

**1921**

**Twenty-seventh Meeting**

Sunday, September 11, 1921, 5:00 p.m.

Comments

In connection with their conversation about the 'sinnlich-sittliche' [sensory-moral] effects of the world of tone, Steiner mentioned it would be pedagogically very important for colleagues to take an interest in one another by studying each other's original work, as this would work strongly on the pupils. He wanted to strike an anthroposophical chord, highlighting the importance of a keen, living interest in each other's work, placing this in a spiritual scientific perspective. This would be of great significance and result in a general enlivening of teaching in all subjects.

**Twenty-eighth Meeting**

Wednesday, November 16, 1921, 8:30 p.m.

The teachers were worried about the behavior of their high school students. As before, Steiner showed masterful gentleness, empathy, and tact. He once again suggested that teachers should discuss interesting aspects of student behavior during meetings.

The faculty asked for esoteric teaching just for the teachers, a Sunday service for teachers. Steiner was critical about this, being of the opinion that the necessary coherence which would be needed for such teaching was not sufficient among the faculty. Esotericism represented a painful chapter within the anthroposophical movement, he said.

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**1922**

**Thirtieth Meeting**

Wednesday, March 15, 1922, 3:00–5:45 p.m.

Work on the Threefold Social Organism had reached its highest point. Due to financial problems of "Der Kommende Tag" [The Coming Day], the stock majority of the Waldorf Astoria company was going to be sold to the Süddeutsche Diskonto-Gesellschaft [Southern German Discount company]. This sale, slated for March 16, 1922, went against the recommendation of Emil Molt, who, in view of the threatening financial situation, had successfully approached a bank consortium to take over the stock. However, the new general director of the "Coming Day", Emil Leinhas, had not followed Molt's advice.

The Southern German Discount Company was not able to manage the Waldorf Astoria stock properly, and sold it again. Emil Molt's cigarette factory now faced ruin. Because of this, the hope to establish a truly effective practice in the spirit of the threefold social order had evaporated. Rudolf Steiner decided to curtail the program of the "Coming Day".

Even though this dramatic decision was to be finalized the following day, the account of the meeting makes no mention of any of this. Steiner traveled back to Dornach on March 18.

### **Thirty-third Meeting**

Tuesday, June 20, 1922, 8:00 p.m.

The summer holidays between the third and fourth school year lasted 4 weeks.

When Rudolf Steiner left Stuttgart, he traveled to Leipzig. After that, he began the second series of lectures in major cities in Germany. During his lectures in Munich and Eberfeld, major interruptions were staged by rightwing nationalist agitators. The opposition became too powerful, according to Rudolf Steiner. Exhausted, he returned to Dornach on May 24, where he remained for one week before traveling to Vienna on March 30 for the East-West Conference (CW 83), which many Waldorf teachers attended as fellow lecturers. This large conference was a major event, perhaps the most important of its kind. The conference ended June 13, and on the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month Steiner traveled back to Dornach. On the 19<sup>th</sup> he returned to Stuttgart. The opening ceremony of the fourth school year was the morning of June 20. Steiner addressed the children, this time leaving out the question, "Do you love your teachers?".

The school had grown to over 600 pupils. That afternoon, there was a members meeting of the "Independent Waldorf School Association". At this occasion, Steiner posited that there were many people "with ears for what was in it for them," but remarkably few people who were co-workers in the full sense of the word. This day's faculty meeting was set for that evening. In between the two meetings, Steiner gave two lectures for the teachers (CW 302a).

#### Comments

The conversation about grade 10 led Steiner to point out that teachers had lost touch with the children from upper elementary school onward, and that teachers also were out of touch with the material they were teaching. He proposed switches of teachers for the 11<sup>th</sup> grade ("Don't be offended."). Instead of real pedagogical interaction, there still was too much lecturing. Surveying the situation, he came to the conclusion that the Waldorf teachers were underperforming even though they had better subject matter, whereas other schools, the competition, were outperforming the Stuttgart school even though they had worse subject matter. Lessons continued nevertheless, even though many teachers had returned from Vienna "half-dead," according to Steiner. He had to ask himself how this should go on.

### **Thirty-sixth Meeting**

Wednesday, October 4, 1922, 8:00 p.m. – 12:30 a.m.

#### Comments

Students had misbehaved during the holidays. The teachers were upset that a number of students were expelled without Steiner being consulted about this. When he returned, Steiner analyzed the situation in

detail, spoke with those students who stood accused, and concluded there was no ground for expulsion. They were basically not bad students. But the damage could not be undone. Teachers had to learn to understand that the student behavior was connected with their own attitudes towards their students. In all four meetings, the central element was a shake-up of the teachers. Steiner told them they were not fully engaged, there wasn't enough "fire" in them. In the end Steiner reminded them of what the school inspector had said: Traditional methods would do for mediocre educators; Waldorf school methods, however, needed pure geniuses. Steiner commented, "I don't want to say he's right, but he has a point." With regard to the difficulties they had just discussed, Steiner asked the teachers "to be mindful that we cannot allow the Waldorf school to become a fiasco."

### **Fortieth Meeting**

Friday, November 24, 1922, 8:00 p.m.

From England, Rudolf Steiner traveled directly to Stuttgart. He visited classes in the morning, and the meeting was in the evening. On November 26, he traveled on to Dornach.

#### Comments

Steiner said the school time table "made his head spin." He added, "This schedule takes us away from the spirit of the curriculum." He insisted on there being a transparent schedule for every class. Fundamentally, he wanted the foreign language classes to be scheduled after the main lesson, and they needed to be carried by the same teacher for a number of years. Afternoons should be totally devoted to artistic and practical subjects.

There was a request for a new training course of discussions with teachers. Steiner replied that basically everything had been given in what he had already laid out, as far as practical advice was concerned. However, he said, the courses had not been studied sufficiently; the way lessons were being taught showed that. He preferred taking questions from teachers and discussing them, because a new course "would reiterate many things I have already presented."

Given the situation in the school, he opposed performing the Christmas plays. "I wish people had the same enthusiasm for their lessons that they have for the plays.... I would say leave them out. Otherwise, you'll just keep digging deeper into the hole you're in."

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**1923**

### **Forty-third Meeting**

Tuesday, January 17, 1923, evening

During the night of New Year's Eve of 1922-23, the Goetheanum burned down. A unique artistic achievement, the building required great financial sacrifice on the part of many people. Countless workers donated their time. Painters, sculptors, carpenters, and architects from twenty nations pitched in for years, including the tumultuous years of World War I, inspired by Rudolf Steiner's leadership.

Together they formed an active artistic collaborative. The building was almost completed when it fell victim to arson.

Rudolf Steiner traveled to Stuttgart on January 9 in order to greet an influential group of English teachers visiting the school; then he was driven back to Dornach, probably on the same day.

On 16 January, 1923 Steiner came to Stuttgart again, accompanied by Marie Steiner. In the evening there was a meeting with colleagues who wanted to help solve the leadership crisis within the anthroposophical movement in Germany, the "circle of seven" [Siebenerkreis], as they were called. They consisted of Caroline von Heydebrand, Eugen Kolisko, Maria Röschl, Karl Schubert, Erich Schwebsch, Walter Johannes Stein, and Ernst Uehli.

#### Comments

Hermann von Baravalle had asked Rudolf Steiner to give an introductory talk without asking for a specific theme. Baravalle himself was not present. Steiner was beside himself and harangued the teachers about the way they had treated him, as well as about the "Stuttgart System".

During the morning he visited classes. He remarked that there was a much better tone in the upper grades, and that serious work was being done. He came to the conclusion that the Waldorf school had proved its viability despite undesirable incidents.

#### **Forty-sixth Meeting**

Tuesday, February 6, 1923, 4:00 p.m.

#### Comments

The first part of this meeting, which had the character of a lecture, is important for everyday teaching practice. Rudolf Steiner presented points of view concerning school hygiene, following up on what he had agreed with Eugen Kolisko sometime back. After the confrontations of early January, Steiner became more direct in addressing problems. He didn't refrain from addressing personal matters head on while people were in the room. An example of this was what he said about teaching grammar. The problem was, he said, that teachers didn't have a living grasp of grammar themselves. Steiner said he would himself raise a ruckus if he were a student, because he "wouldn't know why teachers would throw this kind of stuff at me."

#### **Forty-seventh Meeting**

Wednesday, February 14, 1923, 6:00 p.m.

#### Comments

In January, France and Belgium occupied the Ruhr industrial area, resulting in economic hardship for the population. As a result, a number of protesting parents wanted to do away with French as a foreign

language at the school. A representative of the parents came to the faculty meeting to bring this up with them. Steiner gave a rather drastic characterization of French language and culture in a way which would be off-putting to modern ears. However, he made clear that one couldn't just go it alone and terminate French, because one had to be in sync with the local school practices of Württemberg state.

Out of 650 students 180 were strongly undernourished, the school doctor reported. In the meeting, Steiner and Eugen Kolisko presented a supplement, which was later marketed as Kalknährsalz I and II [still available as Calciodoron AM and PM, or Osteodoron]. Steiner received a donation to get this remedy produced. (In the 54<sup>th</sup> meeting of May 25, 1923, Eugen Kolisko reported on the results of working with these remedies.)

### **Forty-eighth Meeting**

Thursday, March 1, 1923, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

#### Comments

Steiner asked to be informed about the educational goals for the uppermost high school class. He wanted to build the 12<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum on those goals, even though he expressed misgivings about the chances of success in the Abitur, the final state exam. He remarked that teachers were still lecturing too much, and “even though we have repeatedly talked about this, the students are not sufficiently involved in the work.”

He expressed satisfaction that Martin Tittmann and Ernst Lehrs would be joining the faculty in the coming school year.

#### Footnotes to this second year of teacher meetings

1. Footnote for the 31st meeting of Friday, April 28, 1922

### **Memorandum**

Since all documents of the Waldorf School were seized by the Nazis when the school was shut down at Easter 1938, there are no extant reports to the local school authorities. But a sketch in Steiner's handwriting for the proposal mentioned in the meeting does exist, which is printed below.

“The faculty of the Waldorf school intends to carry through the teaching in such a way that it retains complete freedom in the way the subject matter is structured within the first three years, but plans to steer towards the same educational goals set by state schools at the end of grade 3. This intent will be carried out in such a way that a child transitioning from the Waldorf school to a state school at that point can do so without any obstacle. In fourth, fifth, and sixth grade, once again there should be complete freedom in the way the subject matter is structured, with the aim to arrive at the level of a 12 year old at the completion of the 6th grade, reaching the same educational goals set for state schools by the end of the elementary school years, a point which also marks the beginning of high school. The same principle should hold good for structuring the subject material and reaching educational goals by completion of the eighth school year. Children should fully reach the educational goals set for the

*Realschule* [high school], and be prepared to make the transition to a different school at that age. The faculty asks only for freedom in the way it structures and pitches the material at each of these three stages:

- 1) School entry up to completion of the 9th year;
- 2) from that age to the completion of the 12<sup>th</sup> year;
- 3) from that age to the completion of the third level.

At the end of each level, the educational aims set by state schools should be reached by the Waldorf school as well.”

2. Footnote for the 44<sup>th</sup> meeting, Tuesday, January 23, 1923

### **Elementary school ordinance**

On 28 April, 1920, an ordinance was issued for all elementary schools, the ‘Grundschulgesetz’ [elementary school law], making it obligatory for all children to attend the first three, later four, grades of a state school. All private elementary schools would have to be gradually phased out, because they would no longer be allowed to accept children into the lower grades and were also not allowed to take in any new children in existing classes.

This federal law naturally affected the local situation in Württemberg, and through an edict issued by the local authorities on December 31, 1920, the Stuttgart Waldorf School was informed that federal law demanded they gradually close the lower grades, since they were classified as a “private elementary school.” However, if they handed in a special request, an exception could be made, [because a loophole was found in an old local ordinance], and they would be allowed to still open up a new grade for the year 1921/22. But the first 4 lower elementary school classes, (since they were split into a and b groups, there were a total of eight), could not accept new children, so all in all they could not exceed 240 pupils. Even though it turned out to be possible to extend this, it still meant that new children could only be accepted into grade 5. Since applications had accumulated, a new grade, 5c, had to be added at this point, continuing into the grades above, resulting in three parallel grades for 5, 6, and 7.

This situation was only permanently resolved in 1926, i.e., after Steiner’s death. At that time school Superintendent Friedrich Hartlieb carried out the obligatory school inspection. Even though he was incorruptible and maintained the strict requirements he was beholden to by law, he was at heart a true pedagogue. He entered deeply into the educational effort of the Waldorf school and this resulted in a highly favorable report (printed in the newsletter ‘Was in der Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft vorgeht’, 1926, issues 2-6). Based on this report, the ministry recognized the “extraordinary pedagogical quality” [of the Waldorf School], and lifted the restrictions.

3. General footnote

### **Rudolf Steiner on Race**

Based on the collected works of Rudolf Steiner, we can distinguish two different ways he talked about race. On the one hand he uses the traditional anthropological concept, based on physical features as they can be observed in human beings. On the other hand, he occasionally draws on the concept of 'root race,' stemming from Theosophical literature, referring to periods of time during which groups of people went through evolutionary cycles. The latter can be found in Steiner's articles from the early time he started to work within the Theosophical Society, in 1904, specifically those in the magazine "Lucifer - Gnosis." In 1906, in issue number 32 of that magazine, he subsequently distanced himself explicitly from the concept 'root-race.'<sup>1</sup> Earlier in human evolution on the earth, he wrote, there had been no distinction or separation into races. They only came into being at a certain period in time and would dissolve again in the future. Because of its limited validity, he argued that the concept could not be applied in general to phases of human evolution. In various lectures in 1909, Steiner characterized the concept of 'root or principal race' as a "childhood disease" of the Theosophical movement, saying that people should clearly realize "that the idea of race ceases to have any meaning especially in our time."<sup>2</sup>

Rudolf Steiner's books and lectures contain passages where he talks about nations and 'races' in a variety of contexts which contain words like "Neger", [negroes], "Wilden" [savages], and "Hottentotten" [hottentots], words which were in common usage at the time in such contexts, whereas these terms are now widely viewed as discriminatory. In the meantime, the scientific concept of race has shifted, and many earlier formulations have become tainted. In view of the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with its systematic putting down and defamation of ethnic or religious affiliations, especially with terms used in connection with agitation and instigation of hate and discrimination, the use of many such words has become unconstitutional.

As a result of public criticism during the 1990s, a committee to investigate accusations of racism against Rudolf Steiner, commissioned by the Anthroposophical Society of the Netherlands and led by Ted van Baarda, made an extensive study of the legal aspects of all relevant passages in Steiner's work.<sup>3</sup> Their research aimed to assess to what extent Steiner's pronouncements should be taken as discriminating according to present-day legal standards, when such pronouncements represent a position or are disseminated today. The committee concluded that many of these passages were inoffensive, while others could give rise to misunderstanding or were considered to be lightly discriminating. The

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<sup>1</sup> This series of magazine contributions was later printed as AG 11, Aus der Akasha-Chronic GA 11 [From the Akasha Chronicle]. In this book, the 1906 contribution criticizing the concept of 'root-race' is to be found in the chapter "Das Leben der Erde" [The Life of Earth].

<sup>2</sup> Lecture of December 4, 1909 in Munich, in Die Tieferen Geheimnisse des Menschenwerdens im Lichte der Evangelien, GA 117, Dornach, 1986, page 152.

<sup>3</sup> Antroposofie en het vraagstuk van de rassen, Eindrapport van de commissie Antroposofie en het vraagstuk van de rassen, Antroposofische Vereniging in Nederland, Zeist 2000. Authorized German translation of the interim report: *Anthroposophie und die Rassismus Vorwürfe: Der Bericht der niederländischen Untersuchungskommission Anthroposophie und die Frage der Rassen*, mit einem Rechtsgutachten von Ingo Krampen *Rassendiskriminierung nach Deutschem Recht*, Frankfurt a. M. 1998, fifth edition, 2009. ["*Anthroposophy and Race*," final report of the Dutch committee by that name, commissioned by the Anthroposophical Society of the Netherlands. The authorized German translation has an additional legal report by Ingo Krampen on "*Racial Discrimination in German Law*."]

conclusion of the Dutch research considered 16 passages to be utterances which could have a discriminating effect. These passages and others like them were annotated in the relevant volumes of the collected works. This article, together with additional commentaries, aims to serve the same purpose.

The activity of the Rudolf Steiner 'Nachlassverwaltung' [Estate Administration] and the Rudolf Steiner Press is geared towards editing his works, not interpreting them. The works of Rudolf Steiner in the series of Collected Works are rendered as completely and authentically as possible; as a result there will inevitably be passages and formulations which can be interpreted as controversial. Editorial remarks usually confine themselves to philological points or historical context without commenting on contents or giving text interpretations. Actual research discussions lie outside its domain.

Rudolf Steiner's published works consist of several books he wrote during the course of his career, as well as lecture cycles which were taken down stenographically. The lectures were given in a variety of contexts, sometimes in a public setting, sometimes given for internal circles, and were not edited by the author before publication.

The central aim of his philosophy and anthroposophy, both in theory and in practice, is the emancipation and development of the free, self-determining individual on a path of knowledge, regardless of any ethnic or other stamp. Socially, Rudolf Steiner stood for brotherliness. In the totality of his work, there is no doctrine or teaching which could be classified as racist. Like any other work, it is not protected against misuse by adherents or opponents. There is no place in either his written books or spoken lectures, where Steiner incited people to hatred or discrimination against specific groups. On the contrary, he again and again sharply took a position against racial, ethnic, nationalist or sexual discrimination, a fact which should always be borne in mind when reading passages dealing with cultural, racial, or ethnic matters.

The Rudolf Steiner 'Nachlassverwaltung' [Estate Administration], in their function as editors of his work, as well as Rudolf Steiner Press, in their function as publishers, distance themselves from any utterances which either provoke hatred against individuals or groups, or attack people in a hostile or discriminating way on the basis of race, ethnicity, worldview etc. They specifically reject making any use of quotations by Rudolf Steiner to this end.

Signed:

— Rudolf Steiner 'Nachlassverwaltung,' Stiftung zur Erhaltung, Erforschung und Veröffentlichung des wissenschaftlichen und künstlerischen Nachlasses von Rudolf Steiner, Dornach

— Rudolf Steiner Verlag AG, Basel