

■ ANTHROPOSOLOGY IN THE WORLD

Third Rudolf Steiner Research Day at Rudolf Steiner Archives

Letting Go – and Listening for What Happens

In the large basement room at the archives, in which a wall and a half are covered with Rudolf Steiner's personal library, nearly 30 people sat together for an afternoon. Students, independent researchers, authors, representatives of the School collegium, coworkers of the Goetheanum Archives and of the Anthroposophical Society in Germany showed their interest in the findings of two young researchers.

In the background was a vision of the Goetheanum grounds as a campus with daily colloquia and research discussions. This time two young researchers had traveled here to the Rudolf Steiner Archives to present their project and offer for discussion the problems that arose during the research. Favorable, supportive ideas and comments found a place here.

Human Being and Machine

Pascal Klotz, graduate in interior architecture at the Basel Academy for Art and Design, gave an outline of the areas into which his thesis led him. Under the title "Are You Still Functioning or Are You Already Thinking?" he developed his theme, 'The Mix of the Human Being and the Machine'. He looked at the human being shaped and designed by technological means – in specialist terminology: 'beauty design' – from wellness to cosmetic operations, right on up to highly complex prostheses.

Klotz referred to the guiding, broadly recognized position of post-humanistic expectations in regard to healing: 'The human being is finally in a position to overcome nature's less than optimal solutions and, by means of technology's growing possibilities, to freely develop himself. What is now the relationship of modern science to the world? Klotz characterizes this connection as a doing away with reality in favor of pure discussion of problems and posing questions, while maintaining the security of referring to theories.

The relationship of the human being and nature is the topic of the discourse on human cyborgs. In response to the defining question of Roland Halfen – Where does lawfulness end and that which is individual begin? – Klotz said: "There is no foundation for an anthropocentric perspective – how can what is beautiful be expressed in a mathematical formula?"

Robin Schmidt enlivened the conversation with his taunting question: "Isn't the beauty-design approach the original anthroposophical impulse? Transformation



Presenting research projects, exchanging ideas, getting to know one another, and taking a break outside the Rudolf Steiner Archives

– self-development – wanting to continue to exist – reincarnation?" Jens Prochnow lent support to this thought with the pithy sentence, "Anthroposophy is the answer to the human being's longing."

Reincarnation and Karma

Lydia Fechner put up for discussion Rudolf Steiner's practical attitude about reincarnation and karma. She was not concerned with its plausibility as much as with the concrete means of knowing. She outlined her wish to develop a clean position for a widespread reincarnation therapy, which would be synchronous with the idea of reincarnation in increasing constituents of our culture. Fechner formulated her question concretely: "What is specific to the position in anthroposophy toward reincarnation and karma?" She contrasted methodical descriptions of two reincarnation therapists, Ingrid Vallieres and Werner Koch, with an exercise from Rudolf Steiner for insight into reincarnation.

Fechner's thought that "the consciousness soul manifests in attitude and not in content," introduced her perspective of focusing interest on the attitude that is assumed in each instance. In the case of

the therapists, the need to heal is clear. By means of hypnosis, the desired, blockade-free state is reached. Dissolving habitual ideas and falling into a temporal whirlpool that is free of moral values are used as the first healing experience. The new access to regions that are otherwise closed off – such as 'What was your mother thinking of during the pregnancy?' – allows the therapist to approach problems from entirely new perspectives. In the process, one easily works with quite concrete images from earlier lives.

By contrast, in 1912 Steiner described looking at one's own being as the aim of his exercise (in *Reincarnation and Karma*). Rather than extreme states of relaxation, he exacts an enormous inner effort in which one is to develop a lively picture of that which one never wanted, what came about against one's will or what one always rejected or avoided. And now one is to want this. "How would you be if you were shaped by this?" Steiner takes this made-up person as the starting point for a feeling-remembering.

For the therapist, the question of truth is not raised. He uses the idea of reincarnation to interpret problems. Walter Kugler understood Steiner's approach as "thought movement by way of contrast". Fechner, on the other hand, spoke of a will exercise; she accords value to 'dis-identifying' and to the moment of identifying as the will's turn of direction.

The question that sounded most strongly in the turbulent discussion was how one is to deal with the concrete incarnation sequences which Steiner developed. Fechner shed light on the question as she took it up: "What happens when there's no thinking between the metamorphoses?" Vera Koppehel stressed that, for her, in Steiner's approach the question suggest itself: "Do I really want to change my life?" A comment again touched on the nature of practice: "Creating a problem in order to then let go of it and to listen to what happens – overcoming oneself."

Following this, Monika Elbert presented the situation of research support in the Anthroposophical Society in Germany. The advisory circle is suffering from the current financial situation of the Anthroposophical Society in Germany. Central to research promotion is always the question: What is spiritual scientific research? | *Philipp Tok, Leipzig, Germany*