, Painting, Carving, Drawing, etc
The element of imagination in the English language and literature (to make the student see and create inner visions)
The plastic forces in the kingdoms of nature, especially in Geology and Botany.
The plastic forces in Geometry (Synthetic Geometry)
The power of imagination in Fairy tales, Sagas, legends and mythology.

The Musical Element
(astral body - Inspiration)
Music, harmonics, Tone Eurythmy.
The musical element in the kingdoms of nature, especially in Zoology; also in Chemistry.
The musical element in Arithmetic.
Rhythms in the evolution of the growing human being (7 year periods)
Study group on teaching and education.

The Speech Element
(ego - Intuition)
Speech Formation, Speech Eurythmy.
The dramatic element in history (Method of teaching History).
The evolution of individuality in mankind (Biographies).
Comparative study on the spirit of different languages.
Health and illness (What the educator has to know about medicine).

NB. Students are expected to have become familiar with, and gained a clear understanding of, 'The Philosophy of Freedom' before embarking on this course.

While some aspects of the content of Caroline von Heiderbrand's proposal for a teacher training course may appear to be somewhat cryptic, a closer study of the *Study of Man* lectures and, among other anthroposophical lectures, a second series of lectures which

Steiner delivered a year later to the Stuttgart teachers [21] published as *Balance in Teaching*, will help to contextualise the meaning of such terms as 'plastic', 'musical', and 'speech' elements. The strengthening of the teacher trainees' capacities of thinking, feeling and will as well as the development of the more subtle faculties of imagination, inspiration and intuition through the various offerings in the 'threefold curriculum for students', is the intention of von Heiderbrand's teacher training course.

While the writer is not aware of a teacher training course strictly modelled along these lines, the 'threefold curriculum' idea is evident in nearly all training institutions that base their course structure on the needs of the threefold human being as described by Rudolf Steiner.

[21] Rudolf Steiner, (Stuttgart 1920), *Balance in Teaching*, Mercury Press, NY, 1982

Chapter 3: Section 4

The 'Fully Equipped' Waldorf Teacher
~ An Ideal Training ~

1. The Components of an Ideal Training

The components constituting the content of a Waldorf teacher training may be grouped into ten categories, accommodating the range of subjects and fields of activity which should reasonably be covered. These categories have been gleaned from Steiner's writings, such as cited in the previous chapters, or what has been implied from them, as well as from prospectuses of Waldorf teacher training courses from around the world, some of which will be highlighted in Chapter 4, Section 4. The categories should be imagined as spokes on a wheel, suggesting equal value for the integrity of the whole, rather than as rungs on a ladder, which may imply a hierarchical order of importance.

(1) Anthroposophical Studies
(2) Waldorf Pedagogy:
  (a) Child Development
  (b) Curriculum Development
  (c) Teaching Methodology
(3) The Arts
(4) The Crafts
(5) Movement (Eurythmy and Spatial Dynamics), Games and Sport
(6) School Organisation and Management
    (a) The Threefold Socia00l Order
    (b) The College of Teachers
    (c) Social and Community Relations
(7) Classroom Management
(8) Teaching Practice
(9) Meditative Training

From the perspective of Waldorf teacher education, if a teacher educator was asked: 'What should be included in an ideal Waldorf teacher training programme?' The reply would have to be: 'At least all the above!' The nine categories provide a framework upon which to build a training programme. A broad outline of the topics to be covered within the proposed categories, and some rationale for including them, will be given in this chapter in order that it may be used as a theoretical benchmark from which to compare the course contents of different training experiences, both of Australian Waldorf teachers and those offered in some training courses around the world.

2. Anthroposophical Studies: Their implications for Teacher Education

(The reader's attention is drawn to the comments made in the Foreword of the thesis.)

The fundamental importance of this category has already been sufficiently iterated. Sections 2 and 3 of the last chapter gave an outline of Steiner's educational philosophy, including the key ideas that underpin Waldorf education. These ideas included:

1) Epistemology and the Philosophy of Freedom
2) The Threefold nature of the Human Being
3) The Tripartite soul ~ Thinking, Feeling and Willing
4) Developmental Stages of Growth
5) The Human Being and the Kingdoms of Nature
6) Recapitulation and the Evolution of Consciousness
7) Reincarnation and Karma
8) Universal (Cosmic) Christianity

These topics constitute the core ideas in Anthroposophy. Their study, if approached in the right spirit, can challenge the assumptions and values upon which the student teacher's knowledge, attitudes and beliefs rest. A willingness to expand the boundaries of what is generally considered to be reality would be necessary for a fruitful consideration of Steiner's ideas. An essential feature of a Waldorf teacher training

programme would be to provide a means of developing an understanding, but not necessarily an acceptance, of them. Anthroposophical studies are typically offered in the first year of training as foundation courses and their completion is normally considered to be a pre-requisite to embarking on a second year in professional studies. Where a training course is less than two years, Anthroposophical studies courses would be offered in parallel with professional training. The implications for teacher education of each of these topics will be considered below.

2. 1) Epistemology and the Philosophy of Freedom

It is a common feature of Waldorf teacher training courses world-wide that Steiner's epistemology is one of the core subjects of study. This is normally accomplished by systematically working through the chapters of Steiner's *The Philosophy of Freedom*, and by following the logic of Steiner's arguments, students take themselves through the process that he, as philosopher, went through to arrive at the conclusions that he reached about the possibility of human freedom.

The first part of the book is concerned with the question: 'Can I be certain of anything, or is everything subject to doubt?' The second part of the book deals with the question: 'Am I a free agent or does some unknowable force determine my fate?' The students' reasoning powers are exercised as they attempt to think for themselves the arguments connected with these questions, including grappling with the viewpoints of a range of modern philosophers. This approach has proved invaluable to many who may never have had to deal with problems of knowledge and morality in a formal and systematic way before. These questions also occasionally arise in conversation or in normal lessons with high school students. Teachers should have thought about the issues

implicit in the questions, and also have considered ways to help students deal with similar questions in their own lives.

Within the Waldorf school movement Waldorf education has been understood, and promoted, as an education which leads students towards an experience of their own freedom. Steiner's statement that *our highest endeavour must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives* has become a maxim for the central aim of Waldorf education. Waldorf teachers need to be able to justify this claim, as well as others, from a philosophical perspective if called upon to do so. The outcome of studying this subject should be sufficient knowledge and feelings of confidence about the epistemological basis of the educational theory as well the ability to respond rationally to formal queries or criticism. Steiner always insisted that all he had given out of his spiritual revelations was firmly based in his philosophical work, and therefore an ideal Waldorf teacher training should provide the background knowledge and basic reasoning skills to be able to articulate Steiner's theory of knowledge and the basic arguments in *The Philosophy of Freedom*.

2. 2) The Threefold Nature of the Human Being: Implications for teacher education

Waldorf teacher training courses should ensure that the concepts which belong to the field of what Steiner called 'spiritual anthropology', described in Section 2, are well understood by their students. Teacher trainees should graduate with an understanding that Anthroposophy is not a subject that belongs in a Waldorf school curriculum, and that while discussion of these ideas is an acceptable, and hopefully a regular feature of teachers' conversations and professional development, in keeping with the principles of a Liberal education with regard to indoctrination, any formal introduction to Steiner's ideas of the spirit, reincarnation, etc., should be reserved for senior-secondary classes in

specific curricular contexts, such as in literary studies or studies in comparative religions.

In relation to this point, a consideration of what kind of education will guarantee to leave the child's spirit free, should be a feature of every teacher training programme. The contemporary educational philosophers, Paul Hirst and Richard Peters, in outlining their view about what constitutes a Liberal education, identify three key elements, namely;

- that the education be not harnessed to utilitarian ends,
- that it be general rather than specialised, and
- that there should be an absence of indoctrination or authoritarianism.[1]

When these criteria are examined in the light of Steiner's threefold human being (that is, body, soul and spirit), one may reasonably conclude that they apply to the human spirit, for only a Liberal education could satisfy the need for freedom of the human spirit. Waldorf teacher trainees should come to know that Waldorf schools, through their structures, curriculum and teaching methods, should provide an environment which is a safe haven for the human spirit, a place where the student's spirit can find protection, recognition, understanding, and empowerment to seek its destiny, but never a place to imprison it with dogma.

The Waldorf teacher should feel that each generation of children comes out of the spiritual world bearing new forces and evolutionary impulses for the future. In other words, all children have their own unique 'mission' and therefore these 'forces', which bear each child's spiritual potential, should not be imposed upon, directed or

[1] R. S. Peters, *Ethics and Education*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1966, p. 43; Paul Hirst, "Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge," in R. S. Peters, *The Philosophy of Education*, Oxford University Press, 1973, pp. 87-111

manipulated by others, including teachers, but should be left free in order that the child's own destiny can unfold.

An ideal training will aim to develop a clear understanding of the differentiation of those categories of the human being which are called body, soul and spirit. Students should know how to describe the boundary between body and soul, on the one side, and soul and spirit on the other. They should also know the laws that apply to each, and know which of these regions is the primary concern of the pedagogue.

2. 3) The Tripartite Soul: Thinking, Feeling and Willing: Implications for teacher education

Having differentiated the boundaries between body, soul and spirit, the finer differentiation of the soul itself should then be covered. Because the education of children is almost solely concerned with the education of the soul, developing an understanding of this aspect of the three-fold human being should be a core objective of teacher education courses. Capacity to discriminate between Willing, Feeling and Thinking, their expression in the body, and the methodological approaches for 'exercising' them should be known and practiced. An anthroposophical psychology, also called *psychosophy*, would provide a framework for understanding the developmental process, and the stages through which the human soul (the *psyche*) develops. Teacher trainees, through practical training, should become aware of the important role of the arts in building a vocabulary of words, tones, colours, forms, movements and gestures which they, by implementing the curriculum, will help students to use as tools to 'express their feelings' or 'express themselves' without recourse to intellectualising their feelings before they are developmentally ready to do so. The nature of the soul may be 'seen' or 'read' in a student's drawing, painting, dramatic gesture, quality of

movement, speech, and singing voice and the practice of all these activities enriches and enlivens the child's soul.

2. 4) Developmental Stages of Growth: Implications for teacher education

Knowledge about the constitution of human beings and how they develop (like knowledge of the soul) must be seen as a core component of any teacher training course. The construction of the Waldorf curriculum is inextricably connected to children's development: therefore teacher trainees should gain a detailed understanding of child development as a matter of priority. Considerable course time should be given to a study of the development of Willing, Feeling and Thinking in relation to the seven-year stages of growth.

The idea of the seven-year stages of development in human growth is central in Steiner's developmental theory. The attitude with which this key principle is approached in teacher training courses should be in favour of it being a working hypothesis, and as such open to further investigation. In this way the teacher is urged to adopt the role of a researcher, continually testing the suitability of both their content and method for the developmental stage of the children in their care.

Is there really a seven-year rhythm in human development? Can it actually be observed in children and young people? For example, how is Steiner's description of the 'birth of the ether body'[2] around the seventh year to be understood? The progressive loss of the milk teeth and the growth of the permanent teeth can be observed, but in what way do these physical changes correspond to the non-physical 'birth of the etheric body'? And is it the case that the change from childhood to youth comes at age fourteen? To what extent have these developmental 'mile-stones' changed in the course

of the twentieth century? Surely considerable deviations occur with individual children or young people.

The question of what the concept of the 'seven-year rhythm' is about has been researched by Wolfgang Schad, a biologist and researcher in the Waldorf school movement. It has been the theme of some literature and conferences, and is the topic of ongoing research and discussion in the Waldorf school movement.[3] Some research indicates that it would be a mistake to accept uncritically the assertion that the stages of development are fixed and unchangeably bound to a seven-year rhythm. Changing the perspective from 'is it true?' to 'what does it mean?' has helped to open the field up to further research.

Schad has commented that Steiner himself noted on one occasion that this seven-year rhythm is not easy to detect, and that he [Steiner] was not speaking of diagnostic findings, but suggesting that it was 'infinitely helpful for the whole biography if this seven-year rhythm could be conveyed to children and young people in their education'.[4] In other words, the seven-year rhythm is a therapeutic challenge for the teacher to 'convey' or steer the children towards. Schad believes that the child reveals its individual development in deviations from the seven-year rhythm, and therefore if it proves possible for the child, with the teacher's help, to connect with the rhythm again, the individual destiny of the child can relate once more to the human element that is common to all. Whether Schad's belief is accurate or not is open to discussion, but what is important for Waldorf teachers is that they refrain from making hasty judgements about what may be normal individual differences. For example, in observing the

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[2]See Chapter 2, Section 3 on 'The Human Being and the Kingdoms of Nature' for a description of the term 'etheric body'.

[3] Wolfgang Schad, 'The change that comes with maturity - Vital processes and birth of the soul', in David S Mitchell (ed) *Developmental Insights: Discussions between doctors and teachers*, ASWNA Publications, 1997, pp. 179-196

development of children, when teachers find evidence of deviation from the ideal form (in this case the seven-year rhythm), they should not immediately interpret this deviation as a defect, just because it fails to conform to a standard of normality based on the ideal form but, rather, as Schad said, that through this apparent deviation the child reveals its individual development.

Schad's research shows that physiological sexual maturity now comes about two years earlier in Europe than it did seventy years ago, and in Nordic countries several years earlier, so that the characteristics of sexual maturity begin to appear in class six, particularly among girls, and sometimes in class five. Schad explains that in the past this was more the norm in southern European countries, and that a kind of geographical gradient existed in the 1920s. Schad claims that in Central Europe menarche came at 14 or 15, in Scandinavia at 17, 18, or 19, and that this was entirely normal at the turn of the last century. Meanwhile, development has accelerated in the direction of the 'Mediterranean' timing. Therefore it must also be assumed that mental maturation, changing from a child's mental attitude to that of a young person, has been correspondingly delayed.

In his *Occult Science,* Steiner wrote that the birth of the astral body was not a brief event around the 14th year, but took place from the 12th to the 16th year. [5] According to Schad, this is now clearly evident. Physiological maturation has moved forward to the 12th year, mental maturation now extends to class 10, when pupils turn sixteen. Research on rates of maturation of children in Australian Waldorf schools would help to fill in the picture, and teacher trainees should be encouraged to undertake such research. Some anecdotal evidence suggests that children whose families take

[4] ibid, Schad p. 179
[5] ibid, Schad p. 182

active measures to protect young children from undue stimulation (for example, resulting from over-exposure to television, videos, and computer games, as well as fast foods, and loud noise from traffic and 'rock' music) maintain the 'innocent, rosy cheeks of childhood' longer, and in the case of some girls delays menarche until 14 years or older.[6]

With regard to those who believe that inflexible views are held about the seven-year rhythms, a discerning study of Steiner's writings and an investigation of some of the research and discussion within the movement indicates that, rather than rigidity, there are increasing attempts to develop greater flexibility from a position of greater knowledge. For example, Schad's research on the different rates of development in mental growth and physical growth is vital because if the two are not necessarily synchronous (as appears to be the case) this will have direct implications for curriculum development and methodology. An ideal Waldorf teacher training should complement Steiner's indications on developmental stages of growth with the developmental research of some twentieth century psychologists, especially Piaget's[7] research on children's cognitive development, and the detailed child studies of Gesell and others[8]. Teacher trainees should at least be made aware of the important contribution made by researchers other than Steiner towards an understanding children's cognitive, emotional and physical development.

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[6] This protective approach to child rearing has been dubbed 'the Waldorf lifestyle', and the children have been referred to, in a semi-humorous manner, as being 'Steinerised'.

[7] Jean Piaget (1896-1980) Piaget's important works include *The Origin of Intelligence in Children* (1952), *The Language and Thought of the Child* (1952), *The Psychology of the Child* (1969).

[8] Arnold Gesell (1880-1961), Louise B. Ames (1902-?) and Frances L. Ilg, (1902-?), *The Child from Five to Ten*, Harper and Row, NY 1977, *Youth: The Years from Ten to Sixteen*, Hamish Hamilton, London 1956 are two, of literally dozens, excellent publications from the Gesell Institute of Child Development and from the Yale Clinic of Child Development.

2.5). The Human Being and the Kingdoms of Nature: Implications for teacher education

Steiner maintained that the human being is a microcosmic reflection of the macrocosm, and vice versa. A well known verse by Steiner encapsulates this relationship:

> If Man fully knows himself'
> His Self becomes the World.
> If Man fully knows the World,
> The World becomes his Self.
>
> Rudolf Steiner[9]

One of the salient features of the Waldorf school is its all-embracing curriculum. Apart from the utilitarian aspects of a good education, the reasons for such a comprehensive cover are that the Waldorf curriculum is designed to:

- reflect the oneness of the world, and
- further the human being's search for 'self'.

Reflecting Steiner's verse, the human being and the kingdoms of nature are seen to make up the totality of the world, and the content and method of delivery of the curriculum should reflect this. For example, the earth comprises not only rocks, mountains, plains, rivers and oceans, but also plants, animals and human beings. The atmosphere is part of it. Sun moon and stars belong to it in some measure. The earth's crust contains minerals and a multitude of other useful materials. There are many different nations or peoples on the earth with their different cultures. Some areas of the earth are sites of past great civilisations which have produced great ideas or works of art. In delivering the curriculum, a teacher may be concerned at one time with the realms of history, at another with the development of art, or discovering the laws of light, sound, magnetism, the construction of a cane basket or reproducing the ceremony

[9] The verse quoted is one of a number of versions. For another see Rudolf Steiner, *Verses and Meditations* RSP, Bristol 1993, p. 59

of the Olympic Games from ancient Greece on the sports field. All these aspects of the curriculum are also aspects of the world, and the expression of unity of life becomes reflected in an integrated and unfragmented education. While the human mind creates categories and, in schools, the various subjects, Steiner maintained that the unity of the human being and the world extends to the spiritual world.

Steiner accepted as a fact that the physical world had a spiritual origin and was permeated by the spirit, and that the 'book of nature' is a script of the spirit. Needless to say, such views are not universally held, and therefore Waldorf teachers who adopt Steiner's philosophical monism with regard to ideas of unity of man and world, including the spiritual world, clearly realise that it is not acceptable for them to impose their views on the children. The solution is for the teacher to show the phenomena and give the accepted explanation where necessary, but also point out that it may not be the whole truth, thereby stimulating the children's curiosity and desire to understand more about the world.[10]

Teacher trainees should consider the wide ranging implications of adopting this framework and attitude to the human being's relation to nature. There are repercussions on the design and implementation of the curriculum as a whole, but especially for teaching science. Developing the capacity to carefully observe and study the phenomena of the various kingdoms of nature is one of the tasks of schooling, and this is the basis of the natural science curriculum. The approach used for the observation of nature (and the soul), called *Goethean phenomenology*, or *Goetheanistic empiricism*, as some prefer to call it[11], has been mentioned previously. Waldorf teacher trainees should receive

[10] Roy Wilkinson, *The Spiritual Basis of Steiner Education*, RSP, London, 1996, pp. 42-53
[11] Masters, 1997, op. cit. p. 141

sustained 'schooling' in Goethean observation (as it is more widely called) so that it becomes a good habit.

All teachers (not only science teachers) who receive training in this method of observation are everywhere cautioned not to overlook the fact of who it is that is doing the observing, nor of the intimate relationship of the observer to that which is observed in the whole environment. The 'observation' occurs on a number of levels. For example:

- What the senses perceive (called the *percept* by Steiner),
- what thinking brings to it (the *concept)* and
- the soul's response to both (wonder, repugnance, interest, delight, concern, etc).

Being able to identify and separate these responses from that which is being observed provides a greater opportunity for the object of observation to reveal its own nature untainted by the observer's existing expectations or personal prejudices.

Steiner was adamant that teachers should understand the human being as a part of, and not separate from, the rest of nature[12], and their curricular work with students should convey this from an early age. An ideal teacher training would help reinterpret trainees' existing scientific knowledge from a Goethean perspective. Some formal scientific training is advantageous, but not crucial for primary school teaching. Curriculum methodology in science teaching would be ideal, and this would be true for teaching mathematics and the humanities. Prerequisite qualifications for secondary science teaching would be a 'normal' science degree followed by some specialist retraining or reorientation to Waldorf science teaching. The subject content of the science taught may not necessarily change, but the staging of the introduction of scientific concepts (for example the use of chemical equations, or quantification of

[12] See Steiner's comment in quote from *Study of Man* in Section 1, Part 1.

atomic weights to explain chemical reactions) and the way in which they are introduced, might need to be changed in order to remain consistent with child development.

The implications of Steiner's views, on the nature of the human being and the kingdoms of nature, on the approaches to be taken and on the attitudes which need to be interrogated and changed, where necessary, have been raised above. It should be task of an ideal Waldorf teacher training to make these implications clear and, in the various subjects, to lead students, through a critical analysis, towards an understanding of them.

2. 7) Reincarnation and Karma: Implications for teacher education

The study of reincarnation and karma is a fundamental area of Anthroposophy, and teacher trainees should receive a thorough introduction to it. It was outlined in the previous topic that a good education requires the very widest possible curriculum, not as a matter of handing out so much information that can be regurgitated at will, but as a way of helping the individuality to find its right place in life. For this purpose not only the necessary skills must be taught but the mind opened out to all possibilities. In Chapter 2 Section 3, child growth and development were described in terms of soul-spirit incarnating into a physical body. Unless the teacher is an initiate, which is unlikely, he or she does not know the spiritual background of the pupils in their classes, nor do they know immediately what hidden talents or impulses exist in the children before them.

The concept of karma holds that all people have willed what happens to them, and, having incorporated those intentions in their being, bring them from previous existences into the present life. For example, karma is experienced as desires, impulses, urges, or deeds which are carried out through sympathy or antipathy, although people are not normally conscious of the karmic connection. Subconsciously, karma theory

maintains, people are led to certain situations or to meet certain people, but karma cannot dictate how to proceed from the point of contact. Consciously willed actions in the present are not determined by karma. People may at any time choose their fate, but where no conscious action takes place, then karma holds sway.

A further point with regard to karma could be mentioned. Children come into a certain school and a certain class and they are surrounded by a group of their peers, and taught by certain teachers. One might ask if there is any special connection between teachers and those who are taught. Teachers may notice that some children have a particular relationship with one another, maybe friendly or otherwise. It would be wrong to jump to conclusions, but it might be considered a possibility that these relationships derive from the past. The implications for teachers should be obvious. In the case of personal difficulties among the children, the teacher might have a deeper role in finding a solution. It is within the teacher's power not only to develop the children's interests but also their moral and social attitudes. 'In the light of reincarnation, teachers have an almost overwhelmingly responsible task. They are influencing the child, or rather the individuality, not only for present existence but for eternity.'[13]

In an ideal training, a study of reincarnation and karma should include being made aware of the range of available literature by Steiner, other anthroposophically oriented authors, and other writings (including Hindu and Buddhist ideas) on the subject. The input by experienced Waldorf practitioners regarding how they apply this knowledge in their professional work, would be appropriate. Given its complex and

controversial nature the subject should be covered later in the training along with introduction to meditative practices.

[13] Wilkinson, 1996, op. cit., pp.83-84

2. 8) Recapitulation and the Evolution of Consciousness: Implications for teacher education

The outline presented in Section 2 attempted to place Steiner's approach to the evolution of consciousness and the idea of recapitulation within a historical context. Steiner recognised and acknowledged the contributions of other educators, and this attitude should be adopted by Waldorf teacher educators. It can be both instructive and liberating for practising teachers and teacher trainees to learn about the historical background of some educational goals and values, and curriculum principles, in order to appreciate that Steiner's contribution, unique as it was, belongs in the context of the general educational awakening that took place in the West, especially in the stream of progressive educational theory and practice, towards the end of the 19th and the first third of the 20th century. The historical perspective, and other content of the section on 'Recapitulation' in Chapter 2 Section 2, should be conveyed to teacher trainees in order to provide a bigger picture than the one normally encountered in the Waldorf school movement. For example, in his early Waldorf teaching career, the writer believed that the teaching about the Cultural Epochs was exclusively introduced by Steiner and was an integral idea in the construction of the Waldorf curriculum. Recapitulation and the evolution of consciousness was approached from the perspective of Steiner's writings on 'spiritual history', which is deeply fascinating but wholly insupportable by conventional standards of historiography. Encouraging the trainees to cultivate the attitude of 'a working hypothesis' towards these ideas leaves them free to realise their own relationship to them.

2. 9). A Universal Christianity: Implications for teacher education

Religious convictions are highly individual. The cultural traditions of different countries where Waldorf schools exist are most varied. The cultural values of Waldorf teachers or

trainees and the children that attend Waldorf schools are likewise diverse. When speaking of spirituality, it is useful to differentiate between individuality (ego) and genus (the species or group), because, although the culture into which one is born undoubtedly shapes the habits, tastes, attitudes and values of the individuals within it, these same individuals are capable of transcending the boundaries of the family, tribe, clan, or nation.

In his book, *The Philosophy of Freedom*, Steiner laid the foundation for an understanding of the human *ego* or *individuality,* describing it as that in which the *archetype* of the human being can find 'a dwelling place'. While Darwin's ideas on adaptation point to the development of unique characteristics in the various species, they still remain at the level of species. The human *archetype* alone retains its malleability so that each individual *ego* may discover itself to be a unique species and find its individual relationship to the society in which it lives. One may be born a Muslim, Christian, Jew or Hindu but one may cultivate one's own individuality by developing a deeper understanding of and relationship to the human *archetype* which exists beyond sex or race. Its realisation is a choice granted to humans. A universal Christianity, permeating the anthroposophical world view, names the human *archetype* Christ, but the same reality, in different cultural traditions, may have different names.

Waldorf teacher education should lay the groundwork for such an understanding and, possibly, realisation. Waldorf schools can exist in any culture because their aim is not to promote a particular religious conviction but to lead towards the development of an understanding of what it means to be fully human. Given that contemporary world events, especially with regard to globalisation, seem to be leading both to changes within particular cultures and the merging of cultures, the challenge, as Waldorf schools continue to be founded all over the world, is how to cultivate values of striving towards

the archetypal human being, without alienating the religious sensibilities of people who profess to be Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish, materialistic, agnostic, etc. or the range of denominations within them.

Discussion is ongoing within the anthroposophical movement about whether the name 'Christ' is still essential to express the idea of the human archetype. Especially in the light of the probability that it could be counterproductive in some non-Christian countries. One writer[14] prefers to use the term the 'Being of Love' as an alternative to the name 'Christ', but some believe this to be inadequate to encapsulate all the qualities that a universal or Cosmic Christ is considered to embody. The challenge for teachers in Waldorf schools, for whom nomenclature is an issue, is how they make clear to their various communities that they are not teaching, or promoting, a version of Christianity.

Steiner's social theory challenges everyone to maintain a balance in the tension between ethical individualism on one side and cosmopolitanism on the other. The well known maxim of the environmental movement ~ *think globally, act locally* ~ is an expression of this, and is perhaps the key to meeting this challenge of a universal Christianity. Waldorf teacher trainees should be encouraged to discuss ways in which this strategy can be implemented in the schools in which they find employment, and join with others to create a more universal language to name this aspect of human spiritual life.

3. Waldorf Pedagogy

The professional component of a Waldorf teacher education programme necessitates the study of Waldorf pedagogy. The tendency to begin with the 'what' or content of the curriculum, go to the 'how' or method of delivery and finish with the 'why' or

philosophy of education, should be resisted. An *anthropos*-centred education should begin with the 'who' of education and work back to the 'what'. In simple terms, the process of preparing a teacher for the classroom involves asking some basic questions:

- Fundamentally, Who is being educated must remain in the foreground.
- Why should this curriculum content, and this teaching method be used, and when?
- How should the teacher teach it?
- What should the teacher teach?

(a) ***Who (Body, Soul and Spirit)***

Anthroposophical studies are primarily concerned with understanding the nature of the *who*. Who am I as teacher? Who is the child as learner? In what sense are the teachers and students both teachers and learners? These questions lead back to metaphysical foundations on the constitution of the human being, and the nature of the human *spirit* whose presence hovers around and through both teacher and child, and is the source of their meaning for being. What aspect of the human *soul* is in the process of developing? What stage of development is the child's *body* undergoing, and in what way is it the visible bearer of soul and spirit? Such questions do not attract ready answers, but pondering them regularly helps to cultivate an attitude of reverence and openness in the teacher. The importance of meditative practice becomes obvious in this endeavour to discover, explore, affirm and strengthen the experience of the spiritual individuality in oneself as teacher, and learn to recognise it in everyone else.

(b) ***Why (philosophical justification)***

Having decided to be a Waldorf teacher, and to work with the anthroposophical perspective on the nature of the human being, the next question to be considered is

[14] Pietro Archiati, *Giving Judas a Chance*, Spiritual Science Pub., Birmingham Alabama, USA, 1999;

why should this method and content be used? Is it purely a matter of pragmatism: 'Because it works!' or is there a philosophical justification that should be known? Once more Anthroposophical Studies are necessary, as is a study of Child Development in relation to Curriculum Development. Why should there be integration of curriculum content with the Arts? Why should stories be told and not read to younger children? Is there a rational justification for Steiner's pedagogical ideas? Acceptance of Steiner's ideas may be necessary but will not be sufficient in the longer term. Teachers should be able to articulate *why* they continue to hold them.

(c) ***How (Teaching methodology)***

Methodology of teaching is concerned with *how* the content (the *what*) should be taught. Obviously the method will be different depending on the age group. Early Childhood teaching method is fundamentally different from High school teaching method, and the transitions that take place in child development throughout the Primary school years will require a more differentiated understanding and flexibility of method. Once again a thorough study of Child Development in relation to Curriculum Development will be necessary because they are the basis for teaching methodology. Recapitulation theory, in regard to the evolution of children's consciousness, would become an important subject of study.

The use of art and being able (knowing how) to teach artistically is also an important feature of the *how*, and involves both personal qualities and professional skills. Teacher education should place considerable emphasis on identifying these qualities within each trainee and developing the requisite skills. An ideal training will also acknowledge, and capitalise on, 'mainstream' research-based developmental

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From Christianity to Christ, Temple Lodge Pub., London 1996

methodologies, thereby making trainees aware that the educational methods which Steiner rightfully criticised early this century, have developed since the 1920s, and that some conventional approaches (for example to literacy and numeracy, and in assessment of learning disabilities) can successfully complement Waldorf methods.

(d) ***What (Curriculum studies)***

The *what* of teaching is by far the simplest to decide, but c*urriculum content* cannot be decided independently of *child development*. The child's changing consciousness is taken into account when deciding what content will be taught before the ninth year, up to the twelfth year and afterwards. Two examples will be given; teaching Science, and History.[15]

Science:

Before 9: nature experiences

9+: 'natural' history - graphic descriptions of the kingdoms of nature with the human being centrally related in some way to each.

12+: natural science (science 'proper')

History:

Before 9: the purely anecdotal-like presentation of humanity's past, as very small scale narrative or in allegorical form.

9+: in Western cultures, ancient Hebraic, Nordic, Greek mythologies and parallel histories of ancient civilisations - albeit without reference to the fact that these ancient civilisations were ruled largely by those who had access to or received guidance from the respective 'Mystery' traditions (via their priesthood). In non-Western cultures, the local and regional mythologies should prevail.

12+: non-mystery based civilisations (Rome to the present) - with a flashback in Class 10 to ancient times but from the perspective of present-day consciousness.

It is instructive to contemplate the fact that Steiner conducted a two-week initial teacher training course (*Study* of *Man)* in which the *curriculum* (in other words, the *what*) came

at the very end, almost as an afterthought.[16] The teachers were faced with having to take their start from the *how*, rather than the *what*, having gone through an intensive study of the *who.* It is also evident (from the discussions in the *Konferenzen*) that the *how* was also learned along the way.

Summary of Waldorf Pedagogy

Waldorf teaching is not based on working one's way through a set curriculum, but on resorting continuously to first principles. A creation, or perhaps re-creation, of a curriculum needs to be born of insight into subject and child and method. Cultivating an attitude of renewal leads the teacher back to the basics of education:

- its aims
- the child's make-up and potential
- items of curriculum and
- the appropriate pedagogy

Creation of a curriculum based on these elements, and conducted by the teacher through whose imagination, receptivity and intelligence (coupled with a meditatively informed humility, and an unquenchable faith in, and openness to, 'divine grace') becomes possible, and the right content at the right time for the pupils present, can be found.

Steiner clearly attached great importance to the pedagogical process. The records of his meetings with teachers (the *Konferenzen)*, outlined in Chapter 3, Sections 3, part 2, 'are littered with pieces of pedagogical advice of greater and lesser import'.[17] In addition to learning the basic principles of child and curriculum development and teaching methods, the underlying subsidiary aim of the pedagogical aspect of the training is to stimulate teachers to respond to Steiner's challenge to integrate his ideas

[15] Masters,1997, op. cit. pp. 113-4
[16]ibid. p. 265
[17]ibid. p. 106, see also p. 272

with their own experience and research, and to freely apply them without resorting to ready-made recipes.

An ideal Waldorf teacher training would promote the ideal of being able to recreate the curriculum at any moment, an ideal based on a teacher having developed what Steiner called 'the sort of soul perception we mean', an ideal which could only be achieved out of 'a perceptive knowledge of child development', which not only 'supplies the appropriate curriculum [but also] teaching methods'.[18] Developing an appreciation of this goal would require thorough study and clarification of what constitutes Waldorf Pedagogy, and would be a fundamental aim of a Waldorf teacher training course.

4. The Arts

According to Steiner, teacher training should be concerned with developing teachers' artistic sensibilities, their feelings for form, sculpture, space, colour, music and language. Such artistic training would truly prepare teachers to educate children, far more than attempts to instil theories and methods into them which are quite alien to the child's living, artistic nature.[19] This is one of the ways used by Steiner to frame the importance of artistic training for teachers. He also stressed the importance for teachers to develop imagination, especially with the guidance of Spiritual Science through participation in the exercises outlined in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*. Steiner wrote that in so doing, teachers would be able to move out of the isolation of their intellects, and their thinking could merge with the living interflow and movement of feeling, and then 'one awakens as from a swoon'.

[18] Steiner, *Conferences with the Teachers: Vol IV*, 1989, op. cit. pp. 3-4
[19] Rudolf Steiner, (Berne, 1924), *The Roots of Education*, RSP, London 1968, p. 56

> But now one no longer receives abstract thoughts , now one receives 'imaginations'. One gets pictures. And a materialistic view would not recognise these pictures as knowledge. Knowledge, it is said, proceeds in abstract, logical concepts. Yes, but how if the world is not to be comprehended in the abstract concepts of logic? How if the world be a work of art: then we must apprehend it artistically, not logically.[20]

The contents of two major collections of Steiner's lectures on the arts[21] as well as further lecture cycles on more specific artistic expressions and, as noted in the biographical notes in Chapter 2 Section 1, Steiner's own intense participation in and promotion of the arts in the theosophical, and later the anthroposophical movement, provide sufficient evidence for concluding that Steiner considered the Arts to be very important for the development and maintenance of a healthy human life and culture.

In the brief outline on course content of Waldorf teacher training courses around the world (Chapter 4, Section 4), it will be noted that considerable emphasis is placed on exposure to a variety of artistic expressions during teacher training. Further, teachers are encouraged to participate in some ongoing artistic discipline during their working life. In educational lectures given to Swiss teachers in Basel in 1920[22], Steiner highlighted the importance of creative attempts, such as in story-writing, by teachers.

> If only you could become aware of the immense difference between reading and retelling stories to children and making up your own stories I should like to ask you to put this to test by reading or freely rendering existing stories and by creating stories out of your own imagination. Even if your effort is far inferior to published stories, yet it will work more directly upon the children because the process of your creating will communicate itself to them. This is what I mean by 'living teaching'. It is another example of the imponderable elements in education. [23]

These injunctions, to develop the work artistically and with real devotion and always to appeal to the child's innate imagination, are expressed by Steiner in the context of

[20] Rudolf Steiner, (Oxford 1922), *Spiritual Ground of Education*, RSP, London, 1947, p. 28
[21] Rudolf Steiner, *Art in the Light of Mystery Wisdom*, 2nd edition, London, 1970; *The Arts and their Mission*, New York, 1964.
[22] Rudolf Steiner, (Basel, 1920), *The Renewal of Education through the Science of the Spirit*, Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications, Forest Row, E. Sussex, UK, 1981. Fourteen lectures to Swiss teachers (20th April to 11th May 1920).

developing literacy in young children. However they have been found to be applicable, and are expected to be applied, in almost all curriculum areas.

It has become almost axiomatic in the Waldorf school movement that the authority of the teacher derives from his or her capacity to be the author, or creator of the curriculum, as opposed to the more pejorative 'authoritarian' sense of the word which suggests authority based on power. Thus teacher training courses should encourage their students, when preparing lessons, to accompany them with stories, poems and songs, drawing pictures, painting, modelling, or doing dramatic improvisations, as appropriate for the subject matter, always drawing on the natural as well as the cultural/spiritual environment of the children. Thereby the teacher's own creativity will become the basis of their authority with primary school children.[24]

In the Bern lectures[25] to mainstream school teachers, in 1924, Steiner stated how he considered the training of teachers would be furthered if it embraced 'study' of three particular arts: speech, music and modelling. These three arts were to be practiced, not specifically for their possible application in the classroom (useful though this might have been) but in that they quickened the awareness of the teacher for certain qualities residing in each pupil. Steiner emphasised this point in at least six occasions in the *Konferenzen*.[26] This suggests that the cultivation of those arts can become a method for creative pedagogy. The appropriate use in teacher training courses of these three arts needs more research, because they may hold a key to how teachers can better 'keep contact with the pupils' - an injunction which Steiner repeated regularly.

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[23] Ibid p. 70

[24] This approach has been widely adopted in Waldorf schools, and in Australia was given a particular emphasis by the schools identifying with the 'Lorien stream' because this practice was considered a central feature of the Lorien Novalis College of Teacher Education. See Chap. 5.This is partly reported and partly deduced from interviews with two Lorien trained teachers. (interviewees 'J' and 'L').

[25] Rudolf Steiner, *The Roots of Education*, op. cit. especially the lecture of 15/4/24

[26] See Masters, op. cit. p. 269

In addition to preservice training, ongoing participation in the arts is encouraged because, as Steiner implied in the above statements, continual artistic training heightens one's aesthetic sensibility. The arts are considered to be powerful agents in adult self development because in the artistic process, what one does next is not usually predetermined but arises out of the interplay of the artist and the medium (the paint, clay, musical instrument, the word, gesture, etc).

Being involved with children in the 'art of education', takes on a new meaning in this context, whereby the child's soul[27] is seen as the living medium (rather than *tabula rasa)* with which the teacher is expected to work with sensitivity, responsiveness and creativity. The creative tension lies between, on the one hand, having some ready-made content to teach and, on the other, holding oneself back from delivering the already prepared, and trusting that with the necessary receptive attentiveness the inspiration for the appropriate 'next step' will come. Preparedness to submit to this discipline is a characteristic of 'living teaching'. When teaching seriously engages the arts, the feeling that one is educating 'livingly' may be experienced at any point by anyone along the continuum from 'conservative' to 'progressive'. This is a fundamental reason that such a high value is placed on the arts in Waldorf teacher training, and in Waldorf schools.

Some artistic courses to be included in an ideal teacher training:

Speech and Eurythmy

From the point of view of classroom presence, how teachers speak (especially in telling stories or in plays) and how they move (gestures, posture, bearing) have traditionally been held to be important because young children model their own behaviour strongly on the role models regularly before them. Adolescents, on the other hand, are usually

very skilled at imitating and 'sending up' the mannerisms of teachers. Speech Formation and Eurythmy (two well known performing arts in the Anthroposophical movement) constitute a part of most Waldorf teacher training courses. The value of Eurythmy for education is that it cultivates the Will and Feelings. Eurythmy, which together with singing, playing a musical instrument, painting and drawing, is considered to promote the development of the Will 'to a very special degree'.[28]

Speech formation is entirely practical, involving the exploration of the elements of language ~ sound, vowels, consonants, words, and rhythms, and how they relate to the human being. Working with the three styles of Epic, Lyric, and Dramatic helps to form a better relationship to literature and builds skill in story telling. There is a close relationship between this artistic work and Speech Eurythmy which, through gesture and movement, deepens the experience of vowels and consonants, and rhythms and metres in poetry. Tone Eurythmy, again in gesture and movement, works with the basic elements of music ~ melody, harmony, rhythm, the moods of major and minor, intervals, and discords and concord. [29] The inclusion of Speech and Eurythmy in Waldorf teacher training courses is considered to be of fundamental importance to the aesthetic preparation of Waldorf teachers.

Considerable space has been devoted in this section to describing how the arts are pursued in a Waldorf school curriculum. The point that that the arts are taken very seriously in Waldorf education has been highlighted, but this should not be interpreted to mean that a teacher should be an expert in all the visual or performing arts (this

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[27] Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2 on Steiner's Educational Philosophy for a description of what Steiner means by the term 'soul'.
[28] Rudolf Steiner, *Practical Advice to Teachers*, op. cit. p. 182
[29] Steiner gave 19 lectures in 1924 published under the general title *Speech and Drama*, and two fundamental lecture courses in 1924 under the titles *Eurythmy as Visible Song*, London, 1932 and *Eurythmy as Visible Speech*, London 1956. For the actual practice of Eurythmy, see the book by Annemarie Dubach-Donath, *The Basic Principles of Eurythmy*, London 1937.

would be impossible for most people). There are three or four year training courses each for painting, sculpture, speech and drama, eurythmy, etc., and these are not something which most primary school teachers can realistically contemplate. There is a legitimate place for specialists, especially so in the upper primary and high school, and it is in these areas of the school that they mostly work. Artists, as specialists, can gain a great deal from a teacher training course because their artistic training usually does not involve a study of child development or Waldorf methodology.

Primary school teachers, through their foundation studies and in teacher training, should be introduced to several of these art forms, not only for their own personal development but also to acquire some competence so they can integrate them appropriately in areas of the curriculum for which they are responsible. This issue will also be discussed below in relation to crafts because both are concerned with helping to develop balanced human beings.

5. The Crafts

Developing well-rounded people (in addition to teaching specific skills) is the underlying goal of Waldorf schools, and therefore of Waldorf teacher education. In Waldorf pedagogy, being able to do things with one's hands is seen as an important part of being 'well rounded', indeed it is considered to be as important as developing artistic feeling and expression, and to have a broad knowledge and well developed cognitive skills.

> At the Waldorf school, the children do not merely 'have an idea' in their heads; they feel the idea, for it flows into their whole life of feeling. Their being of soul lives in the sense of the idea, which is not merely a concept but becomes a plastic form. The whole complex of ideas at last becomes human form and figure and in the last resort all this

> passes over into the will. The child learns to transform what he thinks into actual deed.[30]

This process of actualising an idea into a concrete, useful object is characteristic of the crafts. [31] In this context, 'well roundedness' is especially pertinent for teachers who so obviously stand as role models for children and young people. Because handicrafts prepare children to manage practical, everyday problems with ability and confidence, Steiner recommended that they be encouraged to make things that are really useful, which will give them satisfaction and will stimulate their instincts for the practical side of life.[32]

Apart from the fact that handcraft activities for children have a long tradition, a further reason for placing a high emphasis on craft in Waldorf schools arises from Steiner's view that developing manual skills in early childhood through crafts would lead to greater flexibility of thought when, in adolescence, the capacity for abstract thinking emerges. That is, the child's ability to think logically is best educated indirectly by means of handicrafts.[33] From a pedagogical perspective one could reasonably claim that crafts, such as knitting, stimulate cellular development in the brain, at the time when neural connections in the brain are being rapidly established, through the activation of the finer motor system of the fingers and hand.[34]

As for the Arts, an introduction to a variety of crafts has a dual purpose, mainly that of skill development and self development. Although many schools employ specialist craft teachers, much that is done by the children is directed by the kindergarten

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[30] Rudolf Steiner, (Ilkley, 1923), *Education and the Modern Spiritual Life*, op. cit 1954, pp. 196-197
[31] Steiner gave several indications on the subject of crafts and handwork, on which there is a book by Hedwig Hauck, *Handwork and Handicrafts from Indications by Rudolf Steiner* (London, 1968), by the original handicraft teacher in the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart.
[32] ibid
[33] Rudolf Steiner, (Stuttgart, June 1921), *Waldorf Education for Adolescence,* Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications, Forest Row, E. Sussex, 1980, p. 36
[34] Brien Masters (ed), *Child and Man: Journal for Rudolf Steiner Waldorf Education*, Vol. 27, No. 2, July 1993, p. 4. Issue theme, 'Craft and Design'.

and class teachers themselves. For these reasons, Waldorf teacher training courses should continue to provide basic skills in a range of hand-crafts for all trainees. More specific technical studies courses are available for teachers who want to specialise in teaching crafts, like woodwork and metalwork, blacksmithing, and a wide range of 'soft crafts' like knitting, weaving. Once more, an ideal Waldorf teacher training would provide additional studies in curriculum and child development.

6. Movement, Games and Sports

Steiner, in speaking about bodily movement, said that it can be developed in two directions. The body can be made to do purposeless, senseless activities which follow the demands of the body alone, or else the outer movements of the body can gradually become purposeful and penetrated with meaning. The first direction tends to be that of Gymnastics, the second of Eurythmy.[35] Gymnastics, said Steiner, ought not to be practised as an activity which is alien to children, rather they should be led to consciously experience their bodily activity with interested attention, and to become aware of the subtle feelings and sensations that accompany in-breathing or out-breathing, movement of the limbs, running and so on. And it is from the child's living experience of his or her body, when thinking and feeling are engaged with the body that the right activities or postures should proceed.[36]

Gymnastics should also lead the child to develop a feeling for external space, not merely three dimensional space which is a geometric abstraction, but space in relation to the body, above and below, left and right, behind and in front.[37] This approach to gymnastics has been called Bothmer Gymnastics (after Graf von Bothmer, a Gymnastics teacher in the first Waldorf school), but in recent years a more contemporary approach,

[35] Rudolf Steiner, *Study of Man*, op. cit. pp. 178-179

called Spatial Dynamics, has been developed. Through a graded curriculum from mid-primary to high school classes, Spatial Dynamics exercises encourage greater bodily awareness in space, which benefits active participation in all forms of physical activity, including sports. An ideal training course would include weekly classes in Spatial Gymnastics as a balance to weekly Eurythmy classes.

'Concentration exercises' are intricate movement exercises which develop coordination and have been found to be of great value in the education of primary school age children. They can also be used to great effect throughout life, and are excellent for developing flexibility of thinking. In a teacher training course such exercises could be included in Eurythmy or Spatial Dynamics classes, as they only need five to ten minutes. Examples of such an exercise are: Participants are given two sets of movements, for example where they have to clap an anapaest rhythm (short-short ~ long) while at the same time step a dactylic rhythm (long ~ short-short), or are asked to hold the left ear with the right hand and touch their nose with the left hand, and then alternate these movements quickly. For children (especially under nine years), these movements which involve crossing the mid-line of the body exercise left and right-brain activity and stimulate development of neural pathways. These exercises begin very simply in the first class (for example, by introducing some simple Maori stick games), and gradually increase in their complexity as the children proceed into upper primary classes. Steiner claimed that such exercises lay a good foundation for the child's ability to connect and separate ideas and perceptions[38], and the great alertness required for

[36] Rudolf Steiner, *Waldorf Education for Adolescence*, op. cit. p. 33
[37] Rudolf Steiner, *Education and the Modern Spiritual Life*, op. cit. p. 206
[38] ibid, pp. 189-190

these coordination movements also make the child's pictorial, imaginative thinking mobile and skilful.[39]

Teacher trainees would need to develop a repertoire of such exercises, as well as learn to design them, for later use when teaching. In addition, traditional children's games, like skipping, hopscotch, marbles, clapping games, a variety of circle games and chasing games, should be learned, or re-learned, by the teacher trainees. Traditional children's games should be encouraged before the conventional sports (like cricket, football and tennis) distract many children's attention from play to more competitive pursuits. Team games, such as basketball, netball, football, soccer, cricket, softball, volleyball, racquet games, and more individual sports like gymnastics, athletics, orienteering, swimming, surfing and cycling become part of schools sport and recreation programmes, according to means and location. Outdoor pursuits like bushwalking, camping, sailing, canoeing, rock-climbing, and caving are activities introduced in some Waldorf school Outdoor Education programs.

The maintenance of a fit and healthy physical body through a wide range of activities in the movement curriculum is an essential part of child development, and therefore an essential aspect of study in Waldorf teacher education.

7. <u>Classroom Management</u>

The term 'classroom management' was not used by Steiner, but all the pedagogical issues associated with its meaning are thoroughly covered throughout his many lectures on education as well as his conversations and comments in the *Konferenzen* over a six year period.

An analysis of the *Konferenzen* by Masters reveals numerous statements and direct advice given by Steiner about how teachers should conduct themselves in the

[39] Rudolf Steiner, *Kingdom of Childhood*, op. cit. pp. 81-83

classroom.[40] Bearing in mind that most of the teachers in the first Waldorf school were not 'professional' teachers, but 'struggling newcomers to the classroom'[41] the precepts outlined below could apply to trained and untrained alike. Only a small selection of these precepts is presented.

- The teacher should pay constant attention to his own speech.
- Economy should be exercised in teaching, so that material presented is in a form that can be absorbed with maximum engagement.
- The balancing of group work (class recitation, the singing of the whole choir, addressing the class as a whole) by giving attention to the individual is a vital factor in the teaching process.
- The teacher should beware of getting drawn into a style of presentation that veers towards the entertaining if this is at the expense of the pupils' acquiring capacities.
- Beware especially of the gimmicky.
- Teaching without notes comes across as being an unshakeable maxim, so that there is no necessity 'to have recourse in any way during the lesson' to something that has been written down as part of preparation. At the dame time Steiner did bow to human limitation, acknowledging that 'this may take a little time to achieve'.
- The point of the above was so that 'vital contact' with the children could be maintained in a completely unbroken way. This point is frequently emphasised in other places.
- But even if the teachers had weaned themselves from their notes, there was still the immanent danger of losing contact with the pupils if the teacher's form of delivery developed into a lecturing style, drifting away from teaching.
- Not only make sure that all pupils are participating in the lesson, but also that they all make some spoken contribution.
- Even when concerned with a single child, keep the whole group in mind.
- It is essential to keep the finger on the pulse of the tempo of the lesson.
- Ensure that alternating elements are incorporated in it.

[40] Masters, 1997, op. cit., All bulleted excerpts from pp. 107-109
[41] ibid. p.106

- When the children are working, keep a track on the noise level in the room, but apply a qualitative listening to it.
- Have the time planned.
- Beware of becoming vague, or losing the connecting thread, or overwhelming with too many ideas, or of slovenliness.
- Handle homework with care: don't necessarily insist on it; voluntarily undertaken homework has greater pedagogical value; it must be enjoyed. Yet if homework has been set, be absolutely consequential about it.
- Steiner was emphatic about who should be in control: the teacher.

Classroom management encompasses all the tasks which a teacher must do to create the conditions in which students can thrive and remain 'engaged with the task'. The aspect of the art of education that has to do with classroom management, when articulated in behavioural terms, can be narrowed down to three major categories.

(1) Lesson planning and Preparation
(2) Classroom Practice
(3) Management and Discipline

The comments by Steiner above have the ring of someone with the voice of experience, and it is noted that the three categories of classroom management are covered. Given the aims of education, the understanding of children and their potential, and a creative way of working with the curriculum, a teacher adopting these precepts should be able the manage the classroom too. Classroom Management theory and method are a standard part of most mainstream teacher training courses, and even though the way that teachers view children is somewhat different in Waldorf schools, much that is used in conventional teacher training can be accommodated and applied by Waldorf teacher educators in their training courses.

8. <u>School Organisation and Management</u>

An ideal training course for Waldorf teachers would provide knowledge and skills related to important aspects of their employment that is not directly connected with classroom teaching. These areas are: 1) Social Theory (The Threefold Social Order)

2) The College of Teachers
3) Social and Community Relations

An understanding of these areas, and the development of basic communication skills would provide a strong base for making a positive contribution to any Waldorf school.

1) Social Theory (The Threefold Social Order)

The theoretical basis for the threefold organisation of an institution, such as a Waldorf school, has already been laid in Chapter 2 Section 4, especially in sub-section 5, called 'Threefoldness and School Organisation'. Schools were described as belonging to the cultural sphere of the social order but, in so far as schools are considered to be microcosms of the wider society, they need to have structures and facilities to deal with the social or rights sphere and the economic sphere. Any functioning organisation, like a school, may also be considered from a four-fold perspective, similar to the four-foldness described in Chapter 2 Section 3 in relation to 'The Human Being and the Kingdoms of Nature', where, the four elements (earth, water, air, and fire) were used to qualitatively differentiate the four kingdoms of Nature. While Natural Law regulates the activity in nature, a social institution like a school requires human organisation and management.

A parallel four-fold differentiation can be made for a school as follows:

Earth	The material sphere: Physical property, grounds, buildings, resources
Water	The formative sphere: Processes, routines, timetables, daily schedules
Air	The relationship sphere: The social interactions between students, teachers, office staff, parents, visitors, etc.
Fire	The policy sphere: The College of Teachers

This latter sphere will be considered below.

2) The College of Teachers

The College of Teachers is responsible for all educational matters in the school, and administers the day to day aspects involved in conducting the educational programme, as well as aspects of wider accountability. These aspects include:

- Formulating Educational Policies: such as class sizes, school starting age, admissions criteria, teaching loads, behaviour management, and general policies on dress, food, TV, drugs, etc.
- Meeting Government Requirements: such as Registration Board regulations, Teacher Registration, Occupational Health and Safety, and Local Council requirements
- Employment: Following legal procedure for advertising vacancies, interviews and appointment of new staff, and informing staff of their duties and responsibilities
- Evaluation of Teachers: Accountability procedures, self and peer assessment criteria, mentoring and staff support

Work of the College may be divided among committees which are given a mandate for their tasks. In most policy matters committees bring recommendations to the College for ratification. College meetings have to do with educational issues, and it is normally only appropriate to have people who are involved in the day to day work of the school to attend College meetings.

3) Social and Community Relations

Maintaining healthy social relations between the various individuals and groups in the school community requires commitment and ongoing work. Best results in this area are usually achieved when all parties are involved in the process of decision making. Responsibilities of and relationships between the College of Teachers, Parent Association, School Council or Board of Management need to be described in writing. Published information about how these bodies communicate with each other, how individual parents communicate with these bodies, and how channels of

communication operate, including the grievance procedure when they break down, should be readily available in a well functioning community. While teacher trainees are usually not in a position to influence policy on these matters during training, they should be aware of their host schools' procedures, and what questions to ask when they have their teaching practicum.

The Waldorf teaching profession is based upon the development and maintenance of well functioning human relationships, therefore having good interpersonal communication skills is a basic asset in school communities. An ideal teacher training course will include courses for developing skills for being effective in meetings, strategies for effective decision making, for managing and resolving conflict, and for giving and receiving feedback; also important are skills in listening and speaking, in achieving consensus, in learning to delegate and learning to mediate. These skills could be taught by making the normal social interactions in the training courses more conscious, as well as by using a wide range of structured exercises. Because these skills are so basic for maintaining sound human relations, they are applicable in every day life and for every day use with children, parents and colleagues.

9. Meditative Practice

In Steiner's first course of lectures to teachers (*Study of Man*)[42] he took an approach which, in order to be understood, requires a new approach to its study. Steiner made it clear very early in the above lecture course that the content he was presenting in the lectures could not be approached as one might approach an applied anthropology, but rather must be grasped meditatively. In other words, 'meditative text' must be grasped meditatively because it cannot be properly grasped intellectually. In a lecture given one

year later to the Waldorf teachers in Stuttgart (*The Three Fundamental Forces in Education*, September 1920)[43] Steiner described a way of working with the content of such meditative text 'that could allow them to flow productively into the educational encounter between teacher and the child, to illuminate in action the educational moment'[44]. The three steps described in the lecture are as follows:

1) The teacher strives to understand and take in the thoughts, asking 'How can I internalise the contents in such a way that they can live on, or better, come again to life in my consciousness?'
2) The teacher transforms them in meditation, asking 'How can this process be intensified and transformed into a meditative deepening?'
3) The teacher remembers them in action, and this can only take place in the classroom.

Steiner summarised these three steps by saying:

> Thus we start with a receiving or perceiving of the study of man, then comes an understanding, a meditative under-standing of the study of man…, and then comes a remembering of it out of the spirit. This means teaching creatively from out of the spirit; the art of education comes about. It must be a conviction, a frame of mind.[45]

This exercise in meditative practice is one of many available[46], and is particularly useful because it is connected with practical classroom work. Although many teachers have the desire to cultivate and nurture meditative work, there are at the same time many questions as to how to begin, how to deal with the problems and challenges that arise along the way, and the need to exchange experiences.

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[42] See Chapter 3 Section 2 for a more detailed coverage of these lectures.
[43] Rudolf Steiner, *Meditative Acquired Knowledge of Man*, Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications, Forest Row, E. Sussex, UK, 1982. See lecture of 16th September 1920, 'The Three Fundamental Forces in Education', p. 14-32
[44] Jon McAlice, 'Annual Report from the Pedagogical Section 1988', in *Rundbrief der Pädagogischen Sektion am Goetheanum*, No. 6 Winter 1999, pp. 12-13
[45] Steiner 1982, op. cit., p. 32
[46] See also Rudolf Steiner, *How to Know Higher* Worlds, Anthroposophic Press, NY 1994 (Originally published 1909); *Towards the Deepening of Waldorf Education*, Henry Barnes et. al. (Eds), Pedagogical Section of the School of Spiritual Science, Goetheanum, Switzerland, 1991; Jörgen Smit, *Lighting Fires: Deepening Education Through Meditation*, Hawthorn Press, Stroud UK, 1992: Jörgen Smit, *How to Transform Thinking, Feeling and Willing*, Hawthorn Press, Stroud UK, 1989

An ideal training would lay the ground work to meditative practice by conducting practical exercises for the training of thinking, feeling, willing, imagination, composure, intuition, positivity and wonder. The benefits of meditation do not come suddenly nor can they be achieved in a one-off course, rather it is an activity which, like other vital or hygienic practices (such as eating or brushing one's teeth), requires regular repetition. It is also most beneficial when it is done willingly and is experienced as a joyful experience. The best that a training course can hope to teach students about the need for ongoing meditative practice, expect them to know how to do a number of basic exercises, and help students start a good habit.[47]

9. Teaching Practice

This final component of an ideal training is perhaps one of the most important because it exposes trainees to the 'real life' situation of their chosen work. The school culture and physical setting, interacting with the students, teachers and parents, the daily routines, timetables, lesson plans, preparation, and being in front of the class, sitting in meetings, etc., provide the confirmation that this milieu is where they belong. Or otherwise they realise that they need to reconsider their career choice.

An ideal Waldorf teacher training institution would be located near a thriving Waldorf school, in which the trainees would be welcome, could visit classrooms for regular observation, and could participate in school events, such as festivals, excursions or camps. In addition to regular weekly visits, trainees would have an extended practicum of four to six weeks. These would need to be taken at different schools.

[47] The proverb: 'You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink', is apposite for meditation. Teacher trainers can only hope that students will be thirsty enough to want to drink.

During the practicum, trainees would ideally return once or twice to the training college for discussion and de-briefing. A supervising teacher within the school would oversee each student's progress, brief them on expectations, standard of preparation and delivery of work to pupils, give detailed feedback on their teaching, give them plenty of opportunity to be involved with the students in a variety of lessons, give them plenty of responsibility and also plenty of help. In addition trainees would be visited by a supervising tutor from the college. Both would write a report on the trainee's performance in a number of areas including thoroughness of lesson plans, evidence of mastery of the subject to be taught, appropriate use of resources, attempts at creative and artistic presentation, personal demeanour, use of voice, involvement of students, rapport with children, flow of the lesson, management of classroom, manner of dealing with minor disruptions, etc. Many more criteria could be identified in relation to quality of relations with staff, involvement in teacher's meetings, or relations with parents, but these need not be included here. The point being made is that assessment of trainees needs to be rigorous and thorough, and potential weaknesses identified and where possible rectified. The outcomes of teaching practice periods are a source of feedback, not only to trainees, but can also reflect back on the college staff in so far as they are indicators of the effectiveness of the training being given.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has identified, and to a varying extent discussed, nine categories of subject areas which should reasonably be covered in an ideal training. Notwithstanding the fact that the first Waldorf teachers were trained by Steiner in an intensive two week course (this was described in Section 2 of this Chapter), to achieve such a training today could easily require three years of full-time study. However, the full-time study option would need to be offered in modules which could accommodate its completion part-time).

There are a number of precedents for this which include regular weekend and holiday intensive courses. (Some of these are covered in Chapter 4 Section $).

The most common model of a three-year training would cover the categories discussed above as follows:

The First Year (Orientation Year in Anthroposophy and the Arts)

- Anthroposophical Studies
- Artistic Studies, (speech and drama, eurythmy, sculpting, painting, music)
- Crafts (soft and hard crafts), Movement (games and spatial dynamics)
- Group Work and Social Skills Training
- Visits to anthroposophically based institutions such as schools, curative homes, therapy centres, bio-dynamic gardens and farms

The Second Year

- Pedagogical Studies
- Artistic Studies (as for first year, but some more oriented to teaching)
- Crafts and Movement
- Group Work and Social Skills Training (more school based)
- Teaching practicum (two periods of at least four weeks)

The Third Year

- Pedagogical Studies
- Artistic Studies, Crafts and Movement
- Teaching practicum (two periods of six to eight weeks)
- Meditative practice
- School Administration
- Special Project

The goal of an ideal training must be to graduate teachers having had the best possible training. This goal is important because the future development of the Waldorf school movement depends on the quality of the teachers who enter it. Its goal must be not only of minimum standards of competence defined in terms of skills, but also of a style of teacher professionalism that encompasses the qualities of enthusiasm, imagination,

inspiration, intuition, and creativity, and also where lifelong education is seen not only as a professional necessity, but as a way of life.