

# Pacifica Journal

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## Waldorf Education in India

*David Nikias, Hyderabad, India*

India is a richly diverse country of deep mysteries, enduring cultural traditions, and striking contrasts where the western imagination is easily stirred by the vivid colors, fragrant aromas, and haunting sounds. Twenty-first century India is a rapidly developing country with an increasingly large global footprint and what has been primarily an agrarian society is experiencing significant growing pains with the transition into the digital age. The often romanticized western picture of mystical India and bucolic village life is undergoing rapid changes and the country has seen a tremendous migration of its population to urban areas, significantly straining the limits of the infrastructure and available resources.

### Modern India

Our state of Andhra Pradesh and in particular, Hyderabad, is widely acknowledged as a major IT hub of the country and continues to experience staggering growth rates averaging 10% a year, ever expanding city limits, and increasingly ambitious construction projects at every turn. The steadily growing numbers of mostly unskilled laborers migrating from rural districts and the rise of an affluent and educated middle class have led to widespread cultural changes in all levels of society. The dynamic of rapid, unchecked urbanization seen in Hyderabad is shared throughout the country.

A common pattern in developing countries is a belief that limitless growth is the measure of human progress, which usually results in the hasty use of every inch of available space. Lush green lands are turned into concrete jungles, mighty rocks that stood the test of time are reduced to rubble and dust to create millions of square feet of livable space

for the steady stream of new residents. In a country with a population of over 1.2 billion people, the impacts of such urban expansion, the pressures on infrastructure and available resources, as well as the limitations to individual opportunity cannot be underestimated. With increased mechanization and industrialization has come the scourge of water, air, and soil pollution and India faces monumental challenges with this darker side of modernization.

There is another dark side to the changes being experienced in India but these are less quantifiable for they are social in nature. Our new technologies bring additional, often welcome comforts and conveniences but also have the effect of dividing and further isolating individuals in an already highly stratified society. Labor is cheap and the very large majority of Indians live a life of hardship, hunger, and poverty. While the standard



Anthroposophical Society in Hawai'i, 2514 Alaula Way, Honolulu, Hawai'i

Email: [pacificajournal@gmail.com](mailto:pacificajournal@gmail.com), [www.anthroposophyhawaii.org](http://www.anthroposophyhawaii.org)

of living has risen for many, the gap between "haves and have-nots" is widening at an alarming rate and questions of social or moral responsibility are not being addressed effectively. The enforcement of existing laws can easily get bogged down in a bureaucratic labyrinth dominated by personal agendas and petty corruption. The very foundation of society is strained with the rise of a consumer based economy and the frustrations born out of growing financial inequity.

On an individual level, the digital revolution and increasing westernization are having a deep and lasting impact on established social norms and expectations. Time honored traditions struggle to compete with the flash and sparkle of consumer culture and particularly among the young middle class, more permissive western attitudes are fraught with unfamiliar temptations that color the social fabric. Amidst the gleaming, glassy monuments celebrating unconscious materialism, the richly diverse spiritual traditions of India remain a dynamic and fundamental aspect of everyday life. Although exaggerated individualism, westernization, and changing attitudes strain social and familial relationships, it is religious practice and devotion that gives form and meaning to life. Devotional activities and ritual are fully integrated into daily rhythms, giving form, direction, and deeper meaning to society and its cycles. Just as it has been for millennia, religion and spiritual practice is imbedded into the very structure of society.

### Education in India

India has always had strong traditions in education, which supported and nurtured our spiritual nature but with modernization have come so-called improvements in the educational system. India is following the lead of so many western societies by emphasizing only the intellect and academic achievement while the soul development of the children is woefully neglected. The government maintains strict control over curriculums and schools where children are rigorously tested, and forced into accelerated academics and intellectual working very early. There is little time to play, explore the wonders of the world, or exercise their growing bodies, much less their imagination and creativity. They only sit at their desks, listen to lecture-like presentations, and mechanically write what they have heard - a poor substitute for the joyful activity of learning.

These methods are primarily about disciplining and teaching children to behave in a particular manner and how to fit into a predetermined order. The honored profession of teaching

has been reduced to that of a technician who conveys pre-approved information as efficiently as possible. Education has adopted what is essentially an assembly line model and the joys of learning and teaching are lost to over reliance on quantitative evaluation and teaching for the test, by only valuing the accumulation of information, and solely rewarding academic merit. As a result Indian children are highly stressed and under tremendous pressure to both conform and perform, for competition is fierce and opportunities limited. With such systems, there is a very real risk of losing not only much of our cultural heritage but also the precious gift of childhood.

### The Healing Impulse of Waldorf Education

With the unique privileges of childhood under such assault, Waldorf education came as a healing balm desperately needed in a high-speed electronic world that fractionalizes and desensitizes the human being in so many different ways. There are many aspects of Waldorf education that harmoniously resonate with Vedic traditions and the soul development of the human

being. In education, those traditions have provided a safe and loving space for the child to develop and strengthen their body, soul, and spirit so, it is perhaps not surprising that India has proven to be such fertile and fruit bearing ground.

The first seeds of Waldorf education were planted in India many years ago thanks to the inspired determination and steady efforts of a small community of people made up of parents, doctors, aspiring teachers, and concerned individuals.

Master teacher, Tina Bruin-sma came from Holland and for an extended time served



*Festival celebrations are a large part of life in Indian and in Indian Waldorf schools.*

as a mentor and teacher trainer for a growing collective of people interested in anthroposophy and Steiner education. As a result of her inspirational example and insightful guidance, aspiring teachers and parents came together to establish the first Waldorf school in India. In 1997, Sloka Waldorf School opened its doors in Hyderabad with 19 children and 4 teachers.

Today, Hyderabad boasts 4 recognized schools, Sloka, Diksha, Prerana, and Abhaya. Diksha opened their doors in 2000, followed by Prerana in 2001, and Abhaya in 2002. There are also Waldorf schools in Mumbai and Bangalore as well as kindergartens in Pune, Chennai, Coimbatore, and Goa. There are now over 50 Steiner-inspired schools using Waldorf methodology and incorporating Steiner's insights in their mainstream syllabi. This carefully tended garden has steadily spread and grown abundant with fragrant blossoms and soul nourishing fruit.





### Why Hyderabad?

It is interesting that Waldorf education in India has been embraced so strongly in Hyderabad, a major IT hub where Indians are experiencing some of the most jarring and radical shifts in traditional culture and society. Hyderabad has seen glory days in the past and is reaching greater heights with a rapidly rising middle class that are well educated, tech savvy, and increasingly cosmopolitan. Many young Indians have travelled or lived abroad and there has been a great influx of ideas and people from Europe, Australia, and America. These factors certainly have been significant forces behind the development of anthroposophical initiatives here.

Committed individuals who are ready to walk that extra mile, those who understand and meet the needs of the situation are rare -- this has made the difference in Hyderabad for the teachers, doctors, and parents who have made Waldorf education a reality have tirelessly given of themselves and brought a true gift to India. Like most initiatives throughout the world, the schools have encountered their struggles and some very significant challenges but have persevered to overcome them with determined effort and steadfast conviction.

The four established schools continue to grow and in the past several years, all have relocated and built new facilities to meet the steady growth in enrollment. Concrete buildings don't make community and recent shifts have required a renewed vigor to build upon shared commitments and developing new means for collaboration.

Vallaki Teacher Training was an early initiative that brought many trainers, mentors, and master teachers to Hyderabad helping to enliven and deepen understanding of anthroposophy and the curriculum. Many teachers and parents benefitted from those efforts and the schools continue to sponsor workshops, artistic events, symposiums, and training conferences on a regular basis. The annual seminar on Waldorf education in Khandala (directed by Aban Bana) that draws participants from all over India and the world, continues to be a great support for both practicing and aspiring teachers. All across India, conferences and workshops held by master teachers and mentors from Europe, Australia, the U.S., and elsewhere are occurring with

greater frequency, in an increasing number of cities, and are drawing larger, more diverse participants.

### Stepping into the World Waldorf Community

This dynamic culture and a growing number of anthroposophical initiatives have been strongly supported by the international Waldorf community and those connections continue to expand. There are anthroposophical initiatives and groups working in many different fields; from curative education, social therapy, and Camphill communities, to pedagogical and curative eurythmy. There are established groups of doctors and educators working with anthroposophical medicine who sponsor regular and well-attended conferences. In other areas, there is a rapidly growing interest in Biodynamics and newly formed groups working with threefold social order.

One program of particular note for the Hyderabad schools has been working with the Friends of Waldorf Education who sponsor young Waldorf graduates to come to India and elsewhere. These young volunteer interns generally commit to a year working with the schools and bringing their youthful enthusiasm, diverse talents, and Waldorf experience to the children; they are warmly welcomed into school communities. The entire school culture is enriched through this intimate sharing and volunteers gain an enlivened and strengthened sense of confidence and deeper sense of self. The building of such bridges transcends cultural differences and the warmly human connections built by such programs are profound and lasting.

Not only do visitors come to India but Indian teachers and doctors contribute and participate in countless conferences in Europe, Australia, and throughout Asia, sharing their experiences once they return home.

In May of 2011, The Asian Waldorf Teachers Conference (AWTC), organized by Friends of Waldorf Education was held in Hyderabad. The Friends or Freunde maintain a strong rhythm of sponsoring conferences in different countries every other year. Initiatives and schools are flowering across Asia and these conferences draw increasing numbers of practicing and aspiring teachers, doctors, and artists from all over the world, casting new seeds of inspiration and nurturing those germinating sprouts.

After years of work, accomplishment, and so many successful endeavors, this strong and committed Indian community officially founded the Anthroposophical Society of India in October of 2011. There are two branches active in Hyderabad; The Rudolf Steiner Branch (Nirmala Diaz) and The Mercury Branch (Dr. Swapna Narendra) and there is one branch in Mumbai, The Gateway Branch (Aban Bana). There are also study groups in numerous cities such as Bangalore, Pune, Coimbatore, and Chennai.

The society and schools working together are sponsoring an increasing number of diverse and insightful workshops, developing a rhythm of training conferences and artistic presentations, all in support of the living vision of social renewal. One can contact the society directly for details on the many new initiatives in the country: <http://www.anthroposophical-societyindia.org>

## Social Renewal

As part of a worldwide movement encouraging social renewal, the initiatives in India are part of a much broader community striving to provide a glimmer of light, a sanctuary for the human spirit in the midst of powerful and unconscious forces of change. I have been working intimately with Prerana Waldorf School as a mentor and teacher trainer since 2004 and my work with the schools in India has been a genuine inspiration. The steadfast determination and untiring dedication of teachers and parents have achieved a great deal and has led to steady growth in the schools but the challenges facing India are monumental. The crushing burden of over population, the competitive climate of Indian society and the financial struggles of modern living are formidable challenges.

Increasingly, I hear from young parents who express grave concerns about contemporary educational methods and the values they promote. They want their children to be successful in the modern world but they also want their children to enjoy the profound blessings of childhood. For a growing number of families, Waldorf education is something of a sanctuary in today's fast paced world for it provides a safe and loving space for the child to develop their imagination and sense of wonder as well as their intellect. Families from all walks of life see that it is a powerful means of finding balance in a world of uncertainty and instability. By honoring the gifts of every child, nurturing their imagination, and encouraging a balance of academic, artistic, and social skills, a measured path is prepared for the child to embrace their individual destiny and engage themselves with meaningful purpose.

Our work is a process of synthesis, an embracing of creative possibilities rather than one of dissection and divisive limitations. Our diversity is a strength rather than a liability for our constructive sharing and active interest in one another widens our perspective, increasing the depth of our understanding, not only of the world, but also of ourselves. In our sharing and celebrating of all festivals, (whether Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Jain, Zoroastrian, or Christian), the rich tapestry of our shared humanity and the wide range of human experience is joyfully embraced. The artificial differences that divide and separate human beings are minimized and the wholeness of life on earth and the connections that bring us together are emphasized. The child is welcomed into a world that is inclusive of all and filled with light and love.

Indian Waldorf School Contacts:

Sloka Waldorf School (Hyderabad) [www.slokawaldorf.org](http://www.slokawaldorf.org)

Diksha Waldorf School (Hyderabad) [www.dikshaschool.in](http://www.dikshaschool.in)

Prerana Waldorf School (Hyderabad) [preranawaldorf.org](http://preranawaldorf.org)

Abhaya Waldorf School (Hyderabad) website currently down  
Bangalore Steiner School (Bangalore) [www.bangaloresteiner-school.org](http://www.bangaloresteiner-school.org)

Inodai Waldorf School (Mumbai) [www.inodai.org.in](http://www.inodai.org.in)

*David Nikias is an artist and teacher who serves as pedagogical chairperson at Prerana Waldorf School. [www.davidnikias.com](http://www.davidnikias.com)*



*A participant enjoys a painting exercise at the Role of Art in Education workshop in Hyderabad, India.*

## The Educator as Artist: Thoughts on a Conference in India

*Anandhi, Hyderabad, India*

Even as the international Anthroposophic community grapples with the passing of Peter Glasby, struggling to deal with the loss as well as celebrating the sanctity of life and its new beginning in the spiritual realm, I sit back pondering the relevance of Waldorf education, which places art so high in the sphere of Education. Many years ago, Peter lectured on the role of art and the artist in life. A question was posed to Peter about the stance of Waldorf Education on the issues of nationalism and patriotism. Peter tackled it with an easy conviction and shared some profound thoughts with the simplicity that awakened one's heart. He spoke of the divisive nature of ideas like nationalism and patriotism and mentioned that as part of history, every Waldorf School would have to work through these ideas. He then spoke of the role of art and the artist as essential, and the need for each teacher to discover the artist within in order to free him- or herself from the inherent limitations of such things as nationalism and patriotism.

I've just brought home a painting of a mosque done by a friend, a rare artist whose artistic integrity is matched only by his humility. Every time I glance at it, it binds me to the thoughts that Peter expressed and to my own experience as a young mother. When my daughter was just days old, Hyderabad, the city I live in, was ravaged by communal violence, between Hindus and Moslems. The flames of violence had less to do with religion than with politics. But fear blurred reason and soon there was the unholy marriage of religious-politics. The only thought and feeling that governed me at that point was, "How do I ensure that my daughter stays alive in an atmosphere of hatred?"



When my daughter was about five years old, she brought home a textbook that rattled on about “National Integration.” It intellectually purported to teach her who a Hindu, Moslem, Sikh, and Christian was with living examples from the classroom. It requires few observational skills to see that children are happy with any playmate! Fortunately, Waldorf Education came our way, and the onslaught on my daughter’s intellect at an early stage was healed through a genial curriculum for which enough gratitude can never be expressed. She is now 23 and is able to tackle questions like the caste system in India with an inner fire that Waldorf Students are so often capable of manifesting.

When Van James came to India for a workshop with the teachers in Hyderabad, it was with great inner anticipation that many of us attended. Given the day-to-day pressures of teaching, we always tend to look for quick recipes that will work in the classroom. While Van James was more than happy to arm us for our day-to-day work, what lived through the conference, “The Role of Art in Education,” was the *living, healing impulse of art*, and the artist as the bearer of this impulse.

The mornings began with David Nikias, an old friend of the Waldorf educational movement in India, singing with us. David, is a teacher who has worked a great deal with art. His love for art continues to be a great inspiration for many of us. As David ended the singing, Van James began with the following verse, which set the tone for the day:

On a Primeval Day  
The Spirit of the Earth  
Approached the Spirit of the Heavens  
Pleading thus:  
“One thing I know  
And that is how to speak  
From out of Human Spirit.  
But now I beg to learn that other speech  
Whereby the great World Heart  
Knows how to speak to Human Hearts!”  
The Spirit of the Heavens then, in mercy,  
Bestowed upon the pleading Spirit of the Earth  
--The Arts.

--Rudolf Steiner.

The verse lifted the workshop to the realm of the “imponderables.” As a young person, I had broken away from religion since I found it very restricting. Familiar with a cultural atmosphere of chanting verses which were hardly felt inwardly and projected in the realm of what I call “spiritual materialism,” I still shudder when I hear words that are not felt in our inner



Some 80 participants for all over India, with a few additions from Australia and Scandinavia, took part in *The Role of Art in Education* workshop.

most being. Van’s inner connection to the words impacted the group. As every day passed by, I felt the difference in our own speech as we practiced recitation. Here was a visual arts educator, working on our speech!

The morning lectures covered the history of art and connected it to the developmental phases of childhood. Milestones in growth as expressed in children’s artwork were explored. This was followed by a workshop, with all 60 participants, in form drawing and blackboard drawing through the grades. Anyone who has worked with form drawings in the grades knows its rich contribution to the organic development of thinking forces. One also knows how difficult it is to convey in language the depth of form drawing’s impact. Although I had always felt that forms as movement come to rest, when I first heard the term “rhythmic drawing,” replacing the familiar term “form drawing” there was a deep resonance within me. It seemed a beautifully simple name capturing the rhythmic nature of form drawing.

While the question of the Goethean color circle had been a mere theory with many of us, as Van James developed the blackboard drawings he suddenly brought the whole question of working with colors alive. A bunch of violet grapes amidst a golden yellow background must look luscious, not only to the fox in the fable but also to every second grader! It was a moment when I felt that what India needs as training

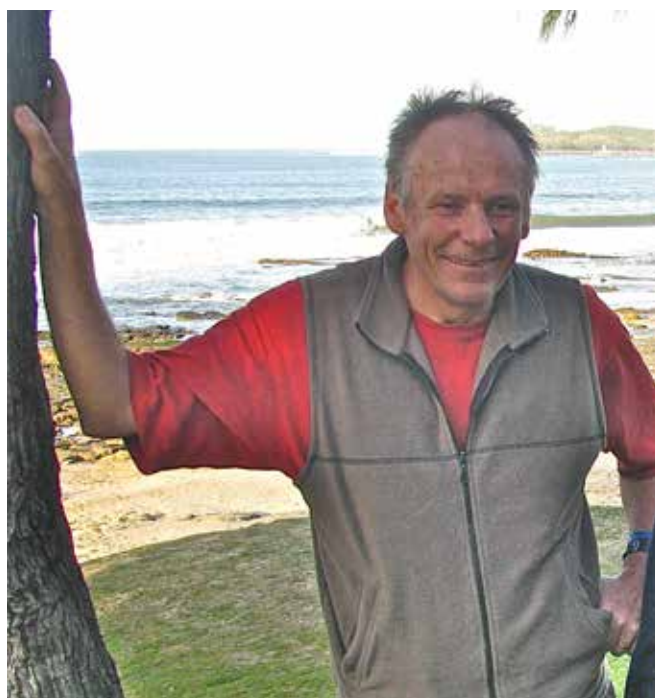


is not ready-made recipes for what to draw, when and how, but more training in the depth and beauty of the principles of color and form.

Following lunch and the art of eurythmy, the afternoon sessions were committed to painting. At a personal level, I have always struggled and continue to struggle with ideas that can become dogmatic, even with an impulse that is intended to free us. So when Van James threw open controversial questions about form versus color in the early grades my heart jumped in delight. Nevertheless I see that in my own struggle with painting and those of many others, we seek recourse in *forms* simply because to sink into the question of colors can be such an enormous challenge. Further work with helping teachers to live into the world of colors and to understand their subtle nature would be an important next step. What I carried as an inner learning was to go back to exercises in the early grades and develop those further in order to carry them into upper classes. Will I show diminishing trees in a grade five painting like Van did? I may not. But the beauty of the workshop was in many ways precisely this, that Van James allowed a lot of individual space and judgment within the group and was quite categorical that we do not ape the so-called “Master Artist.” (I had to stifle my smile at the outer decoration of words delivered to him even as my respect for the teacher in front of us grew).

At Abhaya Waldorf School, where I work, we have a large bulletin board in a common space where teachers from every class pin up one of their class’s paintings or drawings. Ever since the conference the pin board has begun to look so alive. Teachers seem happier planning their painting lessons. The school calendar reflects a marked transformation of quality in the artwork.

Van James mentioned that aesthetics is the awakening of the senses; anaesthetics is the dulling down of the senses. Never have color and form, tone and word, come together to evoke in so many of us a powerful awakening and commitment to discovering the artist within us. I now see this is what Peter Glasby was talking about in regard to teaching science and approaching questions of nationalism and patriotism. This is the path of the educator as artist.



## This issue of Pacifica Journal is dedicated to the life of our dear friend Peter Glasby

\*August 10<sup>th</sup> 1954  
+December 29<sup>th</sup> 2013

Let us look at those voices.

They were impressive –

From wisened, lively souls – too many to name here –

Each worthy of lines to themselves.

Their effect is unfathomable –

But though their lessons went deep –

gave the substance to work with-

There remains a moving place within - or without? It grows in inter-being as the child grew.

Each look of love, reproach, disdain, care, were the threads of that inter-being...

And the child grew to those rebellious years, when, like a flood, Thoughts and feeling came over him and brought a change to that sense of self.

All that had been was to question, though at times with thin base, With the new sense of self came loneliness and longing. Longing for communication with another – for friendship and more.

And so the youth grew with the experience of life that come from where his feet trod-.

From rock and books, from sea and song, from mountain and ? In this the Self? The trodden path?

Or is it that which participates with the walk?

There comes a time for reflection - reflection on what has been – on the path that has been trod,

Within them lies a pattern that lies outside the awake intent –a



pattern that lies somewhere, deep asleep.  
 Is it God?  
 Can it be here that the question of Self and God – inter-be?  
 ...the question of I and You – inter-be?  
 As I look into the eye of you...there in the deep well of the pupil,  
 From where the light of you shines.  
 There I find an image of me – outside of me.  
 Without You there is no me – we inter-be.  
 This must be the meaning of the Germanic greeting: “Gruess Gott”  
 “Greet God” when I meet the other – you.  
 So now when I say: thank God, I thank all of you with whom I inter-be.  
 Those I have wronged, those I have loved, those with whom I have fought,  
 Those with whom I walked and worked and toiled,  
 Those whom I have thought, those...many who have taught me.  
 For Life is change and I know that the role I had are not me, but they gave to me a wealth – a change to be with other...and I find again ...in new roles

Children become friends  
 Students become teachers,  
 Parents become like children  
 Roles that allow another way to inter-be...another way to be free.

So what is the Self?  
 Can it be on the circling horizon of my life  
 The inter-being between the point of intent and what comes like a flush of dawn over the dark line of the edge?

In that inter-being is all the joy, all the pain, all the wonder, all the work-  
 All the Thankfulness for the Gifts of God.

-- Peter Glasby, “The I Knows Itself,” *Journal for Anthroposophy in Australia*, Issue 4, 30th Dec. 2013, and from the eulogy by Karl Kaltenbach, January 1st, 2014



## Peter Glasby: From Shillong, India to Adelaide, Australia

*John Glasby, Adelaide, Australia*

[Peter Glasby was the co-General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Australia, High School Chair at Samford Valley Steiner School, a well-respected science instructor and teacher trainer, and one of the leading figures in establishing innovative Steiner school (main lesson) learning camps in Australia.-- Editor]

Peter was born on August 10<sup>th</sup> 1954 in Shillong, India, a delightful hill station set in the Assamese hills. Peter was the second son of four and from all accounts was an easy-going baby. We grew up in Debitola, a Baptist Missionary outpost established by Mum and Dad, Rex and Peggy Glasby, on the western edge of Assam State where it borders West Bengal. They worked with the Rabha people who became our friends and family. We lived there in a wonderfully carefree existence until 1966 when we returned to Australia.

In those early days, Peter was chubby and pretty much hopeless at all forms of physical sporting activity. He was affectionately known as Fats or Fattie Boy and this term of endearment lasted right through to his time in university. I don't think he suffered from poor self esteem as a result. Dad called me 'pinhead' and I only have a stutter to show for it. Just kidding.

Even during these early formative years, Peter was attracted to the Arts. He loved to draw and Mum strongly supported him in all forms of artistic endeavour, including an early penchant for shadow finger art. He also developed a strong interest in Indian bird and wildlife. On one particularly memorable occasion, Peter was being given driving instruction in the 'Rex Glasby School Of Hard Knocks' (Learner Driver Section) and took his eyes off the road to follow the flight of a golden breasted, red-bellied member of the parrot family. He received a good clip under the ear for this transgression, but this did little to dim his appetite or interest during subsequent driving lessons.

Peter was a fairly ordinary driver in his early days. It's just that he wasn't especially focussed. His daily trip to the university in his much-loved Morris Minor van was legendary. He would enter the vehicle, give the frost-encrusted windscreen a cursory wipe and set forth through the five intersections to the Science Faculty. He took the view that if he went slowly enough, people would avoid him and so rarely stopped to give way. Even in those days, he gave his guardian angel a tough time.

Our early childhood, prior to attending school was pretty much centred on looking after a wide range of pets and animals, many of them dropped off by the local village people who knew that the mad Australian missionaries and their kids would look after anything drawing breath and in need of attention. We looked after day old pigeon chicks, sick eagles, parrots

and even a deer. This was in addition to the full complement of chickens, ducks and goats, which were essentially a walking larder until such time as they were needed for the curry pot.

My other major memory of these salad days is making ice cream. We had an old kerosene fridge that barely kept the tropical heat at bay. But from time to time, Mum would promise us ice cream. Out would come the powdered milk, out would come the pitiful little aluminium trays and in would go the mixture. At some point in time, usually a day or two later,

Mum would indicate that the ice cream had frozen and now required a prolonged beating with the wooden spoon. Peter, whose appetite for ice cream was exceeded only by his appetite for following the flight of coloured parrots, was usually recruited for this task and he could be relied on to reduce the frosty substance to a more liquid form. This process of freezing and beating was carried out at least three times before Mum deemed the final product ready for human consumption. I always thought that Peter just enjoyed the physical

pleasure of giving the mixture a workout. I should have known better. It took me a while to work out that in between the beatings, he was busy licking the spoon clean.

We all went to boarding school in the Himalayas from the age of six. Mount Hermon School is a Year 1 to 12 comprehensive co-education school located at 6500 feet above sea level in Darjeeling, and has an alumni that stretches the breadth of the globe. Its clientele was drawn from adjacent Indian States as well as surrounding Countries. Our class mates included students from Tibet, Bhutan, Thailand, Manipur, Nagaland, Kerala, the Punjab, Pakistan, England, the States and so on. The United Nations had nothing on us.

At the beginning of every school year, we would drive down to Fakirgram in Dad's blue Studebaker, attired in full school uniform, tie, blazer and school cap. The train would pull in, usually about 2 or 3 in the morning. Dad would off-load the large metal trunks with the assistance of a dozen porters, and they, along with us, would be handed over to the supervising staff member, and off we would toddle into the night. Strangely, I can't ever recall this being too traumatic. There may well have been a few tears but nothing that ever lasted beyond the next station.

We all know that little white boys can't jump and in comparison to the manly physiques of our fellow students, our little puny white bodies didn't really cut the mustard. Peter, however, flourished. Not only did he come first in class, he was strong enough, had great presence and because of his compassionate nature and love of animals, attracted the friendship of the Buddhist contingent, namely the Tibetans. By the age of 11, he had the physique of Charles Bronson or to those of you of more tender years, Liam Hemsworth.

Even in boarding school, Peter kept rabbits and white mice and achieved a certain notoriety for this menagerie, which was housed in the warm boiler room of the Boys Hostel. Peter achieved even more notoriety when his monkey Nkima died. Nkima was a particularly nasty piece of work and even his little red waistcoat did little to endear him to any of the Glasby brothers or Sox the dog, who he tormented at will. Even the chooks loathed Nkima. He pinched their eggs.

Anyway, Nkima died and two weeks later Peter got a letter from Mum to say

that Nkima had been buried with full military honours. The letter took quite about two weeks to arrive.

Peter loved that monkey like a brother (probably why we loathed the little red bummed Rhesus so much) and so Peter hatched a plot to return to Debitola. This extraordinary plan saw him reach Siliguri at the bottom of the foothills of the mighty Himalayas. It was there that the police noticed him (not too difficult given that he was conspicuously attired in full school uniform and was after all, a whiter shade of pale) walking up and down the train platform seeking directions in broken Bengali, to get to Fakirgram. The Police, who had been alerted to the fact that Peter had absconded without the necessary permission, lured him into custody with the promise of food and drink. Peter loved his tucker. He returned to school a local hero, having achieved the status of getting further than any previous student attempting to do a bunk from the school. But fame is short lived and a week later, another student, older and certainly better camouflaged as a local, made it all the way to Bombay.

During the school year, Peter's time, like all boarding inmates, was taken up with the full complement of class work, 2-3 hours compulsory study in the morning and evening, com-



*Peter Glasby with one of the participants at the Alice Spring's conference Rediscovering the Secret Sacred in Contemporary Professional Life, July 2012.*



pulsory sport, class plays, choir, half day school on Saturday, church service on Sunday, learning an instrument and lining up in the quadrant for four meals a day. Idle hands were not permitted. Indeed, they were condemned. Peter took up the cello as his instrument and attained some modicum of success.

Parents, Rex and Peggy visited during the school year. No one can imagine the excitement and sense of anticipation. We counted the days. And on the appointed date, we pretty much absconded from class and perched ourselves at the top of the road, behind some overgrown trees, to greet their arrival. We were never chastised for these absences. The staff and principal accepted that a degree of latitude and compassion was required at these emotionally charged times. They recognised that the bond between parents and family is singularly formidable, and beware the rule driven institution that forgets these basic precepts. What a wonderful model of a school that put kids first.

The educational philosophy at Mount Hermon School, unstated as I recall, had nothing to do with educating a student for a job or vocation. Education was about developing the whole person. Developing young men and women who could converse, sing, hold a tune, act, debate, argue a point and kill the opposition at whatever sporting activity they chose. Sportsmanship was actively encouraged but a grisly death to the enemy was preferred. Academic excellence and leadership were lauded. Loyalty to the school and each other was paramount. The school motto, not surprisingly, was and is, *non scholae sed vitae discimus*-- 'Not for school, but for life'... and not as some wag proclaimed 'no school said Vitae, dismiss us.'

But at the core of the school and woven into the very fabric of instruction was a deep sense of building your life and school on God and Christian principles. I think as an adult, Peter may have dropped the 'death to the enemy' precepts of the Mount Hermon School tradition but I have no doubt that much of what he achieved later in life as an educator, he drew from the lessons he learned at the feet of his parents and also from his time at Mount Hermon School. Other influences certainly played their part but these were visceral.

At the end of the school year, we all headed back down to the plains of Assam and Debitola for 3 months. This was a glorious time of the year. The dry. Lovely days and cool clear nights. Sapkata was a satellite missionary outpost of Debitola. It was always a wonderfully interesting place to visit. The accommodation was very modest. We rarely stayed long but the local river flowing out of the Kingdom of Bhutan provided a wonderful source of recreation for young boys who needed little else but a stick, a few rocks, and where possible, a free ride on the local water buffaloes that wallowed in the cool running waters.

Peter could swim and in later life became an incredibly proficient skin diver, who could always find a feed among the crevices, seaweed and rocks of the South Australian coastline. It was not unusual for Peter to have several dead and bleeding fish hanging from his belt as he pursued yet

another beleaguered member of the piscatorial tribe to their death. And this in waters that abound with white pointers! Naughty Peter. I'm not aware that guardian angels must need master the butterfly and backstroke, but somewhere in the heavens there is one very tired and possibly moist retiree of that fine fraternity.

Rex and Peggy were quite content for their boys to grow up in India but they were equally clear that we needed to be comfortable in being Australian. So after twenty fabulous years in India, they returned to Australia and a very uncertain future. Mum, Dad, Mick and Dan ended up in Savage River and Peter and I ended up in the North West Coast of Tassie where we boarded at a dairy farm in Elliot. Auntie Ruby and Auntie Kitty looked after us as their own and we both flourished on a regimen of full cream milk, frozen Jersey cream on our porridge, raspberry crumble with ice cream for desert, ferreting and hunting rabbits with Ring the working (and I use the term loosely) border collie. Each year we were given a vealer to raise and at the end of twelve months, our little mates would be taken to that great abattoir in the sky and Auntie Ruby would place around \$300 bucks in our sweaty little palms.

We went to Burnie High School with our little Gladstone bags every weekday. We walked across the paddocks to the bus stop and took our places in what became our regular seats. No one gave the driver grief. Any noise or cheek resulted in you being abandoned by the side of the road. Justice, Rex Glasby style. We were good with it.

At about this time, Peter began to demonstrate a growing interest in a range of new ideas and products. He was the first brother to wear coloured underwear. Outrageous. He also began to listen to the Blues. Not the Seekers or the Beatles .... but hard core John Mayall and the Bluesbreakers Blues. At the monthly school assembly, Peter got up and introduced the school to John Mayall and the Bluesbreakers using the time honoured template. This reassured the Principal but I don't think he was prepared for "I was looking back to see, if she was looking back to see, if I was looking back at her" ...but it was too late. The Assembly rocked. But the mould had been broken and thus began a pattern that gradually saw the emergence of a broader attitude to musical genres. Small change, but change nonetheless.

By now, Peter had found that Rugby Union allowed him to use his strength and size to good effect and he played for the school team. Peter was never violent but he could fight like a threshing machine when the need emerged. He was by nature affable and by inclination amiable, but the long hair and friendly manner masked a latent capability to transform himself into Viking Valhalla Fatboy, when the situation required. I'm sure there's a former 'toughboy' apple picker somewhere in Tasmania who can attest to that transformation. Still, these inconsistencies were infrequent.

Peter also took to the sea. Surf had always attracted him. Peter began to grow his hair (very long) and began hanging

around with a range of Surfie mates of dubious moral standing. The Surfie Heads were known to enjoy a variety of organic compounds and most people assumed that Fats would likewise, turn to gardening immediately. Instead, he researched the matter fully and then proclaimed one day to Rex that he intended to participate more fully in the social activities of his mates. Rex suggested that he would join him. Peter suggested that this wasn't the best idea that Dad had ever come up with but that he would report back, which he subsequently did. For those of you concerned that maybe Peter has been leading a secret life in this regard, worry not. Of all the brothers, other than myself, his behaviour in this matter has been exemplary.

At about the same time, towards the end of his formal schooling at Burnie High, Peter reverted to type and would nick off from class to observe the elements and enjoy the feel of wax and fibreglass on water. The sea was set dangerously close to the fertile sports grounds of Burnie High and it was but a short walk over the road and the railway track to the water's edge. These extra curricular activities didn't seem to affect his schooling or his ability to score well in his Matriculation Year.

We both went to University in Hobart and stayed at the Lodge, a church based establishment for young men and women from the coast who needed a place to stay away from home. There were about 13 of us and we had up to two years to adapt to the big smoke and find our own way in the rental market. Peter received the only Agriculture Science scholarship in Tasmania. He lasted about a year and then pulled out. Peter, like the Moody Blues, was 'In Search Of The Lost Chord' and he was looking for something more than the rigours of an Agricultural Science Degree could afford. Ability was never the issue. Relevance was. In retrospect, it is perhaps easier to see that Peter struggled through these years to determine a pathway for himself.

After a time of travelling through Asia and other parts of Australia, he ended up at Warrah in New South Wales, where he met Rosie. Game, set, match. Never trust the Swiss when they say 'Hello Peter.' He subsequently went on to receive an Honours Degree in Botany, sired four wonderful offspring and was well on the way to completing his doctorate before time took its heavy toll.

The family began to get a hint of something profound when Peter began referring to a 'special friend' in his letters. And so began a new chapter in Peter's rich life, a chapter filled with children, outstanding success as an educator and a reputation that saw him influence schooling in a range of settings and circumstances well beyond the shores of the Antipodes.

A good mate of mine and co-author of a number of articles with Peter sent me a message when he heard of Peter's death. The message pretty much said it all: "Heaven has just recruited a fine palaeontologist, a good teacher and a remarkable person."



## Peter Glasby †

*Johannes Kühl, Goetheanum, Switzerland*

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During his last visit to the Goetheanum—for the General Secretaries' meeting in November where he represented Australia—Peter Glasby left with the words: "If I'm optimistic I can say 'I look forward to seeing you again in April'—if I'm realistic I have to say 'Farewell.'" Ill with cancer, he approached the threshold and allowed his friends to accompany him soberly, lovingly, and freely. In Peter Glasby one met a friendly adventurer (for instance, his teaching could take the form of a canoe trip); a highly educated scientist (he had left a university career as a paleontologist to become a Waldorf teacher although he continued to work with universities); an independent and deep thinker willing to tackle uncomfortable questions in conversation—but still remain absolutely loyal; and finally, an infinitely loving and cheerful father who—with his wife Rosi—opened his home to many people.

As a Waldorf teacher he helped a number of schools in Australia and throughout Asia. He was a colleague of Manfred von Mackensen, Jochen Bockemühl, Georg Maier, and others in Europe whose approaches to Goethean science he was able to develop further in his teaching and his courses. He brought his many qualities to his work for the School for Spiritual Science and the Anthroposophical Society. When



asked what should be said at his “farewell party” he answered: “Please tell everyone I am deeply, deeply grateful to the friends and members of the Anthroposophical Society. They have continually enabled me...to deepen my spiritual experiences in anthroposophy.” We gladly return this gratitude from the depths of our hearts.

## Thoughts on Death and Crossing the Threshold

*Michaela Glöckler, Dornach, Switzerland*

[From an email correspondence, following typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, and responding to questions concerning the different ways souls cross the threshold of death. Edited with permission.]

At the Goetheanum annual memorial for those who crossed the threshold of death, I dedicated the address primarily to our friends in the Philippines and closed with a verse that Rudolf Steiner gave for those who passed away during the First World War, because this verse can be directed to people one does not know.

Rudolf Steiner describes in his karma lectures the meaning of death in general and the meaning of the different individual ways one crosses the threshold.

### Death in general

This is the most important experience of life - we come into this life in order to cross one day the threshold of death. This moment, the moment of dying, is so important, because it gives us the possibility to experience the birth of our spirit, out of the individual physical body. We are coming on earth, in order to experience and to develop our individual self consciousness, so that, when we are dying, we do not lose our self consciousness and have a sleeping existence in the spiritual world, but will have self conscious existence after death. We need to incarnate in an individual physical body in order to experience ourselves as individuals.

Therefore pain is not simply a disaster—it sharpens our self-awareness and helps us after death to be awake and more sensitive to what is going on beyond the threshold.

No earthly existence without some pain.

If we consider Death more individually, we need to inte-

grate into this consideration the fact of reincarnation and the step by step developing process of our self-awareness and “I”-Consciousness through different lives.

### Death in early childhood

We accomplish our earthly experiences of our last lives with this short lifetime. Through the pain of leaving our parents and relatives so early, we bring into their minds and hearts more longing for religion and spirituality. They [the young children] are leaving the doorway to heaven a little bit open, when they go. Death in youth or younger years is preparing the power of idealism for the next life and preparing new destiny-constellations.

### Death in the best years of life

Bringing for the next life the gift of having more forces and energy than one would “normally” have. The unused etheric forces of this lifetime are given additionally to the next one, in which we are in need of more strength in order to fulfill our biographical task.

### Death through violence

A violent death promotes a stronger “I”-consciousness after death, but also more “birth pain” into the spirit world than might usually be experienced.

Harmonious dying after a long earthly life

This is preparing for the next life a constitution that is balanced.

All the above-mentioned forms of dying are examples of Individual dying as fulfillment of ones own, personal destiny.

### Beyond personal destiny

The following reasons of death are going beyond the personal destiny. They are connecting the individual destiny with wider parts of humankind. They are part of a group/volks/nations- or human-destiny. That means that suffering death in this context is connecting

people with greater destiny-lines than only the personal ones.

One important aspect of the Spiritual background for this is the following: Rudolf Steiner was not only describing the nine Christian hierarchies with their gifts for the human beings and the possibility to connect in developing higher forces. He also described the inner regions of the earth down to the center as regions of counter forces, of forces of destruction, the evil.

In the Christian tradition this is referred to as Christ’s passing through hell and bringing into the whole earth the power of transformation and “overcoming.” If humankind as a whole is separating so strongly from the spiritual world and



*"Circle and Cross, #13," by Van James*

committing itself to materialism as a new religion and essence of life and if the moral state is not transforming towards the more and more human but the more and more animal like and inhuman – then the forces of evil in the earth are strengthened and preparing volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and tsunamis. Sharing such a destiny means often that rather innocent people have to go through [such deaths, while] those who are celebrating the materialistic lifestyles are living in safe regions. This brings our consciousness towards the reality of Christ. He is the archetype of suffering innocently in order to help us all, meeting us through our human destiny, sharing our experiences, so that we have joy and pain of life as shared together with him. The higher our moral state of development, the more we can contribute to the christianization of humankind by the way we are living and the way we are crossing the threshold of death.

#### **This gives the following ways of dying another meaning:**

Death by train accident or another regional catastrophe is bringing a group of people together who share the same moment of death through the same fear, pain and experience. That helps each one to prepare for the next life's journey the possibility to cooperated quickly and easily with these people for certain goals of life and tasks, with less chance for misunderstandings. The members of such a shared-death group can develop the ability for non-verbal communication, of understanding one another in the essential matters, even if they do not know one another well in personal life. For example, working relationships can become good through such a background of shared existential experience. Sometimes people describe such working constellations as "grace from heaven," not knowing that this is a gift of shared death pain in their past lives.

#### **Death by a natural catastrophe in a country, a shared destiny as a folk, as in Fukushima in Japan, or Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines**

This is a strong call for a whole nation of individuals to wake up for their responsibility as a nation for their task within the world family, as an organ of humankind. But also for the other nations and parts of the world to concentrate time and effort on the situation and needs of this specific country. Both aspects bear an enormous potential for cultural change. During the first World War, Rudolf Steiner gave a verse to address the Folk Spirit in such a way, that the folk spirit of the particular nation is supported to meet the guidance of Christ and to overcome the "blood and territory" focus of nationalistic desires.

#### **Death by human made moral catastrophes like genocide and war**

This is part of all of humankind's destiny, which is tragic and waking up for the conditions to find and to practice the inner path of moral development and peace-giving powers and faculties.

To meet Christ in our higher self individually, meeting Him on the level of folksoul-destiny and as the Representative of Humankind is the striving that connects us all worldwide.



*Participants make dolls in Nepal Steiner-Waldorf workshop.*

## **Early Childhood Teacher Training at Tashi Waldorf School**

*Eric Fairman (seminar observer) and 'Shanta' (participant)  
Kathmandu, Nepal*

Having been a Steiner-Waldorf grade school teacher in various English speaking countries over a period of some 30 years, I was delighted to hear that a teacher training programme was planned for mid-January 2014 in Kathmandu, Nepal. Despite my considerable background in class teaching, I have always found it an insurmountable challenge to stand in front of an adult audience and speak lucidly about Steiner-Waldorf education. Thus I am full of admiration for those teachers who are able to share their knowledge and experiences. Sarita Sanghai, kindergarten teacher from Hyderabad, India is one such individual, for here is someone who would not only share her considerable experience, but would also be able to do so in the mother tongue of the participants, being of Nepali birth herself! To have a person from your own culture speaking about a new approach to education that is so much needed in Nepal is the ideal. A country where the educational philosophy and methodology still harks back to an era of the Indian British Raj of Victorian times and even older, medieval Hindu-Nepali practices, makes such a presentation invaluable. Sarita ensured that it would be a memorable occasion for the 38 participants and 2 organisers, who attended the 5-day seminar and workshops. Coming from all regions of Nepal, here was a group of 40 enthusiastic individuals eager to investigate and learn about an alternative, child centred educational methodology,





*Early Childhood Teacher Training participants gather at Tashi Waldorf School in Kathmandu, Nepal.*

elements of which they could conceivably introduce into their own school environments.

Although not a participant myself, I was able to sponsor one of the young woman by the name of 'Shanta' from a small school in Kathmandu endeavouring to implement elements of Steiner-Waldorf methodology into their Nursery and Kindergartens. Despite the doubts and even resistance of some teachers and many parents, Shanta, an assistant teacher in the Nursery, hopes to implement change! A tall order for an experienced teacher; a mammoth one for a young, but enthusiastic, open minded one! This was to be Shanta's second Steiner-Waldorf training in the past 12 months. What would she make of Sarita's presentations? I would follow in her footsteps and find out!

The programme for the 5-days was a daunting one! The day begun at 9 am with a cup-of-tea and social exchanges. 9:30 am was the scheduled time for the course to begin and then it was almost continuous until the close of the sessions at approximately 3:30 pm. These printed times were of course western goals! In reality Nepal runs on its own clocktime which generally is about 30 minutes late or thereabouts! *A bit like anthroposophical time!!* Sarita made every effort to ensure that participants arrived on time to start the day together! Thus the first lesson for participants: Respect for others! Other lessons included:

- Introduction to Waldorf Education
- Four fold human being

- The twelve senses
- Circle time and Morning play
- Rhythm in the life of the child & Rhythm in the kindergarten
- Kindergarten songs and Finger games
- Wisdom of Fairy Tales and the healing art of storytelling
- The Vital role of play
- Creative Discipline
- Artistic Activities (wet-on-wet painting, crayon drawing, soft doll making)

According to Shanta, Sarita was an inspirational speaker who easily held the enrapt attention of all participants. Although this was Shanta's second 'introduction the Steiner-Waldorf Early Childhood education', she nevertheless found Sarita's presentations across the spectrum of subjects (list above) as highly valuable, enabling Shanta to consolidate what she had previously learnt and come to a deeper understanding of many aspects, especially with respect to the 12 senses.

Being herself more of a 'will' person, Shanta delighted in the talks and practical exercises centred on all aspects of nursery activities, such as circle time, morning play, songs, finger games, etc. Having the opportunity to actually engage in some of these activities with other kindergarten teachers was an invaluable experience. Shanta is convinced that play must take a central role in the regular, daily activities for her nursery group and intends to do her utmost to eliminate as much as possible the forced learning prevalent in her particular school nursery and kindergartens, but which is of course an ingrained

methodology in the vast majority of Nepali educational establishments in general. Teachers seem to know no other way!

The healthy lunches prepared in the Tashi Waldorf School kitchen were nourishing and the lunch hour itself gave every opportunity for important networking. Shanta found this experience really helpful and was able to forge new professional friendships.

Being at heart an ‘artist,’ Shanta revelled in the afternoon activities. It was a real ‘out-breathing’ after the focus needed in many of the morning sessions. Shanta found it challenging to imagine herself as a nursery child and to paint or crayon as if she were of that age. Creating a soft cuddly doll during one afternoon session was a wonderful opportunity for developing personal creativity.

On the final afternoon to which I was an invited guest, the entire group gathered in a huge circle on the lawn of the Tashi Waldorf School for the closing celebration. Each participant was given the opportunity to briefly express their thoughts about the seminar/workshops. These were all highly positive. Finally Sarita Sanghai, together with the Eva Bhujel (representing the hosts, the faculty of the Tashi Waldorf School), presented each participant with a ‘certificate of participation.’ Undoubtedly, certificates that will have a place of honour in many homes, schools and even individual classrooms!

The participants were unanimous in agreeing that further training seminars would be most welcome, especially if they were to be conducted by Sarita Sanghai or someone of her calibre!

<http://wen-nepal.wix.com/wen-waldorf-in-nepal>

## Waldorf in Singapore

*Seamus Donoghue, WSEAS President, Singapore*

We start the new year with many plans and ambitions ahead for Waldorf in Singapore.

For those new to the community and a reminder for the others I thought I would provide a brief summary of key events and our progress in 2013 towards setting up a new Waldorf Education Centre.

### 2013 Review

The “school” in Singapore has been operating now for over 10 years in an unregistered “underground” capacity. After the second Urban Redevelopment Agency (URA) visit, in as many years, early last year, inquiring why we were still at the current site we realized that operating “as is” was no longer sustainable. The URA is responsible for land planning in Singapore and terraced houses are no longer permitted to be used as schools or for commercial purposes as the zoning is residential. The URA visit, the disruptions to classes, and the lack of clarity on any enforcement timing created a very uncertain feeling among teachers, parents, and the board about the sustainability of the current site.

Given the uncertainty the teachers and board decided to

freeze our enrollment for most of 2013 until we could find a new site. This resulted in the school operating at a loss for much of 2013.

A new board was elected in February and the decision was taken to do a thorough review of our options, to register an official pre-school with the Ministry of Education. The board, along with a number of parent volunteers, looked exhaustively at our options as a private or a local pre-school within the current legislation. The review focused particularly on curriculum and teacher certification requirements as we already had both a curriculum and teachers and wanted to see where they could fit and allow us to continue to operate. We met several times with the Ministry of Education (MOE) to discuss our options.

We also did a review of a number of other pre-schools in Singapore that we thought were similar to ours to see how they were registered. Very limited information was actually available if a school was not listed on the MOE website (a requirement for registered schools), such as Blue House, and in later discussions with the MOE it came to light that many schools had also been operating as unregistered schools and were similarly negotiating with the MOE on how to become registered.

### Private School Option

Our initial thoughts were that it would be easier to set up as a private school but the downside was that, due to MOE limits, the number of local students we could admit would then be limited.

The two private options were National Curriculum and International Curriculum - Neither of which it turned out were options open to us. Inquiries on how to be recognized were that this was a higher level decision within the MOE policy division. We were left with the impression that this was clearly an avenue to pursue further but it would require access, groundwork and research to build a case for Waldorf as an International Curriculum. Waldorf readings are ambiguous whether it is a pedagogy or a curriculum but we could likely build the case with the assistance of Dornach (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goetheanum>) and potentially other tertiary education bodies that could help to define Waldorf as a curriculum and add cred-



*Downtown Singapore skyline.*



ibility to our case. It is a very nuanced argument, a curriculum is all about what we teach while a pedagogy is about how we teach it but likely an option that we should still pursue longer term. This option is particularly interesting from a primary school focus as there is currently no avenue for Waldorf to have an MOE registered local primary school.

### **Local School Option**

The remaining choice was to look at the option to launch as a local MOE registered pre-school. From a curriculum perspective the MOE had given oral acceptance of the detailed written pre-school Waldorf curriculum prepared by our teachers.

The difficulty was with teacher certification. While previously there had been some latitude with regard to on the job training and certification of teachers with the launch of the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA) in April 2013 the certification of pre-school teachers became much more rigid. Unless we had MOE certified teachers at the initial registration of our school, no matter how favorably they viewed our curriculum, we could not register as a school under the current guidelines.

### **Waldorf Education Center - An "Enrichment Center"**

It was actually the MOE officials we met that suggested our current path to registration. The MOE also oversees enrichment centers, under private schools, and as they have less stringent teaching requirements this would allow us to teach our Waldorf curriculum with our current teachers while they obtain MOE certification. Alternatively we could also organize Waldorf training for MOE certified teachers. Under this arrangement we could operate and grow our student base that would help to ensure sufficient enrollment once we launched a registered school. Once we had sufficient numbers of MOE trained teachers we could register as an MOE local preschool.

This brings us largely up to date on the path the board and the members have chosen to follow in terms of school registration — launch as an education center that will bring us visibility, build the community, and establish/train our teaching staff.

### **Other Issues - Legal structure - Non Profit and Limited Liability**

The current "school" operates under the legal structure of a Society. A society is not a legal structure that is typically used for activities such as schools because it is an unlimited liability structure. As such all members of the society have full liability for the activities undertaken by the society. This is a significant risk.

We reviewed the legal structure that would be most suitable for a school and concluded on a Public Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG). A public company limited by guarantee is one that carries out non-profit making activities that have some basis of national or public interest, such as for promoting art, or charity, etc. The liability of its members is limited to the amount of guarantee that can be as little as \$1.

The new structure also clearly distinguishes us as not being the standard for a profit enrichment center.

Karina prepared drafted memorandums and articles for the company and we have met with a law firm to discuss how to proceed. They will redraft the articles to be largely consistent with our current constitution and also to meet the requirements of the Commissioner of Charities (COC) if we decide to pursue charity status.

We need to submit our MOE registration when we submit the Accounting and Corporate Regulator Agency (ACRA) CLG registration so we are doing the groundwork now so this can be done quickly. We will have another meeting with the lawyers in the next couple of weeks.

Once the CLG is registered we intend to transfer the societies assets to the CLG. The society will continue to be maintained with minimal activity operating under it for now. We have decided not to unwind the society in the event that at a later date there are wider Waldorf school networks that could then be organized under the society.

### **Charity Status**

Given CLG structure and our objective of coming out of the shadows we also looked into registering as a charity. This would impose minimum though manageable levels of transparency and compliance as prescribed by the COC but it would also provide a certain community stature and allow us to undertake public appeals for funding (although without the option of those gifts being tax deductible for donors).

We need to submit a two-year operating plan with COC within 3 months once we set up the CLG with ACRA.

### **New "Schools" Site Selection**

This has been the trickiest part of the puzzle. As a registered school there is some flexibility with regard to type of facility we can use, e.g. bungalow is permitted. However, as an enrichment center, which is classified by the URA as a commercial operation we are limited to commercial leases. The typical commercial property is in a high traffic area or a shopping center — not exactly an inspired Waldorf setting.

The nursery parents have been working on an initiative to lobby the URA for some flexibility on the zoning rules. This would be very helpful as there is significant competition for sites that we are looking for and we currently have limited financial resources.

We have had a number of good potential sites such as in Kampong Bugis and Telok Kurau but in the end each had problems - Kampong Bugis was slated for a massive redevelopment and the Telok Kurau site was a third floor walk-up with expensive plumbing issues. (Shan has been spearheading our search for sites so please coordinate with her if you have suggestions.)

### **2014 Going Forward - Nursery**

Teacher Masami will be returning to Japan at the end of term one. This has been the current urgent focus of the board and we have been working on a teacher transition plan so we can carry over through term two with the minimum of disruption for the children.

For term two we expect Carine Seror will lead the class as the main teacher. This will allow us to find a permanent solution for the fall term. Carine is currently doing the Malaysia Waldorf Teacher training, actively worked with the board last year, and has had two children in our school.

Teacher Ritu has also decided to take some time off to be with her family for term two. We are still speaking to potential assistant teachers and should have a firm commitment in the next week or so. As discussed with the Nursery parents we will likely be moving to having two assistant teachers given the lack of availability of a full time alternative. We are firming up details on the two potential supporting teachers but it is interesting to note that as we have looked further into the community more candidates have emerged.

### **Education Center Administration**

As we evolve to a formal education operation Monica will take over as full time administrator of the education center. It's great to have her continued support going forward

### **Teacher and Facilitator Training**

It is encouraging that at a grassroots level, i.e. our playgroups, we have seen very strong growth this year. We now have 20 children in playgroups with particularly strong demand in the west and central parts of Singapore. We have had to turn people away in both of those areas due to lack of facilitators.

It is pretty clear that Waldorf teacher training will be a bottleneck for the success of our playgroups and school unless we can train teachers in Singapore. Once the new education center is set-up teacher training curriculum will be a key and urgent initiative.

### **Parent/ Member Initiatives & Volunteers**

There is clearly a lot still to do. The nursery parent's initiated effort to engage at senior levels with the URA and MOE is very encouraging as an example of what motivated parents can do to move the community forward.

Hopefully Scott's upcoming engagement with the MOE can bring us some clarity and traction with policy makers - that would be a great outcome as the current rules do not give us much scope to launch as a school from day one. As part of that initiative a testimonial request/appeal from parents, members, and other interested Waldorf parties has been posted on the Friends of Waldorf Facebook page and will soon be circulated by email. The testimonials will be used in Scott's discussions with the authorities to build a case for policy flexibility from both the URA and the MOE.

### **Committee Structures**

The key issue going forward will be, quoting from the article *Human Scale Education for the 21st Century* by Richard House. "How to create an organization that everyone involved will experience as empowering, without stifling the healthy initiative of those who have more energy, time and even, ability to contribute to the organization than others. In order to bring this successfully, clear accountability structures and a deep understanding of the consensual decision-making are pretty much

indispensable prerequisites." <http://www.hawthornpress.com/articles/Human%20Scale%20Education.pdf>

His suggestion, which seems to be a good one is for the board to formalize supporting committee structures - "Very clear descriptions of the various committees, and their respective responsibilities, will help all persons wanting to be actively involved in the school to perceive where their personal and specific strengths could best serve the growing school."

If there is interest in building a committee infrastructure we need volunteers for committees for a broad range of activities. Our current craft and playgroup activities could be set up as committees with clear reporting to the board.

There is still a significant amount of work to do this year. The Board has been operating with some assistance from parents and members but we will need to expand our ranks of volunteers to ensure we execute our plan. If you are interested in getting involved please reach out.

### **Board Election**

The society Annual General Meeting will be held in February and once the new CLG is established we will also have a new CLG board election. Anybody that is interested to participate at the board level is encouraged to put their name forward.

In closing I will leave you with a final quote from the same article by Richard House: "Finally, and above all, the virtue of perseverance is essential. There has never been any school (or human organization, come to that!) including all Steiner schools, which does not from time to time experience challenges and setbacks, and even crises. The issue here is not somehow to expect your school to be a perfectly Utopian conflict-free school, but rather, that you are open to facing and meeting the challenges that will inevitably arise, with maturity, and see them as opportunities for individual and collective development."

Thanks to all those who have worked so tirelessly to move us forward this year and I think we have a very exciting future ahead for Waldorf in Singapore.



*A view of Singapore's harbor and coastal park.*



## The First China Waldorf Early Childhood Educators Conference

Guangzhou, November/December 2013

By Susan Howard, Amherst (USA)

[First published in the WECAN newsletter, Winter 2013]

On a warm November evening near the Pearl River delta outside Guangzhou, more than 500 Chinese Waldorf kindergarten teachers gathered expectantly on the shore of a small lake. Each held a silken lotus flower with a glowing candle, and one by one, each one placed the flickering lotus into the water. Slowly the hundreds of floating lights began to drift across the lake, illuminating the darkness, as participants walked across a footbridge and into the large conference center's assembly hall.



The sounds of the Guqin, a classical Chinese 7-stringed pentatonic instrument, wafted through the hall, and the Soul Calendar verse for Christmas was spoken in Chinese and performed in eurythmy. Thus, in an atmosphere of beauty and reverence and deep listening, the first Waldorf Early Childhood Educators Conference in China began!



This atmosphere continued throughout the five days of the conference, which was full of lively encounters, busy workshops, inspiring lectures, delicious shared meals, walks in the lovely landscape, amazing cultural presentations, and moments of great humor and joy



Participating in this conference was a special privilege for me. I had taught in the Waldorf early childhood training course in 2008 in Chengdu when the Chinese Waldorf movement was just beginning to develop. At that time there were about 20 kindergartens and a small handful of Waldorf schools in China. It is quite amazing to see what has developed since then.

Today, five years later, there are more than 300 Waldorf kindergartens! Most are still very young and in the early stages of development; approximately thirty of these communities have founded Waldorf schools. Some kindergartens began as Montessori pre-schools and then, after the discovery of Waldorf education by the director or teachers or parents, are now undergoing a process of transformation into Waldorf kindergartens. Others are being founded by parents or educators inspired by the ideals of Waldorf education.



Clara Aerts and I, as members of the IASWECE Coordinating Group, were invited to visit a number of kindergartens in Hong Kong, Shenzhen, and Guangzhou area during our two-week visit to China for the conference. We experienced a tremendous pioneering spirit in the new initiatives, where parents and teachers are working together to build the kindergartens, make furnishings and play materials, develop play areas and gardens, while also attending training courses and promoting Waldorf education in their communities.

Most Waldorf kindergartens in China are in vast urban areas and the parents who send their children are highly educated and successful. Through their search for the very best education for their child, they discover Waldorf education, and then often find that their lives are changed in ways they had not dreamed possible. They are profoundly grateful, enthusiastic and supportive, and discover that through their involvement in Waldorf education, they are becoming active participants in the renewal of human culture, bringing healing and planting seeds for the future.





Training courses are absolutely essential in the development of Waldorf early childhood education in China. There are five training programs in Chengdu, Beijing, Xi'an, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong, with a sixth program opening soon in Nanjing. Most of the tutors for these training courses come from abroad –from the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Europe. International mentors are also needed for the hundreds of students enrolled in training courses or who have recently completed a course.

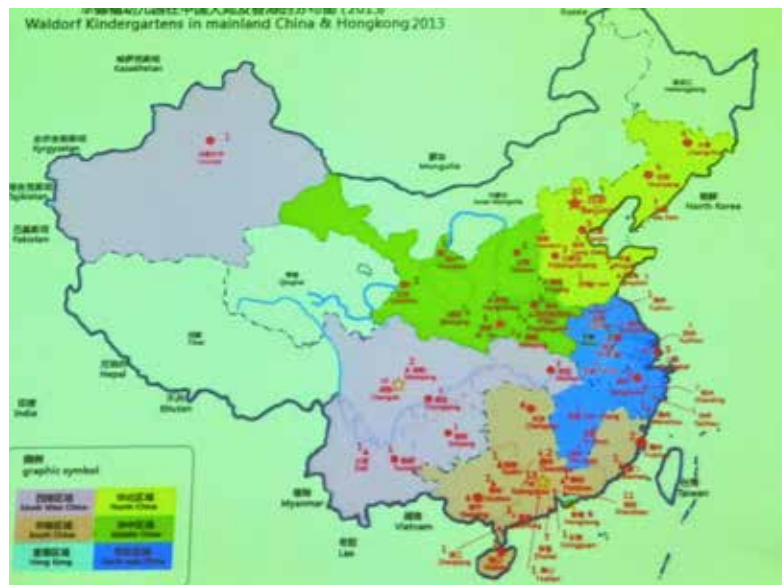
In order to coordinate all this activity, Thanh Cherry, who has played a key role in the development of Waldorf education in China since the very beginning, was asked in 2010 by the Pedagogical Section, the Friends of Waldorf Education, and IASWECE, to act as Coordinator of the Waldorf Early Childhood China Training and Mentoring Project, known as WECC. Thanh has worked tirelessly to support the training and mentoring of the early childhood educators in China, has accompanied the astonishing rate of growth with sensitivity and a deep sense of responsibility, and is deeply respected and loved by her Chinese and international colleagues.



*Regional Representatives of the China Early Childhood Educators Forum (CECEF) with Thanh Cherry (seated, second from the left).*

Parallel to the development of the WECC Program, Chinese Waldorf early childhood educators have begun to work in association with one another to foster collaboration and quality in their work. The China Waldorf Early Childhood Educators Forum (CECEF) has six regions, each with a regional coordinator who works with the training centers and the WECC Program to organize mentoring within their regions, and to support the development of introductory and deepening courses, conferences such as the first China-wide conference in November, plans for translation of publications of Waldorf early childhood resources into Chinese language, and new training courses.

A highlight of the conference for me personally was the moment when as a representative of the IASWECE council, I could formally welcome China as a new Member in our association and present a letter of acceptance to Hao Bing from Beijing, who is the vice-chairperson of CECEF. Li Zhang, the first Chinese Waldorf kindergarten teacher and chairperson of CECEF, was unable to attend the conference, but was very much in our thoughts.



This moment felt like a true rite of passage. We are delighted that our Chinese colleagues will now be able to actively join us. In our IASWECE council meetings, early childhood colleagues representing 30 countries around the world collaborate in wrestling with the challenges of how we can help to sustain, deepen and metamorphose Waldorf education, so that its universally human spirit can light up in the hearts and creative will of human beings in all cultures around the world. The lotus candles gently floating in the lake at the beginning of the conference are an image of this, shining together in the darkness and illuminating the world.




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*Susan Howard is the Coordinator of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN), a member of the Coordinating Group of IASWECE, and directs the Waldorf early childhood training program at Sunbridge Institute in New York.*





## Resurgence in China

by Ben Cherry, Taiwan

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Waldorf education is in its tenth year in Mainland China. The first school opened in Chengdu in September 2004 with five children in the kindergarten and a home school primary class for three of the teachers' children. Now there are about 300 children and long waiting lists and the school is preparing to continue on into high school (grade 9) this September.

There are now thought to be more than 300 kindergartens and 36 grade school initiatives throughout China, basing their work on Waldorf education. Added to this are six 3-year part-time early childhood teacher training courses, five for primary school teachers and one for high school, along with courses in curative education, school administration, the arts and even a pioneer full-time teacher training course in Beijing.

What is the reason for this extraordinary development? And how can one ensure its quality?

One way of coming to an answer is to see it in the context of what is bubbling up in all aspects of life in China, in this time which the new president has called the Renaissance of the Chinese dream. For many, it is a time of optimism and exploration, as the country races to catch up with the standard of living in other prosperous countries. There is an energy in the land and the people, a feeling of almost unlimited possibilities.

One experiences the effects of this massive will for change in many ways. The earth is being dug up and transformed into concrete, expressways and high rise buildings at a rate that must be unprecedented in human history. Whole new cities are being created, high speed trains are being built throughout the country, and airports continuously expanding. It is rare to fly on a domestic flight that is not full and it is equally rare to

take off on time because of the congestion. Meanwhile, traffic on the roads grows like water pouring into a dam; and people are leaving the countryside, seeking employment in the cities, often in the building sites or factories.

Socially, culturally, economically and physically, China is on the move. In most places, no sooner is an estate complete than it is integrated into a thriving community of shops, people and street life. The environmental consequences are immense, of course,

as is becoming ever more apparent. Water pollution and the smog and dirt in the big cities are huge problems. It is like a dream that is wonderful, frightening and inexorable. For those who have money, there is a growing awareness of aesthetics in architecture and life-style, and a plethora of self-development courses. For those who do not, the future is bleak. The divide between the super-wealthy and the poor grows day by day.

One can ask how this - and the growth of an education movement which develops independent thinking - can be taking place within a political system that is still communist. Here one enters into the subtle intricacies of the way of thinking that has evolved through China's long, dramatic history.

Though the government can be ruthless, as is well-documented in the West, it is also pragmatic and, because of its hold on power, can focus on the long term more than many other governments. Chinese people too are pragmatic. Generally they accept the way things are and get on with their lives. The essential attitude is one of free initiative - but beware the consequences if something goes wrong or someone complains to the government, for the penalties can be severe!

If it were not for this, Waldorf education could hardly have begun, for out of the 36 initiatives which are working hard to develop themselves, only two are recognised by their local or regional governments! In Australia or the West, such a situation could never occur, for the relationship with the law is very different. Through long experience people in China have developed the art of moving in the space between the legal and the illegal!

Several schools have been obliged by the government to leave their properties, and this has brought considerable hardship, but so far none has actually closed down. Water has many ways of reaching the sea, and the carriers of the schools too find different pathways for achieving their goals. In one situation the same police officer who supervised the expulsion of a school from one property later found them in

another, not far away, and simply told them to obey the laws! In other situations parents or benefactors in high positions have ensured that a school is protected. Relationship is what counts, along with courage, creativity and an abiding faith in what one is doing.

Another example of this mobile way of thinking is that over the past two years Waldorf teachers, whether from legal or not-so-legal schools, have been invited to participate in the annual conferences of an organisation called New Education, which is led by a professor of education who is a senior member of the national government. Each conference is organised in conjunction with the local department of education. Two years ago I gave one of the keynote lectures, alongside professors from Japan and the United States representing other educational ideas. This year Christof Wiechert, previously from Dornach, gave an address, and both times a group of us gave workshops. Each time we were welcomed with generosity and gratitude.

From encounters such as these, it is clear that the central government is watching what is evolving in the Waldorf movement with interest - and, no doubt, caution. It is part of a wider research into educational methods worldwide, into which they are investing a lot of



*Zewu Li, one of the founders of Chendu Waldorf School, teaches in the Teacher Training Program.*

resources, for there is a growing discontent with the existing exam-oriented paradigm. In the public domain, meanwhile, on the internet and in magazines, there is a lot of discussion about Waldorf education, ranging from enthusiasm and gratitude to accusations of it being a religion.

China is forever a land of opposites. In some ways there is more openness to new ideas than in many Western countries, and a freshness in people's attitudes; yet one walks on egg shells. There are people in influential positions in government, universities and business who recognise this education as a path into the future which accords with the aspirations of Chinese culture, but it is no less true that if the political leaders were to decide to close it down, it would be done immediately.

The most sensitive areas - and all foreign visitors who represent Anthroposophy or Waldorf education need to know this - are religion, politics, safety in schools and the infiltration of Western cultural values. One can speak about the spirit (though there are many ways of doing so) and there is a genuine wish in people to understand it, but one has to be very careful not to give the mistaken impression that Anthroposophy is a

religion or a politically-oriented teaching. To do so would most likely bring about the closing of all the schools.

The fact that Chinese culture is based on philosophy rather than religion, however, provides a safe ground on which to work with Anthroposophy. It becomes a training in tact and in thinking and speaking exactly, and it is always a delight to discover resonances between the two streams of spiritual knowledge, ancient and modern. In my view, it is to a large extent this resonance which is at the basis of the growing interest, not only in Waldorf education, but Spiritual Science.

In a remarkable way, people's encounter with Anthroposophy is also contributing to the growing longing in China to reconnect with what has been buried and almost forgotten on a cultural level. One could say perhaps that something is rising up spiritually from beneath the surface, just as in the

cities the bulldozers, drills and cranes are raising up what is buried underneath the ground.

In a lecture he gave 102 years ago, the second in the series called Earthly and Cosmic Man, Rudolf Steiner spoke of how the time would come when 'imprisoned Atlantean spirituality' would rise up in China and amaze and shake the Western world, challenging the West's sense of its own cultural and spiritual tasks. His attitude

towards this resurgence of the power of a distant past is that we should meet it out of a spirit of mutual respect.

Often I have wondered whether what he was referring to has taken place already - in the diaspora of Buddhist monks who fled Tibet in the fifties of the last century, or in the cultural, social and ecological revolution of the sixties, which began in the United States. Inspirers of this back-to-nature movement were profoundly influenced by ancient Chinese writings, and for many in the West this and Tibetan Buddhism have become more potent sources of wisdom than Christianity.

It could be that this is what he was meaning; but something is nevertheless rising up in China now too and my experience is that many in the West (and the South) look upon it with amazement and fear. This time it is not only a cultural resurgence, but an economic and political one. It has power.

Rudolf Steiner made another prediction. It was that if all that comes from the West to the East is materialism, the East will rise up against the West with a vengeance. What is happening now in the meeting of Anthroposophy with Chinese culture is very important. Anthroposophy, of course, is not



the only fruit of Western culture to transcend materialism, but it is one of the few that unites spiritual revelation with clear, practical application in facing the problems of our world today.

The longing in China is not only for an education which recognises the fullness of humanity in 'spirit, soul and body' - or, to use the traditional Chinese way of expressing the same thing, 'heaven, human being and earth'; it is also for ways of growing food, learning to work together and healing the environment, based on the same wholistic approach. The need for all aspects of the healing power of the anthroposophical way of seeing is urgent.

In all these areas, what is rising up culturally from the past can meet what Anthroposophy brings from the future. In both streams there is a sense of wholeness, and each activity and aspect is an expression of it. Both recognise the central importance of the human being and of the arts in all their forms, and in both there is a sense of how life itself can become an art.

This is the way of the so-called 'junzi' (pronounced like juinde), which is so much at the heart of Chinese cultural aspirations. Traditionally the word has been translated into English as the 'superior man'. I find it more appropriate to use Rudolf Steiner's expression, the 'ethical individual' - or even the 'becoming human being'. Through subtle correspondences such as this, these two great currents of world evolution can find a common pulse, and bring something fresh and new to birth.

I believe I can speak for others with whom I work in China in saying that this ideal works strongly in our will. Everything we do in the China Waldorf Forum, the network which takes on the task of trying to safeguard and enhance the quality of the Waldorf school movement in China and to keep the connection alive with the Pedagogical Section in Dornach and the outside world, is connected with this overall goal.

What is extraordinary is that the situation in China requires us to develop new ways in almost everything we do, for we have been advised that it would be politically unwise to set up a centralized association to control what is happening. Such respect as we in the coordinating group have from the schools comes, not from our position, but the relationships we form and the example we try to set of working together.

Much has been achieved, for example, by a grass-roots approach to creating curriculum appropriate for China. Research seminars, organised by members of the CWF working group, take place in different regions several times a year, focusing on different aspects of teaching. Each seminar is led by a group of more experienced Chinese teachers and all teachers from the region are invited to participate. This collaboration is then continued in meetings organised by the teachers themselves.

In the same spirit, our annual conference last summer had the theme of Diversity within Unity. What many participants discovered was that the magic key for the development of quality comes not from just following or obeying (though rules and expectations have their place), but from the realization of one's own inner source of self-change. It is through the ethical individual that creative change can come. The more clearly we unite in our ideals and goals, the more individual we can become in our ways of working towards them.

This is the inner task of the China Waldorf Forum and the reason why it is called a forum rather than an association. It has the potential of creating a space in which we can recognise the becoming human being in ourselves and each other, and from this centre of inner autonomy and responsibility go back to our work in our separate locations.

It is far from easy and it depends on many people with teaching experience and human-artistic quality working with us, but such is our goal. Most astonishing of all is the thought that the time may come when, through what Anthroposophy carries and what it illumines in Chinese culture, it can come to realisation on a much larger scale in society, as a new expression of the ancient culture, in forms and concepts appropriate to today.

*Benjamin Cherry has been connected with the Waldorf movement in Mainland China since its birth (and pre-birth processes) ten and more years ago. Prior to that (and still now, where time allows) he worked with Waldorf schools and training centres in Thailand, Japan, Korea and Taiwan. He currently spends nine months of each year in the region and has been the Coordinator of the China Waldorf Forum since it was set up in September 2010 at a gathering of representatives from Chinese Waldorf schools, with the help of Claus-Peter Roeb from the Pedagogical Section in Dornach and Nana Goebel from the Friends of Rudolf Steiner's Art of Education in Berlin. If you have experience to offer and wish to help, you can contact the forum at: [cwforum@126.com](mailto:cwforum@126.com)*



*Waldorf teacher trainees at work in Chengdu.*

# Spiritual Geography: Rethinking The Face of the Globe

*Van James, Honolulu, Hawai'i*

[Revised from an article that appeared in *Pacifica Journal* #25, 2004]

The human head can be seen as a microcosmic picture of the world. In a similar way the earth may be imaginatively viewed as a macrocosmic head. Rudolf Steiner says as much in his spiritual scientific research concerning world geography. Following his lead some researchers have considered the twelve major rivers as related to the twelve nerve streams in the human head. Other anthroposophical investigators have suggested that the twelve earth nerves are the twelve mountain ranges that descend from the Arctic Circle region in the north. It has also been put forward that the Mediterranean Sea is like a huge watery eye while the Himalayan mountain range is a second, jutting-out mountainous eye. The Jordan Rift, the deepest, open incision in the planet creates a kind of facial axis or line of symmetry with an indented nose between the liquid and solid mountainous eyes.

Living into such imaginations, unusual as they may seem at first, can provide insights into the universe, the earth, and the human being that otherwise appears lifeless.

Rudolf Steiner suggested that after the departure of the sun from the earth (one could also say the expulsion of the earth from the sun), all the slowly solidifying continents of the earth were clustered together around Africa and positioned near the North Pole. Known in earth science as Gondwana, this group continent offset the larger southern part of a then oblong planet. The earth was not yet completely solid and it rotated very slowly. As it began to cool only two souls were able to incarnate into the inhospitable environment. Designated in Judeo-Christian tradition as Adam and Eve, these two souls were able to survive the early earth atmosphere but only in a subtle, etheric nature, in a special paradisiacal setting. When the southern, denser portion of the earth separated off much later to become the moon, the wound left behind by its separation—the Pacific Basin—was healed by the continents parting from each other into independent bodies or organs, i.e. geographic beings. The continents and by extension the tectonic plates that support them express the earth's particular structure and form. The edges or seams of the plates are warmer, shifting, and more active than their centers. However, hot spots like Hawai'i, demonstrate exceptions to the norm. This all makes

for a rather dynamic, living earth.

Earth movements may be just as prevalent now as they were when the earth was more malleable. After the 1964 earthquake in Alaska, Montague Island was raised twenty feet higher above sea level and offshore depths were thirty feet lower. In 1812, an earthquake in mid-western North America caused church bells to ring in Boston. A lake seven miles wide and twenty miles long appeared in Tennessee as a result of this quake. Krakatoa, Mount St. Helens, and numerous other examples of earth changes have occurred in historic times. Side affects of earth movements include tsunami and climate change.

If one gazes at the face of the earth an interesting tripartite or three-folding division can be seen. (Fig. 1) The Jordan Rift, the deepest open trench in the world, geographically divides East from West, running through the Dead Sea, the Red Sea,



Figure 1

and continuing toward Antarctica as the East African Rift System. Thousands of miles away, the Marianas and Philippine Trenches are the other major vertical features in the earth, but under water, descending to as much as 36,000 feet below sea level off the coast of eastern Asia. Running through the western Pacific Ocean along Japan and the Philippines they are part of what is called the Ring of Fire, a hot and active tectonic plate edge that encircles the Pacific basin. The third great geographic feature of the earth's physiognomy that run north-south along the western side of the American continents is the Rocky and Andes Mountain Ranges. Rather than descending to the depths of the ocean or creating a vessel-like open trench they project skywards as some of the youngest major mountain ranges in the world. An inverted tetrahedron of forces is formed by these three geographic lines of force. They direct magnetic energy to a point at the South Pole (fig.2).

The Alps and the Himalayan ranges, on the other hand, run east-west as if to intersect the three vertical streams of force. If one imagines the western Rocky and Andes mountains as seen through a transparent earth, they would form a great cross with the Swiss Alps at the center and the Himalayas in the East. A giant, geographic Cross of the World can be imagined.



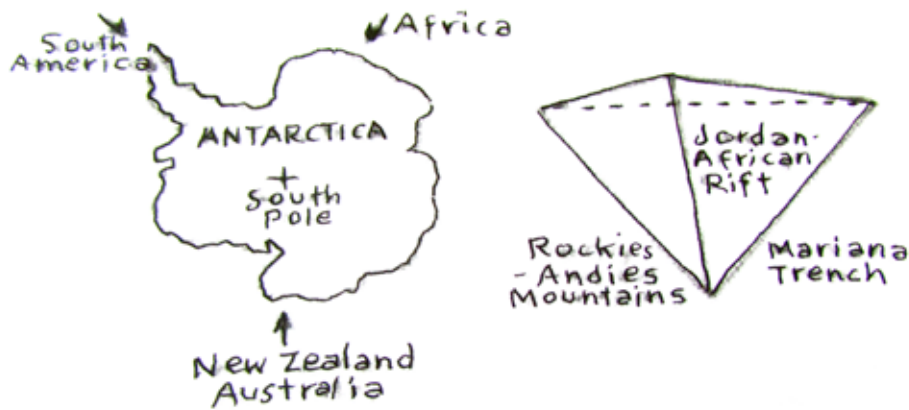


Figure 2

If one looks at the language of land formations from west to center and east, there is yet another three-folding that becomes apparent. The southern coastal areas of North America, Europe and Asia, as they respectively gesture toward South America, Africa and Australia, have three prominent east-west land features. In North America there are the peninsulas of Baja California and Florida, with Mexico as a solid, large landmass reaching out by way of the Mayan peninsula. Europe has three peninsulas as well: the blockish Iberian Peninsula with Spain and Portugal, the boot-shaped Italy, and the serrated Greek mainland with its scattered isles. Asia demonstrates a similar arrangement of transforming land areas with the solid, blockish Arabian Peninsula, then the pointed Indian subcontinent, and further to the southeast the Indochinese peninsula dropping down and dispersing into the islands of Indonesian (fig. 1). It is indeed striking how repeated three-part gestures appear in these landforms with a general breaking up in an easterly direction.

The Pacific region has its own tri-partite character in the Polynesian Triangle, formed by the extreme dispersal of the "many islands" (polynesia) of the Pacific Ocean (fig. 3). Hawai'i in the north, Aotearoa (New Zealand) in the southwest, and Rapa Nui (Easter Island) in the southeast form this great triangle of the Pacific. There are no large landforms here, only the connecting elements of water, air and light. Asia and the Americas flank the Pacific like two half moons creating the Ring of Fire and land boundaries around this vast watery world (America to the east, Asia to the west.) It has been suggested that China and Japan express the will character of this western Pacific region, while the Philippines and Southeast Asia are linked to the feeling, and Australia and New Zealand to cognition. On the other side of the Pacific, Chile and Peru would be connected to will, while Central America expresses the feeling character, and California, Oregon and Washington State the cognitive element. Thinking, feeling or will, the three soul forces might be seen

as strong factors playing out in the peoples of these distinctly different geological regions. One might speak of the soul-spirit of place.

There are five locations throughout the world where very old rock formations, the origins of the continents, may be found (fig. 1, shading). There are also five etheric or formative force centers located in the various oceans. These etheric centers, which are directly linked to the source of weather patterns (winds, currents, and storm systems), are mobile and change-

able but loosely positioned in the north Atlantic, the Indian Ocean, and three source centers in the Pacific (fig. 1, spirals).

The North Pole, apart from its ice cap, is open to the cosmos. It is a water realm with no land forms. It might be seen as a fontanel, open at the top of the earth-head. Antarctica, on the other hand, is closed, solid ground, a firm footing for the world. It is the last of the continents to be discovered and it is the only continent to have no indigenous peoples inhabiting it. In its snowy and icy covering it is a veiled mystery and a place of secrets yet to be discovered.

Keeping with the picture of the earth as a head, Europe



Figure 3

and Africa may be seen as the center of the face with the Americas and Asia-Australia on both sides like ears or arms. Although the British established Greenwich, England as the Mean Time for their own convenience, there are those who feel the meridian line would have been better set along the longitude of Jerusalem, beside the Jordan Rift, at the planets esoteric middle. Although superficially seen as Euro-centric, this imagination of the earth with Europe in the center has a real significance. It also means that the dateline, at which

one day becomes another, is where the center of the back of the earth-head would be, in the middle of the Pacific region. This area of least land on the planet contains two thirds of the earth's seas. As the back of the head it is the place of least awareness, least self-consciousness. It is referred to as the Womb of the World, as it is the place where the moon was born and went forth from the earth (fig. 3).

Looking at North America, the so-called, New World,



Figure 4

we see a land under great geological stress. It is a land out of balance, ill in a sense. Its people die out and need to be continually replenished by people from elsewhere. North America will always need new people for it is connected with death forces (Saturn). People of the west are pulled into the will by these forces yet at the same time have the potential for the highest spirituality. Unfortunately, this high spirituality may be Ahrimanic in character, manifesting in a mechanistic and materialistic manner. Over the course of geological time sea levels in North America have risen no less than 150 times according to geologists, driving the Gulf of Mexico up into the Mississippi River Valley and glaciers down from the north carving out and shaping the Great Lakes. This chain of lakes and bays separating Canada from the US, is the most complex fresh water system in the world. One spiritual geographer relates planetary influences to the Great Lakes. According to him Lake Superior is linked to the planetary forces of Jupiter, Lake Michigan to the Moon, Lake Huron to Mars and the Georgian Bay to Saturn, Lake St. Claire to the sun, Lake Erie to Mercury, and Lake Ontario to Venus (fig. 4). These waterways and the mid-western region

of North America as a whole can be seen as the rhythmic system, respiration and circulation, the feeling realm of the continent. The Canadian Great Plains and the northern lakes region might be a kind of nerve-sensory system, while the south: Texas, Louisiana, Mexico, the Mississippi Delta region and Caribbean, might be imagined as the metabolic functionary of North America. This three-folding of the continent from north to south can be extended east to west creating a crosscurrent of forces (fig. 5). The east carries the nerve activity and thinking pole of the continent, while the west acts as the limbs and will. The east coast, that looks towards Europe, is sinking while the west coast that turns its back on the Pacific is rising.

Observations and designations from different points of view overlay one another with seeming contradictions. These observations of North America should be seen alongside the earlier considerations of the earth as a whole, where America is more generally a land of will.

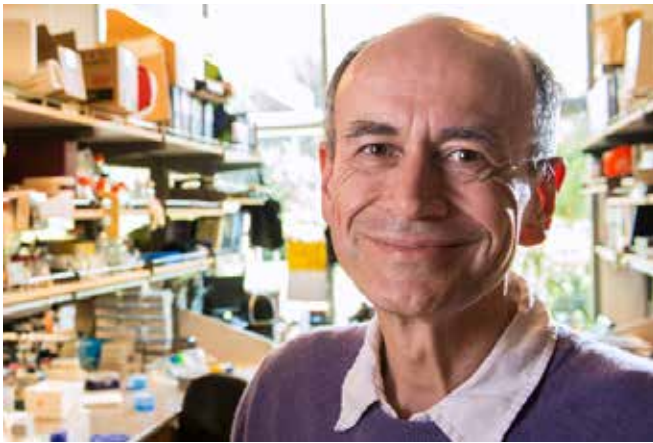
Humanity needs to experience itself once more as a spiritual-physical organism within the context of a whole. We can expand our awareness to embrace all the regions of the earth as interdependent

and related to one another. To transform the earth we must start with transforming our own head, that is transforming our own thinking.



Figure 5





## Waldorf Graduate Wins Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine

*An Autobiography: Thomas C. Südhof*

Thomas Südhof wins Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.  
(Photo by Steve Fisch)

When I was born in Göttingen in 1955, the aftermaths of the second world war were still reverberating. I was born into an anthroposophical family. My maternal grandparents had been early followers for Rudolf Steiner's teaching, and worked for Waldorf schools when Hitler assumed power and banned the anthroposophical movement. Waldorf schools were closed, and my grandfather was conscripted to work in a chemical munitions factory – it was a miracle he survived the war. My uncle was drafted into the army right out of school, and when I was born, he had just returned from the Soviet Union after 10 years as a prisoner of war. My parents were physicians, with my father pursuing a career in academic medicine, while my mother cared for our growing family. My father's training led him to the United States during the time I was born; as a result, he learned of my arrival by telegram as he was learning biochemical methods in San Francisco, where in a twist of fate I now live.

I spent my childhood in Göttingen and Hannover, and graduated from the Hannover Waldorf school in 1975. I had been interested in many different subjects as a student, any subject except sports. I did not know what to do with my life after school, except that I was determined not to serve in the military. More by default than by vocation, I thus decided to enter medical school, which kept all avenues open for a possible career in science or as a practitioner of something useful – being a physician – and allowed me to defer my military service. I studied first in Aachen, the beautiful former capital of Charles the Great, and then transferred to Göttingen, the former scientific center of the Weimar republic, in order to have better access to laboratory training since I became more and more interested in science. Soon after arriving in Göttingen, I decided to join the Dept. of Neurochemistry of Prof. Victor P. Whittaker at the Max-Planck-Institut für biophysikalische

Chemie. I was attracted to this department because it focused on biochemical approaches to probe the function of the brain, following up on Whittaker's discovery of synaptosomes in the two preceding decades, his development of methods to purify synaptic vesicles, and his increasing interest in the cell biology of synaptic vesicle exo- and endocytosis. As a lowly 'Hiwi' ('Hilfswissenschaftler' for 'helping scientist') in Whittaker's department, I was assigned the task of examining the biophysical structure of chromaffin granules, which are large secretory vesicles of the adrenal medulla that store catecholamines and ATP. Although my project developed well, I started exploring other questions in parallel as I became more and more familiar with doing experiments, while simultaneously studying medicine at the university. I am infinitely grateful to Victor Whittaker for giving me complete freedom in his department in pursuing whatever I thought was interesting, and continued working in his department after my graduation from medical school and my internship in 1982, until I moved to the US in 1983.

Among the studies I performed during my time in Whittaker's department in Göttingen, the most significant is probably the isolation and characterization of a new family of calcium-binding proteins that we called 'calelectrins' because we had purified them from the electric organ of *Torpedo marmorata*. 'Calelectrins' were among the first identified members of an enigmatic and evolutionarily ancient family of calcium-binding proteins called annexins. Annexins were at the same time discovered in several other laboratories, and I am proud of the fact that we contributed to the first description of this fascinating protein family, although to this date their function remains unknown.

After I finished medical school, I thought that I wanted to be an academic physician, along the mold of my father who had died when I was in high school. Although my time in Whittaker's laboratory had taught me to love doing science, I wanted to do something more practical and immediately useful. The standard career for an academic physician in Germany was to go abroad for a couple of years to acquire more clinically oriented scientific training before starting her/his clinical training. Upon surveying the scientific landscape, I decided to join the laboratory of Mike Brown and Joe Goldstein at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas for postdoctoral training. Brown and Goldstein were already famous for their brilliant cell-biological studies when I made this decision, and were equally renowned for using cutting-edge scientific tools to address a central question in medicine, namely how cholesterol in blood is regulated. While in their laboratory, I cloned the gene encoding the LDL receptor, which taught me molecular biology and opened up genetic analyses of this gene in human patients suffering from atherosclerosis. I also became interested in how expression of the LDL receptor is regulated by cholesterol, and identified a sequence element in the LDL receptor gene called 'SRE' for sterol-regulatory element that mediates the regulation of the LDL receptor expression by cholesterol. Discovery of the SRE later led to the identification of the SRE-binding protein in Brown and Goldstein's laboratory,

which in turn identified new mechanisms of transcriptional regulation effected by intramembrane proteolysis.

In 1986, I had the choice of resuming my clinical training, or trying to establish my own laboratory. Much of what I know about science I learned in my three years of postdoctoral training in Brown and Goldstein's laboratory, and has guided me throughout my career. Probably the best advice Brown and Goldstein gave me, however, was now: they suggested I forego further clinical training and do only science, and they backed up this advice by providing me with the opportunity to start my own laboratory at Dallas. This I did, and I ended up staying in Dallas for another 22 years, interrupted only by a short guest appearance as a Max-Planck-Director in Göttingen (see below).

When I started my laboratory at Dallas, I decided to attack a question that was raised by Whittaker's work, but neglected: how do synaptic vesicles undergo exocytosis, i.e., what is the mechanism of neurotransmitter release which underlies all synaptic transmission? In 1986, Whittaker's work had shown that synaptic vesicles could be biochemically purified, but nothing was known about the mechanisms of synaptic vesicle exocytosis in particular, and membrane fusion in general. Our approach, initially performed in close collaboration with Reinhard Jahn whose laboratory at that time had just been set up in Munich, was simple, namely to purify and clone every protein that might conceivably be involved, and worry about their functions later. This approach was more fruitful than I could have hoped for, and has arguably led to a fairly good understanding of membrane fusion and neurotransmitter release. In the 25 years since the start of my laboratory, our work, together with those of others, led to the identification of the key elements of the membrane fusion machinery, to the characterization of the functions of these proteins, to the mechanisms of regulating this machinery, and to the description of synapse-specific molecules that bestow the specific properties of neurotransmitter release onto synapses that render synapses so fast and precise, as required for brain function. Some of the proteins whose function we identified are now household names and have general roles in eukaryotic membrane fusion that go beyond a synaptic function, while other proteins are specific to synapses and account for the exquisite precision and plasticity of these elementary computational elements in brain. I feel fortunate to have stumbled onto this

overarching neuroscience question at a time when it was ready to be addressed, and it has been tremendous fun to work our way through the various synaptic proteins and their properties that shape their functions.

It is important to note, however, that the nature of our studies was not revolutionary. There was not a single major discovery that all at once changed the field, as usually happens for the development of tools (e.g., monoclonal antibodies, patch clamping, or shRNAs, to name a few). The closest our work came to a radical change in the field was probably the identification of synaptotagmins as calcium-sensors for fusion, and of Sec1/Munc18-like proteins (SM-proteins) as genuine membrane fusion proteins, but both hypotheses took more than

a decade to become accepted by the field – in fact, the SM-protein hypothesis was only recently adopted by others, 15 years after we proposed it. Thus, our work in parallel with that of Reinhard Jahn, James Rothman, Jose Rizo, Randy Sheckman, Richard Scheller, Cesare Montecucco, Axel Brunger, and many others produced a steady incremental advance that resulted in a better understanding of how membranes fuse, one step at a time. As a result of this combined effort, we now know that SNAREs are the fusion catalysts at the synapse, first shown by the discovery that SNAREs are the substrates of clostridial neurotoxins, that SM-proteins in general and Munc18-1 in particular are essential fusion proteins for all membrane fusion events, that a synaptotagmin-based mechanism assisted by complexin underlies nearly all regulation of exocytosis, and that synaptic exocytosis is organized in time and space by an active zone protein scaffold containing RIM and Munc13 proteins as central elements.

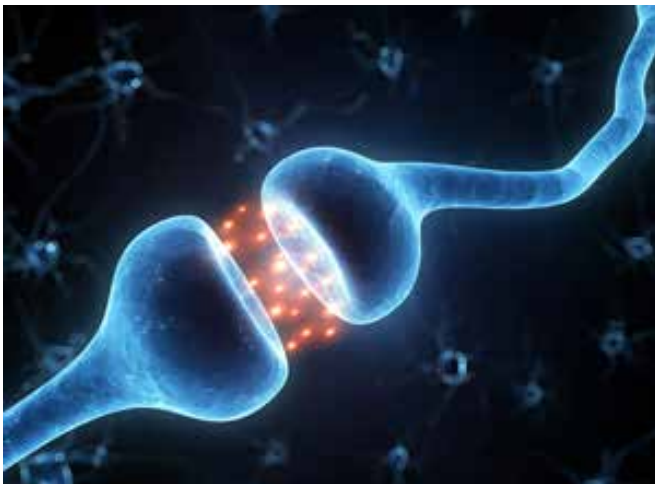
Ten years after I started my laboratory, while the work described above was progressing, I was offered the opportunity to return to Germany and to organize a Department of Neuroscience at the Max-Planck-Institut für experimentelle Medizin in Göttingen, my home town. I enthusiastically took on the challenge, planned and oversaw the building of a new animal facility, hired scientists, and organized the renovations and equipment of a suite of laboratories. However, despite of strong local support, it soon became clear that the new leadership of the Max-Planck-Society, which had recently changed, developed doubts about my recruitment, and began rebuilding the institute that I was recruited into in directions that were quite different from what I had been told and what I had envisioned. In a personal discussion, Prof. Markl, then the president of the Max-Planck-Society, suggested I resign my position at the Max-Planck-Institut and look for a future in the US, which I did. I have never regretted my work for the Max-Planck-Institut in Göttingen, which laid the foundation for much of what happened there subsequently, including the recruitment of one of my postdoctoral fellows as a new director who has done a much better job than I could have done. However, I have also never regretted following the suggestion of the president of the Max-Planck-Society, and returning my attention and future to the US, where the breadth and tolerance of the system allowed me to operate in a manner that was more suitable for my somewhat iconoclastic temperament. Overall, my work as a director at the Max-Planck-Institut in Göttingen was a very positive experience that shaped my thinking when I subsequently had the opportunity to help build the Department of Neuroscience at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas. Contributing to establishing a neuroscience department at Dallas was a lot of fun, and the free-flowing and unbureaucratic environment of a state university was extremely supportive – it was a pleasure to hire young people, and see them develop!

The currently final chapter in my career began when I moved my laboratory from UT Southwestern to Stanford University in 2008. After 10 years as a chair of a Neuroscience



Center and then Department in Dallas, I felt that I wanted to devote more of my time to pure science, and to embark on a new professional direction, with an environment that was focused on academics. Moreover, I decided to redirect a large part of my efforts towards a major problem in neuroscience that appeared to be unexplored: how synapses are formed. Thus, in this currently last chapter of my life, I am probing the mechanisms that allow circuits to form in brain, and to form with often near magical properties dictated by the specific features of particular synapses at highly specified positions. I am fascinated by the complexity of this process, which far surpasses the numerical size of the genome, and interested in how disturbances in this process contribute to neuropsychiatric diseases such as autism and schizophrenia. This is what I would like to address in the next few years, hoping to gain at least some interesting insights.

Throughout my career as an independent scientist, I have been generously supported by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and the National Institute of Mental Health. I am grateful to both for their unflinching support. I have received several recognitions, all of them unexpected, among which I particularly cherish the Alden Spencer Award from Columbia University in 1993, the von Euler Lectureship from the Karolinska Institutet in 2004, and – of course - the Kavli Award in 2010. I am not sure I deserve any of these awards, as conceptual advances in science always represent incremental progress to which many minds contributed. The conceptual advances we made were no different in this regard, they do not constitute a single discovery of a particularly revolutionary method or phenomenon but a continuous postulation and testing of hypotheses. Moreover, our discoveries on how membranes fuse and how calcium regulates fusion would have been impossible without the coincidental findings by others, to whom I am grateful for their contributions. Finally, I feel indebted beyond words to my family, without which I would be barren and rudderless, and which has been more considerate of me than I deserve.



(Photo by Shutterstock.com)

## The Science Behind the Nobel Prize of Stanford's Thomas Südhof

By Bruce Goldman

[From *Stanford Report*, October 7, 2013. <http://news.stanford.edu/news/2013/october/sudhof-science-behind-nobel-100713.html>

Thomas Südhof won a Nobel prize for his work in understanding how nerve cells communicate. They use junctions known as synapses to transmit chemical messengers to each other.

Synapses are junctions in the nervous system where information, in the form of chemical messengers called neurotransmitters, is passed from one neuron — or nerve cell — to another. The firing patterns of our synapses underwrite our consciousness, emotions and behavior. The simple act of taking a step forward or tasting a doughnut requires millions of simultaneous and precise synaptic firing events throughout the brain and peripheral nervous system.

There are an estimated 200 billion neurons in a healthy adult brain. Any single neuron may share synaptic contacts with as few as one other neuron or as many as 1 million, other neurons (the median is somewhere in the vicinity of 10,000), meaning that the human brain likely holds 2 quadrillion synapses.

Much of a neuron can be visualized as a long, hollow cord whose outer surface conducts electrical impulses in one direction. At various points along this cordlike extension are bulbous nozzles known as presynaptic terminals, each one housing myriad tiny, balloon-like vesicles containing neurotransmitters and each one abutting a downstream (or postsynaptic) neuron. When an electrical impulse traveling along a neuron reaches a presynaptic terminal, calcium from outside the neuron floods in through channels that open temporarily in the terminal. Some of the neurotransmitter-containing vesicles fuse with the terminal's outer membrane and spill their contents into the narrow gap separating it from the postsynaptic neuron's receiving end.

Thomas Südhof, MD, professor of molecular and cellular physiology at the Stanford School of Medicine, along with other researchers, identified integral protein components critical to the membrane-fusion process. Südhof shares the 2013 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his work.

Südhof purified key protein constituents sticking out of the surfaces of neurotransmitter-containing vesicles protruding from nearby presynaptic-terminal membranes, bridging them. Then, using biochemical, genetic and physiological techniques, he elucidated the ways in which the interactions among these proteins contribute to carefully orchestrated membrane fusion. As a result, synaptic transmission is today one of the best-understood phenomena in neuroscience.

The proteins Südhof has focused on for close to three decades are disciplined specialists. They recruit vesicles, bring

them into “docked” positions near the presynaptic terminal, herd calcium channels to the terminal membrane and, cued by calcium, interweave like two sides of a zipper and force the vesicles into such close contact with the terminal membrane that they fuse with it and release neurotransmitters into the synaptic gap.

Although these specialists perform defined roles at the synapses, similar proteins, discovered later by Südhof and others, play comparable roles in other biological processes ranging from hormone secretion to fertilization of an egg during conception to immune cells’ defense against foreign invaders.

Südhof started focusing on the workings of the synapse in the early 1980s. It was then known that presynaptic terminals are filled with tens to hundreds of small synaptic vesicles and that the release of these vesicles’ contents were triggered by calcium. But nobody had any idea how any of it actually worked. Südhof’s research has helped to solve the riddle.

## News

### India

#### **The Sixteenth Waldorf (Rudolf Steiner) Education Seminar at D.C. School in Khandala, Maharashtra, India, 2014**

The Seminar will be conducted in two one-week sessions:

The first week, from 5 pm on Sunday, May 18, until 1 pm on Saturday, May 25, 2014 will be for beginners.

The second week, from 5 pm on Sunday, May 25, until 1 pm on Saturday, May 31, 2014, will be open to all those who are acquainted with Waldorf education, as well as those from the first week. Appropriate groups will be formed.

The venue will be Bai Dhunmai Cawasji Public School (D.C. School) in Khandala, pin 401 310, a hill station in Maharashtra between Mumbai and Pune, reachable by bus, car or train (Central Railway). Tel. no. of D.C.School is 02114-269 153.

The cost of boarding and lodging in very simple dormitories at the school is Rs. 350 per head per day. Tuition fees are Rs. 2,000 per head per week. Please make the total payment in cash upon arrival. Registration fee is Rs. 100 per head, to be sent with the registration form. Please register

before April 18, 2014.

SOME OF THE SUBJECTS OF THE SEMINAR WILL BE:

1. Anthroposophy of Dr. Rudolf Steiner
2. Child Development in the Light of Spiritual Science
3. The Four Temperaments
4. Nature Observation and Ecology
5. The Waldorf Kindergarten
6. The Waldorf School Curriculum

ARTISTIC AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES:

1. Eurythmy – a modern art of movement
2. Water-colour painting
3. Drawing and form-drawing
4. Singing and flute-playing
5. Speech formation and drama
6. Classroom and outdoor games

The faculty members at the Khandala Seminar are Waldorf teachers from India and abroad, with many years of teaching experience in established Waldorf institutions.

For more information, please visit the website [www.anthroposophyindia.org](http://www.anthroposophyindia.org)

Contact: [abanbana123@rediffmail.com](mailto:abanbana123@rediffmail.com)

**The Light Performing Eurythmy Group** from Dornach presented performances in Hyderabad, Mumbai, New Delhi, and Kolkata in early 2014. Joined by Indian eurythmists Aban and Dilnawaz Bana, audiences were treated to a range of musical and spoke pieces.



*Eurythmy in India*



## China

*New Yorker* story about Waldorf in China:

[http://www.newyorker.com/  
reporting/2014/02/03/140203fa\\_fact\\_johnson](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2014/02/03/140203fa_fact_johnson)

**ArtSpirit Studio** is a new community workspace for change...development...transformation...healing through Anthroposophy and Art.

In close association with

Rudolf Steiner Education Foundation Hong Kong,  
ArtSpirit Studio is located in Tai Po, Hong Kong  
beside 'HeartSource' Kinderhouse and Garden

email: [artspiritsstudio@yahoo.com](mailto:artspiritsstudio@yahoo.com)

website: [www.artspirit.asia](http://www.artspirit.asia)

## New Zealand



Friends and Colleagues of Taruna

You may have already heard the news that the perennial program the Diploma in Rudolf Steiner Education did not reach a high enough level of enrolments to run this year. In the pause this creates we are currently working on some dynamic approaches to keeping this valued program available to our future students, in a contemporary, accessible manner.

All of the courses listed below are delivered over 34 weeks within that there are three one week seminars in Havelock North, the remaining time is self-study at home. Our enrolment deadlines for courses running this year are looming, so if you know anyone who would like some more information, please contact Rachel or Ishtar in the office on 06 8777 174 or [info@taruna.ac.nz](mailto:info@taruna.ac.nz) :

- Certificate in Rudolf Steiner Education is a specially designed course for parents and those wishing to work with children. This will give you an overview of child development and introduce the Steiner Waldorf curriculum.
- Certificate in Art of Health this is an excellent practical introduction to Anthroposophic study giving you an understanding of human development, relating this to your own biography and developing a wide range of artistic processes that allow you to access a deeper understanding of self.
- Certificate in Holistic Healthcare this is a great addition for any healthcare professional looking to enhance both their personal and professional practice, expand their holistic approach and gather new hands on skills.
- Certificate in Applied Organics and Biodynamics if you are interested in working with the land and developing your

property or farm with a holistic view, then this course might be the inspiration that you are looking for.

Taruna College

33 Te Mata Peak Road

PO Box 8103

Havelock North 4157

New Zealand

[info@taruna.ac.nz](mailto:info@taruna.ac.nz)

Freephone - 0508 TARUNA (827862)

Local - 06 877 7174. International - +64 6 877 7174

## Switzerland

The Atelierhaus near the Goetheanum in Dornach

The Atelierhaus (Studio House) has been the home of the Painting School at the Goetheanum for many years. Built in the 1960s through the financial support of Frau Jung, the Atelier house was meant as a place of art, for teaching and for the painters living in Dornach. Beppe Assenza and Gerard Wagner both had their schools in the building and since Assenza's death in 1985 it has been the home of the "Wagner School."



The Gerard and Elisabeth Wagner Association is now considering buying the building from the Goetheanum to create a centre for art and research. The focal point of the initiative is both the wish to find a suitable home for the extensive archive of Gerard Wagner's paintings, and to create a living atmosphere of research in the form of workshops, conferences, and meetings between artists.

Please get in touch with us if you are interested to hear more about this project and if you would like to support this initiative.

Caroline Chanter

Brosiweg 41, 4143 Dornach, Switzerland.

[c.chanter@iriscolor.ch](mailto:c.chanter@iriscolor.ch)

[ernstschuberth@yahoo.com](mailto:ernstschuberth@yahoo.com)



## USA

### Review from Video Library

(one of the leading library review resources in the USA)

May 7, 2013

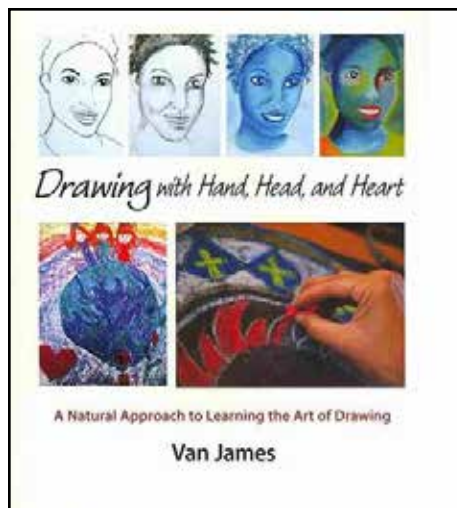
Cupola Productions

<http://www.videolibrarian.com/othervideo.html#Anchor-33785>

A combination of biography and encomium, Jonathan Stedall's lengthy two-part film—three-hours-plus, with a 10-minute postscript to boot—serves up a reverential portrait of the titular Austrian thinker (and some would argue visionary) who died in 1925 and whose influence radiated into many fields, among them education, agriculture, medicine, architecture, and spiritualism. Although Steiner's thought cannot be neatly pigeonholed, its overarching theme can be termed "holistic": his studies of Goethe led Steiner to argue for the inseparability of spirit and matter, and the need for humanity to join science with spirituality rather than relegate them to different spheres. Steiner further believed that this line of thought had to be put into practice, and he promoted an educational philosophy aimed at nurturing a) the individual child's self-actualization, b) an appreciation for nature that fostered organic farming, c) an understanding of the human being as a union of body and soul that encouraged holistic medicine, and even d) a view of economics that saw profit not as the goal but rather as something naturally derived from humanistic practices. Stedall travels the world to talk with people committed to applying Steiner's principles in schools, wineries, clinics, communities for the mentally impaired, and even banks. For the most part, the interviewees see Steiner's ideas not so much as doctrine but as an invitation to continuing reflection and innovation. An often fascinating and provocative view of Steiner's wide-ranging thought and the multifaceted movement it spawned, this is recommended. Aud: C, P. (F. Swietek)

Article originally appeared on [rudolfsteinerfilm](http://www.rudolfsteinerfilm.com/) (<http://www.rudolfsteinerfilm.com/>).

## Book Review



### Book Explores Process of Visual Thinking

Joleen Oshiro, *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* (11/10/2013)

Although Van James' book spends much time explaining the hows and whys of drawing instruction in a Waldorf educational curriculum, *Drawing with Hand, Head and Heart: A Natural Approach to Learning the Art of Drawing* (SteinerBooks, \$30) is informative for anyone learning the skill. James explains basic concepts and materials and offers instruction on how to draw people, animals and plants, correct a drawing, perspective drawing, figure and portrait sketching, and more. The Honolulu Waldorf High School art teacher shares how incorporating drawing into lessons addresses child and brain development, and includes many works by Waldorf teachers and students that are astounding for their sophistication and beauty. To purchase the book, visit [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) or [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com).

### From a review in *Renewal Magazine* by Ronald Koetzsch:

In *Drawing With Hand, Head and Heart*, Van James, artist and art teacher with many years of Waldorf classroom experience, provides a comprehensive and practical, step-by-step guide to the art of drawing. With almost 600 color and black-and-white illustrations of examples and exercises, the book provides parents, teachers, and others the chance to develop their drawing skill in a way based on the wisdom of the Waldorf curriculum... *Drawing With Hand, Head and Heart* is an invaluable resource for those engaged in teaching others to draw and for those who would like to develop their own drawing skills.



# Conferences, Seminars, and Workshops in 2014

**March 28-29, 2014**

**Mandala: The Art of Centering the Self**

*With Van James*

Rudolf Steiner House, Auckland, NZ

Contact: Bernadette at +361-1368

**April 4-6, 2014**

**The Dynamic Language of Linear Design:  
Meander, Koru, Knot and Braid**

*With Van James*

Taruna College, Havelock North, NZ

Contact: <http://taruna.ac.nz>

**April 14-18, 2014**

**Inner Work for Teachers**

The Mullumbimby Steiner School, Shearwater, Australia

Contact: [admin@metavision.com.au](mailto:admin@metavision.com.au)

**April 10-15th**

**Intensive Training in Bothmer Gymnastics with Dan Freeman**

Willunga Waldorf School, Willunga, S Australia

Contact: [ben\\_prosser@wws.sa.edu.au](mailto:ben_prosser@wws.sa.edu.au)

**April 22-24, 2014**

**The Therapeutic Classroom: Educating Diverse Learners**

*With Dr. Michael Sargent and Emma Ratcliff*

Taruna College, Havelock North, NZ

Contact: <http://taruna.ac.nz>

**April 27 to May 2, 2014**

**Asian Chinese-speaking Waldorf Teacher Conference (ACWTC)**

"Human Life as Seen in the Light of Karma and Reincarnation: Towards a Society Based on Human Values"

With Christof Wiechert

CiXin Waldorf School, Taiwan.

Contact:

**May 18-25, 2014**

**The Sixteenth Waldorf (Rudolf Steiner) Education Seminar at D.C. School**

Khandala, Maharashtra, India, 2014

**July 5-13, 2014**

**IPMT**

Melbourne, Australia

Contact: TBA

**July 8-11th**

**Annual National Conference of the Anthroposophical Society in Australia**

[Pre-conference excursion July 6th-8th,

Conference proper July 8th- 11th

School of Spiritual Science members' conference, July 11th-12th

Contact Jan Baker – Finch [janb-f@optusnet.com.au](mailto:janb-f@optusnet.com.au)

**July 11-28, 2014**

**Chengdu High School Teacher Training (Module 3)**

with Caroline Alba, Van James, Nick Wong

Chengdu, China

Contact: [waldorfchinatraining@gmail.com](mailto:waldorfchinatraining@gmail.com)

**September 26-28, 2014**

**Shaping Citizenship: Society's Role in Cultural and Community Identity**

*With Nicanor Perlas*

Anthroposophical Society in New Zealand Conference

Wellington, NZ

Contact : [sue.simpson0@gmail.com](mailto:sue.simpson0@gmail.com)

**October 13-17, 2014**

**The Transformative Power of Art IV**

**Become as Little Children: The Way of the Artist Teacher**

*With Van James*

Prado Farm Retreat, Philippines

Contact: [ISIP.Philippines@gmail.com](mailto:ISIP.Philippines@gmail.com)

**July 8-12, 2015**

**Kolisko Conference**

*With Michaela Glückler*

Cambridge, NZ

Contact: TBA



*Sophia Services presents ...*



# In Search of Parzival: an Inner and Outer Journey

**April 5—25, 2014**

**with Brian Gray from Rudolf Steiner College**  
*and further contributions from Andrew Wolpert in England,  
Adriaan Luijk in France and Miha Pogacnik (to be confirmed) in Slovenia.*

This is a traveling exploration of Wolfram von Eschenbach's epic tale, Parzival. The tour encompasses sites where the Arthurian stream in Great Britain and Little Britain connects with the Grail stream in locations identified by Rudolf Steiner and others in France and Switzerland, as well as sites significant to Parzival's quest in Slovenia identified by Viktor Stracke, Sergei Prokofieff and Miha Pogacnik.

The Arthurian sites of the Round Table bear memories of cosmic Pre-Christian Hibernian and Druidic mysteries of the Sun, Moon, stars and Zodiac. The Grail sites call forth medieval Christian legends of Joseph of Arimathea, Titirel, and Frimutel. These mystery places set the stage for Parzival's quest in the ninth century to overcome personal folly and achieve compassion and love. Rudolf Steiner relates that Parzival's quest is archetypal for our own spiritual quest in present and future times.

This tour will interweave mystery streams living in the Arthurian, Grail and Parzival sites with the re-telling of Wolfram's epic tale from a Zodiacal perspective and many insights originating in Rudolf Steiner's research. Please join us as we explore these mysteries together on this tour.



[www.sophiaservices.ca](http://www.sophiaservices.ca) | [sarnia@sophiaservices.ca](mailto:sarnia@sophiaservices.ca)  
ph 604-740-0676 | fax 604-885-6170



Freedom is the great ideal which mankind development is streaming to. Its realization is connected with human experience of dignity, with recognizing of purpose of life of individual human being and goals of universal development. Freedom, understood as ability to creation out of love for realizing idea, is, essentially, appearance of divinity in human being and just that capacity which makes the True Human Being – bearer of Individual Free Spirit. Only development of this kind of Freedom allows human being to keep human identity and to develop Humanity in all greatness of this capacity.

**Conference languages are Russian, English and German.**

### Cultural program before conference

**June 25 2014**

### Acquaintance with Don Land – excursion "Don Freedom"

During several centuries river Don was a kind of Freedom symbol in Russia, so our conference starts with acquaintance with Don Land such as boating by river Don, visit to first and last capitals of Don Troop, unique Troop Cathedrals and Atamans' Palaces and with traditional cuisine of Don Cossacks. Meetings with Don Culture continuous during conference time also when every evening conference participants touch new aspects and features of Don Land

### Program international conference

### «Freedom as the Way to Keep Human Identity»,

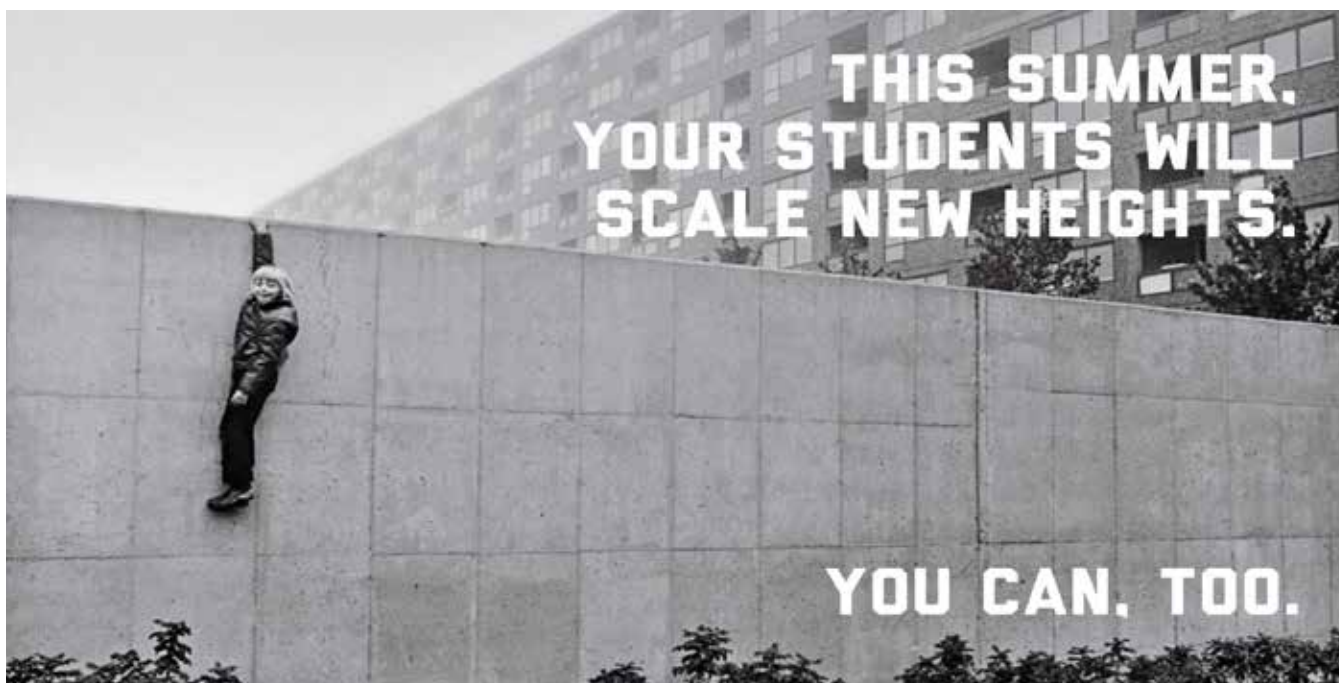
devoted to Rudolf Steiner Philosophy of Freedom

	Thursday June 26	Friday June 27	Saturday June 28	Sunday June 29	Monday June 30	
9.00 – 9.30		Beginning of day (music or eurhythmy)				
9.30 – 10.40		Sergey Prokofieff (Russia) “Impulse of Freedom as the basis of knowledge”	Mario Matthijsen and Martin Kollwijn (Netherland) “Freedom – Humanity – Spirit-Self”	Tatiana Pavlova (Russia) “Healing potential of ethical individualism”	Nick Thomas (United Kingdom) “Threefold Love as the Basis of Freedom”	
10.40 – 11.10		Coffee break				
11.10 – 12.30		Work in discussion groups				
12.30 – 14.00	Registration	Lunch			Plenum	
14.00 – 15.00	Introduction into the conference subject. Music.				The Foundation Stone Meditation in eurhythmy	
15.00 – 15.50	Oskar B. Hansen (Denmark) “Rudolf Steiner and Concept of Human Rights”	Terje Stefan Sparby (Norway) “Steiner and Hegel on Freedom”	Stephan Frei (Switzerland) “Idea realism and reality of freedom”	Karl-Friedrich Sprich (Switzerland) “Rudolf Steiner’s <i>Philosophy of Freedom</i> as a seed for Anthroposophy ”		Conference conclusion
15.50 – 16.20	Coffee break					
16.20 – 18.00	<i>Philosophy of Freedom</i> in eurhythmy	Workshops				
18.00 – 19.00	Supper					
19.00 – 21.00	Free evening	Performance of the Folk Song Theater “Lazorki”: songs and dances of the Don Cossacks	A sightseeing tour of Rostov-on-Don	Performance of children’s choir of the Rostov State Musical Conservatory: spiritual and classical compositions		

To know all conference information and to do registration is possible on

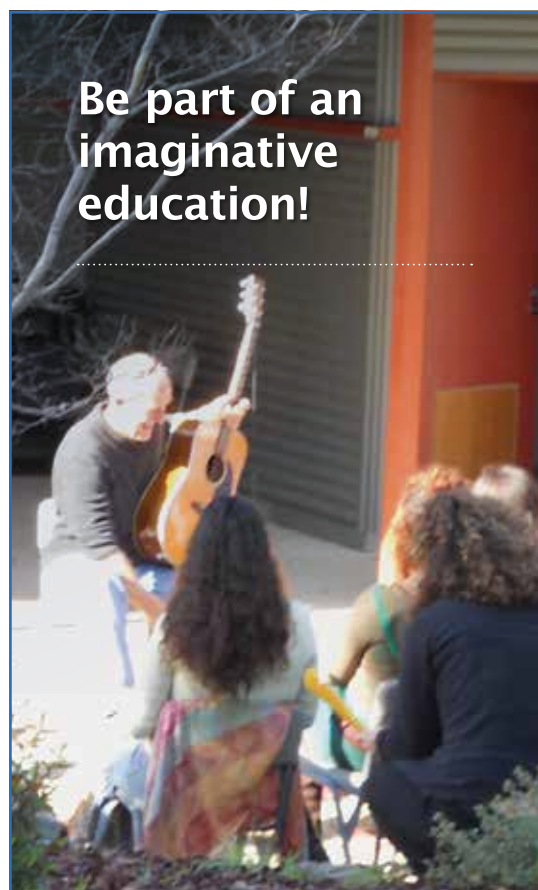
**<http://anthropos-psycho.org/pages/conference/>,**

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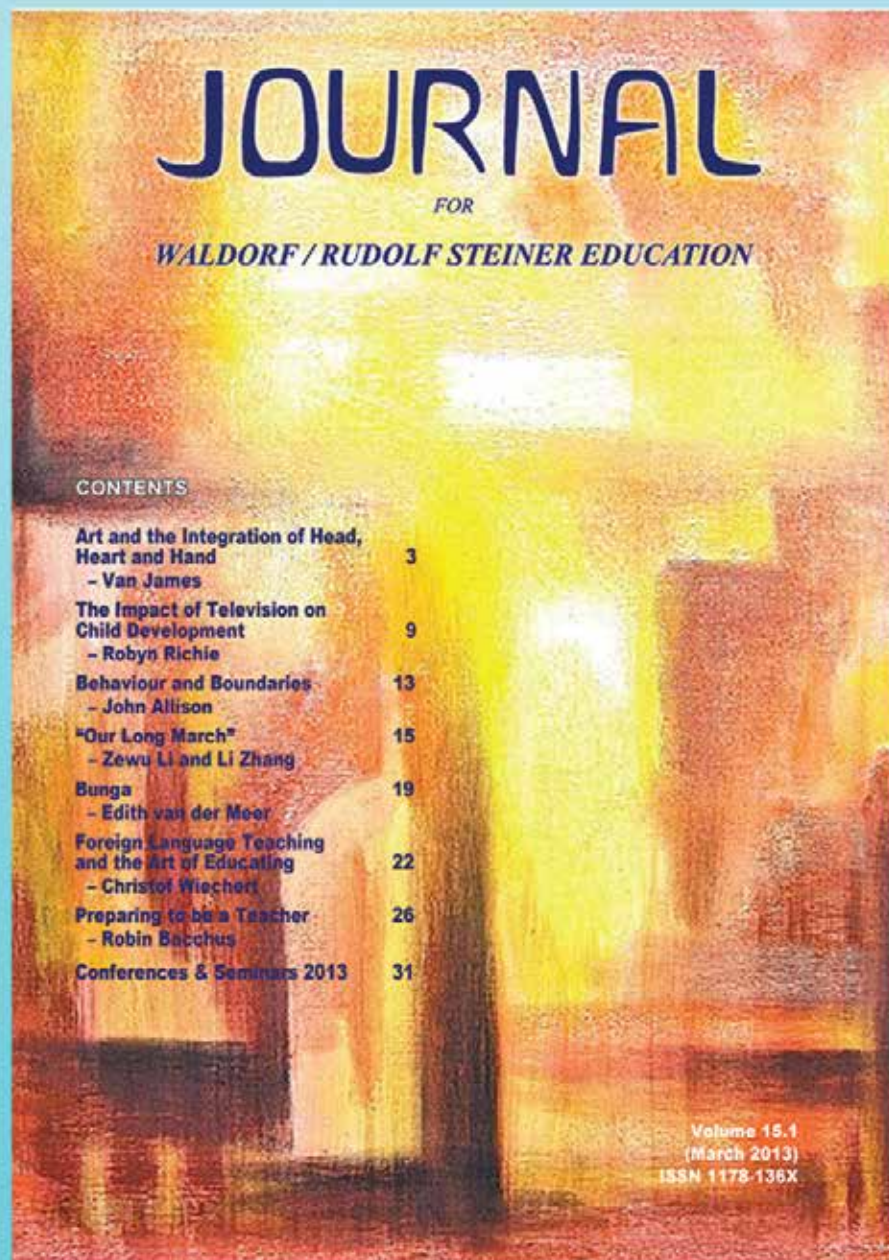
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## Asia-Pacific Contacts



Asia  
Hans van Florenstein Mulder  
[hmulder@xtra.co.nz](mailto:hmulder@xtra.co.nz)

Australia  
Jan Baker-Finch  
[Janf-b@optusnet.com.au](mailto:Janf-b@optusnet.com.au)  
[www.anthroposophy.org.au](http://www.anthroposophy.org.au)

China  
Harry Wong  
[harry@waldorfchina.org](mailto:harry@waldorfchina.org)

Hawai'i  
Van James  
[vanjames@hawaiiintel.net](mailto:vanjames@hawaiiintel.net)  
[www.anthroposophyhawaii.org](http://www.anthroposophyhawaii.org)

India  
Aban Bana  
[abanbana123@rediffmail.com](mailto:abanbana123@rediffmail.com)  
[www.anthroposophyindia.org](http://www.anthroposophyindia.org)

Japan  
Yuji Agematsu  
[asj@pobox.ne.jp](mailto:asj@pobox.ne.jp)

Korea  
Eunhwa Lee  
[eunhwalee@lycos.co.kr](mailto:eunhwalee@lycos.co.kr)

Nepal  
Rachel Amtzis  
[tashiwaldorf@gmail.com](mailto:tashiwaldorf@gmail.com)

New Zealand  
Sue Simpson  
[sue.simpsonO@gmail.com](mailto:sue.simpsonO@gmail.com)  
[www.anthroposophy.org.nz](http://www.anthroposophy.org.nz)

Philippines  
Anthroposophic Group in the Philippines  
Reimon Gutierrez  
[isip.philippines@yahoo.com](mailto:isip.philippines@yahoo.com)  
<http://isipphilippines.multiply.com/>

Taiwan  
Ya-Chih Chan  
[chishn1@ms18.hinet.net](mailto:chishn1@ms18.hinet.net)

Thailand  
Dr. Porn Panosot  
[panyotai@thai.com](mailto:panyotai@thai.com)  
[www.anthroposophy-thailand.com](http://www.anthroposophy-thailand.com)

Viêt-Nam  
Thanh Cherry  
[thanh@hinet.net.au](mailto:thanh@hinet.net.au)

Friends of Rudolf Steiner Education  
Nana Göbel  
[berlin@freunde-waldorf.de](mailto:berlin@freunde-waldorf.de)

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