

*The Foundation Stone Meditation*  
*A Call to Integrate and Transform*

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## INTRODUCTION

Almost a hundred years after the renewal of the Mysteries at the Christmas Conference as an anthroposophist I'm led to reflect at what are the global achievements of anthroposophy. On this account opinions may differ and we may enter endless discussions. Another approach offers more insights to my mind. It consists in turning to the Foundation Stone Meditation as an endless source of inspiration, as a potent extract of everything that anthroposophy has to offer, and everything that anthroposophy can achieve. It is a call to realize our full humanity and to seek to do so in communion with like-minded spiritually striving fellows "so that the good may come." And since becoming fully human is an endless labor of love, we may receive from this meditation incentives as well as sobering reminders.

A word here to those who consider themselves anthroposophists but don't know the Foundation Stone Meditation and its importance, nor have enough information about the history of the Anthroposophical Society. While I encourage them to find out more,<sup>1</sup> I will give a few words of introduction here, and will indirectly return to what happened after Steiner's death in speaking about Ita Wegman in the second part of the essay.

What matters most to this writing is not our common history but the fact that through the meditation we are invited to become fully human and in effect change our world. How this can be realized is the heart of the essay. It is through the agency of more and more individuals reclaiming and furthering their humanity that we can face the challenges of the present, counter them and lay the foundations for a new culture that will recognize the fundamental role of the spirit in everything material and practical.

At the turning point of the years 1923-24 Steiner found himself in the position of taking an unprecedented step for earth evolution. It was a decision that followed the burning of the first Goetheanum and great trials within the Anthroposophical Society. It was fraught with risk and did not present a predictable outcome.

Steiner saw the need to bring what had been traditionally cultivated in the precincts of the Mystery schools out in the open, of uniting deep earnest esotericism with effective exoteric work. This led him to convening the Christmas Conference. It was through an act of great trust and personal sacrifice on the part of Steiner that the spirit responded, affirming him in his resolve and rewarding him, and all of us, with a great new stream of spiritual revelations. Steiner's deed laid the foundation for the re-founding of the Anthroposophical Society and for the inauguration of the work of the School of Spiritual Science, whose task is to cultivate esoteric work for every branch

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<sup>1</sup> A good introductory article is that of Arvia MacKaye Ege: The Experience of the Christmas Foundation Meeting 1923.

of knowledge with the aim of practical outcomes. Cultural renewal in our time demands the effort of reconnecting with spiritual reality by changing our relationship to self and world.

The Foundation Stone Meditation was a gift from the spiritual world in response to Steiner's spiritual striving. No other meditation or document in the whole of anthroposophy has more substance and strength than this meditation. It was after all the spiritual world's response to the greatest inner sacrifice that Rudolf Steiner accomplished for the social future and for world evolution. And there is nothing more powerful in the meditation than the nine words: "Practice spirit recollection, practice spirit mindfulness, practice spirit beholding." These recur in the rhythms and will be the focus of this essay.

The Foundation Stone Meditation is a constant challenge in my inner path because it calls me to become fully human. It reminds me that I could, if I so wish, truly live, feel and think. For each one of these I am offered a path: respectively spirit recollection, spirit mindfulness, spirit beholding. Do I truly know what these paths are? Do I fully cultivate them? Can I be equally strong in each of these three directions? What more can I do? And what more can we do together?

When I look at the history of Anthroposophical Society I have the good fortune of being able to discern many individuals who have highlighted one or more aspects of the paths; individuals who have had different strengths; who have offered ideas and results in one direction more than another, while striving to round off their unavoidable human one-sidedness to become whole; finally individuals who have acquired great capacities, other than those that were given to them by birth and karma. This is the perspective in which I want to place my efforts. Of course I am one-sided, but that is no excuse for not seeking to understand other parts of myself as well as what is different in other human beings. In doing so my gaze can extend not just to other anthroposophists but to the Michaelic community, which extends far beyond our bounds.<sup>2</sup>

The Foundation Stone Meditation will serve a double purpose here. On one hand it is a call to realize our full humanity; a call to remind ourselves that world good will come the more human beings realize that work in themselves. And additionally the good is what emerges from human beings collaborating, who can complement their forces and contributions with those of others. By offering an image of what has been possible I want to invite each one of us to see what is still possible, only all the more urgent.

A look at the cosmos of the meditation and at anthroposophical history shows us that in the Foundation Stone Meditation is offered everything we

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<sup>2</sup> In a conversation Steiner told R. Maikovski that there were a few million Michaelic souls. Source *Schicksalswege auf der Suche nach dem lebendigen Geist* 27, quoted in Jesaiah Ben Aharon, *The Supersensible Experience of the Twentieth Century*, 40.

need as anthroposophists, and as Michaelites, engaged at the beginning of the millennium into the battle for what it means to be fully human and for retaining our humanity in the midst of unequalled challenges. The practice of meditating daily on the so-called daily "rhythms" has offered me order and understanding. From the microcosm of the meditation it is possible to see and penetrate a little of the macrocosm around us; to see what is possible, and do what is needed.

It is not uncommon, maybe actually closer to the norm, to be overwhelmed by the all encompassing reach of the Foundation Stone Meditation. It is my experience that the whole only started to make sense because I approached it from the smaller parts of the rhythms, which contain a maximum of fifteen lines, versus the total amount of just about one hundred lines.

Yes this is a study, but it's also an invitation to realize the power that is present in all of us to become truly human; and to fathom what greater power will result from it when we recognize we can only, and therefore must, realize this humanity with the help of other earnestly striving human beings in order that "good may come."

Part I of this essay first explores the seven rhythms of the Foundation Stone Meditation in relation to the work they require on our soul forces and the place they offer the human being as a co-creator with the hierarchies. It then characterizes the specific nature and forms of the three practices and what it means to truly live, feel and think.

Part II will offer examples of complementarities and integration in biographies. It illustrates the effect of the practices and renders concrete the concepts of truly living, truly feeling, truly thinking. Frederick Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven and Bernard Lievegoed knew about and appreciated their differences; they strove to collaborate and learn from each other. This collaboration yielded a good harvest. Ita Wegman and Walter Johannes Stein integrated their soul forces through the practices with far-reaching results for anthroposophical circles and beyond.

## **I THE SEVEN RHYTHMS OF THE FOUNDATION STONE MEDITATION**

The seven rhythms of the Foundation Stone Meditation were given by Rudolf Steiner between December 25 1923 and January 1<sup>st</sup> 1924. The 25<sup>th</sup>, Christmas day, had been the day of the laying of the Foundation Stone Meditation; on each successive morning of the week Steiner read parts of the lengthy meditation, then offered the rhythm for the day.

The first part of this study came from a growing spontaneous realization after meditating daily on the Foundation Stone Meditation rhythms for about ten years. A rather obvious realization is the injunction that is repeated four times and calls us to practice spirit recollection, spirit mindfulness and spirit beholding. Why these appear on Wednesday, then Friday through Sunday was

an interesting question, but one for which there appeared to be no answer. In addition certain rhythms spoke to me less than others; I could not fully see their place in the whole.

It was clear from the beginning that the Sunday rhythm stood on its own and for more than one reason. On one hand it is one of two verses in which the connection with the Christ verse of the fourth stanza exists. The verse speaks of Christ, and points to the shepherds and kings at the turning point of time. The Sunday verse is clearly one of resurrection and completion. Like the Our Father it speaks of 'we' and 'us' through Christ.

Little by little some polarities started to appear; first of all the Tuesday one with the Friday one, in which the statements "you live" were replaced by "practice." Likewise the Thursday rhythm does not repeat the "practice" injunction, but it completes what is said on Wednesday; it starts by repeating the last two lines of the preceding rhythm. The Monday to Saturday polarity did not appear until the end, after I had felt the previous ones and started writing down my notes. In pairing the verses thus I found a correlation to what Lievegoed indicates in the polarities of the planets in relation to the forces in the human body and in the soul. In his book *Man on the Threshold* he pairs up: Moon and Saturn, Venus and Mars, Mercury and Jupiter.<sup>3</sup>

The Monday and Saturday rhythms present the greatest contrast both in length and form. They span the greatest distance, moving from the earth to the hierarchies. The other two polarities have overlapping verses.

### **The Rhythms and the Parts of the Foundation Stone Meditation**

A first look at the rhythms will simply indicate the parts of the Foundation Stone that they include. These were in fact the parts of the meditation presented by Steiner each day of the week before turning to the rhythm.

Briefly we can recognize the structure that forms the Foundation Stone Meditation. The first three stanzas comprise a call to the Human Soul followed by a microcosmic section of 12 verses, and a macrocosmic part of 12 verses. The whole is completed by a fourth stanza of 13 + 12 verses that stands on its own through form and content; it points directly to the Christ and to the Mystery of Golgotha through its cosmic and human dimensions. In summary we could say that the meditation covers a microcosmic section, a macrocosmic section and a macrocosmic/microcosmic/historical section. We'll call the latter 'meta-historical' in order to encompass its human and cosmic dimensions.

Let us see how the rhythms are composed in relation to these three components:

- Monday uses first the fourth stanza then the second part of the first three verses: meta-historical / macrocosmos.

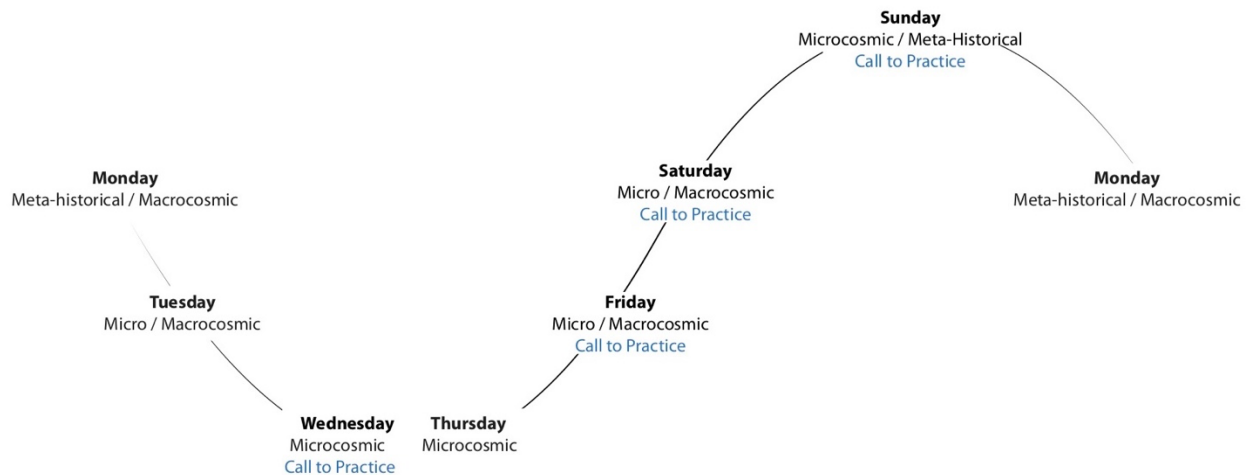
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<sup>3</sup> Bernard Lievegoed, *Man on the Threshold: The Challenge of Inner Development*, see chapter 9.



- Tuesday refers to the two parts of the first three stanzas: microcosmos/macrocosmos.
- Wednesday and Thursday use just the first part of the first three stanzas: microcosmos.
- Friday and Saturday take from the two parts of the first three stanzas: microcosmos/macrocosmos.
- Sunday uses the first part of the first three stanzas then the fourth stanza: microcosmos /meta-historical.

Seen in review this leads to the table below. Notice the alternation of the elements of the meditation at the turn of the week between Saturday and Monday.



**Table 1:** the rhythms in relation to the Foundation Stone Meditation (the rhythms of the week which we call to practice are highlighted in blue)

In the following we will use the Speech Association of North America version translated in 1999. I will favor spirit-recollection throughout the essay rather than spirit-recalling, and use "spirit mindfulness" for the second panel instead of spirit sensing. These are the terms that spoke to me most over the years.

### Rhythms and Polarities

Not only does the Sun rhythm stand on its own; it is also placed between the three sets of polarities and above them. Whenever the three sets of polarities are in balance in a dynamic way the Sun plays a role between them.

The Sun activity in the heart manifests in diastole and systole, in expansion and contraction, from the center to the periphery and from the periphery to the point. The Sun in the blood alternates also between the inner world of the body and the outer world in the lungs, leading Lievegoed to

conclude "The Sun rhythm densifies the cosmos to substance, and again transforms substance to cosmic quality."<sup>4</sup>

We can order the verses in the form of a parabola with three on each side. When we will look at one part of the parabola in relation to the other we will see movements of expansion and contraction. From the perspective of the meditant this double movement has to be seen as a spiraling gesture in time, not a uniformly constant or recurring activity. The Sun plays in between each polarity both as a middle point and as a destination. This is most visible between Saturday and Monday, but equally so between the other two polarities.

The ordering of the rhythms on both sides of the polarity highlights another phenomenon. One of the rhythms of each polarity calls us to practice, as does the Sunday one. The practices of spirit recollection, spirit mindfulness and spirit beholding are evoked four times during the week. To help accentuate their differences the reader can remind herself and complete the calls through what is implied in each one of them when we read the full Foundation Stone Meditation:

- Practice spirit recollection in depth of soul
- Practice spirit mindfulness in balance of the soul
- Practice spirit beholding in quietness of thought

We will return to the practices later on in the essay.

### Monday and Saturday rhythms

Light divine,  
Christ-Sun,  
This is heard by the spirits of the  
elements  
In east, west, north, south  
May human beings hear it!

Human Soul!  
Practice spirit-recalling  
Spirits of Strength:  
Let ring forth from the heights  
What in the depths is echoed.

Human Soul!  
Practice spirit-sensing  
Spirits of Light:  
Let from the East be enkindled  
What through the west takes on  
form.

Human Soul!  
Practice spirit-beholding  
Spirits of Soul:  
Let from the depths be entreated

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<sup>4</sup> Bernard Lievegoed, *Man on the Threshold*, 113.

What in the Heights will be heard.

Lievegoed characterizes this polarity as the interplay between the “incarnation of the spirit realization of Saturn and the mirroring, receptive forces of Moon.”<sup>5</sup>

Moon and Saturn, are the closest and farthest planets; they are gates, thresholds. The Moon is the gate between the planets and the human earthly world, the gate to the microcosm. The Moon works on procreation and hereditary processes; it spells all that we have in common as human beings. Saturn is the gate from the planets to the fixed stars; the gate to the macrocosm. It manifests the individual spirit forces; everything that makes us different.

The first rhythm of the week calls us to see what the new Earth has become through Christ; the other verse calls us to practice. Monday inaugurates the week by speaking of the human being in the plural, but without directly calling upon him, an exception among the rhythms. It does not call to the human being but to the Christ. We could say that it invokes the highest in the human being and its future potential.

On one hand of the polarity we have the Christ-permeated earth and the elementals—the realms below the human being; on the other the hierarchies—the realms above the human being. The Saturday rhythm unites earth and hierarchies through our practice.

The four cardinal directions of the Earth on Monday are contrasted with Depths, Widths (East-West) and Heights on Saturday. The Earth is linked to the Christ on Monday; united to the widths, the depths and heights on Saturday.

Monday can be seen as a beginning, but also as a future culmination. Monday speaks about human beings in the plural; it harkens to the tenth hierarchy, but that of a distant future. From Monday to Saturday we cover the whole span from nature beings to hierarchies with the human being playing an important part in between. What is common through heredity to all human beings on the day of the Moon finds individual expression on the day of Saturn.

Monday unites the future human being to the present human being; the physical Earth to the Sun/Earth. It offers us an image of a destination and the warning “may human beings hear it!” It is an exhortation to begin.

Monday and Saturday contrast on one hand the most undifferentiated part of the first three stanzas—the one that is common to all of them—on Monday (the last three lines) with the greatest differentiation of the hierarchies on Saturday. The two rhythms contrast a general injunction (hear it!) with the call to practice. By hearing the call of the elementals from the earth on Monday, the human beings espouse concern for the future of the

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<sup>5</sup> Bernard Lievegoed, *Man on the Threshold*, 113.

earth and desire to further its evolution in consciously co-creating with the hierarchies on Saturday.

### Tuesday and Friday rhythms

hold sway  
In cosmic being, imploring light.

Human soul!  
You live within the limbs  
For the Father-Spirit of the heights  
holds sway  
In depths of worlds begetting life.

Human soul!  
Practice spirit-recalling  
For the Father-Spirit of the heights  
holds sway  
In depths of worlds begetting life.

Human soul!  
You live within the beat of heart and  
lung  
For the Christ-will encircling us  
holds sway,  
In world rhythms, bestowing grace  
upon souls.

Human soul!  
Practice spirit-sensing  
For the Christ-will encircling us  
holds sway,  
In world rhythms, bestowing grace  
upon souls.

Human soul!  
You live within the resting head  
For the Spirit's world-thoughts

Human soul!  
Practice Spirit Vision  
For the Spirit's world-thoughts  
hold sway  
In cosmic being, imploring light.

Mars carries purposeful movement, direction and intention. Venus nurtures and prepares the environment. Lievegoed calls the process taking place between Mars and Venus that of conversation: speaking in Mars, listening in Venus.<sup>6</sup>

The Tuesday verse is calling us to awareness of the relations of our body to the activities of the hierarchies: it is incarnational ("you live"). The other verse calls us once more to practice, to reinforce consciously (Friday) the relationship that we have naturally (Tuesday); to co-create, to repeat microcosmically what the hierarchies accomplish macrocosmically.

On Tuesday we unite the awareness of our body with the activities that flow from heights, depths and widths: life, light and in between them the bestowing of grace upon the soul. This means connecting the body to the soul forces through the etheric body. In the fuller meditation something else

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<sup>6</sup> Bernard Lievegoed, *Man on the Threshold*, 113.

appears that is closely connected with the above. The three activities lead us respectively to the world of space (limbs); rhythms of time (heart and lung) and the grounds of eternity (head).

We bring intention to what happens naturally through practice. Realizing what the hierarchies do for us (Tuesday) we now undertake to take on part of their work; to relieve them in order to co-create. By realizing our part in karma we no longer just expect from life but take fuller responsibility for our lives and correct the consequences of our past karma; we can connect consciously with the Christ event and with the becoming of the Sun/ Earth; we can help disenchant the beings of nature trapped in matter.

The call of the Mars initiating forces on Tuesday is met with the listening of Venus, coming as a response for a need.

### Wednesday and Thursday rhythms

Human soul!  
Practice spirit-recalling  
Your own I comes into being  
In the I of God.

Human soul!  
Your own I comes into being  
In the I of God  
And you wilt truly live  
In human world-all being.

Human soul!  
Practice spirit-sensing  
Unite your own I  
With the I of the World.

Human soul!  
Unite your own I  
With the I of the World  
And you will truly feel  
In human soul's creating.

Human soul!  
Practice spirit-beholding  
Bestow the light of cosmic being  
On your own I

Human soul!  
Bestow the light of cosmic being  
On your own I  
And you will truly think  
In human spirit depths.

Jupiter works as a wisdom-ordering force; Mercury produces a fertile chaos that can allow to adjust, change, innovate. Lievegoed calls this polarity a process of knowledge between Mercury, always present everywhere, and order-creating Jupiter.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Bernard Lievegoed, *Man on the Threshold*, 113.

One verse calls us to practice; the other verse answers by pointing to the consequences of practice: truly living, truly feeling and truly thinking through the I. Practice precedes results (contrary to the other two rhythm polarities). Without practice we can think, feel and live in the ordinary way (as a given on Tuesday); but not truly live, truly feel and truly think. The turn-around comes through the consciousness-taking of the I devoting itself consciously to the practices.

It is of interest that the opening offered by the Mercury forces is met by the call to practice, which allows for an important change in our habits, and that wisdom-ordering Jupiter answers with a promise for the future.

Thursday announces Sunday: by first being fully human we can later do the good in an evolutionary sense.

### Sunday Rhythm

Human Soul  
Practice spirit-recalling  
Practice spirit-sensing  
Practice spirit-beholding  
That good may become  
What from our Hearts  
We are founding,  
What from our heads  
We direct  
With focused will.

In order to produce the good we found from the depth of our karma and self-connection (heart) and we direct from the clarity of our thinking (head). We unite human soul with community (we) through our connection to the turning point of time (implicitly since here the fourth stanza is referred to). This is only one of two rhythms in which reference to the fourth stanza appears. It is a culmination of all the above; not just in relation to the hierarchies but also to human history through the Christ event and to the Earth become a Sun.

Sunday is the rhythm in which the human being asks collectively, like the future tenth hierarchy. On both sides of this rhythm we find the nine hierarchies on Saturday and the elementals on Monday. Everything above the human being on Saturday; below the human being on Monday. The elementals are those who recognize the Christ and who call us to do likewise.

Sunday unites with the ascending side of the parabola that emphasizes practice. And it also adds a crucial information to the quality of the three practices. For the first time we are told how they work together, what they add to each other. Indirectly we can read why they will not work in separation and what can be the temptations. We can either avoid the founding stage and escape in an ungrounded thinking, in the comfort of the contemplation of the

truth alone. Or we can create a solid foundation and that strength that allows great endurance, but an endurance which is void without the hope given by a clear direction.<sup>8</sup> Strength and wisdom together generate the harvest of the Consciousness/Spiritual Soul, true spiritual insight.

The Sunday verse also addresses a question that is raised by looking at the third stanza in the larger meditation in which we are told "bestow the light of cosmic being on your own I for free and active willing." This becomes clearer on Sunday. Yes truly thinking is what allows us to act in complete free will. But this is a thinking directed by the head after it has been founded in the heart.

The ground is tilled in the depth of soul and harmonized in the balance of the soul. It is given direction in quietness of thought. Ultimately it is our connection with our deeper karmic being and with the Christ being that offers us the foundation from which our study/penetration of anthroposophy will be able to offer new contributions to the world. The study can go in the direction of new cognitive/aesthetic or moral impulses and result in new contributions to humankind in all three fields. Through a commitment to truly living and feeling the possibility of truly thinking opens up, even if in a remote future, to the possibility of 'free willing' mentioned in the Wednesday verse.

'Free willing' results from sacrificing our karma for the sake of furthering the life's work of others. It can only truly be achieved at the stage of Intuition. The supreme example, though outside of the purely human realm, is that of the Christ incarnation as a redemptive deed for the sake of humankind. Closer to the human realm Steiner offered us at least three examples if not more. While he was completing his new edifice of spiritualized thinking, Steiner brought further the tasks of Nietzsche and Schröer. This was made possible through Steiner's perception of both his own life-task and the two individuals' mission in relation to world karma. The culmination of Rudolf Steiner's path on earth came with the acceptance of a leading role in the General Anthroposophical Society. Here he made a great sacrifice by consciously connecting with the karma of all anthroposophists.

What made these deeds possible is a deeper grounding in the heart and directing from the head. It comes from the willingness to relinquish personal karmic aims to accomplish deeds objectively fulfilling world evolution. One must on one hand know what is (temporarily) sacrificed of personal karma and accept it; and on the other objectively see and understand world evolution

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<sup>8</sup> Verse 29 of the Calendar of the Soul (October 20-26) offers a meditation of what this integration can be: "To fan the spark of thinking into flame / by my own strong endeavor / to read life's inner meaning / out of the cosmic spirit fount's of strength / this is my summer heritage / my autumn solace and my winter hope (Hans Pusch translation). I recommend to meditate on the verse together with the revealing image that Karl König created for it, which I use for the cover of this essay.

in order to further an objective world need. We will see other examples when we look at the biographies.

We can now review the three weekly polarities in relation to the Sunday rhythm that stands in between them.

### The Rhythms in Relation to Sunday

#### *Monday-Sunday-Saturday*

Through the Sunday rhythm, what lives on Monday in the Earth (four directions) is expanded in space through the practices to the depths, widths, heights. What lives in the practices on Saturday acquires deeper purpose and direction on Sunday.

#### *Tuesday-Sunday-Friday*

What lives in the whole of the human being (limbs, heart and lung, head) is potentized through the practices in heart and head. In heart and head is found all the activity of the body rendered conscious. What lives in the practice in relation to depths, widths and heights on Thursday acquires an evolutionary aim on Sunday.

#### *Wednesday-Sunday-Thursday*

Through the Sunday verse the I of the human being on Wednesday is connected to the larger cosmic self. Through the Sunday verse, truly being human (truly living, feeling, thinking of Thursday) becomes the ability to create the good that we may find and direct from our connection to Christ at the turning point of time.

We will now look at the progression of the rhythms during the course of the week.

### **The Rhythms in the Course of the Week**

#### The first part of the week

##### *Monday to Tuesday*

Monday is about the very first step of hearing the Christ call. From awareness of the new earth imbued with the Christ presence we move to the relationships between our body (limbs, heart and lung, head) and the trinity. Monday and Tuesday are 'given'; we are told about what is in order to awaken our awareness. We live on the Christ-awakened Earth, and through our body we relate to the trinity and its activities: body of the Earth followed by the human body. This will be continued with a call to action on Wednesday.

As Zeylmans van Emmichoven points out, Monday indicates the Earth as the place where the human being takes his existence in the physical body.



On Tuesday the rhythm invites us to live beyond the physical into the etheric, into those forces that work from the cosmos into the physical body.<sup>9</sup>

### *Tuesday to Wednesday*

After realizing the reality of the new earth and of the sacredness of our body we are called to practice in order to unite with the hierarchies. The awakening goes from human soul to the I and the I of God / I of the World / World Being's Light. Wednesday is truly the verse that calls to the awakening of the I, which is addressed for the transformation of the soul forces through the active work of the practices.

### *Monday to Wednesday*

Since Wednesday terminates the first part of the week let us review it. On Monday we are descending, as it were, from the Sun of Christ to the Christ-permeated Earth in which we meet the elementals of the natural kingdoms. After that we transition to the human body; through our connection to the trinity we develop the three-foldness of the body through which arise the soul faculties of thinking, feeling and willing.

The movement is therefore completed on Wednesday from the human sheaths to the I, which makes further evolution possible. The human I, able to consciously undertake the practices, occupies the center of the week (Wednesday and Thursday), forming the connection to the movement of ascent in the second part of the week.

## The Second Part of the Week

### *Wednesday to Thursday*

Wednesday and Thursday have in common that they use just the first part of the first three stanzas; the microcosmic element in which the I lives. In moving from Wednesday to Thursday we see the results of what we do through our practice. We are awakened through our I to practice in order to be more fully human (truly live, feel, think) and being able to co-create. Thursday's rhythm announces the "good that may become" of Sunday by calling us to being more than is given to us by mere nature.

In the Wednesday verse we are told of the far-reaching and life-changing consequences of the practices. They root us into a new way of being human; it is understandable that they lead to the profound change in the human being that is the foundation of the re-ascent in the second part of the week.

What was the natural human being on Tuesday becomes through the practices of Wednesday the human being conscious of his spiritual dimension.

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<sup>9</sup> Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven, *The Foundation Stone*; see Chapter 6, "The Seven Rhythms."

We could say that anthroposophy, through its practices, makes us truly human.

Both Wednesday and Thursday rhythms use just the first part of the first three stanzas of the meditation. The three ego experiences of Wednesday ("come into being," "unite" and "bestow") are repeated on Thursday. As van Emmichoven points out the I on Wednesday brings about the transformation of the astral body in the Thursday rhythm. Through this the soul forces are transformed, purified; the astral body can become Manas, Spirit-Self, which humanity as a whole will develop in the future Jupiter stage of Earth evolution.<sup>10</sup>

#### *Thursday to Friday*

We are going from living and being more fully present on earth to relating our activity to that of the hierarchies. Practice deepens in relation to Wednesday because now it is no longer just linked to our being (live, feel, think of Thursday) but to the activity of the hierarchies, which beget life, bestow grace and implore light. Human beings and the divine need each other; they can work together, co-create.

What is said of the etheric body (etheric/you live) on Tuesday is transformed on Friday. This means that we can penetrate more fully the etheric through the activities streaming out of the cosmos (Father Spirit, Christ Will and Spirit's Universal Thoughts) and that we can prepare to transform our etheric body through the ego-power of humankind as a whole, into Life-Spirit, or Budhi, stage which humanity will reach in future Venus.<sup>11</sup>

#### *Friday to Saturday*

Both Friday and Saturday rhythms use the two parts of the first three stanzas: the microcosmic and the macrocosmic. We are extending our activity in the realm of the hierarchies; we respond inwardly to it, knowing that we can be co-creators. The Saturday rhythm implies the Rosicrucian sayings: "Out of the Godhead we are born; In Christ death becomes life; In the Spirit's cosmic thoughts the soul awakens." In the practice I am committing to go through what the hierarchies go through; since we are born from God, we can die in Christ and resurrect in the Spirit. It is only through our continuous dying and becoming that we can join with the work of creation.

What is expressed on Friday in the second part expresses what the hierarchies do for the human being: "For the Father-Spirit of the heights holds sway in depths of worlds, begetting Life; For the Christ-will encircling us holds sway in world rhythms, bestowing grace upon souls; For the Spirit's world-thoughts hold sway in cosmic being, imploring light." The practices invoked

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<sup>10</sup> Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven, *The Foundation Stone*; see Chapter 6, "The Seven Rhythms."

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

on the first day call forth the co-creative agency of the human being in the following day. What sounds from the heights is echoed in the depths through the human being; the light coming from the East receives form in the West; the human being entreats in the depths, trusting that she will be heard in the heights.

On Saturday, reminds us Zeylmans van Emmichoven, the ego proceeds to the earliest beginnings of human evolution, when the foundations of the physical body were laid down so that in future it may be transformed into Spirit Man (Atman). This will only fully happen in the Vulcan phase of evolution, corresponding to the new Saturn.<sup>12</sup>

### *Thursday to Saturday*

Let us review the second part of the week. We are moving in reverse in relation to the first part. From the worlds in the human being (human world-all being, human soul creating and human spirit depths), connected to the I of God, I of the world and light of cosmic being (Thursday) to the Heights, Widths and Depths, and finally to the realm of the hierarchies. We start the movement of re-ascent from the new ground created on Thursday: that of having found what it is to truly be human. We realize the connection between our practice and the work of the hierarchies on Friday; we join in that work on Saturday. Thursday is a new ground for the second part of the week like Monday is for the first part of the week.

### Around Sunday

#### *Saturday to Sunday*

The Sunday verse implies that we really do the earthly and evolutionary good when we practice to be more than we are as given human beings; when we try to truly live, feel and think. Our body (heart and head) is united with our activities and with the activity of the hierarchies. Further, we create a bridge from the hierarchies to our fellow human being. We are uniting the poles of the human being (heart and head) through the practices and bringing the blessings of the hierarchies to other human beings.

Saturday connects the most encompassing part of the first three stanzas—the nine hierarchies—to the human being. Sunday connects the most potent extract of the three stanzas—the practices—to the fourth stanza; and the human being to his fellow human beings. It is the verse in which the human being can ask the divine as the potential, future tenth hierarchy.

#### *Sunday to Monday*

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<sup>12</sup> Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven, *The Foundation Stone*; see Chapter 6, "The Seven Rhythms."

Both Sunday and Monday rhythms refer to the four stanzas of the meditation. Sunday uses the microcosmic part of the first three stanzas and ends with the fourth stanza. Monday picks up from there; it starts with the fourth stanza and continues with what is common to the second, macrocosmic part of the first three stanzas.

Sunday unites what is unique and fundamental of the three stanzas—the practices—with the heart of the fourth stanza: the human and cosmic/historic event. To the Mystery of Golgotha are connected the shepherds and the kings, warmth and light, and heart and head.

Sunday and Monday mirror each other like culmination and new beginning. Notice that both verses speak of the human being in the plural. However Sunday speaks from the perspective of the human in “we,” whereas Monday speaks, one could say, from the cosmos in “may human beings hear it.”

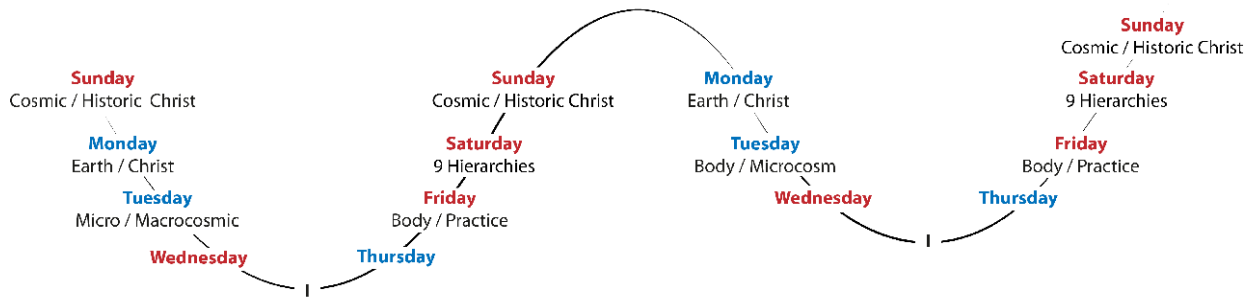
If we penetrate our three practices and connect them to the Christ being and the turning point of time on Sunday and bring about the good, then we truly work at the evolutionary future of the Earth, an Earth in which nature is transformed. And the elemental beings can be witnesses of it on Monday. Having recognized the historic event of Golgotha on Sunday, it is natural to continue by acknowledging the new Earth/Sun on Monday, the Earth of the new Christ in the etheric.

As Zeylmans van Emmichoven points out, during the course of the week we have a recapitulation of Earth evolution; Sunday and Monday point to Old Sun and Old Moon. Tuesday corresponds to the present Mars stage of evolution. It is followed by the Mercury-phase, corresponding to the second phase of Earth evolution. Thursday indicates the next phase of Earth evolution, which spiritual science calls future Jupiter, in which human beings will reach the Manas/Spirit Self stage. Friday indicates the condition of the future Venus phase of Earth evolution, in which the human beings will perfect the Spirit Self/Budhi organization. The Vulcan phase, to which Saturday points, is the new Saturn phase, bringing Old Saturn a stage further and integrating the Spirit man/Atman in the human sheaths.<sup>13</sup>

The weekly path of the Foundation Stone Meditation can thus be seen as a ladder fostering inner growth throughout the week, and bringing us ever so slightly further up from week to week. Table 2 attempts to show the spiraling nature of this path.

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<sup>13</sup> Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven, *The Foundation Stone*; see Chapter 6, “The Seven Rhythms.”



**Table 2:** evolution of the rhythms in time

Let us return now to what was left unfinished in the pairing of the days of the week, which will render more explicit the relationship between Thursday and Sunday verses.

### Monday/Thursday/Sunday Gesture

Another rhythm appears during the week that we have already referred to only indirectly: the Monday-Thursday-Sunday (1-4-7) rhythm. Monday's rhythm is the beginning, the least differentiated. It is a call to just start, but imbued with the certainty of Christ's presence and activity on Earth.

Wednesday offers the impulsion for the way upwards in the second half of the week. It leads on Thursday to the human being attempting to be fully human (truly think, feel, live); it is a new beginning, at a higher level than on Monday. Sunday is a culmination both in complexity (the integration of the four verses) and intent—emphasizing practice for co-creation.

Both Monday and Thursday verses form beginnings; neither of them asks us to practice. But the progression from one to the other goes from the natural being to the human being who takes his spiritual development consciously in his own hands.

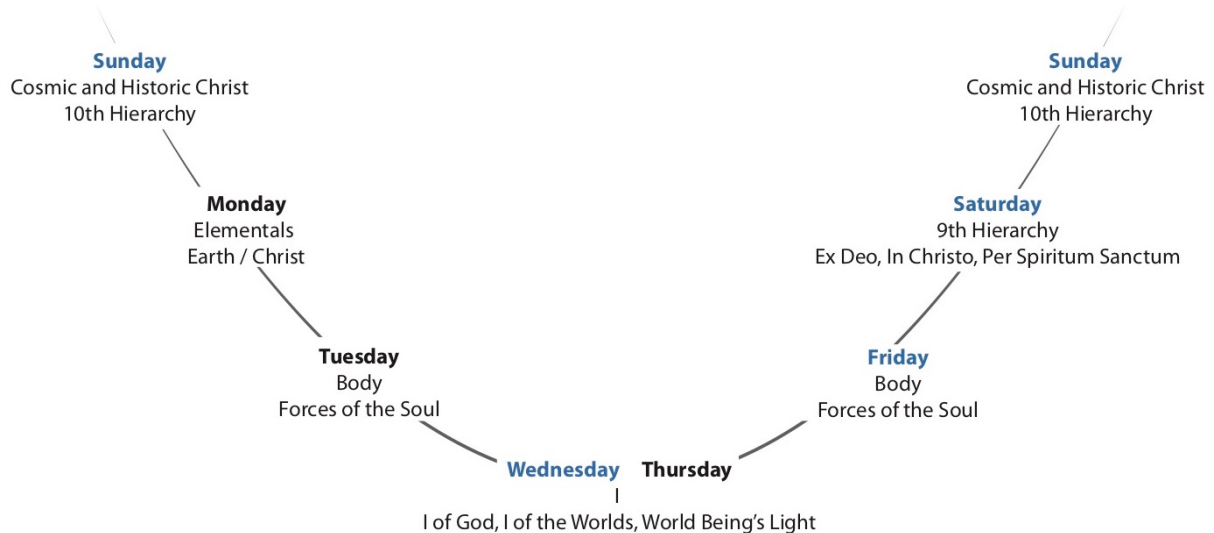
Thursday indicates that through the practices only introduced the day before we can "come into being in the I of God, unite our I with the I of the world and bestow the light of cosmic being on our own I. We can transform the ground upon which we live by living "in the human world-all being, in human soul's creating, and in human spirit depths." We can say that we create a new foundation, a new house to inhabit on Earth. We are incarnating more fully in the reality of the Earth/Sun announced on Monday.

We have brought our living on Earth to a new level through our conscious connection to the trinity. We start to acquire Anthroposophia, the wisdom of the human being on the day of Jupiter. Through the practices we can aim at transforming thinking into Imagination, feeling into Inspiration, true living into free willing/Intuition. In Intuition arises that which is founded in the heart and is at one with the head; we completely unite our thinking, feeling and willing. The soul forces are no longer separated.

The practices of heart and head find their expression respectively in the streams of Shepherds and Kings at the time of Christ. In our times this reminder forms a double call. At a personal level it means to consciously integrate ways what in other times was carried separately in different streams. At a collective level, it means integrating the contributions of the different streams; primarily Aristotelians and Platonists, but also the Christ path of Master Jesus, the Rosicrucian and Manichean paths. We will turn to examples of these in the biographies that follow.

The inner and outer endeavors strengthen each other. By integrating the paths in my soul I can better meet, understand and collaborate with the other paths outwardly. The we of the Sunday rhythm becomes a reality, inwardly and outwardly, for the good at the evolutionary level.

### The Course of the Week in Review



**Table 3:** “incarnational pattern” in the rhythms of the Foundation Stone Meditation

To summarize we can say that the week traces a descent from the Christ event to the Christ-permeated earth that the elementals recognize. From there we descend to the body and the sheaths, and finally to the human I, which takes residence on earth. For that it is important to practice transforming what is given (everyday thinking, feeling and willing) in the new instruments of egohood in order to truly live, feel and think, as mentioned on Thursday.

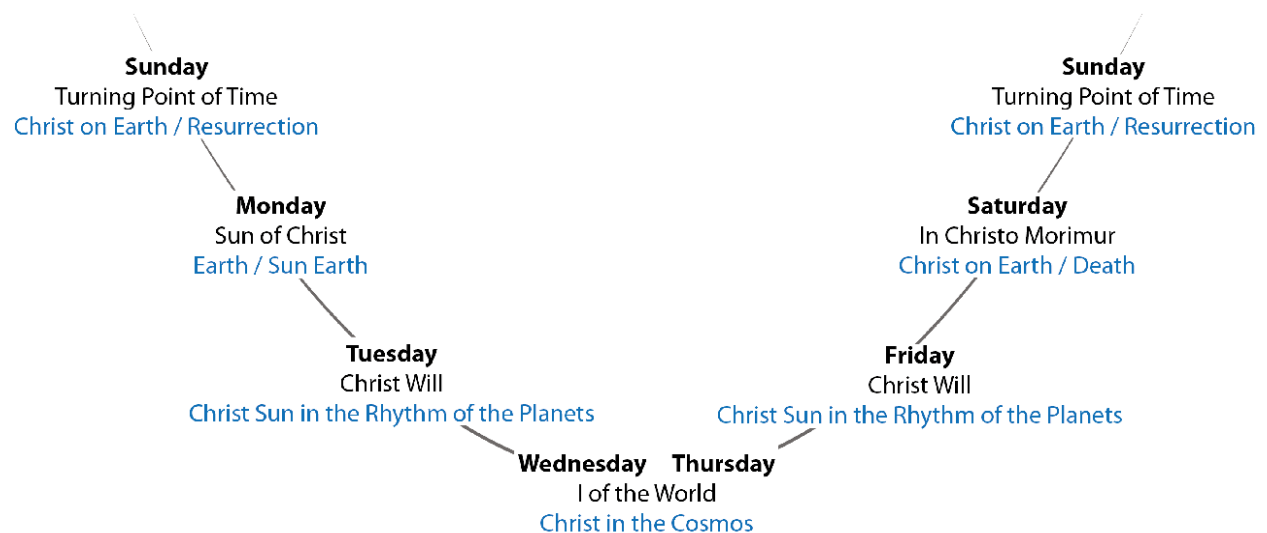
The three practices elevate our soul faculties to new stages of conscious co-creation. We then ascend back by connecting to the activity of the trinity in our body (microcosm) and at a macrocosmic level, in the Depths, Widths and Heights. On Saturday we connect with the whole of the hierarchies and the trinity. Sunday is both a culmination and resurrection verse.

### The Christ Being in the Rhythms

All rhythms of the week include reference to the Christ being in different ways. We start from the Sun of Christ on Monday, the Christ Will in the planetary sphere on Tuesday. Tuesday places the act of 'bestowing grace upon the soul' between the life in the Father and the light in the Spirit; and the Christ Will between the Father Spirit and the Spirit's universal thoughts. It is the Christ Sun that orders and harmonizes the planetary movements. The blessing of the soul indicates peace and harmony between the more 'active' life and the more 'passive' light. On Wednesday and Thursday the Christ being expands to its maximum cosmic extension as World I.

After Thursday we descend to the Christ of the planetary spheres in symmetry with Tuesday. Once again we return to the Earth, but this time from a cosmic/historic perspective with the "In Christo morimur" summons of Saturday, announcing the historical death. The Rosicrucian saying does not appear in the rhythm, only in the full meditation in conjunction with the mention of the hierarchies. The movement is completed in the turning point of time and therefore with the resurrection on Sunday. From there the cycle continues and resumes on Monday with the result of the resurrection in the Christ-permeation of the Earth.

We can notice from the above that the Christ rhythm is complementary to the human rhythm. Whereas the human being condenses so to speak out of the body of the Earth into his sheaths and his I from Monday to Wednesday/Thursday, the Christ being expands from Earth to planetary sphere to the whole cosmos on Wednesday and Thursday. The contrary takes place from Thursday to Saturday; the sphere of action of the human being expands from the I to the hierarchies, whereas the Christ being contracts to a point in the historical incarnation. The Christ fully incarnates on Sunday; the human being on Thursday.



**Table 4:** Christ in the Rhythms of the Foundation Stone Meditation



### Calls to the Will and the Three Practices

Even when they are not articulated in the practice of the exercises there is present a call to the will in each of the rhythms:

- Monday; may human beings hear it; this is a call to wake up.
- Tuesday: the "you live" is a call to live in our body more consciously knowing how we are sustained by the trinity
- Thursday; will truly live, feel, think. Here we are told that these are goals worth pursuing because they render us more fully human.

Let us contemplate now what is meant by 'truly living', 'truly feeling' and 'truly thinking.'

### **Truly Living, Feeling, Thinking: Exercises, Meditation, Study**

The three practices—spirit recollection, spirit mindfulness and spirit beholding—are quite different one from the other. And the Foundation Stone Meditation shows it in the fact that they are each practiced at different levels: respectively in "depth of soul, balance of the soul and quietness of thought." And further, they are connected to the limbs that express themselves in movement, to heart and lung which live in rhythm and the head that works in quietness of thought. Let us look at them more closely.

With the practices we are entering three different realms of existence. Spirit recollection leads us past the gate of the Moon into the soul world, the microcosm. Spirit beholding leads us past the gate of Saturn into the realm of the macrocosm. And what about spirit mindfulness? Here we find the gate of the Sun which lies in between the two. In the life after death the Sun separates the soul world from the lower spiritual world. It naturally creates a bridge between the two.

#### Truly living

Anthroposophy can help awaken in us a lively feeling for our biography and destiny. Practically speaking this means acquiring a sense for the lawfulness and forward-moving intentionality of the events in our biography. Through exercises meant at creating conscious mental pictures we can gain the sense that we are the architects of our lives to a much higher degree than our common sense would have us believe. An example of these exercises is offered in the so-called "lesser karma exercise" in which we picture energetically having brought about out of our will something that we may actually deplore. In referring to it Steiner indicates: "Through such mental pictures—that we ourselves have willed the chance events in our life—we arouse, in the life of feeling, memory of our earlier incarnations. In this way



we understand that we are rooted in the spiritual world, we begin to understand our destiny.”<sup>14</sup>

Other karma exercises that Steiner legated are designed to penetrate past the veil of appearances that hides the reality of karma from our view. They all involve deeper and fuller observation of the given. A significant example is that of recalling a significant individual in our life with such vividness that in Steiner’s terms, we “paint him spiritually.” But the same intent can be practiced by looking at ‘slices’ of our own life in such a way that we may just as well be contemplating another person. For a fuller review of what I call Steiner’s “karma exercises” see <http://millenniumculmination.net/Steiners-Karma-Exercises.pdf>

Truly living thus can be expressed in a variety of ways. If we are the architects of our lives, we can no longer remain absorbed in the after-shocks of events. When so-called ‘negative events’ befall us, rather than dwell on the externals—who is at fault, who is to blame, how could it have been differently—we can take two seemingly contradictory steps in brief succession. On one hand observe as complete spectators; on the other reverse the tendency of the spectator and become participants. The spectator acquires distance both from what he does in the moment and from what happens to itself. The participant feels himself part of everything that happens; he does not seek an external understanding, one that does not involve the self—but rather the one involving what Steiner calls the “second man in us” who directs the events of our biography. By doing so he becomes more and more aware of how his deeper karmic being, and the forces of destiny are revealed in the unfolding of the biography; he understands how he himself wills the events.

This observer/participant perspective allows us not to place our ego at the center of our understanding of life; not to equate who we are with the outer events of our biography—our profession, family /cultural /professional /racial and other external conditions. We will try to seek meaning beyond these in the sense of our life-task, which can unfold in a great variety of ways, of which profession and place in life are one of many possibilities, but only an external manifestation—the outer sheath of who we truly are. Only through this deliberate choice can we fathom that our daily ego lives in the conditions of present time and space, whereas our higher self is the expression of something larger, which manifests in our pre-birth intentions and in the succession of our various incarnations beyond the present one. Even in the present our past incarnations reverberate in our biography and we can start to acquire a sense for our deeper being. Steiner calls this “conscious experience of destiny” in contrast with “understanding of the spirit” which we

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<sup>14</sup> Steiner, Esoteric Christianity, January 29, 1912 lecture.

will see under the heading “truly thinking.”<sup>15</sup> An example of what is meant here will shine in bright light in the biographies of Ita Wegman and Walter Johannes Stein.

Truly living means being able to walk towards the full expression of our destiny and of our potential to realize it. This finds a forward-moving expression in an exercise that Steiner gave in order to develop inspiration. By actively picturing and immersing ourselves in a scenario of how we can meet a challenging event in our near future we can face what is forming in our karma without later giving way to feelings and emotions that would cloud our ability to act freely. Feelings and emotions that would obscure the free unfolding of our destiny make room for the ability to receive inspiration from the spirit and find new ways to respond to challenges of the soul. In this sense truly living means being able to creatively respond to the moment, without undue influence and burden from the past; to inwardly hear what the future wants of us; to remove obstacles to the unfolding of our karma.

### Truly Thinking

Truly thinking stands at the other end from truly living. Whereas what unfolds in time in our biography needs to be recalled, what is present in space is immediately present to our senses. It can be beheld, rather than recollected.

Truly thinking can unfold in at least two steps. In a first step it leads us to contemplate the activity of our thinking. Through the study of *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* we can relate percept to concept as the two sides of a unified experience of the world. What is separated by virtue of the constitution of the modern human being—which leads him to freedom through separation from nature, from the social world and the divine—is reunited through conscious effort. By thinking about our own act of thinking, we render conscious what happens naturally and unconsciously. We move from associative and passive thinking to an active thinking that does not just separate—as in our binary thinking, applied to quantitative expression—but what unites, as in the expression of the qualitative element.

When we free our thinking from its support in the senses and from the reflective quality of the brain, we move beyond images that can be activated through memory, to sense-free imaginations. An example of this is found in Goethean phenomenological botany. Presently the plant is studied through a description of its outer characteristics, physical and chemical analyses of its various constituents, much of it with the help of indirect observations (microscope, chemical analysis, spectroanalysis, etc.).

What a Goethean/phenomenological study in the direction of spiritual science adds to classical science is the perspective of the qualities of the plant which can only derive from the ability to see the whole in its unfolding in time.

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<sup>15</sup> Rudolf Steiner, “Understanding of the Spirit and Conscious Experience of Destiny,” Letter xvii to All Members of July 13, 1924.

Polarities/primary phenomena such as expansion (as in the pollen) and contraction (as in the seed); horizontal (as in the leaf or petal), and vertical (as in the stem or carpel); or metamorphosis of the form of the leaf (as in the evolution of the form of leaf around the stem, and from leaf to sepal, stamen and carpel) can only arise when we stop dividing—as we would with the help of assisted, indirect observations—and we actively integrate through our beholding and inner recreating of the whole.

By holding in front of our eyes the totality of what unfolds in time we let the phenomena speak for themselves. We evolve from the secondary phenomena directly accessible to the senses, to the primary phenomena of polarities present immediately behind sense percepts, rather than forcing an interpretation/theory through indirect observations, statistical correlations and other speculations.

Once we have adopted the phenomenological approach we can enlarge our perspective through what spiritual science reveals to us of the plant. Here are a few examples: the expression of mineral, etheric and astral in the plant itself; the threefold plant in relation to the threefold human being.

In the first instance we can recognize in the plant what is most mineral and undifferentiated in the root, what is a purer expression of etheric forces in the bud and leaf; an expression of the astrality that descends on the plant in the color and form of the flower, fruit and seed. Each plant offers a different expression of the relationship of these three elements.

We can also look at the plant as an upside-down human being. What is most mineral in the human being is the head; in the plant the root. The functions of heart and lung in the human being are taken up in the leaf where respiration and photosynthesis take place; the metabolic function of the human being is taken up by flower and fruit which consume substance produced by root and leaf. With this in mind a whole new ground is laid for the creation of medicinal remedies. The above two examples, and others, open up a huge field of scientific inquiry unknown to conventional science.

### Truly Feeling

In spirit mindfulness we are moving into the space of the heart and lungs which leads to the experience and expression of purified feelings. As to what these purified feelings could be and how they lead us to Christ we can gather insights from the lecture cycle *From Jesus to Christ*.

Steiner names Blaise Pascal and Vladimir Soloviev as representatives of this path: “as the witnesses cited [Pascal and Soloviev], together with thousands of other human beings, can testify from their own experience, [this way] leads to recognition that self-knowledge in post-Christian time is impossible without placing Jesus Christ by the side of man and a

corresponding recognition that the soul must either deny itself, or, if it wills to affirm itself, it must at the same time affirm Christ Jesus."<sup>16</sup> (emphasis added)

Steiner linked the path of feeling to conditions that are emerging at present. Returning to Pascal and Soloviev, Steiner indicates that these "have given eminent testimony to the fact that Christ (Who from the twentieth century onward will be seen through the more highly developed faculties) can be *recognized, felt, experienced, through feelings* that were not possible in the same form before the Event of Golgotha."<sup>17</sup> (emphasis added). Theirs are paths of "inner deepening of heart and soul" in which the "way must begin in experiences through feeling."<sup>18</sup>

Blaise Pascal postulates in his *Pensées* that the human being can experience the extreme feelings of pride and arrogance on one hand, under the illusion of being already a God, or of despair when she cannot connect to anything of a divine nature in or outside of herself. Contentment and peace can only be found at the point of balance in recognizing the Christ being and his deed.

The approach of the Russian mystic Soloviev is more complex. He places the Christ being between the questions of immortality and wisdom, by which he means moral perfection, neither of which can be found in nature. Science confirms that all of nature leads to dissolution and death. On the other hand the human being wants to continue the work of nature because in his breast he feels both a call to immortality and a call to human perfection. The second cannot be reached without the first.

Transcending death implies moving from the realm of nature into what Soloviev calls the "realm of grace." Christ unites the two realms in Himself. To bridge the two the human being needs faith, which Soloviev sees as a necessity and inner duty, which we can only accomplish in freedom.

Without faith we would fall into despair. We can only overcome the limits set by nature by recognizing the Christ in His historic dimension. The soul can experience itself as an "I am" through Christ.

### Exercise, Study, Meditation

We have finished highlighting three archetypal activities that correspond to truly living, truly feeling and truly thinking, respectively in exercise, meditation and study. Like anything of an archetypal nature, when we come from the general to the particular these activities complement and combine with each other, witness this essay, which is a study about a meditation. Here we will nevertheless explore them separately and highlight their uniqueness.

Truly living—in the activity of the limbs—can be cultivated through exercises. The forces of our biography can be discerned through the repeated

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<sup>16</sup> Rudolf Steiner, *From Jesus to Christ*, October 8, 1911 lecture.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

act of recollection. Our karma lives unconsciously in depths of soul through our limbs which actively seek its fulfilment in space. We can live in greater awareness of the moment in a higher detached consciousness, but it's nevertheless after the fact that we can let insights form in the soul. The act of spirit recollection is that of recapturing life from the stream of time. We have to deliberately hold our attention on something past to let what would remain unconscious become conscious. The exercise is purely individual; it is directed to the subjectivity, contrary to the study that turns to what is universal, as we will see shortly.

The movement is completed in facing the future when we move forward to the active, future-looking aspect of meeting our karma. In the Inspiration exercise mentioned above we actively place ourselves in front of future events, as if they were present in front of us. We envision responses and picture what is to be as deliberately as possible. We prepare ourselves to render the call from the stream of the future operative in our life.

Truly thinking—in quietness of thought—is achieved in study, when we understand this as something beyond the present scientific approach. In the first step study unites the scientific/analytic capacity of science with the synthetic/holistic perspective of art. A rigorous understanding of secondary phenomena, much in line with what a deterministic science does, is raised a step higher through the artistic capacity to grasp what unites the phenomena in common gestures. From secondary phenomena we can rise to an understanding of the primary, or ur-phenomena, which unite the secondary phenomena in their manifoldness. In other words we can see the secondary phenomena as the expression of primary ones. Ultimately this can lead to the possibility of beholding the idea; of unifying once more what has been separated in percept and concept in the spectator consciousness. This is what Owen Barfield called the “modern participatory consciousness”; what Goethe characterized as the perception of the idea in his beholding of the ur-plant.

Truly feeling—in the rhythm of heart and lung—is placed in deliberate relation to the Christ being in the Foundation Stone Meditation's second panel. If exercise is the activity of spirit recollection, and study that of Spirit Beholding, what do we find in the path of spirit sensing? I would offer, as others have, meditation and prayer, the first one colored with the thinking element. Two expressions of the above are on one hand the Calendar of the Soul and on the other the Our Father prayer.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Rudolf Steiner, *The Lord's Prayer: An Esoteric Study*, Lecture of January 28, 1907. For the relationship between the Foundation Stone Meditation and The Our Lord's Prayer see F. W. Zeylmans van Emmichoven, *The Foundation Stone*, Chapter 7.

In the Calendar of the Soul the Christ is present throughout though never mentioned, if nothing else in the consideration that the calendar starts at Easter, and marks the times of St. John and Christmas in relation to the cosmic Word.

Much could be said about the calendar. Suffice to indicate here that its aim is to show how the life of the soul is both dependent upon, and emancipated from, the life of the cosmos in the cycle of the year. Our relationship to the Christ moves between necessity and freedom.

In the time between Easter and Michaelmas the soul naturally expands towards the cosmic light and cosmic warmth, but refrains from losing itself in them. During the time from Michaelmas to Easter the soul naturally feels drawn to looking inward or brooding, but counters the tendency to be put to sleep by conscious spirit striving and forging of the sense of self.

This thought can be continued in the way illustrated by Karl König in his contrast between boding and thinking. The thinking human being finds his bearings around the time of Michaelmas and throughout the fall-winter season. At the time in which outer stimulation dims the human being has to develop a sense of self and a rooting in his thinking capacity. On the contrary the first weeks after Easter announce that "thinking must in dream-life rest content" (verse 2). Another force takes its start at the time in which the human being immerses himself in light and warmth, a force which allows him not to lose himself outwardly, when thinking fades. This is the force that directs the human being in her inner world, just as thinking oriented him in the outer world in the colder time of the year. Boding has been variously translated as intuition (obviously the more popular intuition of 'hunch'), presentiment, perceptive feeling, intimation, divining, heart's divining, expectation, inner voice, awareness stirring in the heart, inner prompting, etc.<sup>20</sup> It can be said to be a "sensing of the heart."

The Calendar of the Soul shows in the course of the year the alternation of those forces that appear in the Sunday rhythm of the Foundation Stone Meditation as heart and head. And although the Calendar of the Soul points to the interplay between spirit beholding, emphasized in the winter, and spirit recollection in the summer, it identifies with neither of those alone and is more than the sum of each.

When we close our eyes in meditation and prayer we experience a natural breathing between the earthly and the divine, between microcosm of the soul and divine macrocosm. In this activity we naturally feel a blessing. Meditation and prayer stand between exercise and study.

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<sup>20</sup> See *The Calendar of the Soul* by Rudolf Steiner with Translations by Daisy Aldan, John F. Gardner, Isabel Grieve, Brigitte Knaack, Ernst Lehrs and Ruth and Hans Pusch, and a Paraphrase by Owen Barfield.



In the larger meditation we are told that the three practices address respectively the realms of space (spirit recollection) of time (spirit mindfulness) and of eternity (spirit beholding). In the will and the limbs the human body is related to movement and to space. In feeling the human being is related to the rhythmic tides of time; so is he related to it in breathing and heartbeat. Time is here intended in its etheric quality, that which is expressed in cycles. In transformed thinking the human being can apprehend what is beyond space and time, he can enter the realm of eternity.

When we return to these aspects from the perspective of the Sunday verse something else becomes apparent: the movement from past to future: in spirit recollection we look to the past; we reconnect in our path through time to the point in which we descended from the Godhead. In spirit mindfulness we reconnect to the Christ, to the turning point of time and to the Christ in us in the ever-present moment. In Spirit Beholding we are connecting to the working of the Holy Spirit and to the future. The movement of founding and directing emphasized in the Sunday rhythm is once more visible here. For the good to become we need to create the grounding in past and present offered by the practices of spirit recollection and spirit mindfulness; to direct it towards the future that of spirit beholding.

The practices of the Foundation Stone Meditation address the whole human being, as is indicated by their relationship to the body. The limbs in movement are those that take us from here to there; they address our movement forward. The practice of spirit recollection unites past and future as we have highlighted with the qualities of the Lesser Karma exercise (past) and the inspiration exercise (future). These confirm that we are addressing the front-backward plane of the human being.

The heart and lung live in the space between inner and outer. The practice should be carried in balance of the soul; and that balance is offered by the Christ being standing between Lucifer and Ahriman and holding them at bay. Balance is what helps us stay in our center, and prevents us from falling to the right or the left. Spirit mindfulness addresses the sagittal plane of symmetry.

Finally, the head connects us in quietness of thought to the light of the world. It creates a relationship between us and the macrocosm, between the human being and what is below or above him; it forms a relationship with the vertical plane of existence.

Just a note in passing. What we see in the Foundation Stone Meditation and in the inheritance of Steiner's esoteric practices was already present in seed in the writing of *Knowledge of Higher Worlds* at a time in which Steiner had not given the world his *Calendar of the Soul*, his Karma exercises (for both of which we had to wait until 1912) nor other specific meditations or exercises. Let us see how.

What we have called spirit beholding is present in the book with the two observation exercises of the seed on one hand and of the growing plant on the other. There what is proposed as an exercise becomes the doorway for piercing through the veil of the senses; to perceive the full nature of the plant, which leads to its etheric dimension. In effect uniting concept and percept to perceive the unified essence of the plant which is hidden from the constitution of the modern human being.

On the other side the book offers another two exercises of spirit recollection, which Steiner recommends to undertake with caution after achieving the first two. In simple terms these are recollections of individuals who have on one hand met one or more of their needs, or on the contrary have not. This has to be done with utmost respect for the individuality in question.

The Foundation Stone Meditation forms thus a completion of the whole range of esoteric practices; it confirms and expands what Steiner had given us at the start of his spiritual scientific career.

In conclusion we can summarize:

Practice **spirit recollection** and you will truly live in the limbs in movement, in recollection of your deeds or in anticipation of future deeds

- EXERCISES leading to perception of the forces of karma, forces that lead us to more fully incarnate in our biography (microcosm).

Practice **spirit mindfulness** and you will truly feel in the beat of heart and lungs; rhythm stands between movement and rest

- MEDITATION / PRAYER leading to living connection to the Christ impulse.

Examples:

- o Meditation: Calendar of the Soul; joining cycle of the year/nature with life of the soul.
- o Prayer: Our Father: joining macrocosm and microcosm of the soul through Christ.

Practice **spirit beholding** in the resting head and you will truly think in quietness of thought

- STUDY leading to spiritualized thinking and fuller perception of the macrocosm and forces at work therein.

## **II Biographical Examples of the integration of the Practices**

In order to grasp the world-formative character of the practices we will turn to two examples. In the first we will look at the effect that the intertwining of



three lives have had over the karma of the General Anthroposophical Society. Here it is a matter of appreciating how individuals following primarily different paths have complemented each other and produced something more than the sum of the parts.

In the second example we will look at an individual who not only integrated the various paths, but offered the fruits of his efforts to the larger Michaelic community. For our good fortune his path has been well documented.

### **Three Doctors and the Karma of the General Anthroposophical Society**

Many among us anthroposophists know of the tragic legacy of the 1930s crisis in the General Anthroposophical Society. That is all too clear, and we can surmise that we still suffer from the repercussions of events in our collective past. What does not appear as clearly is that a careful look at our collective karma also offers us potent indications about the way upward and out of a sterile repetition of the past, or a passive acceptance of its results. We can marvel in fact, that notwithstanding the severe trials that the Anthroposophical Society faced most strongly in the 20s and 30s, which have lingered ever since, we still have one Society, not various splinters as has been common in religious denominations and spiritual movements. That it is so we owe to a multitude of remarkable individuals. Here we want to look at some of those most closely involved, and in particular three of them. Their strength lay in knowing how to collaborate effectively.

It is, to say the least, uncanny that the three individuals here observed were Dutch and were doctors in medicine. Their healing impulse, stemming from their profession, extended to the social sphere. Their contributions are of such magnitude that they reverberate past their time on earth. Looking at these key individualities means therefore acquiring a larger perspective on modern challenges. It can show us the way to what is always present and possible.

The three individuals were able to bridge divides, in this instance between concrete Michaelic impulses. They could do so because they accomplished first and foremost a synthesis of polarities in their own souls, before this achievement could carry results in the outer circles of their lives.

What I say here borrows from what I have written previously in the book *Aristotelians and Platonists: The Convergence of the Michaelic Streams in the Third Millennium*; many passages are lifted from it. In that book the exploration was confined to the polarity represented by the beings and corresponding views of Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven and Bernard Lievegoed, who formed a very close friendship and collaboration at the top of the Dutch Anthroposophical Society. Their interests naturally extended from there to the global Society.

The karma of these two individuals led them to play a part at their respective national level. The third individual is Ita Wegman, whose personal

destiny it was to be one of the closest of Steiner's collaborators. She naturally understood what stakes were at play with the fate of the General Anthroposophical Society (G. A. S.). After Steiner's death, and most intensely in the first half of the 1930s, she was immersed in the growing crisis that led the Society to a de facto split, in which herself and another member were expelled from the Vorstand (executive board of the G. A. S.), others were expelled from the G. A. S. and some National Societies, or parts thereof, were greatly estranged from Dornach.

Ita Wegman spent much of her time after Steiner's death promoting the legacy of the First Class of the School of Spiritual Science and the anthroposophical medical impulse in two directions; anthroposophical medicine and the incipient curative education and social therapeutic impulse that Steiner had encouraged before his death. In fact, the three Dutch doctors had an interest both in the fate of the Society as well as in the continuation and deepening of medical and curative impulses.

We will look first at the lives of Zeylmans van Emmichoven and Lievegoed in an abridgment of what I have already previously written. Ita Wegman stands in a way as a higher-level synthesis of the work of integration accomplished by her two colleagues. After all, only she was placed by karma in a place in which she could represent anthroposophy globally.

No two individuals could present themselves to the world in as starkly different ways as Lievegoed and Zeylmans van Emmichoven. They understood it and sought each other for what they were missing, or what they could start to integrate more fully. Thus it was that the younger Lievegoed grew under the tutelage of van Emmichoven. The older understood, in passing the baton to the younger, that in Lievegoed the Dutch Anthroposophical Society would find a different kind of leadership than the one he had impressed on it for nearly 40 years—no small sign of trust both in a fellow human being and in the guidance of the spiritual world.

Let us look briefly at some of Zeylmans van Emmichoven's accomplishments.

#### Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven

Born in 1893, Frederick Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven became one of the most important Dutch anthroposophists, leading the National Society from 1923 until 1961, the year of his death. Among other things, van Emmichoven contributed to the founding of the first Dutch Waldorf school in The Hague, started a psychiatric hospital, lectured worldwide on anthroposophical themes and wrote various books.

As a child van Emmichoven had a very strong imaginative life, and great love for gardens. In contrast he was shocked by the bleak world of the factories and tenements that surrounded him. Living close to factory workers' houses, the contrast between the beauty of the gardens and the ugliness of people and buildings marked his soul. He felt the need to protect himself from

this reality, by imagining a world of lovely young people, a world “where only young, radiant people lived” and “everything there was perfect, ...”<sup>21</sup> Predictably, the boy experienced school as a prison. Once more he found refuge in his inner world. In this world he was a king on a white horse and he imagined all sorts of great adventures.

Not only was his inner life imaginative, it also opened up to direct spiritual perception. Demons appeared for the first time when the boy was five. They looked like animals and yet different from them. “They were all as frightful as each other, and he could feel himself going rigid with fear.”<sup>22</sup> Only in later years did his inner voice enjoin him to look the beings in the eyes because this would make them vanish. When he did this he experienced great dread, but the demons effectively started to dissolve. These visions went on for years, especially when he was tired or ill at ease.

The young boy could also experience the elementals of the animal world. He could perceive the elemental dimensions of animals, a “something’ that was both friendly, gentle, delicate ... and eerie and frightening.”<sup>23</sup> In addition van Emmichoven mentions something else of interest, though only in passing. In his neighborhood he could see many drunkards, and he could recognize whether they were affected by wine, beer, or other liquors quite precisely, based on the elemental beings that accompanied them.

When at school he had the first opportunity to write a story, the teacher declared that the class had found a poet. From that moment on his inner life was fired. What he had seen in his imagination, he could now put on paper. He started writing long essays, reading stories, poems, novels, world literature. Another absorbing world was that of light and darkness that he found in painting. In a museum he had a deeply significant experience. After feeling overwhelmed by the amount of paintings, “... suddenly, like a flash of lightning, he saw what was around him: deep shimmering colors, radiant bright colors, fiery blazing colors, colors that quietly drew him into the distance. Slowly he began to see the paintings themselves, to distinguish one from another and at last to know them.”<sup>24</sup> And something else offered him relief. He could now see the familiar demons he knew so well in the paintings—he in fact recognized most of them—and knew by this that others had experienced them.

While engaged in his medical studies, he continued to explore color in modern paintings together with two friends who painted. In July of 1920 he started to conduct experiments on color. In a darkened room he exposed people to different colors. The subjects were simply asked to beat a regular

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<sup>21</sup> Emanuel Zeylmans, *Willem Zeylmans von Emmichoven: An Inspiration for Anthroposophy. A biography*, 8.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, 10

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, 12.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 18.

rhythm on an electrical apparatus, and the resulting tempo was recorded in relation to clock time. The results showed the fastest rhythms between yellow and orange, the slowest ones between blue and violet, and the middle ones in the green part of the spectrum. But what was of further interest was that at the other side of the spectrum, there was a point of balance similar to green in the color crimson. At the time he was still under the sway of Newton's physics, even though he had read some of Goethe's writings on color and was open to them.

He was getting ready for a breakthrough, and what came next were Steiner's writings on Goethe, which helped him cross the threshold of his hesitations. He had an epiphany: "So I went to the university library and asked for Goethe's scientific writings, and began to read Rudolf Steiner's introduction, and suddenly, lo and behold, a bolt of light flashed down from the heavens and struck through me, as I read Rudolf Steiner's sentence: 'Our image of the visible world is the sum of perceptions metamorphosing independently of underlying matter.'" And further, "A whole world opened and showed me color as a living being." This led to the unavoidable conclusion: "I went to Frau Wolfram, the group leader, and told her I would like to join the Society."<sup>25</sup> This he did because he wanted to study an as yet unpublished medical course cycle now given to members of the Society.

In December 1920 van Emmichoven traveled to Dornach and heard Steiner lecture for the first time. It was a turning point in his biography. When Steiner appeared, he remembered later: "At this moment I had a clear experience of recognition. This was so strong that a whole series of images surfaced in me at the same time, vaguely recalling former situations—as though I recognized him as my teacher through the millennia. It was the most powerful experience I have had in my whole life. For a long time I sat, lost in thought, and only later did I realize that the lecture had begun."<sup>26</sup> We will return to one instance of 'former situation' later. Not only were memories stirred; he was also deeply touched by Steiner's appearance, which for him personified the full human being in its whole potential.

To Steiner van Emmichoven talked about his work with the color spectrum. He explained that "green was a zero-point because all the feeling responses were there in equilibrium; and crimson was also a zero-point because it represented a balance between the greatest will activity and the highest intensification of thoughtful and reflective activities." Steiner, impressed, showed him that the spectrum of colors is really a circle. "In one stroke he had answered all the questions that I could not even put."<sup>27</sup>

In his late twenties, van Emmichoven moved to The Hague and started his own practice; by the end of 1927 he opened his Rudolf Steiner Clinic,

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 49.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 53.

located between The Hague and Scheveningen. Van Emmichoven's medical career ran in parallel with his involvement within the Dutch Anthroposophical Society and his lecturing activity, which continued to the end of his life. He soon became accustomed to large audiences.

In his 1923 visit to the Netherlands Steiner had suggested: "Well, then all you need to do is make Dr. Zeylmans free for anthroposophy and offer him a generous salary."<sup>28</sup> When van Emmichoven told Steiner that he hesitated in leading the Society, Steiner impressed upon him that "as a doctor, you are particularly fitted to be General Secretary, for the Society will increasingly need the therapeutic aspect."<sup>29</sup> When he accepted the task, Steiner warned him against the dangers of sectarianism.

Van Emmichoven had many social skills. He could recognize the qualities of his opponents. He was able to summarize at the end of conferences everything that people had contributed, and therefore was asked to give the concluding address. Son and biographer Emanuel offers the image of the eagle that circles above and sees everything, and he concludes: "Van Emmichoven was a 'man of the middle,' someone capable of encompassing and combining the most painful contradictions and oppositions and able to mediate solutions."<sup>30</sup> He always found the right word to say, and human difficulties melted away in the presence of his genial wisdom. He was exceptionally capable of being all things to all men, yet he always remained eminently himself." And further: "Everyone felt that he would be able to see the matter from all sides."<sup>31</sup>

In looking at his personality, Lievegoed comments "Within the anthroposophical movement, [van Emmichoven] was an original thinker. His whole stature was saturnine, in his face the skeleton dominated. He was a spiritual eagle that hovered far above the earth. With the people to whom he gave his confidence, he had a relationship of deeply hidden warmth and absolute loyalty. In such a relationship, time became something infinite; when you had a profound conversation with him, it could suffice for a couple of years."<sup>32</sup> Van Emmichoven was a true spiritual investigator who could live with questions for a long time, confident in the help of the spiritual world. On occasion, upon awakening from sleep he would receive pictures, from which he could form inner judgment, and build inner certainty.

We can say that van Emmichoven was a true representative of his stream, the Aristotelian one, as he knew from the recognition of "former

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<sup>28</sup> Emanuel Zeylmans, *Willem Zeylmans von Emmichoven*, 59.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 91.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 139.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, 142.

<sup>32</sup> Bernard Lievegoed, *The Eye of the Needle: Bernard Lievegoed: His Life and Working Encounter with Anthroposophy; An Interview with Jelle van der Meulen*, 34.

situations” of which more will be said below. And he was also keenly aware of the various paths that can be trod within anthroposophy.

In 1961 van Emmichoven asked Lievegoed to succeed him at the helm of the Dutch Anthroposophical Society, which he had steered for thirty-seven years. To his friend, Lievegoed had already previously said that it would have been difficult to combine his more worldly pursuits with those of the Society, because of the gulf between the tasks. Van Emmichoven replied that he was acting out of the old maxim of giving power to those who were not seeking it. Lievegoed continued to ponder the idea, then saw that it was unavoidable. He could not say no to van Emmichoven.

This important responsibility was offered to Lievegoed a few days after his fifty-sixth birthday. In September 1961, before going to South Africa, van Emmichoven told his friend “I am going to Africa very shortly, and when I return in the New Year I shall resign as Chairman; and I expect you to take over the Chairmanship of the Dutch Society!” As we said before, for Lievegoed this was a shock, and the thought did not appeal to him, mindful as he was of the dimension that politics played in the Dutch Society. Van Emmichoven added “You know, I shall then withdraw [after you take the Chairmanship] and from somewhere up above I shall look down at you, going about things in quite a different way from how I would have approached them! And I shall be pleased to see things done differently!”<sup>33</sup> True to his word, van Emmichoven died six weeks later.

To give us a flavor of the difference between the two doctors, let us look at it through the eyes of Lievegoed. “We were very different people and were conscious of that. He had a strong imaginative life and was able to put deep truths into words. He was also a bit of a loner, he was at his most creative when he was alone with himself. I was more a will person, more oriented towards doing things and flourished especially in cooperation with other people.” Lievegoed greatly treasured this key destiny link with his colleague. “Witness what he said on the same occasion: “Willem Zeylmans remained my teacher to the last moment of his life.”<sup>34</sup>

### Bernard J. Lievegoed

Lievegoed was present at a 1926 international pedagogical conference organized by the Dutch anthroposophists. The young man had red hair and a fiery temperament, and looked younger than his age. His fellow students called him “fire-ball.” He was introduced to van Emmichoven, then thirty-three, and twelve years his elder. The younger man appreciated that “Despite his young years [van Emmichoven] seemed a mature person.” The elder man, hearing what the friends were calling Lievegoed, approached the youth very

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<sup>33</sup> Bernard C. J. Lievegoed, *Developing Communities*, 78-79.

<sup>34</sup> Bernard Lievegoed, *The Eye of the Needle*, 34.



directly: "Now then, how do things stand with you—will you willingly sacrifice yourself to the dragon...?" Lievegoed was puzzled and moved, and the question kept circling in his mind. He concluded: "During the next months I came to see that I must ask Zeylmans how I might find the way to my own self. That was the beginning of an intimate friendship and pupilship that was to last thirty-five years."<sup>35</sup>

Bernard Cornelis Johannes Lievegoed was born in Medan, on the island of Sumatra, on September 2, 1905. As a child Bernard was used to riding on boats on rivers where alligators roamed; going around almost naked, except for a hat; guiding boats through rapids; going on long mountain hikes and reaching the summits; descending into the crater of a volcano when the weather allowed it; or viewing performances of the Hindu Mahabharata epic cycle.

Lievegoed experienced illnesses and personal losses at key moments in his biography. At age four he developed acute cholera, with high fever and dehydration. Of nine children who contracted the disease, only he and another one survived. The illness left him with paralysis on his right side, and he had to learn to walk again. He recovered almost fully, but maintained a slight disorder of the right arm afterwards, root cause of poor handwriting. As a further consequence, and in spite of his active life, he could not participate in sports because he didn't have good balance. This pushed him to withdraw within himself, and gave him the feeling of being somewhat weaker than others.

As a child, Lievegoed had a recurring dream of a wooden temple on top of a mountain, and he knew that he needed to get up there. He dreamt that he would begin to climb but never reached the top. With heavy building blocks he erected a miniature Greek temple, and kept it atop a table for months and months until his mother removed it. Years later, in relation to his sister being sick, he heard from a family friend in The Hague that in Basel, a temple for the anthroposophists had been built on top of a hill, and that the Catholics had burned it. He commented, when giving interviews for the book: "... during his story the shivers ran over my back, from the top down and from the bottom up."<sup>36</sup> This was his first encounter with anthroposophy, but only later did he understand that the man had been talking about the Goetheanum. He was then eighteen years and seven months old, the time of his first moon node. When Steiner came to Holland in the same year, Lievegoed was busy with his high school exam, and never had another chance to see him. From these circumstances he gathered the feeling of having come too late.

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<sup>35</sup> Emanuel Zeylmans, Willem Zeylmans von Emmichoven: An Inspiration for Anthroposophy: A Biography, 113.

<sup>36</sup> Lievegoed, The Eye of the Needle, 23.

The young man was attracted to the scientific world. Originally he wanted to study electrotechnology. For a period he was also interested in chemistry, but was reluctant to spend his life in a factory. The choice of medicine was providential, since it left him free to decide later on a more specific direction.

Lievegoed received his medical degree in 1930. He returned to his studies to complete a doctorate, and wrote a thesis on "Fundamentals of Therapeutic Use of Musical Elements" in 1939.

In 1926 as a student doctor, he went on his first visit to Ita Wegman's clinic in Arlesheim. He felt immediately at home and had his first conversation with his colleague, with whom he had in common the experience of growing up in the East Indies. He was impressed by her personality because she was both most spiritual and very practical. It was after this visit that he decided to join the Anthroposophical Society and soon got involved in the development of the anthroposophical movement in the Netherlands.

Upon meeting with anthroposophy, Lievegoed began a very intensive course of study. He devoted great interest in the qualities of the seven planets and in the concept of development, particularly from *Occult Science* and *True and False Paths in Spiritual Investigation*.

One day Lievegoed had the opportunity of visiting a curative institution in Jena, because he had gone to an anthroposophical meeting and had been assigned to visit a home for "backward children." There he was part of a music appreciation class, and realized how differently things could be done. This was what he called a "coincidence." He asked the anthroposophist Werner Pache, one of the pioneers of anthroposophical curative education, if this would be possible in the Netherlands, who replied: "Yes, of course - just go and start."<sup>37</sup>

The Jena episode led to the initiative of the Zonnehuis in 1931, the first curative educational institute in the Netherlands for children with special needs. Lievegoed remained the director of the institution until 1954. By the time he established his work with developmentally disabled children, he knew that curative education involved the therapeutic aspect, the lifestyle, the medicines, etc., to which Steiner had made many contributions. But a whole other realm was that of suitable social forms that would be appropriate for each phase of the organization. Here Steiner had not made direct contributions, since this had not been a question, or a felt need, when institutions were only in their infant stage. Lievegoed saw that moral technique—the art of translating moral imagination into practical impulses—would be very important in the search for these new social forms. Development and moral technique were to form the two touchstones of most of his work and literary output.

After getting deeply involved in the Anthroposophical Dutch Society, the doctor helped give birth to the NPI (Institute for Organizational Development)

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<sup>37</sup> Bernard C. J. Lievegoed, *Developing Communities*, 6.



in 1954 and the Free High School (a one-year course for students preparing for university), and worked at the re-fashioning of the First Class of the Dutch Anthroposophical Society. In addition he wrote numerous books, including *The Developing Organization*; *Phases of Childhood*; *Phases: The Spiritual Rhythms in Adult Life*; and *Man on the Threshold: The Challenge of Inner Development*.

Lievegoed remembers that preceding the important initiative of NPI was an experience, which "arose, by chance, as people say." The question came out of the surrounding world: "Could I help in a situation where trainees were causing difficulties when they finished their apprenticeship?"<sup>38</sup> Apart from the social conflicts, this was a major financial drain for the firm. Having no previous experience of industrial life, Lievegoed spent a lot of time listening. He does not tell us how the experience ended, but it probably had a positive outcome, since new developments happened in the succeeding years.

Lievegoed continues: "To my great astonishment there then came a request from our University in Rotterdam, from the Faculty of Social Economics, for me to take over a professional chair for Social Psychology, later Social Pedagogy."<sup>39</sup> It was a completely new field of inquiry and he declined it at first, only to accept it two years later. In 1954 the doctor was involved in the founding of NPI, and became professor of Social Pedagogy at the Netherlands School of Economics in Rotterdam. He accepted, provided he could call it Social Ecology, and that he could teach from experience. The NPI connected with the faculty chair at the School of Economics. The institute was supported by companies such as Shell, Philips, Unilever and AKZO, and it was built from the start as a purely anthroposophical initiative. It was independent from the university, although it had links to it.

NPI made contact with anthroposophy possible when people asked questions about the deeper aspects of its work. Moreover, everyone knew that NPI co-workers were anthroposophists. In addition, Lievegoed wanted people who worked for the NPI to anchor the springboard of their vocation in the work of the First Class of the School of Spiritual Science. He wanted anthroposophists to be in touch with the real problems of people and be able to offer something out of anthroposophy. The most important thing was to be able to offer something specific out of a concrete situation. As he would say, "The good always takes place in a situation."<sup>40</sup> In relation to the above Lievegoed further stated, "Therefore, we also picture to ourselves that moral technique and development are very closely connected, and in fact the whole Social-Pedagogical Institute (NPI) was founded on the concept of development."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Bernard C. J. Lievegoed, *Developing Communities*, 13.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 10.

<sup>40</sup> Bernard J. Lievegoed, *Towards the Twenty-First Century: Doing the Good*, 66.

<sup>41</sup> Lievegoed, *Developing Communities*, 16.

Group work can lead organizations to the experience of what Steiner calls their "new group souls." Here too, Lievegoed's work had much of a pioneer quality. When groups learn to work together and really listen, a moment can arise in which "the group suddenly becomes interesting for the spiritual world."<sup>42</sup> This will remain so, only as long as these special conditions are preserved. And people should make a point of remembering such moments.

### Zeylmans Van Emmichoven and Lievegoed as Mediators

Both Lievegoed and Zeylmans van Emmichoven were good mediators because they could understand the width and breadth of the Foundation Stone Meditation and of the variety of impulses contained within it. Lievegoed could rise to this understanding by apprehending the manifoldness of the human being in the social world; van Emmichoven from the archetypes contained within the Foundation Stone Meditation itself.

Lievegoed was used to the practice of letting spiritual scientific ideas fade in the background, as it were, and to see them re-emerge from experience. He does not refer specifically to streams, such as Aristotelians, Platonists, Rosicrucians, etc. but to paths. He recognizes two paths that encapsulate the strongest polarity and one in between that has a uniting/mediating power. The two, clearly polar, paths he calls:

- a "path through clarity of thought", through which one can perceive reality more clearly and live according to the insights that are derived from it.
- a "path of intervention in the reality of the world through the will, in which man initiates, works and is effective."<sup>43</sup>

Referring to the first two paths Lievegoed concludes: "Thus we have on the one hand the path of the individual who strives mentally, and on the other, the path of the individual who works socially into the earthly foundation process."<sup>44</sup> Taking the example of philosophical matters, pertaining to the first path, Lievegoed points out that here things must be precisely defined. Contrasting this to the second path he comments "However, in the social realm ... one will make no progress in such a way; it is impossible and would be a violation of social life. It leads to an overly strict and inappropriate application of principles in which the drive to form [of the cultural sphere] takes precedence over the living reality."<sup>45</sup> The above basic attitude is,

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 85.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 117.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 118.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 120.

according to Lievegoed, important in the path of the will, the second path, “for will-impulses conflict with each other most drastically of all.”<sup>46</sup>

The path of the will is one that cannot be taken on one’s own; it is the path of community. This is the path that brings us to karmic groups and enables us “to compensate for one another’s deficiencies, where each person’s Intuition is protected by the others.”<sup>47</sup> In these Mysteries we can decide to form a karmic group, not out of the past, but in view of the future. However, nobody can make progress on this path if they do not make progress on the other path [the path through clarity of thought]. And he judges that the reverse is true and that nobody on the individual [cognitive] path will make progress unless they work socially and deliberately with others in listening to what is needed from the future, and sensing what is coming from our pre-birth intentions. Here Lievegoed shows himself in agreement with van Emmichoven’s repeated assertion, in his book *The Anthroposophical Understanding of the Human Soul*, that the soul works as a unity, meaning that all its processes need to be honored to attain a state of balance and health.

In between the two paths, Lievegoed places the “path of soul-perception”, which is also the artistic way. One who walks this path feels pain whenever a concept becomes fixed. He is also unable to participate in intellectually-clever conversations. For a person who follows primarily this path, the soul always experiences new situations, which are fully justified for the individual. In addition, in the soul, each person is unique. One can sense that a lot more could be said about this important, mediating, third path, but Lievegoed did not expand further.

The theme of the Christmas Foundation Meeting and the Foundation Stone Meditation occupied van Emmichoven for many years, and he gave numerous lectures about it. He was in fact one of the first anthroposophists to draw attention to Steiner’s use of the rhythms of the Foundation Stone Meditation. He had meditated on them since 1923. It is worth quoting him at length from his biography, written by his son and biographer: “Practise spirit remembering’ (spirit recollection) not only means that we learn how ‘our own ‘I’ is part of God’s ‘I’ – no, out of cosmic heights we hear resound: ‘From the divine, humanity takes its existence’, the humanity together with which we must come to a brotherly, social community. Thus ‘Practise spirit reflection’ (spirit mindfulness) is a path of schooling for meeting the being of Christ, the cosmic ego, the ‘I’ of humanity, to which in the far-distant future all human beings can find their free relationship. The third task set us, ‘Practise spirit vision’ (spirit beholding), is ultimately the path from natural science to

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 147.

spiritual science, from anthropology to anthroposophy."<sup>48</sup> Notice that van Emmichoven recognizes in spirit remembering (spirit recollection) the path leading to "a brotherly social community." In his book on the Foundation Stone Meditation, van Emmichoven further elaborates on this theme and refers to one of the first exercises in Knowledge of Higher Worlds: looking back over the day's experiences as a spectator. Then he refers to other exercises, such as looking back at particular phases of one's life, concluding "it should really be possible, after several years of these exercises, to look back on one's whole life as a detached observer."<sup>49</sup>

For van Emmichoven spirit recollection was enhanced through a certain natural clairvoyance. On December 17, 1920 van Emmichoven heard Steiner lecturing on the first of three lectures on "The Bridge between Universal Spirituality and the Physical Constitution of Man." When Steiner appeared, a clear experience of recognition emerged in his soul, accompanied by a whole series of images, vaguely recalling "former situations." One of his recollections may have been, as he later confided to his most trusted friends, that of his incarnation as Ptolemy Lagides, one of Alexander the Great's most trusted generals, who became ruler of Egypt (323-283 BC), and founder of the Ptolemaic Dynasty. Ptolemy's life was one of continuous action and adventure. He accompanied Alexander during his earliest Asian campaigns, and was one of the major protagonists in the later Afghanistan and India campaigns.<sup>50</sup>

At the center of spirit mindfulness, van Emmichoven places everything of the nature of meditation. It centers around meditation itself but is also much more. On one hand, it means recognition of the laws of destiny, through which the individual can feel his own I in the world Ego of Christ. On the other hand, it addresses the study of anthroposophy, which can start to acquire a more meditative quality, and become more than reading with the head.<sup>51</sup> Finally, spirit beholding is "The whole path of knowledge which Rudolf Steiner described... and, indeed the whole of anthroposophy, is a path of spiritual practice."<sup>52</sup> In effect, in mentioning the practices, van Emmichoven has outlined cognitively the very same different attitudes that Lievegoed derives from experience.

Both Lievegoed and van Emmichoven fulfilled some of the express wishes of Rudolf Steiner in the Netherlands. Their spiritual master had warned against sectarianism in the Society, and neither doctor could ever be accused of it. Steiner had also indicated that the Society would increasingly need the

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<sup>48</sup> Emanuel Zeylmans, Willem Zeylmans von Emmichoven: An Inspiration for Anthroposophy. A biography, 249.

<sup>49</sup> F. W. Zeylmans van Emmichoven, The Foundation Stone, 42-43.

<sup>50</sup> See more about this in Luigi Morelli, Aristotelians and Platonists: A Convergence of the Michaelic Streams in Our Time, Chapter 7.

<sup>51</sup> F. W. Zeylmans van Emmichoven, The Foundation Stone, 44.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 45.

therapeutic aspect for its work; and van Emmichoven, a doctor and great diplomat, passed the baton to another doctor with specific social therapeutic skills. Not surprisingly, it was from the Dutch Society, and more specifically from van Emmichoven, that arose the possibility of healing the rift that had been opened with the expulsions of prominent anthroposophists and sections of national societies from the Anthroposophical Society in 1935. Lievegoed supported the elder doctor's efforts of reconciliation.

Zeylmans van Emmichoven attended everything that happened in Dornach between December 23, 1923 and January 9, 1924. He was one of the first to realize the crucial importance of the Christmas Meeting and of the Foundation Stone Meditation.

In 1935 van Emmichoven, Ita Wegman and many others were expelled from the General Anthroposophical Society. Lievegoed reveals that van Emmichoven had a heart attack in the train leaving Dornach, and that he suffered deeply under this tragedy. Lievegoed saw him as an eagle with clipped wings. For van Emmichoven had reason to feel wounded. He believed that: "What Rudolf Steiner meant with the Christmas meeting of 1923 is now going to be delayed for decades."<sup>53</sup> Lievegoed himself, at that point, felt that the worldwide Society had lost its right to speak on the world arena. The anthroposophical movement in Dornach further split around the personalities of Albert Steffen and Marie Steiner. Van Emmichoven countered this trend by writing a booklet entitled "Development and Spiritual Conflict."

After the events of 1935 van Emmichoven dedicated much of his life to healing the rift that had occurred within the Anthroposophical Society. In 1948 he tried different ways to approach Dornach. Emil Bock, who was also attempting the same, had conceived the plan of a "Friendship Conference" that would gather a small number of friends to discuss the world situation, and how it needed to be addressed. Through the efforts of van Emmichoven and Karl König fourteen participants convened in June of 1948. They came from the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, and one from America. They spent a week together, occupying the first three days with a study of the Arnhem Karmic Relationships lectures that Steiner had offered in 1924. After that, other Dornach members were invited to join, and in the last day and a half the Executive Committee of the Goetheanum itself. Progress took the form of collaboration between lower-level groups in the respective countries. A conversation also took place in December 1948, but it was marred by Marie Steiner's death, which caused a bit of disarray. On New Year's Eve van Emmichoven gave a lecture; then a small group of fifteen people worked together for three days. The theme of the Christmas Foundation Meeting and its impulse was the thread that united them.

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<sup>53</sup> Bernard Lievegoed, *The Eye of the Needle*, 46.

The initial group enlarged, and it supported the Dutch summer conferences in the following years. This culminated in a 1953 European conference, held in The Hague and attended by 1,200 people. The chosen theme was "The Birth of Europe: A Spiritual Question." There was a conference the following summer, but nothing of import occurred until 1960. At that stage Lievegoed actively encouraged his elder friend to seek a mandate from the members of the Dutch Anthroposophical Society to reunite with the G. A. S. in Dornach. Van Emmichoven took the last steps in order to ensure that reconciliation would happen.

In a letter of September 1959 (presumably addressed to the Goetheanum Vorstand) he announced: "If we [Dutch Anthroposophical Society] are ready to reintegrate with the General Anthroposophical Society, this is because we believe the time is pressing, and that we ought at least to make our contribution to building up a General Anthroposophical Society which deserves the name 'General' because it includes all who see themselves as honest students of Rudolf Steiner." At the Annual General Meeting the following year on Easter Saturday, April 16, 1960, he amended this slightly to "and if people should ask us why we are reintegrating with the General Anthroposophical Society, we can only give one reply: because we wish and have the will to!"<sup>54</sup> Van Emmichoven had accomplished one of his most important tasks just before dying. We have seen that in his efforts van Emmichoven was supported by other individuals who wanted to promote healing impulses. Noticeable among them were the personalities of Karl König, another doctor and of Emil Bock, a priest. We will now turn to the individual who was uniquely placed by karma in the position to play the most important role of reconciliation within the worldwide General Anthroposophical Society—Dr. Ita Wegman.

### Ita Wegman

Ita Wegman was born in Krawang, sixty kilometers east of Jakarta, in Java, on February 22, 1876, almost exactly fifteen years after Steiner. Her given name was Maria, and she was the firstborn.

Wegman lived her early days in an environment that had known practically all the religions of humanity. She grew up playing with native children, speaking Malayan with them, and eating their food. She was very energetic, self-confident, and talented for organization and leadership. She seldom played with dolls or toys, and was an unusual child. While she used to organize games for others, she did not play herself. As a child she scrutinized her parents' acquaintances from head to toe, before opening up to them. Although easily prone to fits of rage, she had a happy, sunny disposition. At school she was a good and ambitious student. Among other things, she had a

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<sup>54</sup> Emanuel Zeylmans, *Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven*, 248-49.



prodigious memory. She busied herself and read books, preferably of history, and very much enjoyed physical activity, loved horseback riding and any kind of adventure in nature.

Her downfall came from her choleric temperament, which could erupt unexpectedly. Her inexact communication caused misunderstandings, and her interference in human relations could make her seem tactless. In her years in Zurich, she was known as the "black panther," and during that time she mentioned she had enemies.

Later in life, Wegman displayed a natural talent for organization, finance, and fundraising. Overall, she lived in action, rather than in ideas, and had a sense for working with people. Rudolf Steiner called her a "person of the deed." Not surprisingly, she wrote little and gave very few public lectures. However, her speech had strength and influence on others. Her talents lay in starting initiatives, and encouraging and supporting others in their professional choices. In her work as a doctor, she had what Steiner called the "courage to heal."

Around 1894 in Java, Wegman had become a friend of Henny Steinbuch, from whom she took singing and piano lessons. Steinbuch was the one who eased Wegman's introduction to Theosophy. At age twenty-one, Wegman became a vegetarian and chose an independent professional life. She studied physical therapy, therapeutic gymnastics, and massage, and in 1902 passed her exam in physical education, which allowed her to teach it in high schools. After completing her studies she left for Berlin, where she probably pursued her training in various methods of physiotherapy, Swedish massage, and hydrotherapy. During these years Wegman accumulated quite a bit of knowledge in anatomy and physiology.

In the spring of 1905, Wegman moved to Zurich, and remained there until 1920. In September 1905 she was accepted in the Sravaka Order of the Esoteric School of the Theosophical Society, as a letter of Steiner indicates. She was part of it until 1908 when she was accepted into a higher class. In letters from that time Wegman wrote to Steiner to ask how she could balance her inner life with the demands of university studies. In 1917 she completed her studies of gynecology and opened a private practice in Zurich.

With the benefit of esoteric discipline, Wegman developed a very high capacity for empathy. Steiner said she had forces of medical inspiration and intuition. "She could live into the symptoms of an illness so intensively that she could take Dr. Steiner's indications as self-understood."<sup>55</sup> Eventually, she mastered, to a degree, the temper that would occasionally flare up even in the later years, especially in the light of the many unjustified attacks. Such was the transformation that Wegman could talk with people of different opinions by first familiarizing herself with their ideas and without antagonizing

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<sup>55</sup> J. E. Zeylmans van Emmichoven, *Who Was Ita Wegman: A Documentation*, Volume I: 1876:1925, 88.

them. She would not dwell on differences or get stuck in fruitless criticism. What conflicts remained usually led to deeper encounters and stronger connections.

Overall, Wegman was definitely a person of the deed; through her the Clinic in Arlesheim came into being, as well as the Haus Sonnenhof, a therapeutic home for mentally handicapped children, the Arlesheim Clinic's annexes in Ascona and Brissago, and the medical centers in Paris, London, and Berlin. In addition, she helped design training courses, create laboratories and organize public conferences.

Rudolf Steiner was in the habit of encouraging the practice of spirit recollection among his closest pupils. Ita Wegman awoke only gradually through it to the recognition of her personal links with Steiner. After all, she had been present at the side of his eternal individuality in all known incarnations. Her progress was fraught with many steps backwards. However, after years of receiving support, Wegman began to become available to Steiner. On New Year's Day 1923, with others, she formed a committee for the reconstruction of the Goetheanum, asking her acquaintances for financial help.

After a meeting on May 27, 1923 at the Villa Hansi, she wrote in her notes: "From that moment on I knew that Rudolf Steiner was my teacher, is my teacher, and will be my teacher in the future."<sup>56</sup> In April 1925 another journal entry reads: "A few months after the fire, the karmic connections between the doctor and myself were revealed to me."<sup>57</sup> This was an enhancement of something that she had already realized in 1905, but was not able to act on at the time. Much karmic residue needed to be burned off, particularly from her incarnation as Alexander the Great, before Wegman recovered the place at Steiner's side that was hers to play by virtue of world karma. Other steps followed.

In the summer of 1923, Steiner went to England and Wales, where he had the occasion to address a group of physicians. Ita Wegman was able to attend sometime after August 23 or 24, and joined the course at Penmaenmawr from the seventh lecture onward. Wegman was disappointed by the courses. She asked Steiner if medicine could become what it was at the time of the Mysteries. It seems she had become ever more conscious of the link that united her to Steiner from previous lives. Steiner did not answer Wegman's question immediately. When he did, he told her that "Mystery medicine shall come to life again." That year, after lectures held in Vienna, Steiner mentioned to people that he was going to write a book with Wegman. The latter, unaware of it, overheard him. In fact Steiner hoped to be able to

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<sup>56</sup> J. E. Zeylmans van Emmichoven, *Who Was Ita Wegman: A Documentation, Volume I: 1876:1925*, Notebook # 42/43, 117.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, Notebook # 1, 117.



collaborate for several volumes, rather than the single one that actually proved possible.

The collaboration leading to *Fundamentals of Therapy* was an unprecedented event in the scientific field. Steiner spent mornings in the studio exploring the themes of the book on the basis of the medical cases they had explored together. In the evenings, when Wegman came to the studio, he described to her the results of his research on a particular theme. Wegman then formulated in her words the particular chapter and summarized the content. Her part was more practical, deriving from what emerged from her experience with the patients, and the way she was able to formulate it in the scientific terms with which she was familiar, given her education. Thus, the research and themes were generated by Steiner; Wegman would let it all grow in her soul and set it down in a preliminary form; and he would further elaborate. The new *Mysteries* were abolishing the strict boundaries between teacher and pupil. Wegman, who had been a pupil in her previous incarnations, was now becoming a full collaborator with Steiner.

In the year 1923, Steiner was undecided about whether to start an International Society with his direct involvement, or a limited Order of Anthroposophy. He seems to have discussed the matter with Wegman too. On November 17, in the Hague, Wegman exclaimed: "But, Dr. Steiner, you can't abandon the Society. You told me this summer how you were thinking of building up the Society under your leadership." Thereupon Dr. Steiner stood up, went to her, took her hands and said with warmth and depth, "Yes, Dr. Wegman, if you help me I will dare it!"<sup>58</sup> Steiner had pondered about founding the Society and leading it with the help of Marie Steiner, but she had not been ready. Her health at the time was too precarious.

Before the crisis that tragically affected the General Anthroposophical Society in the years 1933 to 1935—followed by her expulsion from the Vorstand—Wegman had covered important milestones: she had recognized her karmic connection with Steiner and the incarnations that linked them; she had asked the question about the renewal of medicine, which had led to the collaboration on *Fundamentals of Therapy*; and she had asked the question leading to the renewal of the *Mysteries* and the Christmas Conference.

Wegman also realized in retrospect that, although she had acted selflessly to defend Steiner's heritage, she had not always done it in an effective way. We could say she lacked moral technique – as described in her appraisal by Peter Selg: "[she] was aware of having behaved in some ways too quickly and decisively after 1925, with too much will and too little

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 146: unpublished manuscript quoted by Zeylmans van Emmichoven, *Who Was Ita Wegman: A Documentation*, Volume I.

circumspection, albeit—despite all allegations—with the best of selfless intentions.”<sup>59</sup>

The year 1933 marked the beginning of the crisis. The Annual General Meeting, which was announced for March 27 and 28, included a motion seeking change in the statutes and awarding the signing of the membership cards to Albert Steffen alone.

Before the meeting was called Wegman fell ill. She knew by then that the tensions accumulated over the years went well beyond any possibility of mediation. What was to prove a “providential illness” of unknown cause, worsened as the AGM approached.<sup>60</sup> That this was accompanied with despondency and resignation is clear from a letter written on March 9: “I almost sense a desire rising in me no longer to have anything to do with this false Society. No longer is there any good will to be found in it, but instead an intentional distortion of reality.”<sup>61</sup>

Nevertheless, Wegman found the strength to write to Steffen to state her position against the motion to be introduced at the AGM. Predictably, the motion was passed by an overwhelming majority. Wegman’s health deteriorated further to the point where her life was threatened. Later on, it appears, this was ‘neuralgia’ so severe that “it was impossible for [Wegman] either to speak or work.”<sup>62</sup>

Eventually, her improvement was preceded by a spiritual experience: an encounter with Rudolf Steiner at the side of Christ, which revealed to her that she still had an unfinished task on earth.<sup>63</sup> Henceforth she gained the strength to take her recovery in hand.

Wegman clearly felt that the Christmas Conference had been nullified. Originally it was based on a constellation of key individuals, through whom people in the various streams could find access to anthroposophy. Upon this lay the importance for Steiner of creating a Vorstand (governance) body, which he knew was fraught with tensions, but which nevertheless recognized the need to encompass all the streams that worked with Michael and Christ for the furthering of civilization on earth.

Wegman resolved after her spiritual experience to resist the urge to create a new Society. Focusing on the spiritual tenor of human connections, and without creating new external forms, she was both able to accept the very grim reality all around her and declare nevertheless “My heart still beats joyfully...”<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Peter Selg, *Spiritual Resistance: Ita Wegman, 1933-1935*, 149.

<sup>60</sup> For a full account of illness written down by Wegman see Peter Selg, *Spiritual Resistance*, notes pp. 231-233.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, 67.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, p. 165.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*, 81-83. See more about the experience, 159-60.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, 91.

Wegman's recovery had already taken place away from Dornach, in Ascona, Switzerland. From there she knew it was not time yet to return to Dornach. The doctor realized that in order to regain strength from the illness she needed to take distance from the recent tragic events. She accomplished this goal with a series of interrelated steps in what outwardly appears solely as a vacation, or time of convalescence. She decided to travel to Italy, Istanbul and Palestine.

The decision to visit Palestine was deeply connected with her Christ experience. It was potentized through the possibility of reading Emil Bock's notes on the Christ event (which later became part of his books). These allowed her to see the polarities at work in the geography of Palestine and in the individuals working around Christ in his three-year ministry. Deepening the Christ impulse allowed her to carry her own cross joyfully. Moreover, and just as importantly, she was reconnecting with the Greek culture and with her previous incarnations, most importantly the one of Alexander the Great.

About her traveling, Wegman tells us: "The verse 'Practice Spirit Recollection,' which Steiner gave us at the Christmas Foundation Meeting, really is true. One can practice this on a journey; and so a trip of this kind becomes, more than recuperation, a voyage of knowledge and increasing insight, so that traveling itself acquires a greater purpose."<sup>65</sup> She repeats this later: "It is true that by traveling one can really practice the Christmas Foundation Stone verse 'Practice Spirit Recollection.' In this sense my convalescence vacation was also a journey of deepening insight."<sup>66</sup>

Though not detailed by Selg, we know that spirit recollection was one of her goals in her journeys. In a letter to van Emmichoven, Wegman wrote about her extensive journey through Greece, two or three years earlier: "For me, the finest experience was to let the landscape of each Mystery site work on me in such a way that one could recall that Aristotle, Plato, Alexander had seen the same landscape and found great joy in their beauty. Thus the present started to fall away, and one could live completely into ancient times, could experience Ptolemy's enthusiasm for the great Cabiri spirits to which he gave expression in his Ptolemy temple, whose foundations and pillars still lie around, as well as in the Arsineium. And it made a strange impression on me to read, in Greek, on a great gable stone, the clear words: 'Here Ptolemy and Veronica honor the great Cabiri.'"<sup>67</sup> Notice here the insistence on Ptolemy, a general of Alexander the Great. Wegman was knowingly referring to the individual with whom van Emmichoven knew himself united in the course of time.

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 134.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 136

<sup>67</sup> F. W. Zeylmans van Emmichoven, *The Anthroposophical Understanding of the Human Soul*, 238.

About her effort of spirit recollection, Wegman also says immediately before the quotes given above: "The wealth of experiences I was granted has been hugely valuable for my further path."<sup>68</sup> You can gain the feeling that she saw and/or reflected upon her Alexander incarnation, and did not mention these experiences—far too controversial at the time—and gained detachment and empathic understanding for problems she had helped to create in an incarnation that led to a premature death. The above is also candidly confirmed in a letter to W. J. Stein: "It is my karma to stand at the very center of these things, [accusations and allegations] and also to be the focus of all attacks."<sup>69</sup>

The transformational effect of this healing journey was already visible by the following Christmas when in a letter Wegman wrote: "There is still conflict in Dornach no doubt, but I am no longer in the least bothered about this. For me, conflict and battle in the physical world are maya. Spiritually things look very different, and I adhere to this spiritual stance and arrange my life with a sense of faithful connection to Rudolf Steiner."<sup>70</sup>

In seeing the hatred coming towards her she judged: "I, too, believe that those who find such degrees of hatred within them are not the originators of it, but that powers stand behind them who are working to weaken the Anthroposophical Society."<sup>71</sup> And further: "This is how I see it: spiritual beings need nourishment, a spiritual nourishment that only human souls can give them, which can proceed from a particular inner stance, one which contains selfless will for sacrifice. If souls can affirm the severe trials that come toward them, then this can result in positive effects for the future."<sup>72</sup>

After the providential illness, the spiritual experience and the extensive traveling allowing the distancing and gaining of perspective, the test came when the doctor received the Memorandum written, in great part, against her in 1935. She recalled: "When I picked up this memorandum, my heart started racing a little and the thought surfaced in me—'Now you will be tested as to how you react to this attack.' However, I myself was very surprised indeed after reading it to find that I felt nothing at all. I was neither angry nor sad. The whole thing was alien to me. I found that I had distanced myself entirely from the matters dealt with in the Memorandum. I was extremely pleased at this, and see that it concludes ten years of suffering, and that my illness had also played a part in this."<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Peter Selg, *Spiritual Resistance: Ita Wegman, 1933-1935*, 133.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 165; see also note p. 262.

<sup>70</sup> Peter Selg, *Spiritual Resistance: Ita Wegman*, 142-43.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 161.

<sup>72</sup> Peter Selg, *Spiritual Resistance: Ita Wegman*, 170-71. Wegman also wrote "I have the feeling that these things are inevitable, a matter of destiny, and so I am tranquil and await what is spiritually intended." (Ibid, 162).

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 169.

Ita Wegman did much more than withholding herself from conflict. She also literally created a space in her heart where others could meet and bridges could be created. "Slowly, very slowly, one has to rebuild things—perhaps this can only happen in the heart—so that this vessel [the Anthroposophical Society or what would replace it] arises in purity again."<sup>74</sup> This is the new place where she could arrive, thanks to her work of spirit recollection, her Christ experience and connection to the Christ impulse, not to mention her faithfulness to Steiner.

In Wegman's reconciliation stance lies another example of free deed, which to some degree can be called 'free willing.' Wegman had found in her heart a connection with her deeper karmic being—her connections to Steiner's eternal being in all previous lives—and to the Christ being—both through a direct Christ experience but most of all through her literal walking on the footsteps of Christ Jesus in Palestine. Thus she could truly create the ground of the good from within her heart. From her comprehensive knowledge of anthroposophy both in science and in social matters she could also direct what she had rooted in her heart. Her free deed was both profoundly insightful and future-looking and the fruit of deep compassion and reverence.

Writing to the biologist Poppelbaum, who attacked her at the time, Wegman expresses that she wants to hold in her heart the image of who he really is, rather than the person who is presently attacking her. And mentioning a spiritual union between people in order to prevent a split in the Society she explains her effort of "... offering a place for those who do not wish to ally themselves with any party."<sup>75</sup> This also meant fully accepting those who were allied to parties; no distinction could be made in fact in fostering a place of meeting. Part of this opening one's heart is done in order "to take this tragedy upon oneself, at the same time maintaining a clear, spiritual protest, and through quiet, fruitful work in smaller groups prepare for the new situations that must eventually emerge."<sup>76</sup>

When her friends rallied around her from England, Holland and Germany, there was an intention of giving anthroposophy an alternative form to the one existing in Dornach, and placing Steiner's mantle upon her shoulders. She did not feel comfortable with it. She steered a middle course, not out of compromise or weakness, but out of the attitude of the one who listens inwardly to what the spirit is calling her to be and consequently to do, an act of true Inspiration. We owe thus to the efforts of people like van Emmichoven and Lievegoed that the Anthroposophical Society preserved its unity, and most of all to the spiritual exertion of Ita Wegman.

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<sup>74</sup> Peter Selg, *Spiritual Resistance*, 158.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, 258.

<sup>76</sup> Peter Selg, *Spiritual Resistance*, **FIND PAGE**

## Walter Johannes Stein: Scientist and Historian

Reviewing his life W. J. Stein saw himself as a lecturer in Anthroposophy and someone who tried to help other people. In fact towards the end of his life he held daily therapeutic practice. He did not see these activities as a profession. Rather it was his unflinching dedication to anthroposophy and to world economy that formed a long thread among his various pursuits. Earlier on he had also been a Waldorf teacher and a publisher.

Stein's biography can be traced along a line that unites Vienna to Stuttgart and London; from the capital of a declining multi-ethnic empire to the de-facto and short-lived 'capital' of the threefold Social Order, to London, the bustling center of a worldwide empire in the second part of his life. What was the thread that brought together this geography?

### Stein in Vienna: Early Childhood

Born on 6 February 1891, Walter Johannes Stein was almost exactly thirty years younger than Steiner. He inherited from both sides of the Empire: from a father who was Hungarian by birth, a lawyer and interpreter; from an Austrian mother of Jewish descent, who later contributed in bringing the son to Anthroposophy. The older brother, Friedrich took most from the father, Walter from the mother.

The mother confided years later that the baby was hard to feed and had been saved by a wet-nurse. As a child three key scenes summarized his relationships with the members of his family. From his father he remembered first learning to hold veneration for the divine; from his mother he was awakened to the dimension of maternal love. From his brother, one may say a modern knight, he acquired the incentive towards self-improvement.

Other experiences, small as they may seem, tell us a great deal about the future personality. Stein remembered quite clearly the first glimmer of individuality. While an infant his nanny had put him to the test of crossing the road on his own, while hiding on the other side of it. Stein remembers "... my self was spread out over the space in which she was. She and the tree were within my experience of self, and though the little body down there felt something like fear at being left alone, the true self rejoiced in this fear and in the feeling, 'I am an I,' which went with it."<sup>77</sup>

He knew from this moment the dual experience of feeling oneself in the whole environment and on the other hand within his body, which later he understood philosophically as "the dual nature of the lower and higher self in man." This experience also repeated itself upon falling asleep when he could

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<sup>77</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 11. Stein acquired a dispassionate perception of the forces of destiny at work in his own life by "by dint of earnest effort" commenting that "... everyone has such experiences, only most people overlook them." Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 20.



see himself go out of himself, and felt the “[self] enveloping [him] as if it were a second and much smaller starry firmament.”<sup>78</sup>

An experience at age nine formed another turning point, the importance of which appeared later in review. It was the silent love for a German-American girl six years older, to which he related much as a “soul-guide.” He used to accompany her on walks, and she awakened in him through an innocent love the feeling for the reality of another person’s soul. It was this first glimmer of love that awakened him from the child’s world of dreams, and opened wide the soul’s appreciation for nature, for its beauty filled with spirit. He saw that it was this love that helped him penetrate ever so slightly beyond the veil of the senses. With the benefit of hindsight he could say “... we discover that all knowledge really rests on love and, moreover, that all truly selfless love is knowledge.”<sup>79</sup>

Death entered the child’s horizon in two ways; from his own and his father. During childhood he became dangerously ill from an undiagnosed illness. He was seen by a sympathetic and famous physician. He liked the doctor and his treatment ideas—quite simply more meat—and therefore decided to cooperate at getting better.

His father soon died from diabetes and the young Walter was at his side when it happened. He felt incapable of tears, not experiencing anything, quite at the other end of the spectrum from his brother Friedrich. He recalled “At this moment it became clear that the human being can uplift himself in mind and spirit into a world that abides eternally in silence, far beyond the surging waves of pain and passion.”<sup>80</sup> Once again he had a feeling of the “I am” and felt closeness with his father in the spirit. The experience gave him the ability to differentiate between what it means to live in the body, in the expression of feelings and emotions in the soul, and in the spirit beyond emotions.

### Stein the Scientist

As a child Stein manifested interest in technical and mechanical matters. The dome of St. Peter fascinated him in relation to the technique of its building, not for its art. And this was the direction towards which Stein saw himself bound.

The Schottegymnasium, which he attended, was run by Benedictines and the lively quality of their pedagogy, not to mention some strong personalities, awakened the child’s interest in various directions. Very soon he was marked by the striking personality of Vincent Knauer, the librarian through whom Steiner himself had become acquainted to the “Aristotelian spiritual schooling.”

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 40.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 33.



Through Knauer he was first familiarized with the Aristotelian concepts of "form" and "matter," and thus started questioning the materialistic assumptions of the time. One example that struck him was that of a rectangular plate of glass, which can carry more weight after some matter—two semi-circles on either side—have been removed from it. He concluded "Such experiments brought me to the conviction that it is form and not matter which supports us, and from which we receive the sense-impressions we sum up as the 'material world.'"<sup>81</sup>

Stein further embarked on a journey of discovery into the foundations of mechanical physics, and the realities of time, space and substance. He wanted to penetrate to a full understanding of the deeper reality and evolution of nature. This became his avenue to Anthroposophy. Soon after his meeting with Anthroposophy he inwardly identified as a Christian Aristotelian.

*Occult Science* was the first of Steiner's books to come into Stein's hands. In first reading about warmth Stein first felt at odds with the author, believing Steiner was missing the latest scientific views about heat; reading further he noticed how aware Steiner actually was of all the latest theories. Therefore, in coming to this new worldview thereafter, he knew he could only wholeheartedly accept it or reject it and that, if positive, this was going to alter his life irreversibly. He later recognized three phases in his gradual acceptance:

- he first saw that Steiner's thoughts were consistent but doubted they were true
- comparing Steiner's views with all other religions and philosophies, he realized that what Steiner offered could encompass all of them.
- finally, comparing Steiner's scientific methodology to that of natural science, he noticed that when Steiner diverged he did so with good reason. He saw that his views were consistent with nature's reality.

Having tested the ideas, he proceeded to test the person! He first heard Steiner lecturing on January 20, 1913 (no notes have survived). He spoke of the transformation of the forces of the soul into powers of cognition: thinking into Imagination, feeling into Inspiration, willing into Intuition. During the lecture Stein tested whether Steiner was clairvoyant by formulating thoughts and seeing if Steiner picked them up, then discarding them as possible coincidences when they happened, until after the lecture he handed a paper slip with a question to the lecturer.

Steiner first answered in a general way, but then came back and addressed the question anew, indicating he did so according to the train of thought of the one who had generated the question. This finally convinced the

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<sup>81</sup> Walter Johannes Stein, *The Death of Merlin: Arthurian Myth and Alchemy*, 31.

young man. Coming up to Steiner, Stein told him he recognized who he was and that he wanted to become his pupil.

Steiner's first remark, so prophetic for Stein's future, was "I take it you know English." He then assigned him the reading of the works of Berkeley and Locke—one denying the existence of matter, the other strictly bound to sense perception, adding "then write a theory of cognition of spiritual knowledge, avoiding both of these one-sided points of view ... learn to know the fullness of the world through Aristotle, and the act of cognition itself through the philosophy of Fichte."<sup>82</sup> The latter part referred to the fact that Aristotle, like all Greeks received his thoughts as perceptions; the modern Fichte, like Stein, had to exert spiritual activity into his thinking. The new assignment, the natural continuation of the studies that Stein had initiated, was to yield a rich harvest. Later on Stein recalled that through the meeting he understood he wanted to be a pupil of the Spirit of the Age, and that it had helped him awaken memories of his pre-natal existence.

While Europe was preparing for war Stein joined the artillery, and now he had to carry his studies on the battlefield. The youth had been most impressed by "[Steiner's] glance as it glowed during the lectures." With the inspiration he received from it he was able to go through the experiences of war in inner peace. "And from this peace in the midst of battle there arose my deep love for that which this glance had conveyed to me."<sup>83</sup>

One could be surprised about how he lived the days of battle, partly as a matter of fact, and how he celebrated the closeness with nature and the leisure to devote himself to prolonged observation. Naturally war also had the effect of testing his inner powers under fear of death, and Stein felt a loosening of his soul from the body. This was all the more so since he gave up the solace of alcohol under the express request of Steiner.

In between military activities Stein kept elaborating the dissertation. He continued to study Locke and Berkeley and even tried to understand them from the original, mustering a certain knowledge of English. And he asserted "When I came home from the front, the whole work was before me in my mind's eye, completed."<sup>84</sup> But this was just the foundation of the work, so to speak. More needed to be integrated to the whole.

Stein was still struggling in moving from thinking about the two philosophers' thoughts to experiencing them. Therefore he felt he could not yet reach spiritual ground. In what is a leitmotif in his writing Stein expressed that he experienced through love the being of the loved one directly within himself. This was for him intuitive knowledge. He wanted to elevate compassion and love in the act of perception in order to awaken to spiritual

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<sup>82</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 32.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, 54.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, 56.

reality. "Love (through perception) transforms the objective utilitarian world into a world of revelation for the beings of the hierarchies."<sup>85</sup>

Stein still couldn't find the inner thread around which to build and weave his dissertation. He therefore turned to Steiner, who advised him to transform every occult fact into concept. And he gave him the book *Anthroposophy [A Fragment]*, which he said he had been unable to conclude, since it had been difficult to translate his imaginations due to too high a limitation of language.

Stein then hit upon the realization that he could build his book chapters around the twelve scenes of Goethe's fairy tale without letting out the occult content of the images. Steiner suggested changes and asked to suppress one chapter. The final title became *Historical Critical Contribution Concerning the Development of Modern Philosophy*. Stein received class honors and brought to an end in 1918 the process which had started with his meeting with Steiner in 1913.

Steiner weighed in the progress of his pupil and warned him about his future: "You have grown up in Anthroposophy as by a matter of course; as a result of this and just because you know so much and are so mobile in your thinking, you will encounter great personal difficulties with regard to the tasks with which you will be confronted in your search for knowledge. You may succeed in adding to that fulness the most beautiful gift of all; you may be able to give to your audience the whole of yourself."<sup>86</sup>

Everything that Stein did in his gymnasium years, and then more strongly from 1913 to 1918, was like a retracing of Steiner's steps. In his studies he had been influenced by Vincent Knauer, whom Steiner appreciated, and from another side by Karl Julius Schröer, who had taught and deeply touched Rudolf Steiner. In effect Stein, until then reputed slow by his teachers, had surprised them all with an essay in which he deeply penetrated Schröer's thesis that German cultural ferment was the reborn expression of ancient Greece.

Another curious detour of destiny brought Stein during the war close to Rudolf Steiner's birthplace, in Wiener Neustadt. It was here that his regiment was first stationed. And on March 1916 he returned to the hospital of the region due to a suspected typhoid. In his exploration of the area Stein was touched by how special the place felt, not just in a sentimental way, but on the basis of the presence of plants and animals that were not present elsewhere in the neighboring districts.<sup>87</sup> He recorded: "One had the feeling here that everywhere around the heavens are close at hand."<sup>88</sup> Clearly there

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<sup>85</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 54.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*, 5-6.

<sup>87</sup> Walter Johannes Stein, *The Death of Merlin: Arthurian Myth and Alchemy*, 45.

<sup>88</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 163.

was some urge in Stein's meeting with Steiner and his scientific work as Stein himself later commented.<sup>89</sup>

Another aspect of Stein's encounter with anthroposophy is worth mentioning here. It also occurred in the pivotal year 1913. Although immediately at home in Anthroposophy he had no desire to join the Anthroposophical Society until this was a prerequisite for seeing the Mystery Dramas. For this purpose Steiner consented in giving him a provisional membership and Stein soon realized he had been a fool not to join.

In assisting to the performance of *The Guardian of the Threshold* he recognized the drama of his own search for knowledge. In *the Secrets of the Threshold* lecture cycle around the dramas, Stein was impressed by what Steiner indicated in relation to the events of the ninth century and the Church's Council of Constantinople of 869, which stamped out knowledge of the spirit. What was argued on the basis of the doctrine that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son led, a century later, to the split between Eastern and Western Churches. The events were echoed in the twentieth century in the new split between East and West. These themes later became important for Stein's life and found their way into his book about the ninth century and the Grail. They would start to play a crucial role soon after Rudolf Steiner's death, especially after an intervening preparatory spiritual experience.

#### Stein in Stuttgart: Threefolding and Waldorf School

The period of Steiner's presence in Stuttgart is marked by a brief interlude as lecturer for the threefold social order, then thirteen years as a Waldorf teacher. In the midst of it were two important turning points; the spiritual experience of March 9, 1924 almost a year before Steiner's death, and the turmoil that followed in the General Anthroposophical Society.

Stein felt at the end of the war as if standing "before an empty void." He had little resources and no occupation, and depended on the help of his friends. Moreover, the situation in Germany was chaotic, dangerous and violent.

Stuttgart was at the time the place where much of anthroposophical initiative originated. Stein was looking for a way to serve the one to whom he had sworn loyalty. This coincided with the period in which Steiner saw the urgency of bringing the fruits of anthroposophy to bear upon practical needs. Chief among these, and one to which he devoted great energy, was the propagation of new social ideas, what we know as "threefold social order."

On July 1917 Stein arrived in Berlin, at a time in which Steiner wanted a Memorandum on the new ideas about threefolding to get into the hands of the Emperor Karl of Austria. Count Polzer-Hoditz was apparently uneasy about the task. Stein offered to take it up even before knowing what it was. "In case

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid, 223.

of emergency I will swallow it" he declared jokingly. Steiner consented but first informed the bold young man.

At the end of January 1919 Steiner issued the proclamation "To the German People and the Civilized World." The founding of free schools was already part of that program. Then Steiner stepped into the fray by making the new ideas known to a wide audience beyond the immediate anthroposophical circles. Stein, then twenty-eight, was ushered in by Molt upon Steiner's request. In the interview with Steiner he noted down, among other things in his journal "evolve towards initiation."<sup>90</sup> Steiner posted him in Vienna as a lecturer, and Stein did it continuously though with little means for three months, while simultaneously defending his dissertation.

When the efforts to promote threefolding encountered mounting opposition from political parties, and Steiner's very life was threatened by Nazi hooligans, the time came for the impulse to take its next natural step, the setting up of independent cultural initiatives, which led to the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart.

The industrialist Emil Molt supported the new movement financially. Steiner was faced with the difficult task of finding teachers. Many had to step into it as a new profession. Stein was part of the initial circle, even if just as an observer and "temporary guest." For him the lecture and the festive mood clearly formed a life's turning point. He remained because Steiner told him he could "help in many ways." He was the last and twelfth of the group, and a "spare teacher" and librarian. Stein was convenient to Steiner as a spare since this allowed him to resume lecturing on behalf of the Anthroposophical Society. Steiner jokingly asserted "I keep Stein for my great effects."<sup>91</sup> In effect he called upon him to present the scientific work and the basis of anthroposophy to the public.

In the newly founded Waldorf School Stein naturally expected to teach mathematics and physics. Recalling that Steiner asked him to switch to history and literature, he later commented: "I still remember my despair."<sup>92</sup> Yet, his classes were very lively, as was his rapport with his students. Rudolf Grosse remembers "It was as though the Golden Age of Scholasticism had been revived."<sup>93</sup> He impersonated history; he recreated it within and acted it out.

We could say that in this new vocation and new direction lay another important turning point. Yet still a small one in comparison with what followed a few years later.

### *Spiritual Experience and Karmic Turmoil*

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<sup>90</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 75.

<sup>91</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 118.

<sup>92</sup> Walter Johannes Stein, *The Death of Merlin* 61.

<sup>93</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 92.

On March 9, 1924 the teacher Karl Schubert was holding the so-called Youth Service, devised by Steiner, in the Stuttgart school. Stein remembers "... [His] religious zeal freed from the body, brought the soul before the countenance of God and into contact with Christ."<sup>94</sup> Stein had lost consciousness and needed medical assistance.

Rudolf Steiner confirmed the reality of the experience in a letter to Stein. In a later note under the title of "Rudolf Steiner as Comforter" what Stein says points to the nature of his 1924 experience. "There are moments in life in which one is suddenly surrounded by light, in which one radiates a love of which one is certainly not capable oneself; a love which is so powerful that one cannot even imagine it later. In such moments the soul can feel the might of Christ. ... The unexpected thing about these Christ experiences lies in the fact that the figure of Christ does not appear outwardly, but rises out of currents within one's body and bears one in its love. ... This 'being carried by Christ's love' can be experienced. I would like to say: What one can thus experience in festive moments of life was present continually in Rudolf Steiner. He was a personality borne by the love of Christ."<sup>95</sup>

What Steiner said about the experience is worth quoting at length: "That you have arrived at this experience is a good result of the living way you have devoted yourself to concrete ideas out of the spiritual world. Now accept with complete serenity the fact that the soul-spirit part of you will be carried by your ideas into the experience of the spirit. Observe the following:

1. Calm spreads out over the whole realm of my soul
2. I gratefully receive what the spirit wishes to reveal to me
3. I wish to remain calm, so that my destiny can give shape to what is to come about through me out of the experiences I have observed ...<sup>96</sup>

What Stein experienced felt like an image of his own destiny. It also revealed to him that this had happened at the precise mid-point of his biography. He felt that a period brought about by nature—the first ascending part of life culminating at age thirty-three—was coming to an end. He stood at "the abyss of the individuality." On the other side was a possible growth of the spirit in him.

Stein wrote about the results of his experience and his "seeking for certainty of knowledge in the realm of experience founded on *meditative devotion*."<sup>97</sup> (emphasis added) He expressed the insight that intuitive knowledge allows access to the consciousness of "other beings or one's own being in former lives on earth."<sup>98</sup> After talking with Steiner on April 27, the

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid, 96.

<sup>95</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 235.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, 96.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, 99.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.



latter gave him a meditation that summed up the results of Stein's future path thus:

My head bears the being  
Of the resting stars  
My breast harbors the life  
Of the wandering stars  
My body lives and moves  
Amid the elements  
This am I.<sup>99</sup>

After the spiritual experience Stein's finer bodies had loosened. In his continued meditative practice he engaged in new fields of exploration. The newly invested historian endeavored to study karmic connections. At times he felt impelled to reveal some of his results but consulted with Steiner who asked him to refrain. Inspired by the study of the *Karmic Relationships* lectures he had recognized "the various directions of will and groupings of destiny in the educational movement."<sup>100</sup> He was hoping that these discoveries would allow people to understand the sources of discord and promote karmic progress. His biographer, Johannes Tautz, confirms that through the karma exercises Stein observed changes in his dream life and continuity of consciousness in sleep which deepened his understanding of destiny and directed him towards the Grail research that he pursued for years.

The spiritual experience turned out to be both a blessing and a challenge, however. Stein became one of the most important teachers and one of the most successful lecturers. This led to mounting opposition, then to attacks, until in 1932, in preparation for the Anthroposophical Society members' meeting, he was judged in absentia. When he resigned from the Waldorf School, this led to protests about his decision, and further aggravations and misunderstandings, events in which we can hear an echo of Steiner's prophetic words. But to be clear, Stein himself had a responsibility that he was ready to assume.

Stein held very clearly stated positions and fought for these with determination, and ultimately this brought him to the decision of resigning from both school and Society. Shortly after his thirteenth year at the Waldorf School, he left Germany never to live there again. Looking back to the experience Stein judged he had gone through an important inner test. Because he was starting to move beyond the threshold he felt torn between following convention or being led by fanaticism. "It is clear to me how much my capacity for love has been taken away from me owing to the fact that I can penetrate beyond the senses ... It is like getting to know those soul powers

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 99-100.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, 135.



of the depths which appear to imaginative perception in the form of the 'double'.<sup>101</sup> And in effect at times and places Stein had been very resolute and unyielding.

Johannes Tautz describes Stein thus: "there was something volcanic in his nature, and the way he rode out to attack his enemies and dispense his wordy blows reminded some people of a medieval knight forcing his foes to surrender by his bold sword strokes."<sup>102</sup> The following is an example of Stein's ardor in protecting Anthroposophy and Steiner from its opponents, in countering a certain Professor Friedrich Traub in 1919. In a letter to his wife Stein says "It was a fight to the death. ... I portrayed Traub as a man without scruple who was completely ignorant of the subject he was dealing. He was only able to stammer his final words. He was a broken man. ... But I went on speaking quietly, pointing at Professor Traub and said: 'There is your authority!' I was acclaimed and was victorious. The man is finished. I am still half dead."<sup>103</sup> It is as if intellect and body were melded in a single will.

Stein's overzealousness becomes more understandable when we look at the expression of his larger individuality. He was saved further mishaps, however, by a capacity to mercilessly look at and acknowledge his personal flaws.

### Stein the Historian

With the spiritual experience Stein indicates he had acquired the capacity of looking back at previous lives. Soon after he took the resolve of writing a Grail book, having discovered his "spiritual home in the landscape of the Grail." He had recognized himself in the person of the hermit Trevrizent, whom Albrecht von Scharfenberg calls the "deed-hasty." In that incarnation he played a role in compensating for other people's shortcomings. After Amfortas's transgression, described in the Parzival legend, Trevrizent, who did not have such a natural inclination, renounced the knighthood and took on a hermit's life in service of the Grail.<sup>104</sup>

The inner recognition deepened Stein's awareness of the connection between ninth and twentieth centuries, and of the new confrontation between the powers of the Grail and the opposing ones of Klingsor—in effect black magic. What had been a premonition, from his early awakening in relation to the Mystery Dramas, now became a lived experience.

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<sup>101</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 81.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid*, 113.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>104</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 110. It is of further interest that Steiner wanted to create a center for spiritual research and training. In relation to this he had a vision of a Grail Castle and he tried to ascertain whether he was worthy of entering it. He wrote to Steiner about it asking to be given access and pledging to purify his thinking and will for the purpose.

Another lifetime broke through the veil of consciousness on June 27, 1924; at that date the mention of a "retrospect of past life" appears in his diary. He wrote about it to Steiner, and when they met Steiner confirmed it was the memory of Stein's last death—a violent one. This is not unusual since recall of a traumatic death is often one of the first memories to emerge from a previous life. Stein traced it to the Portuguese knight and Viceroy of India, Francisco Almeida (1450-1510) at an important time in relation to the ushering of the epoch of the Consciousness Soul. Steiner confirmed him.

What brought the recollection can be attributed to the kind of experience in which someone says to the individual something unpleasant that irritates and hurts his feelings. And this is the experience that one has to work into a living picture and carry into the night three times in a row.<sup>105</sup> This is one of the specific exercises, the so called "Greater Karma Exercise" that Steiner offered as a tool for karmic recognition and insight.

After having surfaced the memory of his Almeida incarnation Steiner enjoined Stein to bring the experience back to memory, deepen it in meditation, and illuminate it with everything that life could bring him, but refrain from interpreting it; in essence just observe and notice how things present themselves metamorphosed in the present life. And he suggested "You can have a good control over the truth of an inner experience if, at the same time as you meet it in inner experience, it confronts you outwardly in the form of karma."<sup>106</sup> We will bring up a couple of examples of seemingly fortuitous outer 'confrontations' or synchronicities.

Steiner recommended Stein the historian, to collect everything that external history had to offer, complement it with active imagination and let it re-emerge after sleep, noticing how it changed. This is what Stein did in relation to both Trevrizent and Almeida, seeking extensive historical confirmation.

Seven years after his recall Stein had the opportunity to visit Portugal where circumstances brought him the support of a rich patron. Stein relived pictures of his battles against the Moors as a Knight of St. James of Compostela (Knights of Santiago) in arriving at the city. In vision he beheld the pilgrims coming into the city and recognized the figure of Basil Valentine, with whom Almeida accomplished an important deed for world evolution, and for which he paid with his life.

Once more he established connections with people who furthered his research, gained access to the state archives, held in his hands the letters that Almeida had written, and saw the gravestone that said "first Viceroy of India, who never lied and never ran away." In meeting with the being of

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<sup>105</sup> See Steiner's lecture of May 9, 1924 in *Karmic Relationships*, volume 2.

<sup>106</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 106.

Almeida Stein comments "his own self confronted him as something foreign."<sup>107</sup>

Stein recognized in the harbor of Belém the place from where the Spirit of the Age set forth in the fifteenth century under the inspiration of such great individualities as Henry the Navigator, Grand Master of the Order of Christ, who inherited the riches of the Templars and continued their impulse. Such an impulse acquired greater meaning in Stein's life.

The figure of Almeida was to play an important part in Stein's later life and mission. Portugal is that country that ushered in the transition from the Medieval consciousness to the Consciousness Soul and paved the way for the preparation of the English mission. The Portuguese did this through their voyages of discovery and by opening the East-West trade routes, which they wrested from the Arabs.

Stein sees the great knightly orders that followed the Templars as "the instruments of the spirit of modern time." The sword was needed in order to contend the trade from the Arabs. And that fight had its epilogue in the siege of Granada, the last stronghold of the Arabs in Europe, in which Almeida was present.

Among the treasure of the Moors was a sacred relic that was considered connected with "a form of alchemy", therefore a relic able to impart knowledge that goes back to Alexander the Great and Aristotle. Almeida came in its possession, judging he could decide how to dispose of it. The Order of the Knights of St. James wanted it for itself. Almeida eventually passed it on to a certain alchemist, Stefan Rautter, known to history as Basil Valentine. His opus was later published by the Rosicrucians.

Valentine himself mentions that he undertook a dangerous journey to Compostela. The alchemist is famous for his work on the transmutation of carbon, known as *prima materia*. He could perceive the human being's threefold constitution of body, soul and spirit. Of Basil Valentine Steiner says that Aristotle's views of nature continued in his writings, of which only the *Twelve Keys* survived. Thus Aristotle's scientific writings, or rather the essence of these, went from Greece to the Arabs and returned via Spain to the West. What could be called the *Royal Art* went from Almeida to Alsace instead of remaining in Spain. Later, as Valentine mentions, he went to England where Thomas Malory became his pupil. Stein indicates that proof of his discipleship appears in Malory's seventh chapter of *Morte d'Arthur*.

On account of displeasing some in his order, Almeida was recalled to the motherland and assassinated while he was on the way, in the Bay of Saldana (South Africa). What Almeida intuited was the coming of a new world order in which it would be necessary to transmit a certain knowledge not to the old nations of the fourth epoch but to those who were preparing the fifth one. Here the knowledge of the mixing of substances within the human being, dear

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid, 172.

to alchemy, may be transformed in knowledge of the collaboration between many nations in the development of a world economy. This gift was to materialize in the Germanic and Anglo-Saxon peoples. We will see what form this will take in Stein's writings and lecturing below.

In the letters that Almeida wrote to the king—which Stein may have read—already appears a far sighted understanding of history “In Alexander's time the interior of the country [India] had to be occupied; we, however, must rest content with fortifying certain points along the coast and thus securing the ocean path to India, for we must now wrest the trade from the hands of the Arabs and must take their place.”<sup>108</sup>

Alexander had died prematurely and the Arabs were therefore not Hellenized. This later brought the necessity of the Crusades and the war against the Arabs at the time of the great discoveries. When the Portuguese mission was brought to an end through Spanish occupation, the baton was passed on first to the Dutch, then to the British.

In summing up the experience of his journeys through Portugal, Spain and beyond, Stein knew “Everything I experienced on this journey has a significance for the future, although it has been determined by past events.” With his knowledge become love, and love become knowledge, Stein could devote the rest of his life to the West and live in London to the point of making the British Isles his home and hardly returning to Germany. He did in effect carry the tasks of Trevrizent and Almeida further and in a very conscious fashion. He had understood how the Grail experience had metamorphosed from the Middle Ages to the present. He had seen how the Portuguese mission had promoted the furtherance of world economy.

Stein indicates clearly the importance and relevance of history for the present in relation to his Grail research: “What the present can gain by a spiritual interpretation of history, this is what we wish to show: for no other reason would we be engaged in research into the history of the Grail.”<sup>109</sup> It is this recognition of the continuity and evolution of spiritual impulses that allowed him to unconditionally say yes to his destiny.

Looking back to these incarnations Stein could no doubt also recognize and transform those tendencies that were no longer appropriate for the time, such as his surviving knightly zeal and ‘deed-hastiness.’ He could better appraise his part in past events and set the course straight for the task of the larger Michaelic movement.

### Stein the Economist

Arriving in London in 1933 Stein had a fruitful, but unfortunately short, collaboration with another remarkable individual, D. N. Dunlop. The two complemented each other. Dunlop excelled in quality of initiative, Stein in

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<sup>108</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 95.

<sup>109</sup> W. J. Stein, *The Ninth Century and the Holy Grail*, 192.

mobility of ideas and richness of thought. Stein, twenty-three years younger, experienced that once one had taken up Dunlop's suggestions it was as if one could work with the forces streaming from him.

Dunlop had founded the World Power Conference in 1924 bringing together engineers, technicians and scientists from forty countries to pave the way for collaboration in the energy sector. The Conference became a permanent institution in the years that followed and later turned into the World Energy Conference including up to eighty states.

Stein took the role of director of the research office. He wrote letters to people in more than one hundred countries and gathered news about world industry, such as the circulation of paper money, data on wholesale and retail prices, in essence feeling the pulse of world economy. The goal was to create the database for an associative economy. Stein was returning to his first short-lived attempt at threefolding, but now on a global scale. He had turned forty-two, and was entering what he called "the trial of the will."

### *World Power Conference*

The research institute gathered data and statistical information on world economy with two goals in mind: preparing the international conference and offering a publication that gathered and interpreted the accumulated data. London was the ideal place for this as a world harbor for raw materials, the center for world trade and international banking, and the capital of a worldwide empire.

The first years in London presented for Stein what looked like an overwhelming pursuit and a seemingly impossible task. He commented "The world which I have to contemplate is beautiful. The means by which I carry out my work are such that one is almost continually in a state of losing one's consciousness."<sup>110</sup>

In collaboration with Dunlop, Stein attempted the writing of *The Earth as the Basis for World Economy* (left incomplete) and published the monthly magazine *World Survey*. Stein indicated that he wrote the book "banned for a year in the British Museum Library" and here "the whole earth organism and its processes arranged in cosmic order appeared before him."<sup>111</sup> He named the first chapter "The Earth as Star among Stars" and reveals in enigmatic fashion that through French and Russian specialized publications he had found proof that the world is a unity. By this he is referring to the synthesis of scientific work to which we will return briefly.

*The Earth as the Basis for World Economy* remained unfinished, however, due to Dunlop's sudden passing. Stein was handed the layoff notice. Stein undertook to publish a new magazine to which he gave the name of *The Present Age*, under Dunlop's inspiration. Soon he had a good number of

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<sup>110</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 191.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, 195.

subscribers interested in an endeavor of such a comprehensive reach: from medicine to education, history, religion, natural science, technology,...

From his new platform Stein introduced far-reaching ideas and proposals, such as those he offered for the 1936 Peace Conference to which he was invited by FDR. Here he proposed the formation of an International Parliament for Culture, a Ministry for World Economics, and the reframing of the United Nations into a purely political body dealing with rights. Unfortunately these ideas were not received in the prevailing mood of the time. Stein kept promoting self-government in culture and economy under different circumstances. The publication of *The Present Age*, however, came to an end with the growing roars of war.

### *King Leopold's Plan*

In 1937 King Leopold sent a seven-page open letter to his Prime Minister Van Zeeland, accompanied by a Stein commentary. The king wanted to set up a permanent World Economic Council. This was accompanied with the initiative of preparation for a World Economic Conference "as independent as possible of national influences" which already had the support of England, France and America. King Leopold had been introduced to Stein by the anthroposophist pianist Walter Rummel. From what became a regular friendship Stein managed to convince the monarch of the idea of financing a Research Institute for World Economy in Brussels.

The king had gone through hard trials when the friendship of Rummel first, Stein second, offered him succor. His father Albert I died in a mysterious mountaineering accident, and his wife, a Swedish Princess, in a car accident. He started to gain answers to his deep existential questions from Rummel and his wife.

Stein wanted to start working on the wheat market with the four largest producers (USA, Canada, Australia and Argentina) by negotiating terms of sale and minimum sale prices, rather than working at keeping prices high by curtailing production. He wanted the Brussels Institute to push for the idea of economically justified prices and to set up a fund that would stabilize prices by buying and selling stock. Stein worked mostly through his colleague Ferguson at the idea of a gold-wheat-standard, following closely Steiner's suggestions in the *World Economy* lecture cycle. He was hoping to regulate the price of gold according to that of wheat and establish an international currency agreement on that basis to set the conditions for free world trade. To this he later added rice and silver as standards for the East.

These initial ideas got to the ear of Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, who suggested that the Dutch International Statistics Institute collaborate with the Brussels Research Institute. Unfortunately, in time the collaboration with Stein exposed Leopold to political risk and this became even harder to negotiate with the outbreak of war in 1939. Once more Stein's activity came to an abrupt end in Brussels and he had to return to London.



Stein played another role through King Leopold who was part of the "Oslo Countries", a group of seven neutral European countries who wanted to arbitrate between the axis and France/England. In 1939 King Leopold conveyed to the group a declaration crafted by Stein. The King was appointed spokesman in the peace negotiations together with the Dutch Queen.

Even after the outbreak of war all was not lost. What remained of the impulse of the Brussels Research Institute and of the collaboration with the Dutch monarch fostered the birth of the "customs and economic unit" of the Benelux (Belgium, Netherlands, Luxemburg) in 1944.

Stein who had made the fate of the world very much his own had to assist powerless to the East-West split which so much affected Germany. He asked himself what could be done and had to fight resignation.

In a way that may seem surprising, out of the fighter started to emerge the healer. Stein was holding daily therapeutic practice and even producing medical remedies. However, this is understandable because his interest in medicine was far from new. It had in fact its origin shortly after the spiritual experience of 1924. In the spirit Stein was then able to experience his own blood circulation or his skeleton. Through various experiences he had been able to see physiology under a new light. And true to what the spiritual experience had revealed he died in 1957.<sup>112</sup>

### *Gathering All the Strands*

It is in Stein the economist that we see all of his individual capacities contributing to a grand synthesis. Here science and history offer complementary contributions.

Stein calls our attention to the fact that we have moved from a science of economics based around the human in the nineteenth century to one that is now part of nature and of planetary life. Quite significantly, the expression "world economy" first appeared in 1879.<sup>113</sup> The growing reality of world economy reflects the fact that the earth is a body of relationships that unite one part of the planet to the rest. Stein sees in the economy forces "which in their effect are analogous and which work in the same way as the primitive forces of nature" and the economic system as part of the earth itself.<sup>114</sup>

Stein wants us to look at the earth both as a living system and also as that which "engenders a form of moral impulse which ... is not moral through any conscious act of the will, but is based on an objective comprehension of

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<sup>112</sup> Stein saw his life divided in two by his spiritual experience: the 33 years between 1891 and 1924 reflected in the 33 years between 1924 and 1957. This had been revealed through the experience.

<sup>113</sup> W. J. Stein, *The Earth as a Basis of World Economy*, a special number of "The Present Age," 17.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid*, 11.



the equilibrium of the surrounding forces.”<sup>115</sup> For the purpose of the above it is important to consider the Earth in its evolution. And for this we need a revised view of nature as a basis for economic life, because “only by feeling himself to be a collaborator in a well-ordered planet in whose working he can see aim and purpose will [the human being] be able to find the way to fruitful work in real freedom and under his own full responsibility.”<sup>116</sup>

World economy allows goods to be produced where they are most economical in terms of input of materials, labor and energy. Ever since trade has extended worldwide, national economies are dependent upon foreign raw materials and resources for their industry. De facto the welfare of one country depends on that of others. Trying to produce everything within national bounds means forcing the production of goods that come at high costs and expense of manpower.

It is impossible for the nations to resolve economic problems within their frontiers; isolationism inevitably lowers economic standards, and creates problems for other countries. The experience of WWII, when nations tried or were forced to be economically independent, proved that it is impossible to isolate oneself within its own borders without suffering consequences. In effect the contrary is true. Economic policies that aim at national independence, or that encroach on the reality of economics’ global dimension, can only lead to war.

Economy is based on and means interdependency; it is intimately bound to nature. Nationalism does not acknowledge this and comes from historical/psychological perspectives. Matters of world economy need to be removed from all other political considerations, save for matters concerning the intersection of cultural and political matters to which we will return below.

Lest this sound for some too much like neo-liberalism it should be added that world economy requires relationships that are mutual, equal inclusion of all actors and complete transparency. World economy must stand in service of all. In a worldwide organization representing a sector of world economy there should be not only representatives of the nations, but also delegates of associations dealing with specific products, distributors, consumers, and most importantly representatives of the earth itself, primarily the scientists.

In his *The Earth as a Basis of World Economy* Stein looks at the Earth from an interdisciplinary approach: astronomy, geology, mineralogy, geography, botany, zoology, meteorology, climatology, .... Stein predicates that “only through the real cooperation of all sciences and of all nations can knowledge be born which will serve as a foundation for the building up of a world-embracing economy.”<sup>117</sup> For this purpose he gathers the scientific evidence that shows that the Earth is a living organism.

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<sup>115</sup> W. J. Stein, *The Earth as a Basis of World Economy*, 12.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid, 52.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid, 50.

In essence Stein first looks at the four elements and their role in earth science, then at the finer planetary cosmic influences. Among these he lists various phenomena: the forming of an equatorial and a meridional belts of mountain chains; the role of microorganisms, animals, or plants in accumulating specific chemical substances; the evidence that all life derives from previous life which points to the Earth as a living organism; the cosmological origin of metals; the movements of the tectonic plates; the rhythmic life of oceans; Moon and Sun and their effects on tides; the formation of currents in the oceans, both on the surface and in the depths; the effect of winds on currents; the distribution of warmth on the surface of the Earth; the circulation of the winds; the musical principles at work in weather formation.

All of the above show how intimately interconnected are all elements at work in the living expression of the earth. But the earth itself is not isolated from the larger cosmos. Stein continues the exploration by connecting weather formation (e. g., cyclones) to sunspot periodicity, and showing the link between sunspots frequency and planetary rhythms, e. g. that of Venus. As cursory as this exploration appears, it draws from an immense mass of scientific studies that Stein synthesizes with great skill. Even to one who is versed in Goethean sciences, it is impossible not to be awed by the scope of Stein's synthesis and the contribution it offers to a new science of world economy. It remains fresh and provocative even eighty years later. We can thus understand what he meant when he said that "the whole earth organism and its processes arranged in cosmic order appeared before him" while he exiled himself in the British Museum.

All of the above has a direct influence on world economy. The fluctuations of the climate influence the prices of corn and crops. Influences can even be detected in relation to planetary rhythms. Research from the astronomer William Herschel has shown price fluctuations to move with the sunspot cycles. And the effects are opposite to each other in different parts of the Earth so that gains compensate for losses. His research was corroborated by others.<sup>118</sup>

From what could seem a long detour Stein returns with great precision to immediate economic concerns and examples of practical applications. He relates as an example that waterpower reaches its maximum in the higher Alps in summer; hydraulic works on the Adriatic reach their maximum in winter due to the higher rainfall. Forming a network of electric power stations would thus benefit Europe, even out peaks and bottoms, and allow for better results and lower costs.

Study after study shows that lack of any given agricultural product in one part of the globe is most often, if not always, accompanied with abundance in another part. World solidarity depends on the possibility to provide for the needs out of surpluses, with the only proviso of doing so without affecting prices in the market. At present stocks that cannot be sold depress prices and

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<sup>118</sup> W. J. Stein, *The Earth as a Basis of World Economy*, 67-68.

render farmers' subsistence problematic. These stocks, rightly seen however, are nothing more than necessary reserves for shortfalls in one place or another in the globe. Stein offers ideas about how to deal with the surplus while keeping it out of the market in the interest of those who produce the crops and of those in desperate need of them.

Finally, following Steiner's indications Stein offers ways to stabilize world currency. He predicates allowing the gold cover of the note issue of central banks to move in conjunction with the long-term production of various crops to stabilize prices globally. In effect the price of gold rises when the price of agricultural products falls and vice-versa. There is a reciprocal interest in tying one to the other. In view of a stable world economy monetary standards should be tied to the production of crops and severed from national politics.

From the above examples we can see that only a world economy, rightly conceived, can allow for the emergence of global solidarity and security. Stein addresses this need from yet another angle in looking at the folk-souls in what we could call a celebration of national identities in the spirit of a modern Grail.

### *The Importance of National Differences*

The nation states still retain an important role in relation to world economy. To these falls the task of taking into account the particular national work regulations and production methods. The states will have to determine labor conditions working hours, labor rights, standards of living, and subordinate the industry to national cultural choices. The regulations and cultural goals will reflect the differences of physical conditions found in the land and the values and temperaments of the different peoples of the world.

With this effort the cosmopolitan Stein strove to overcome national identification in order to become a true Michaelite and build an inner appreciation for the peoples of the world, avoiding the obstacles of nationalism on one hand, or vague relativism on the other. Yes, the people of the world deserve equal appreciation, but only an indifference towards their true being can ignore their core uniqueness and differences.

Stein wanted to understand the nature of the folk souls in order to move beyond nationalism; he wanted to differentiate in mutual respect in order to collaborate. He showed us how folk souls of East and West form polarities that complement each other. Such are England-India, France-China, Japan-USA, Italy-Russia, whereas Germany forms its own self-contained polarity for in it East and West meet, as the folk of the Ego.

Stein was highlighting how differences (knowledge) fully accepted can lead to collaboration (love) and concluded "On this depends the whole rhythm of the cosmos." He offered us a short but rich expression of the above in the form of a mantra.

Weaving life  
In the garment of rays  
Of the stars  
Art thou, O Man,  
Before God's countenance:  
Living, yet in isolation  
Distinguished from others  
Art thou, O Folk  
Thy group-ego  
Before God's wisdom-filled  
Justice

In mutual weaving  
Awakening,  
Flames up  
Love  
Of cosmic becoming  
In God's astonishing  
Wonder of creation,  
When human beings  
And peoples  
Unite  
For reciprocal support  
For mutual creative work  
For individual community deed  
In the earthly business  
Of coordinated economy.<sup>119</sup>

A fuller example of how Stein approached the folk soul appears in his posthumous *The British, Their Psychology and Destiny*, which was gathered from his notes. What is remarkable in this little essay is how deeply and empathically Stein penetrated the British folk-soul. He understood the limits of the national spirit in its one-sidedness, but he truly transcended his Austrian-German outlook to fully embrace his adopted country.

In looking at the British Stein illustrates how naturally the assertion of individuality comes to the surface in such a simple thing as the capitalization of the I. One would be wrong to attribute arrogance to it. This I is felt in the body as is naturally brought forth in such expressions as 'nobody' or 'everybody.'

Stein characterizes the Englishman by the vividness of his sense impressions, by his habits guided more by instinct than by argument and reason, his phlegmatic temperament and the quietness and detachment of the

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<sup>119</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 192-93.

spectator mind. He recognizes that all European influences are present in Britain and that "Europe had to be built up a second time in the English Islands, concentrating all ingredients of its culture in order to create the spiritual stream which penetrates the English nature in all its varied aspects."<sup>120</sup> The British, he recognizes, can be called the people of the Consciousness Soul.

Seen under a larger perspective, East and West complement each other, as is the case for England and India. The two nations develop the same principle of soul—the Consciousness Soul—but from two complementary perspectives, the first from a more material angle, the other from a spiritual one.

It is in the Consciousness Soul that we arrive, by continuing scientific thought to its logical conclusion, to the realization of repeated earthly lives and the laws of karma. Here we find the same point of arrival—in the East from primeval wisdom, in the West from the cultivation of the faculty of thinking. In the teachings of Buddha we have a prefiguration of what the age of the Consciousness Soul needs for its development. It is present in the Buddha's patient building of ideas.

India and England complement each other in yet other ways. For the East the Christ can be seen as another teacher of world wisdom. From the West can come the understanding that the Christ has penetrated the substance of the Earth. Thus in the two countries lives a longing for what the other has, and a natural way to complement each other. It is not a coincidence that Theosophy came to the fore as a result of English revival of Indian wisdom. But this is not just a repetition of the past. Theosophy naturally led to Anthroposophy and new revelations coming from the spiritual world.

World economy is seen on one side like a force of nature to be reckoned with, a necessity emerging from world evolution. World economy embraces the whole earth; it doesn't know of national boundaries. The national tendencies that appear at odds with world economy are addressed under the second perspective we have just offered. In addition the need for world economy comes from a historical perspective, as an important next step in the Christ impulse during the new Michael Age. This is the impulse in which Stein sees himself involved throughout the centuries, whose origin he traces to the Grail legend.

While Portugal first, then Holland laid the groundwork of the voyages of discovery and the trade routes, the first emergence of towns as centers of a new economic order came about in England in the tenth century. Towns were fortified and new ones built at the time of Edward the Elder (874-924) in defense against the raids of the Danes. Turketul [Turkental in the legend of the Holy Grail] was the son of Edward's brother. The king selected him for the

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<sup>120</sup> *The British, Their Psychology and Destiny*, 31.

role of High Chancellor, confiding in him for both temporal and spiritual matters.

Turketul lived through the reign of six kings. In other legends he is renamed Lohengrin and called the Swan Knight. Lohengrin wanted to initiate a new Grail impulse turned towards the development of the crafts and peaceful trade in the tenth and eleventh centuries.<sup>121</sup>

For Stein the mission of the Grail lineage is to "expand what is bound up with the family with what is cosmopolitan. ... to become the vessel of the world-irradiating Sun-Impulse"<sup>122</sup> and to prepare the transition from the fourth to the fifth cultural epoch, from the Moon/heredity-based impulse of Gabriel to the cosmopolitan one of Michael. "The Grail Race is then the race which uses its family and blood ties to serve universal ends."<sup>123</sup> In so doing it was striving to add to the morality of individuals that of groups, communities and nations through a new penetration of the Christ impulse.

The above is what Von Eschenbach's inspirer, Kiot, was seeking in genealogical lines related by blood descent, and what he found through historical research. His work served as the basis for von Eschenbach's *Parzival*. The lineage of the Grail, the people mentioned in the legend, center around the house of Eticho and St. Odile (662 – 720). Through extensive genealogical work Stein has traced that most of the ruling families of Europe descended from this family. Not only rulers but other people, like Godfrey of Bouillon, whose companions founded the Templar Order, were also part of this lineage.<sup>124</sup>

Moving on to modern times Stein indicates "We are at the point of time in which the Christ impulse is being renewed, in which the Christ comes to the folk-souls as he came to the individual human being in the events of Golgotha."<sup>125</sup> In our time Stein sees this mission in fostering a mutual and equitable world economy, where the role of individuals is now taken by nations that have Christianized, which is to say humanized, their national impulses. For this purpose the social ideas of Steiner must serve as a foundation.

What Stein accomplishes in world economy, he carries further from a world historic perspective, underlining how history's place is to offer us a better understanding of the present. Here the work of scientist and historian come to a synthesis and culmination.

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<sup>121</sup> Rudolf Steiner connects the Lohengrin saga approximately with the year 1000 A. D. See W. J. Stein, *The Ninth Century and the Holy Grail*, 270.

<sup>122</sup> W. J. Stein, *The Ninth Century and the Holy Grail*, 292

<sup>123</sup> Ibid, 201.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid, 292.

<sup>125</sup> W. J. Stein, *The Ninth Century and the Holy Grail*, 192.

### Stein, the Michaelic Mediator

Through his cosmopolitan perspective and activity Stein was deeply in touch with the larger Michaelic movement. In his last years Stein returned to devote his attention to it. Part of that came from a painful realization of not having played fully his potential role in the years of the Society's crisis, though not for lack of trying. In effect when crisis in the Society had deepened Stein was given the role of arbitrator in Nuremberg and other places. This task fitted Stein to a degree because he had some karmic perception and wanted to develop it further, and because Steiner wanted people to meet each other with the utmost honesty. Next to what he could perceive Stein realized he needed to develop the necessary inner balance and moral technique. And his striving for self-improvement and his esoteric practice kept bearing rich fruit.

In Stuttgart Stein had recognized, according to Johannes Tautz, "the various directions of will and groupings of destiny in the educational movement."<sup>126</sup> In fact he no doubt was one of the anthroposophists in his time who had some of the deepest understanding of the forces at play in the Michaelic movement.

### *Stein between Aristotelianism and Platonism*

In later years Stein recognized his "own interference" in the history of the Anthroposophical Society. In order to move forward and restore karmic balance he took on as his task to recognize:

- the duality in the streams of destiny as described in *Karmic Relationships*
- the representatives of these currents
- and the preparations underway for the future collaboration [culmination]

This theme played in uncanny ways in his biography. In his early days he felt himself keenly as an Aristotelian Christian, and indeed walked that path with fervor. Steiner confirmed him in that direction from the very first words they spoke. Even so, next to the scientist, Stein the historian was not completely hidden from view even then, witness his deep understanding of Schröder's views about Germany as the reborn Greece. And just when Stein was ready to continue on his initial path Steiner gave him a nudge in a completely different direction. He set the course for Stein the historian to emerge with long-term consequences for the second part of his life.

It is no wonder then that the theme of the streams of the Michaelic movement was known to Stein both inwardly and outwardly. And thus he was the first one to receive a preview of the karma of the anthroposophical Society in 1922 in a conversation in The Hague, before Steiner would make the topic

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<sup>126</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 135.



public at the Christmas Conference.<sup>127</sup> In The Hague Stein first heard about the karma that united Steiner with Karl Julius Schröer and of the tragic difficulties that emerged from the latter foregoing his world mission.

In the famous conversation Steiner had pointed to the two Michaelic streams with the contrast between natural-scientific and historical-literary knowledge, the first being fully developed in the Aristotelian stream, the second in the Platonic stream. And Stein was no stranger, nor a dilettante in either.

Let us look at the content of this conversation and its bearing on Stein's life and work. This is how Steiner characterizes Aristotelian natural-scientific thinking and Platonic historic-literary thinking: "Natural science comprehends ghosts with its thoughts. You only have to take the word in its original sense. What the cosmos spins, what the planets weave, this is what natural-scientific thinking comprehends. Historical thinking, on the other hand, comprehends "demons," but this word also taken in its noble sense: in the way that Socrates speaks of his *daimonion*, as a guiding spirit, a spirit such as Plutarch speaks of as a good star that men can follow. Each historical fact is a demon in the sense of the Greeks. And when one grasps these two forms of knowledge together, approaches both in their most noble form, then a path opens up. Yes, a true path." What he further says about the merging of the two paths could be epitomized as the essence of Stein's lifepath: "And then, when one treads both these paths simultaneously and achieves natural-scientific Imagination and historical Inspiration, then life itself undergoes change; destiny is transformed. Then, sacrificing, and celebrating one's destiny, one places oneself into the stream. That is the path, that is anthroposophic knowledge, that is anthroposophic life."<sup>128</sup>

Stein was present at Steiner's last lecture in which he addressed the karma of the Michaelic movement at its roots; the relationship and interplay between himself and Karl Julius Schröer. It is no wonder that Stein was also closely linked to Wegman—who was his family doctor for a time—and no doubt understood her deeper individuality, witness his invitation to explore the Burgenland together, the place in which the Gilgamesh/Wegman individuality had known the Hibernian Mysteries.

When Steiner offered the lectures on *World History in the Light of Anthroposophy* these resonated deeply with Stein. Tautz indicates that what Steiner offered appeared to his mind "like a remembrance behind memory."

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<sup>127</sup> Rudolf Steiner: Dokumentation eines wegweisenden Zusammenwirkens: W. J. Steins Dissertation in ihrem Entstehungsprozess und in ihrer Aktualität, mit Briefen und Aufzeichnungen, Rudolf Steiners Korrekturen und Ergänzungen sowie dem "Haager Gespräch" von 1922.

<sup>128</sup> Rudolf Steiner's Conversation with Walter Johannes Stein, The Hague, 1922; translation by John Barnes as included in Luigi Morelli, *Aristotelians and Platonists: A Convergence of the Michaelic Streams in Our Time*, Appendix 1.

He felt he wanted to deepen his understanding of the role of individuals over the course of centuries, if not millennia, just like Steiner had done in the lecture course. All of this got him closer to Steiner and his mission, and not surprisingly this matured in his soul with the decisive spiritual experience on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 1924.

Stein held a long-term view of the karmic events of the Society and felt that the Michaelic souls would come back at the end of the millennium in changed resolve of minds. "Perhaps only at the end of the century will it be possible to bring into complete harmony what today confronts us as differing directions of will. In spite of that, however, we shall have to preserve the continuity of our movement until the time when our leader again appears among us and we shall be there, too, to work at our common task."<sup>129</sup> He concluded these notes with Steiner's words in the Mystery Dramas "I see in much that hates only the germ of future love."<sup>130</sup>

We can marvel at whether Stein was an Aristotelian or not. In his soul he felt so at least in his early days. On the other hand Steiner, reporting from the West-East Congress in Vienna, had this to say: "he who has an ear can still hear today in Baravalle and Blümel what only the Benedictines possessed,... in Stein what the Cistercians have effected." This may not be a direct assessment of a previous lifetime but simply point to a more Platonic direction of soul in Stein as in the Platonic Cistercians. Lastly we may overlay the above with the intimations of the Grail stream with which Stein felt himself keenly connected later in life, and which places him outside of either stream mentioned above.

We may not know for certain whether Stein was or was not Trevrizent—after all this was not confirmed by Steiner to our knowledge—and it may not matter at least in this exploration. What is remarkable is how much this very integration of streams of thinking through the will (Aristotelian), will through the thinking (Platonist) and feeling directly connected to the Christ (Grail) was a reality in Stein's life. From this we can appreciate the depth and breadth of his work, written and practical, and the way he inspired and affected the Michaelic community around him.

For the reader interested in exploring the matter further we offer the thought of looking at the biographies of Karl König and Emil Bock. Both of them were keenly interested in the future of the G. A. S. and how to overcome the effects of the crisis of the '30s. Their lives show similarities to that of W. J. Stein in their rootedness in the Christ impulse and ability to hold the balance between the directions of spirit recollection and spirit beholding.

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<sup>129</sup> Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, 235.

<sup>130</sup> Uttered by the Second Master of Ceremonies in Scene 8 of *The Soul's Probation* by Rudolf Steiner.

## **IN CONCLUSION**

In the examples given thus far we can recognize how different individuals have striven to reach their full humanity through the practices that are at the heart of anthroposophy. They strove to integrate the forces of their souls and reached out to and worked with those who could accomplish what they could not. Anthroposophy was for them the ground from which they could let more of the world enter into their heart.

Lievegoed and Zeylmans van Emmichoven offer us a shining example of how much more can be built when differences are understood and integrated; when individuals know that they complement each other and they want to leverage each other's strengths intentionally. Ita Wegman understood her place in the world in such a way that she could resist the temptation of power and prestige to simply be the meeting place of all anthroposophists. W. J. Stein cared deeply about the fate of the Michaelic movement because he had placed the work of the Foundation Stone Meditation in his heart in such a way that he could harmonize thinking, feeling and will.

Together these remarkable anthroposophists touched the lives of many, and far beyond the boundaries of the Anthroposophical Society. They could be heard and received because their spiritual affiliation created little perception barriers.

The Foundation Stone Meditation remains the guide from which our work in the world acquires depth from the esoteric grounding that we build with the three practices. Our work in the world, its depth and reach depend on that foundation that we place in the soil of our hearts.

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