

Pacifica Journal

A tri-annual newsletter published by the Anthroposophical Society in Hawai'i
Number 20 2002 (1)

The Asia-Pacific Initiative: A Seven Year Cycle

Van James, Hawai'i, USA

Karl Kaltenbach (AUS), Hans van Mulder (NZ), Olaf Lampson (CAN), and Arthur Zajonc (USA), General Secretaries of the four English-speaking countries that ring the Pacific region, met regularly in Dornach at the Goetheanum Land Representatives meetings. In order to discuss their common regional interests, which were not dealt with in the official meetings, they gathered together at meal times. When in 1995, Hans and Olaf had just come from the first Pacific Region Conference in Hawai'i, and Nicanor Perlas gave a report on activities in the Philippines, it was decided that a greater effort to work together in the Asia-Pacific region was necessary. Nicanor Perlas suggested that a group of country representatives be invited to the Philippines to share reflections about their countries and the anthroposophical work in their regions. In addition to the people mentioned above, this first group included: Penny Roberts (USA) attended instead of Arthur, Van James (USA-HI), Ha Vinh Tho (CH-Vietnam), June Yu (Taiwan), Aban and Dilnawaz Bana (India). They became the Asia-Pacific Initiative Group and were joined by about fifteen local friends of Anthroposophical Group in Manila in 1996. A very fruitful sharing took place and it was agreed to meet again the next year in India to explore further questions that arose during the meeting. However, the India gathering would be open to all interested people.

The 1997 Asia-Pacific Conference took place in Mumbai (Bombay) in the buildings of the Theosophical Society. It was quite an experience to hear lectures in India on the nature of anthroposophy delivered by international speakers flanked by large portraits of H.P. Blavatsky and H.S. Olcott, the Russian and American founders of the Theosophical Society. The well-organized conference (thanks to Aban Bana) had about one-hundred participants, including representation from Japan, Thailand, Nepal, Singapore, and several European countries. We saw from this conference that many of the people from school, farm, and medical initiatives in India came together for the first time and benefited from the

interaction with their own people as well as from the broader international exchanges that took place. This was to be one of the major accomplishments of all the Asia-Pacific conferences—bringing local groups together with each other to share their work within a global context.

Dr. Porn Panosot invited us to hold the 1998 conference in Thailand. Some of us questioned whether there was enough interest in anthroposophy at the local level in this country, but this turned-out to be unfounded for this was one of the most successful conferences in terms of participation and a balanced program. Unfortunately, anthroposophical confer-



Taiwanese public school teachers in front of Waldorf school exhibit in Ilong County, Taiwan.

ences almost always have too much lecturing and not enough hands-on, artistic learning or social interaction of people scheduled into the program. This habit (contrary to what anthroposophy stands for) was corrected at the Thai conference with plenty of activities, field trips, arts, and games in addition to the excellent lectures. Malaysia and China were now represented at this conference in addition to the other countries mentioned above.

With reluctance turned to hearty enthusiasm, Taiwan took on the 1999 conference with the theme "The Mystery of Love." Yi Ling Chan, Yah Chih Chang, June Li, June Yu, and many others helped to pull this event together. It was a

wonderfully organized conference that even had co-sponsorship from the local government. Korea was represented for the first time at this conference.

The 2000 Asia-Pacific Conference, prepared over two years, was hosted by Japan on the slopes of Mt. Fuji. Some two hundred participants attended, over half from Japan, and almost every Asia-Pacific country was represented. This conference was in both English and Japanese, which allowed most participants to follow along, but made for other difficulties. Still, it was a milestone event for Japan and for the Asia-Pacific work.

There was no strong offer from a host country to sponsor a 2001 conference. Hawai'i was planning another Pacific Region Conference in the summer of 2001 so it was felt that a hiatus for the Asia-Pacific Conference was in order. Those country delegates who could come to Hawai'i would meet there to plan a next step. A daylong meeting of those country delegates who did come to Hawai'i decided that what was really needed was a gathering of the country representatives, a delegates retreat for those who are concerned with the development of anthroposophy in Asia. Nepal offered to host a limited gathering, and a mandate group (Yuji Agematsu, Nicanor Perlas, Karl Kaltenbach, Hans van Mulder) was chosen to plan the agenda for a November 2002 meeting in Katmandu. This Mandate Group would also shape a mission statement concerning future anthroposophical work in the Asia-Pacific region.

At all the Asia-Pacific Conferences there have also been Class Lessons held for members of the School of Spiritual Science. This has contributed an essential esoteric foundation for much of the anthroposophical work in many of these countries.

It should also be noted that beginning with the India conference, Nana Goebble of the *Friends of Rudolf Steiner Education* directed a Waldorf Roundtable (meeting of Waldorf educators), usually a day in length, following the Asia-Pacific Conferences. This was a very fruitful gathering of information, sharing of insights, and setting of tasks for the future of Waldorf-Steiner education in Asia. (Growth in the Asian Waldorf movement has been phenomenal over the past few years.)

If one includes the first and second Pacific Region Conferences in Hawai'i (1995 and 2001), as well as the up-coming Asia-Pacific Delegates Meeting scheduled for

Nepal, a clear seven-year-cycle becomes apparent. The question is: now, what is necessary as a next step for anthroposophic work in this region? Should the countries be left to themselves to organize their own conferences in their own languages and in the particular fields of endeavor (education, agriculture, medicine, social issues, and the arts)? What is the task of an Asia-Pacific Initiative Group and how can it best fulfill its task? These are only some of the many questions that will shape the 2002 Delegates Meeting in Nepal.

At the first Asia-Pacific Conference in Manila the idea for *Pacifica Journal*, a newsletter for the communication of news in this region, was proposed. *Pacifica Journal* has been critically acclaimed but still has a relatively small number of subscribers. This has necessitated its becoming a tri-annual publication rather than a quarterly. The *Journal* will continue to communicate the events, ideas, and opinions that are of interest and concern to those at work in the Asia-Pacific region and the world as long as this is wanted and possible.

Report on the Pacific Region Conference in Hawai'i

Reiichi Yanagisawa, Tokyo, Japan
(Translation by Ikuko Nishimoto)

On July 29, 2001, I took an Aloha Airline flight departing from the familiar Honolulu airport for the Big Island where an anthroposophical conference was going to be held. When I landed an hour later at the Kona Airport that stands on the extensive lava field, every bone in my body cried out, "I am back!" From there I took a school bus to the conference site, beautiful up-country Waimea, where I was reunited with my former colleagues from the Honolulu Waldorf School. Mauna Kea, "White Mountain," was in full view from my dormitory window. The place reminded me of the village near Mt. Fuji in Japan where the 2000 Asian-Pacific Conference was held just a year earlier.

The first Pacific Region Conference was held here in Waimea six years ago. It was appropriately titled "Meeting the Future," for it became the seed for many future Asia-

Pacific conferences. This second Hawai'i conference owes its existence, in part, to the chairman of the Anthroposophical Society in Hawai'i, Van James. During our conversations, he expressed his hope that this impulse will flow well into the twenty-first century.

The conference theme this year was, "At the Threshold: Seeking the Truly Human." Every day of the conference a rainbow appeared over the campus in the Waimea sky, as a symbol of our nearness to the threshold. Conference participants flew in from all over Asia as well as other parts of the world; Japan, Taiwan, China, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, North America, Canada, and Switzerland, about one hundred altogether.

The cafeteria where we took meals and coffee breaks provided an ideal place for all of us to meet and exchange news or simply get to know each other.

The conference opened with a powerful Hawaiian chant, followed by the Foundation Stone Meditation and opening lecture by Dr. Michaela Glöckler. Michaela is the leader of the medical section at the Goetheanum. Her strikingly serene appearance seemed to embody the spiritual world itself, as she set the tone of the day with introductory words before a keynote speaker addressed us each morning. She brought the picture of the four guardian beings of a Korean Buddhist temple she had just visited. (Fig. 1) Each guardian held a different symbol; the sword, the pagoda, the lyre, and the spear. Together we contemplated the significance of these pictures as she guided us through the sacred temple's threshold in order to encounter the spiritual.

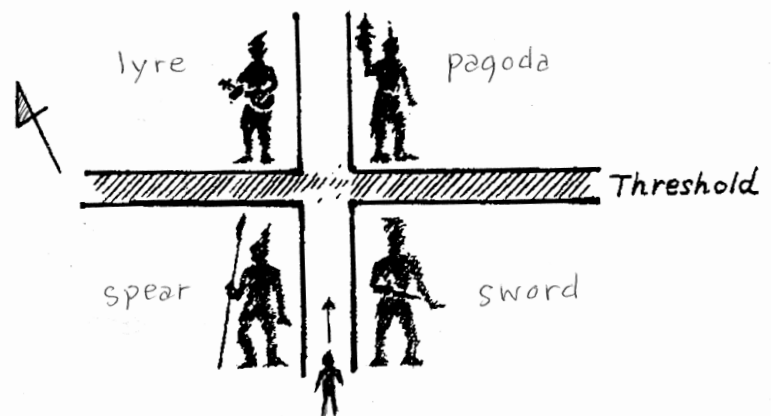
Nicanor Perlas from the Philippines took the podium to discuss some of the most urgent and current issues we are facing today: globalization, genetic engineering, missile defense, and cloning. He urged us to respond to these issues in a truly free and spiritual manner, and urged us to apply a truly three-fold social structure. (Fig. 2)

After morning lectures, several workshops were offered. Some were artistic, some were meditative in nature, and others took the form of discussion groups. Professor Agematsu from Japan gave a workshop on "Threshold Experiences in Architecture." More workshops were offered in the afternoons.

One night there was an evening of music and dance. We were treated to rare and unique performances of eurythmy and

ancient *hula* in the same program. While watching the eurythmy, I was so moved by it that I was convinced nothing could top this experience. Then the hula was performed. I was pleasantly surprised to find myself equally impressed by it. It was an intriguing and enchanting evening for me altogether. We Japanese presented a traditional Japanese singing game called "Toryanse." This singing game depicts Japanese customs that might be described as threshold experiences. It is a pity that such experiences of meaningful initiation and the rites of passage seem to be quickly disappearing in today's Japan. On the final day, after the last lecture, every participant was presented with a lei made by the grade eight students of the local Waldorf school. A round of applause in appreciation echoed through the cafeteria for the staff and organizers of the conference. Just when it was about to close, good-natured laughter broke out as Michaela Glöckler called out: ALOHA!

1 Four Guardians at the Threshold (shi-ten-ou)



Throughout the conference, I felt two different kinds of breeze blowing. One was the "cosmopolitan breeze" and the other was the "free individual breeze." They were both converging on the path called "truly human." May this impulse reach every shore that surrounds the Pacific Basin, and travel across the world, to lead us all to many more Asia-Pacific Conferences. And I, for my part, will do what I can to keep this impulse alive in these crescent-shaped islands called Japan.

Globalization and Humanity at the Threshold

Nicanor Perlas, Manila, Philippines

[From notes by Bonnie Ozaki-James, unedited by the lecturer, July 30, 2001, Waimea, Hawai'i.]

The following are four pictures of humanity's global threshold crossing:

1. The G-8 meeting Genoa, Italy—where 150,000 demonstrators gathered, hundreds injured, one dead. This was a protest against economic transformation. Under the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) education and health care become private businesses. The Agreements on agriculture are wiping out the small farmers all over the world.

2. Genetic Engineering—the transformation of nature, reassembling species boundaries. Once humanity feared “fire technology,” the transformation of the inorganic world, which developed to the point of creating the atom bomb. Now we are able to transform the organic world.

3. Cloning of Humans—another step in the transformation of the organic world. 1973 DNA recombinant brought the Age of Biology. Now stem cell research is being debated. Using cells at this stage of development, any bodily systems can be generated.

4. Star Wars—missile defense shield of the planet. This constitutes a militarization of outer space, the control of earth from outer space by military technology.

When we cross thresholds, ordinary reality is no more, and we are awakened to asking important questions of ourselves and of our society. In connection with each of the four pictures given above, we must ask ourselves questions. First, in light of the World Trade Organization and its resulting globalization agreements, we must ask, “What kind of society do we want?” The work in genetic engineering forces us to ask, “What is nature?” The ability to clone humans necessitates the question, “What is the human being?” and the technology for taking over the planet from outer space makes us inquire “What is our image of our planet?”

The globalization forces have answers to all these questions, and if we do not come up

with better answers, theirs will dictate the future. To the first they offer that in twenty-five years there will be no work for 80% of society, a sort of reverse Egyptian caste system. To the second they offer the possibility of “re-forming” all life. Whoever has the power and the resources will define which genes are “good” to have and which are “bad.” They plan on the transnational corporations, backed up by the governments of states, holding the power. To the question of what is the human being, they reply “a biochemical machine,” and are in the process of patenting human materials, such as embryos and stem cell systems. And our planet and the space around it are seen as open venues for wars and other military purposes.

Globalization is a call to humanity to define all our fundamental relationships. We must seek answers that responsibly engage the world. The 1994 beginning of the World Trade Organization might be viewed as the seventh trumpet of the Apocalypse (a giant machine sowing death and destruction.)

What are our responses to these calls?

Despair is one, especially when we truly feel the situation. The level of despair in the world is indicated by the use of drugs, violence, saying no to life and culture.

Illumination can be another. When spirits are awakened there will be trials. If we can stand among these forces, we can be liberated.

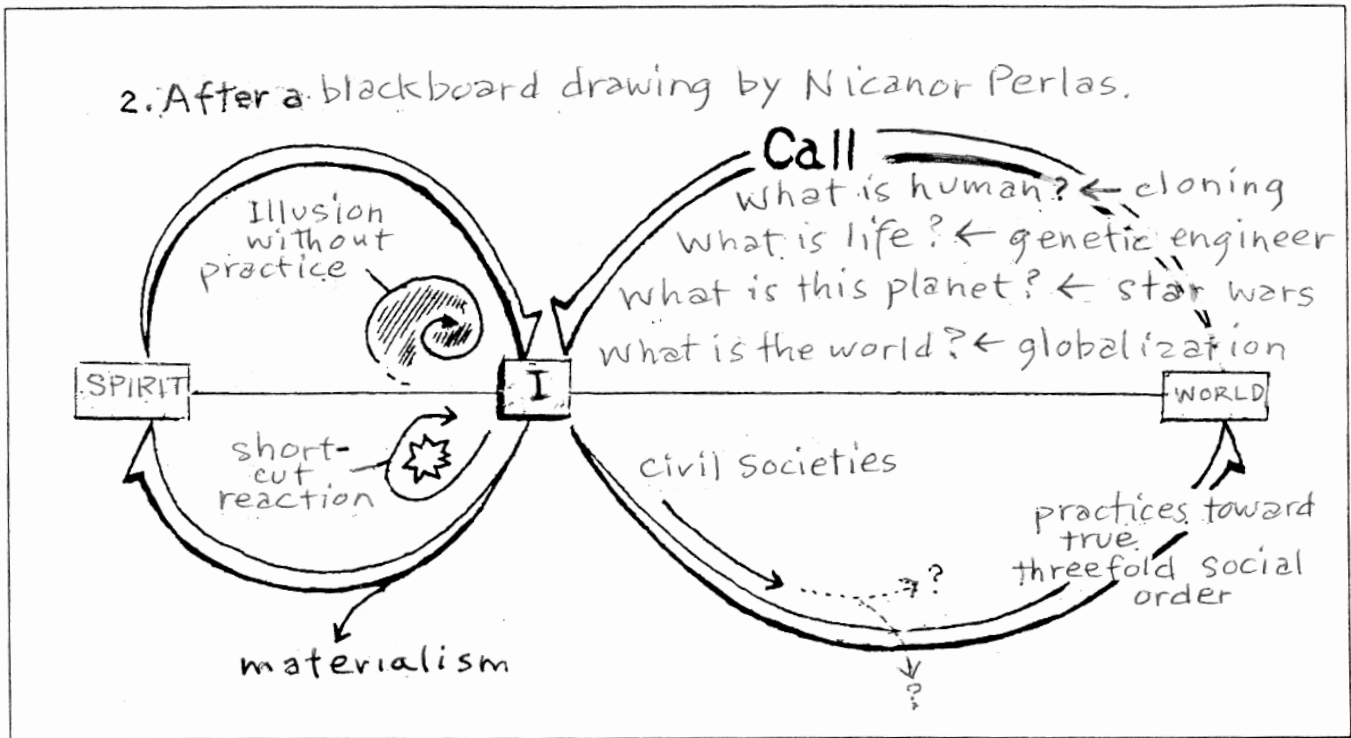
Globalization is a form of initiation. If we reject the *call* we are in our own little world of fear, and will need to withdraw more and more from the world. We need deep fundamental changes in our own identity or we are cut off from the world. False illumination can place us outside of the real world, as well. (Threefolding is even in the Trilateral Commission of the WTO, where Japan, the US and Europe are the main powers.)

Each person or “I” looks out at the World and the world responds with a call to act that the I takes in and contemplates (fig. 2) The call enters the spirit world through me. Here it can go around and around in its own small inward circle never resulting in action, but always being contemplated as an idea. Or it can fill me with despair so that I “drop out” of life. Or it can be filled with illusions that again lead me to abandon the mundane world, but for lofty spiritual ideals. The healthy path to initiation is that the call will awaken in me the will to act and to meet the world in a

helpful way. This helpful path might be to work as one of Paul Ray's *Cultural Creatives*, 50 million of whom are living in the US and thinking they are each alone. Another way would be to join new social movements, or to become part of global civil society.

Massive alienation, such as is happening now everywhere, creates awakening and

The question is, will anthroposophy cross the threshold or will it build on the past only? Some milestones worth noting: at the beginning of the 20th century, the birth of anthroposophy indicated the individual meeting with the lower guardian of the threshold. As we step into the 21st century, we need to meet with the greater



propels humankind over the threshold and through the initiation process.

Civil Society is the third power necessary to bring about threefolding at the global level. Transnational corporations and governments are the first two and together, without the third, they spell disaster.

Cultural creatives are a great business force as shown by the growth and power of socially responsible investments and SR banks, worth an estimated three trillion dollars. Cultural creatives are active in government as "whistle blowers," reporting government abuses.

Threefolding is nearly possible and is necessary to transform elite globalization, to transform hate, doubt, and fear to love, hope, and courage and let these forces work in the world.

guardian in order to work in the world.

Materialism has now entered into the will through technology. Another question for anthroposophists is, can we move from thinking through the heart and into the will? Now it is a question, not of thinking about spiritual science, or of feeling it, but of doing it. Deeds are of the utmost importance.

Globalization stops in me at the moment when my behavior and ideal are one. When I love the world and truly live in the chaos, I allow possibilities for others and the "impossible" happens. When I act rightly a fountain shoots up to the spiritual world and help arrives to do the impossible.

Steiner Initiatives in "Material" Singapore

Betty Khoo, Darwin, Australia

The ground was stony—but Waldorf Education & Biodynamics have taken root! It's hard to imagine ground stonier than Singapore—one of the world's most materialistic city-states—for Waldorf education and Biodynamic farming to be seeded, and take root. But maybe because material goals (industrialisation, urbanisation with the consequent destruction of Nature and banishment of farms) were being pursued so relentlessly by the Singapore government (a dictatorship of 30 years standing), there were souls just crying out to be nourished by an alternative, eco-friendly system.

The state schools (private schools were phased out by the '60s) of this former British colony, and later Universities & Polytechnics had become 'servants' of industry, churning out whatever technicians & engineers the factories and their support services demanded. Land was deemed "far too valuable" to be used to feed either pigs, chickens or people, and farms were phased out by the '70s while land was sold or leased for development. Expressways, housing developments and golf courses ruthlessly pushed into nature reserves. The mantra of the ruling elite for the past 30 years has been, "We must be competitive or lose out to other 'markets' in the global economy."

Even at the heady height of Singapore's incredible economic success (riding on the coattails of the petro-chemical industry), there were Singaporeans who felt emotionally empty and hungry for values and a life-purpose that they knew did not come with the material success of their well-paid jobs. They saw too how, as Singaporeans became more urbanized, more affluent, they became all stressed out, with no time for family togetherness, and were frequently sick. Cancer, asthma, heart disease are still on the rise. Private hospitals sprang up, as soon sickness had become one more 'growth industry.'

"In every crisis, a saviour will appear. In education one such person was Dr. Rudolf Steiner, the founder of the Waldorf schools....." and this was how Dr. Lai Chui Nan (American-Taiwanese born physicist-

author and cancer specialist) introduced the teachings of Steiner to more than 20,000 Singaporeans (mostly Chinese-speaking) at the Singapore Indoor Stadium in October 1993. Dr. Lai was not brought in to speak specifically about Rudolf Steiner or Waldorf Education. As the founder of the non-profit Buddhist-based Lapis Lazuli Light Total Health Information Centres (in USA & Taiwan), she was the guest speaker at a Holistic Lifestyle and Environmental Protection program. Her talks focused on achieving total health the natural way--and Steiner's work in Education, Anthroposophic medicine & nutrition and Biodynamic agriculture were brought in as being the best vehicles to achieve such goals.

In fact, the 'seeds' had already been sown the preceding year when Joyce Low (a banker then), inspired by Dr. Lai's work, set-up a Lapis Lazuli Light (Total health Centre & Library) in Singapore. A number of Steiner's books were included in the library.

More than that, Dr. Lai sent Joyce materials on Waldorf education seminars and holiday camps for teachers and parents in the USA and encouraged her to promote such education.

At about the same time Organic Paradise—a health food shop in Singapore's glitzy main shopping strip Orchard Road—opened, and they stocked organic and Biodynamic foods. Stressed, sick and seeking Singaporeans patronised the shop and café for the health foods—health videos, books, tapes—the label biodynamic became familiar but not the philosophy behind it.

So the ground was 'ripe' when Biodynamic Outreach's Peter Proctor rang Betty Khoo in Darwin, Australia from New Zealand, introduced himself and said that he would be going to India to seed Biodynamics and as he would have to pass through Singapore, would there be anyone there who could be interested in him giving talks. (Betty is a Singapore-born journalist residing in Darwin and is the Biodynamic farming honorary rep for northern Australia).

The seeds were ready to fall on well-prepared ground! Peter Proctor was most warmly received and he gave not one but two talks. The first was a public dinner-talk at Organic Paradise which also has a health-vegan food café. He was asked to speak about Rudolf Steiner's philosophy and its practical applications in the different fields

of human endeavour. The shop-café was crammed to bursting with about 100 people who were not only new to the foods but Steiner's philosophy. They relished it.

On this same visit Peter also gave a lecture at the Singapore Zoological Gardens. This time he spoke specifically on Biodynamics—to horticulturalists, botanists and nature lovers. And he led the making of BD compost in the Zoo—with Zoo poo! This was in 1995 and Singaporeans seemed hungry for more.

Then, hot on the heels of Peter's first visit, Singaporeans were further exposed to the teachings of Steiner when Australian Terry Forman (a Biodynamic farmer & lecturer, anthroposophist, sculptor and founder of the Armidale Steiner school in NSW), was flown in (sponsored by another health food shop, Brown Rice Paradise) to conduct a week-long series of lectures.

It should be noted that Richard Seah, editor and publisher of *The Good Life* magazine (and one of three directors of Brown Rice Paradise, the other two being Kheng Chua and John Yeo), had also been writing about Biodynamic foods and Steiner. In fact Richard had, back in 1995-96, reported on what Steiner had said about cows going MAD (Mad Cow Disease) if they were fed animal products!

Terry's talks kicked off with a well-attended public lecture billed intriguingly as: Dr Rudolf Steiner—Does this Man Have the Answers to the Problems Plaguing Humanity Today? Terry, a masterly speaker, had a rapt audience at the National University of Singapore's Guild of Graduate Society's lecture hall. Each day, for the rest of the week Terry spoke on the different applications of Steiner's work—including a practical demonstration of compost making and BD 500 stirring.

The seeds were fast sprouting. More speakers (practitioners' of Steiner's ideas) followed and some Singaporeans went overseas to study to Waldorf education (Derrick Lim and Ping Lee went off to New Zealand, and Ann Lim to Australia), and this has culminated today in two major Steiner-inspired endeavours in Singapore.

In mid 2000 Joyce Low and husband James opened the charity Kampung Senang—a holistic daycare centre for the elderly, teens and children with a Waldorf playgroup and Waldorf pre-school, and an organic food garden to educate about

natural farming systems and also provide fresh vegetables.

In the same year Evelyn Eng-Lim (a chemist turned volunteer eco-educator) and her husband Thian Soo (accountant turned farmer) started Singapore's first Biodynamic farm. Their five-acre farm Green Circle Eco-Farm in north-west Singapore is one of the very few formerly farmed areas that the government has tentatively allowed for horticulture. Right at the very beginning



Peter Proctor was there, alongside Evelyn and Soo, bashing through the human-height elephant grass, digging and examining the soil ("very poor, need lots of BD compost!") Meaning non-stop hard work in the equatorial heat and humidity. The couple had visions of not just developing a Biodynamic market garden with fruit orchards and poultry but of creating a sanctuary for threatened wildlife. Green Circle would also be a 'living classroom' where groups of students and adults would learn about nature and natural farming systems.

It must have been very gratifying for Peter to see—five years after he first seeded biodynamics in Singapore at the Zoo—Green Circle farm produce an abundance of fresh vegetables that go into weekly box orders. Weekends are open for visitors. On his most recent visit to Singapore—in September 2001—enroute again to India, with partner Rachel to live and continue their work there, we organised a Steiner family and friends get-together at Green Circle.

Peter Proctor introduces Biodynamic ideas at a public gathering at Organic Paradise Food Shop and Cafe in Singapore.

A night coinciding with the Chinese Full-moon festival and a tropical storm was not the best choice. Still about 60 people rolled up in the rain to hear Peter talk of Steiner and the significance of his teachings in the New Millennium—and enjoy a vegetarian feast of farm-fresh herb teas, salads, soups and rice dishes—the herbs and veggies coming straight from the farm! The next day



Low Gek Keng, inspired by Van James' workshop at the Hawai'i conference, leads a mandala drawing class at Kampung Senang in Singapore.

Peter was invited to visit Kampung Senang and see the Waldorf kindergarten and pre-school, the daycare facilities and garden. But not before being brought to a very good organic lunch at Organic Paradise which had expanded to two shops. The range of organic and many BD dried goods, also fresh fruit and vegetables, some local, most from Australia and New Zealand was impressive—although Peter was a bit taken aback to see small green apples selling for \$1 each (about 50 US cents).

Kampung Senang is a unique concept, for it not only brings together the elderly and teenagers in a 'Holistic Daycare Centre' (in Tampenis, the northeast of Singapore), but the ideals of Waldorf Education and the Buddhist 'Still Thoughts Education' (developed in Taiwan and conducted in Chinese) are twinned under one roof, both for young children. In the 'Still Thoughts' program children are taught natural farming and gardening, expressing gratitude before eating; perform simple housekeeping chores, play games with the elderly and enjoy storytelling—almost the same activities one would find in any Waldorf pre-school!

Kampung Senang is also a meeting place for youth volunteers who massage and play games with the elderly, participate in the recycling programs and work in the organic vegetable garden. There are also regular holistic health talks, art classes. Low Gek Kheng, who attended Van James' *mandala* classes at the summer conference in Hawai'i, was so inspired she volunteered to conduct similar classes at Kampung Senang soon after she returned to Singapore. Joyce immediately took her up on the offer. Something Joyce picked up at the conference in Hawai'i was a deepening of her interest in Anthroposophical medicine and nutrition. It is part of her steady, long-range vision to bring an Anthroposophical doctor within Kampung Senang's fold.

Meanwhile, over in the organic food garden, the work is constant if everyone is to be well fed. This is James Low's main responsibility—along with some regular volunteers, young and old! Happily, in September the garden had extra help—along with some 'showers of blessings'—from the indefatigable Peter Proctor. He had brought along some BD preps and he inoculated the BD compost herbs into the compost pile (the centre is vegetarian so the compost has no animal manure) then we took turns stirring the valerian and he sprinkled that over the heap.

"Now, let's stir some BD 500" (the famous horn manure) Peter announced fishing out some 500 he had stashed away. A bucket was found and while we all sat in a circle and took turns stirring (a light, almost meditative job), Joyce kept us fortified by a steady stream of green tea, juices and fresh fruit, all organic, of course. The BD 500 was spread out just as the sun was sinking and Peter suddenly announced, "We must go – my flight's at...!" He'll be back.

Meanwhile, at Green Circle and Kampung Senang the blessed soil is loosened from its hard material properties and is spiritualized. It will grow abundant and chemical-free veggies and continue to nourish Singaporeans, helping to create a healthy community that sparked by these initiatives develop in harmony with Nature and one another.

Eulogy for Dr. William Scherer

Karl Kaltenbach, Tasmania, Australia

Dr. William (Bill) Scherer died at Straub Hospital in Honolulu, Hawaii on the 1st January 2002. He leaves behind Ulrike his wife and Hilary their daughter. Many members, students, and friends in the USA, Europe, and Japan will miss him dearly. Bill was Chairman of the Anthroposophical Society in Hawaii from 1975 to 1985 and was a long time Class holder of the School of Spiritual Science and a Professor of German at the University of Hawaii where he taught German Literature and European Culture.

Bill suffered from cancer for some years, I was able to see him, after 16 years for the last time in early August of last year. To my consolation, I experienced him to be very realistic about his own state of health and ever so joyful and optimistic in respect of his spiritual innermost values for which he earnestly stood. Although he was confined in a wheelchair and knew that he had not long to go, he was full of spiritual vitality and love for the wonders of the cultural field in which he was active as a professor at his university.

With his particular love and knowledge of Goethe, Novalis, Lessing, Herder, Schiller, Rilke, Wagner, Verdi and many other European writers and opera composers, he continued the spiritual mission of these thinkers for humanity.

I also love to remember the lectures he gave when he visited Australia in 1982. His enthusiastic method in presenting his thoughts, tempered with academic knowledge and anthroposophical insights, brought to life the listener's feelings. Actually nobody could remain indifferent to his message; one either was with him or felt disturbed.

Bill carried in himself the mission of 19th century German idealism; he sang his love song to the philosophy of humanity, pertaining to the eternal validity of the mystery of the Individual, the Christian ethics and the cultural complexity of today's civilization. It was as if he himself had written it and thus made them again so relevant for today's challenge of the reconstituting of humanity. It was as if he had been taken out of 19th century Europe and planted into the middle of the Pacific Ocean to continue the call for what is truly human.

When I re-read letters which he had sent to me 18 years ago and in which he expressed his worries that the University in Honolulu might have to close his faculty for European Culture and Literature, I realized today, that he was more concerned, that he might not be able to fulfill his spiritual mission and that of his destiny in which he carried the spiritual task of his life.

In our short reunion of the third of August he talked about his intentions, should his physical body allow it, of commencing again his student-sessions in his home, where he would let them listen to the great classical works of 19th century operas and share with them the mysteries which had been enshrined in the artistic styles of the "old" Culture.

Yesterday, as I was reading his correspondence of 1982 and 1983, an additional content was revealed to me. Although the content of his letters were more of a practical nature about his life and the people surrounding him, they now have gained a prophetic meaning. In me is the question, why do we need to lose a friend through death before our eyes are opened to the essence of an individual mission?

I shall also remember warmly, when Bill spoke at the General Secretaries' Meetings, which he attended in 1982 or so, and when he stood there with his glowing face, reinforcing with his lively head movements everything he was articulating. He spoke of, and defended the uniqueness of the spiritual tasks of the Hawaiian Anthroposophical Society. Although situated on an island small in physical size it is gigantic in terms of 20th century world history. The surprise sinking of the American Fleet in Pearl Harbor in 1941 by the Japanese raised the Hawaiian events to the forefront of the world's consciousness. I now wonder whether Bill's own personal karma on this small island, was not guided by the greater spirits from above, who made him into a cultural surprise in his defense of human ideals behind the scene of the popular image of the indolence of the holiday and entertainment culture of his island.

Once he attended the General Secretaries' Meeting at the Goetheanum, where he represented, not only the members of his Society, but much more when he spoke his spiritual inner mission which he wanted to represent at the forum of these friends.

Bill's love for the Vorstand members, his respect for their responsibility and his adoration for the Goetheanum impulse were all like a shining light and radiant goodness when compared to the present day trend of criticizing anything which is different to ones own expectations.

I am sure all the social, emotional and physical obstacles life placed before him, which he fully endured without losing his radiant warmth and spirit, will now become his well-prepared freedom by which he can bring these intelligent thoughts on the ideals of humanity to Michael.



Thoughts on a New Zealand Classroom

Gert Christeller, New Zealand

When we enter a room, we are not indifferent to its various features. Besides building materials, colours, lighting etc. we are impressed by its form. The latter is not fully, but largely determined by the (two-dimensional) plan: the box-form by the rectangle, the spherical form by the circle. Our inner response to spacial forms is not

number of solutions for the different age groups. I came to my own conclusions through extensive study of the pentagon and its associate form, the pentagram.

My attention was drawn to the compact form of the pentagon (not unlike that of a circle) in contrast to the pentagram with its star-like rays opening out like the petals of a flower. I observed that the two contrasting forms exhibit an innate tendency to change from one to the other.

I also was made aware that unlike any others, these geometric forms, due to their

Pentagonal Waldorf classroom in Wellington, New Zealand, designed by Nicole Cooke and Anne Spee of Co-Design.



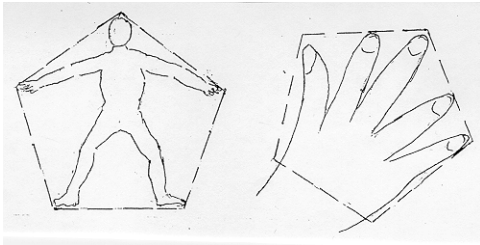
usually brought to consciousness, but we have the capacity to sense them.

What applies to grown-ups applies even more to young, sensitive children who are exposed to certain forms within their particular daily environment. In order to give kindergarten children a sense of security and maternal care, the use of rounded, circular forms has long been regarded as beneficial for their wholesome development. They also give the feeling of togetherness and thereby encourage early social awareness.

Architectural form as an educational aid has more recently been taken into consideration also in regard to the configuration of a school's classrooms. Architects, especially in Germany and the Netherlands, depending on certain criteria, have come up with a

inner mobility, relate to organic life processes such as respiration where breathing-in and breathing-out alternate rhythmically. It seemed to me that for this reason alone the pentagonal form should be able to provide a fitting educational environment for children during their first three years at school when rhythm plays such a prominent role in their development. The grouping together of seven to nine year-olds from the aspect of form also appears justified for the reason that during that period the children are helped to learn every subject matter in an artistic way, as yet unencumbered by intellectual interpretation. They are likely to experience a relationship between the pentagonal form of the room and their own body, because the human form itself is based upon it. I have illustrated this well-

known, yet surprising fact by the two drawings below. Rudolf Steiner pointed out its beneficial use in therapy, especially by means of eurythmy.



Now Rudolf Steiner Education is what we understand to be a holistic education: it sets out to develop the whole of a young person, his or her inner talents and skills. To achieve this end, the school offers experiences in all aspects of God's created world including soul and mind. The wonderful Waldorf curriculum promotes this totality of learning.

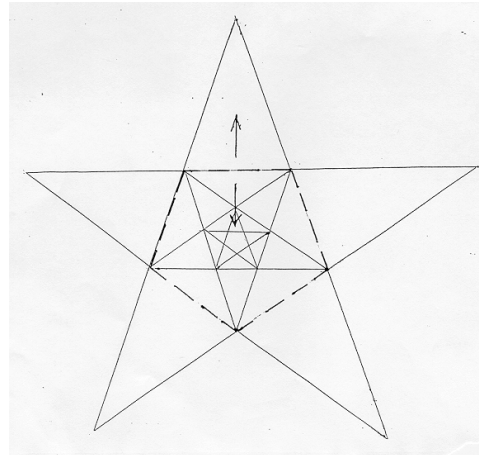
By listening to stories the child is encouraged to form its own imagery according to its soul experience. By painting with watercolours it learns about the language of each of the primary colours and their combinations; by singing and recorder playing as well as by eurythmy, it enters the world of sound and movement in pure enjoyment and by mastering its production. This in the main stimulates the growth of the inner self.

On the other hand the child learns about the outer world - the immediate surroundings of the school, the different manual tasks that people engage in (to this belongs its own activities in handwork such as knitting and other skills). It learns about the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms in nature and about the movement of sun and moon. This then is the other, as some people believe, the only "useful" side of education.

This two-fold direction in learning surprisingly finds a counterpart in the pentagonal form of the classroom! Drawing all five diagonals inside the pentagon, we arrive at the five-pointed star (the pentagon) in the middle of which appears a second smaller pentagon, upside down in relation to the first. We can imagine this process, if repeated indefinitely, will end up by both forms vanishing in the central point. Its movement corresponds to the child's inner

development.

Now we lengthen the sides of the original pentagon - what do we get? A large pentagram. Imagine the tips of this pentagram joined - an equally large pentagon arises and so it goes on. Here the forms stretch out into the infinitely large until they "melt" into the starry heavens. This is a gesture of the outer experiences of the child. The drawing below illustrates these two tendencies.



These tendencies or directions exhibited by the pentagon are of course not visibly perceptive (though as shown they can easily be demonstrated), but they should be taken as forces acting upon the children and strengthening their ability to learn. The form of the pentagon "invites" the children to seek balance between inner and outer so that they will acquire a holistic outlook on life. Its function is that of being the mediator between the two activities, the two worlds which together form a whole.

When all's said and done, what really counts is that the beneficial effect from the pentagonal form is confirmed in the course of time. I found it most heartening to be told by Dr. Michaela Glöeckler, Leader of the Medical Section of the Goetheanum, that teachers working in such already established classrooms have spoken to her about them with much praise. It is my wish that the experience with your new classrooms at Tauranga Rudolf Steiner School will be equally positive.