

Perspectives on the renewal of the General Anthroposophical Society into an esoteric world society

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1. Introduction

The question of the constitution of the General Anthroposophical Society (General Anthroposophical Society) has existed since Rudolf Steiner's death on 30 March 1925 and has remained unresolved ever since. One hundred years after the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924 and Rudolf Steiner's death, the time seems to have come to tackle and resolve this question again. This text is intended as a contribution to finding a viable contemporary solution to the constitutional question.

The description of the nature of the Christmas Conference in Chapter 2 is quite extensive because the author is convinced that a *correct understanding of the Christmas Conference* is essential in order to be able to have a truly healing effect in the world on the basis of anthroposophy.

The description of the situation of the General Anthroposophical Society and the anthroposophical world movement in Chapter 3 is also quite extensive, because it represents an *essential basis for the way in which the renewal process is to be carried out*.

The principles of social organisation in Chapter 4 are intended to show what conditions such a process as the reorganisation of the General Anthroposophical Society must satisfy in order to be successful.

Chapter 5 describes an ideal-typical course of the redesign process that fulfils scientific as well as artistic and spiritual criteria.

The author hopes to have found a clear and free style and tone appropriate to the subject matter and is grateful for any supportive feedback (contact details at the end of the text).

2. The Christmas Conference 1923/1924 for the founding of the General Anthroposophical Society and the Independent University of Spiritual Science

2.1 The fire at the Goetheanum and the preparations for the Christmas Conference

In his closing words to the Christmas Conference 1923/1924 on 1 January 1924, Rudolf Steiner spoke of the Christmas Conference as a "*beginning of a turning point of the world*"¹. What did Rudolf Steiner mean by these meaningful words and what has become of them to this day? The answer to this question and others that follow will reveal the *cosmic significance of the Christmas conference*.

On New Year's Eve 1922/1923, the first Goetheanum, built entirely of wood, burnt down to the concrete base as a result of arson. The Anthroposophical Society, and with it the entire anthroposophical movement, had thus lost its *earthly home*. According to Rudolf Steiner, this was the result of *the weakness of the Anthroposophical Society*, which had been unable to protect the Goetheanum because it was only concerned with itself and saw its main task as organising lectures by Rudolf Steiner rather than taking Anthroposophy out into the world and representing it and to defend and protect it and Rudolf Steiner against the increasingly frequent public attacks.

Already on 1 January 1923, Rudolf Steiner announced that the work would continue and that the Goetheanum building would be rebuilt as soon as possible and continued with his lectures as planned. However, he made clear that the Anthroposophical Society had to be re-established first. Throughout 1923, Rudolf Steiner worked tirelessly in countless difficult and tiring meetings with representatives of the anthroposophical movement from various countries and with his support in the founding of many national societies to prepare the Christmas Conference for the founding of the General Anthroposophical Society (General Anthroposophical Society).

The fire of the first Goetheanum only destroyed its earthly shell, but not the spiritual Goetheanum², which had already existed as a spiritual being and had been filled with *human love*

¹ To this end we have immersed ourselves in those words with which I began, in those words with which I would like to close this Christmas conference, this Christmas conference, which is to be a consecration night, a consecration festival for us, not only for a beginning of the year, but for a beginning of a turning point of the world, to which we want to dedicate ourselves to the devoted cultivation of the spiritual life: [The whole foundation stone saying follows.] (Rudolf Steiner: Die Weihnachtstagung zur Begründung der Allgemeinen Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft 1923/1924; GA 260; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Basel, 1994; page 281)

² We are not of the opinion that we do not have a Goetheanum [...], we are of the opinion that we do not have a building, but that we will have one as soon as possible. But we are of the opinion that the Goetheanum has remained. [...] We stand here as a Goetheanum in the soul, as a spiritual Goetheanum, which of course must have the outer building as soon as possible. [...] The Goetheanum stands there before our spiritual gaze! (Rudolf

substance through the deeds of love – as donations of money and labour – of all those involved in its construction. The bursting into flames of the physical shell of the love building, and the merging into the etheric elementary sphere of the earth where the Christ is living, strengthened the etheric shell of the spiritual Goetheanum, which probably also contributed to promoting the worldwide spread of the Goetheanum impulse and anthroposophy to this day; analogous to the burning of the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus in 356 BC, also by arson, which promoted the rapid and powerful spread of Hellenism in the wake of Alexander the Great's moves in Asia Minor, in preparation for the rapid spread of early Christianity in this region and from there in Europe.

One may also ask whether this first Goetheanum, a double-domed wooden building which in its gesture was mystically turned entirely inwards, would fit into the present day and should make way for the second Goetheanum, which Rudolf Steiner – built of concrete – designed not as a spherical, and closed in itself, but designed to open up to the world and into it towards the west, which corresponds on the one hand to the modern *Goethean path of initiation* through the spirit in nature and on the other hand to the cultural impulse of anthroposophy in the present day.

2.2 The Christmas Conference as the "Beginning of a Turning Point of the World"

By founding at the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924 the General Anthroposophical Society with the "Independent University of Spiritual Science" at its centre as *soul-space and legal body of the anthroposophical movement for the incarnation of the spiritual being "Anthroposophia"*, the Christmas Conference became – after *the Mystery of Golgotha as the first singular world event* – the *second singular event in world history* and was forever inscribed in the earth's memory (Akashic Chronicle) in the etheric and astral sphere of the earth as the "beginning of a turning point of the world".

These two singular world events belong to *different dimensions*. The mystery of Golgotha happened *directly from the whole cosmos for the whole cosmos* through the *Logos*, the realising member of the divine Trinity, the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924 *from human forces for humanity and the earth* through the first initiated human being of the time of the consciousness soul, Rudolf Steiner, who, across several incarnations – as Enkidu/Eabani, Gilgamesh's friend; as the priest Kratylos in the Temple of Artemis in Ephesus; as Aristotle, the founder of modern science; as Thomas Aquinas, the Dominican monk who in the 13th century christianised Aristotelian philosophy and most recently as Rudolf Steiner the inaugurator of the new living thinking of the heart– had taken on the task for humanity of repeatedly giving fresh impetus to the *development of human thinking*, and in doing so had developed the ability to *consciously encounter Christ* and the hierarchical spiritual beings in the spiritual worlds.

Both turning points of the world and in time will not be repeated but will have an effect far into the future of humanity until the end of this earth's time. Just as there cannot and will not be a second Christ or a second Mystery of Golgotha in the physical world, there cannot and will not be a second Christmas Conference or a second Rudolf Steiner in the physical world. Through *Christ's redemptive sacrifice of death and resurrection in the body*, he healed *the archetype of the physical organ* – the "phantom", how Rudolf Steiner calls it – which had been damaged by the work of the opposing powers and, on the one hand, made the physical organ a fully-fledged instrument of incarnation of the ego again and, on the other, liberated the souls

Steiner: Die Weihnachtstagung zur Gründung der Allgemeinen Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft 1923/1924; GA 260; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Basel, 1994; page 121)

of the deceased who were bound to the earth. This enabled them to pass through the spiritual world again after death and thus to develop individually by transforming their karma.

Through Rudolf Steiner's redemptive sacrifice – with the help of Christ and in succession of his redemptive sacrifice –, the *legal organ of human communities*, which had become rigid in the ahrimanic, materialistic-hierarchical regulations of Roman law, was liberated and *resurrected in a spiritual legal organ*, thereby enabling the development of human communities in the age of the consciousness soul into *esoteric or spiritual communities* that work in a very practical way on and for the earth, and thus the further development of humanity and the earth.

Just as the Christ united himself and his future karma entirely with humanity and its karma ("I am with you always, until the end of the world"), Rudolf Steiner connected his own karma with that of the General Anthroposophical Society and thus also with that of the worldwide anthroposophical movement by taking over *the chairmanship of the General Anthroposophical Society and the Independent University of Spiritual Science* himself and by appointing his co-workers as board members and section leaders.

Since then, the karma of the anthroposophical movement and that of Rudolf Steiner have been inextricably linked, which is Rudolf Steiner's great *sacrifice for humanity*. What the members of the anthroposophical movement and the General Anthroposophical Society do or do not do for anthroposophy, they do to Rudolf Steiner, for better or for worse. This gives rise to the deepest gratitude and the greatest modesty and humility.

The importance of Rudolf Steiner's work for the world shows in his *succession of Melchisedek* (Hebrew: Melech zadik, righteous king, king of righteousness), the king of Jerusalem and priest of the highest God, the initiate of the great *solar mystery*, the messenger of Christ. When Abram (Abraham), sent by Yahweh to Canaan, came to the Temple of the Sun in Jerusalem, Melchisedec met him with bread and wine and blessed him³. This blessing of Abraham with bread and wine to become an initiate of the highest sun-mysteries of the highest God, who was thereby enabled and empowered to become the progenitor of the Israelite people and lead them safely, corresponds to the *blessing of the disciples by Christ-Jesus at the Last Supper*, on the one hand through the *foot washing*, through which the Christ-Jesus enabled and empowered his disciples to go out into the world in his name, and on the other hand through the *sharing of bread and wine* with them, as his body and his blood.⁴ This enabled the Christ-Jesus to work directly through the disciples into the world.

Succeeding the mystery of Golgotha as another "Beginning of a Turning Point of the World", the sharing of bread and wine by Christ as his body and blood appears at the Christmas Conference 1923/1924 in the *fourth verse of the foundation stone mantra*⁵. The light of Christ that warms the poor shepherds' hearts i.e., the love, is the bread. The light of Christ that enlightens the wise heads of kings i.e., the wisdom, is the wine. Thus the Christmas Conference

³ Genesis, 14: [18] And Malki-Zedek, the king of Salem, brought bread and wine, priests to the High God, [19] and blessed him, saying: Blessed be Abram, the High God, founder of heaven and earth! [20] And blessed be the High God, who has delivered your oppressors into your hand! And he gave him a title of everything. (Translated from the Hebrew by Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig, 1929)

⁴ Gospel according to John, 13.4 - 10, according to Mark 14, 22 - 24, according to Matthew 26, 26 - 28

⁵ At the turn of time / The light of the spirit of the world / Entered the earthly stream of beings; / Night-darkness / Had spread out; / Day-bright light / Shone in human souls; / Light, / That warms / The poor shepherds' hearts; / Light, / That enlightens / The wise heads of kings. / Divine Light, / Christ-Sun, / Warm / Our hearts, / Enlighten / Our heads; / That good may come, / What we from hearts / Reasons, / What we from heads / Purposefully want to lead. (Rudolf Steiner: Die Weihnachtstagung zur Gründung der Allgemeinen Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft 1923/1924; GA 260; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Basel, 1994; pp. 281 - 284)

lives in the stream of the solar mystery of Christ, as the "world's spirit-light", with Rudolf Steiner as its initiated messenger.

The Christmas Conference 1923/1924 has *cosmic dimensions* as the goal and climax of Rudolf Steiner's work on earth. It includes not only the founding of the General Anthroposophical Society and the Independent University of Spiritual Science with its first class, but also the work that was to continue until 24 September 1924 – the end of Rudolf Steiner's lecturing work – including the karma lectures, workers' lectures, important conferences on the development of professional esotericism in various professional fields on an anthroposophical basis – such as curative education, agriculture, (pastoral) medicine, Christian Community (Apocalypse), Dramatic Art – as well as the written works "Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts" (GE 26), "Fundamentals for an Expansion of the Art of Healing according to Knowledge of Spiritual Science" (GE 27, together with Ita Wegman) and "The Story of my Life" (GE 28). Only by understanding the Christmas Conference in its human and cosmic significance can the uniqueness and greatness of Rudolf Steiner's individuality and work and its significance for the development of humanity and the earth be properly appreciated.

2.3 The General Anthroposophical Society and the Independent University of Spiritual Science as the new Grail for the foundation of the new mysteries

The General Anthroposophical Society and the Independent University of Spiritual Science were founded at the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924 when the spiritual foundation **stone** was sunk into the hearts of the members present by means of the foundation stone mantra. The spiritual foundation stone takes the spiritual form of a spiritual *double pentagon-dodecahedron*, in which – each consisting of twelve pentagons – the two differently sized pentagon-dodecahedrons – the smaller representing the human being as microcosm, the larger representing the macrocosm – partially interpenetrate one another and, within their shared interior space, symbolise human consciousness, which reflects cosmic consciousness. On the one hand, this symbolises how the human microcosm (pentagon), three membered in its will, feeling and thinking, is intimately connected with the twelve-part trinitarian macrocosm (12 pentagons, dodecahedron) and, on the other hand, how the human being as a microcosm both projects into the macrocosm, i.e. originates from it, and projects out of it, developing it further.

With the spiritual foundation stone in the external form of the foundation stone mantra, the worldwide anthroposophical movement was placed on a new spiritual foundation – the new Grail – in accordance with the **cosmic trinity principle**, which is expressed in the *threefold structure of the human organism and the social organism*. The earthly foundation for the spiritual foundation stone was the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society, with, on the one hand, the *Trinitarian foundation stone mantra*, which connects the threefold human being with the cosmic divine Trinity, from the earth via the threefold Rosicrucian motto – *ex deo nascimur, in Christo morimur, in spiritum sanctum reviviscimus* – and from the cosmos via the three times three cosmic hierarchies, and on the other hand, its social structure formed by its statutes with minimal regulation for a cooperation in the service of anthroposophy without hierarchy, based entirely on mutual trust, knowing "that hearts can resonate together without heads clashing"⁶.

⁶ Where anthroposophy truly finds understanding in hearts, these hearts will be able to beat together without heads colliding. And if we solve this purely human problem, that hearts can resonate together without heads clashing, then we will indeed have done everything necessary from the human side to prepare ourselves to achieve these things, which have been described, in the leadership of the Anthroposophical Society as well.

Hearts can resonate together when Christ has entered them with the spiritual foundation stone and dwells and speaks within them. Then 'Anthroposophia' also dwells in the hearts. And then the *encounter between people can be a 'religious act, a sacrament'*⁷, because then two people are together in the *name of Christ* and Christ is present among them⁸. And then it also happens that it is not the subjective ego of the human being that determines, but Christ within them⁹. And then the other person also lives in the heart of the human being, and hearts can resonate together in *mutual understanding and trust*, and human hearts come together and agree, find a consensus, so that the different ideas in the heads do not clash.

In the *human solar organ*, in the *hearts of those people who connect with anthroposophy and work in its service in the world, spiritualising and Christianising it*, the spiritual-cosmic stream of the Christmas Conference and its spiritual-earthly stream meet and unite. Just as in the *solar spirit Christ*, Lucifer from the cosmos and Ahriman from the earth meet and unite. In and through the **spiritual cosmic stream**, the '*Anthroposophia*' as *Spiritual Independent University of Spiritual Science* with its leader, the Archai Michael, descends to earth and to human beings in the spiritual foundation stone. In and through the **spiritual earthly stream**, the *Christianised social form of the General Anthroposophical Society* with its statutes arises as the spiritual form of human communities, risen from death in hierarchy and power.

Through the union in the hearts of human beings of the spiritual foundation stone – carrying the Independent University of Spiritual Science within itself – with the Christ-filled General Anthroposophical Society, 'Anthroposophia' can be born and arrive on earth in the community of these human beings who form the new Grail. Thus, the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924 became, in and through the birth of 'Anthroposophia,' a real *Christmas event*, in and through the resurrection of the spiritual human community, a real *Easter event*, and in and through the inspiration of people by 'Anthroposophia,' a real *Pentecost event*.

At the Christmas conference of 1923/1924, the **representative of humanity appears in a temporal form**, the Christ, who holds the two opposing powers – Lucifer, falling above him and Ahriman, bound below him – in their respective places and unites them as the most important development helpers of humanity. The spiritual foundation stone hidden in the foundation stone mantra is the *Luciferic power of the Christ* – selfless enthusiasm, phantasy and initiative. the statutes are the *Ahrimanic power of the Christ* - selfless, clear logic.

(Rudolf Steiner: The Christmas Conference for the Founding of the General Anthroposophical Society 1923/1924; GA 260; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Basel; 1994; page 92)

⁷ [...] that we approach every human being with the fully developed feeling: something appears in the human being that reveals itself from the divine foundations of the world, reveals itself through flesh and blood. To grasp the human being as an image that reveals itself from the spiritual world, as seriously as possible, as strongly as possible, as understandingly as possible, this is laid into the images by the Angeloi. Once this is realised, it will have a very specific consequence. All free religiosity that will develop within humanity in the future will be based on the recognition that the image of the deity is truly present in every human being in their immediate life practice, not just in theory. Then there will be no religious coercion, then there will be no need for religious coercion, for then every encounter between human beings will be a religious act, a sacrament, from the outset, and no one will need a particular church with external institutions on the physical plane to maintain their religious life. Rudolf Steiner: Death as a Transformation of Life; GA 182; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, 1996; pp. 145-146)

⁸ Furthermore, I say unto you: If two of you agree on anything they ask for, it will be done for them in my Father's kingdom in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst. (Matthew 18:19-20 in the translation by Emil Bock)

⁹ But I have died to the law through the law, in order to live for the sphere of God. I am crucified with Christ. So it is not I who live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now have in my earthly embodiment, I have through my faithful devotion to the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Letter of Paul to the Galatians, 2:19-20 in the translation by Emil Bock)

Thus the two adversary powers, guided by the Christ, co-operated in a supportive way at the Christmas Conference 1923/1924, on one hand, through the spiritual foundation stone in the foundation stone mantra and, on the other hand, through the Statutes, which as polarities belong inseparably together and as their enhancement form the Christmas Conference as a higher spiritual unity, as the *manifestation of "Anthroposophia"*.

With the disappearance and invalidation of the statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society founded at the Christmas Conference, Ahriman was no longer held within his boundaries and was given space to exert his destructive hierarchical power impulse in the General Anthroposophical Society, culminating in the events of 1935 with the expulsion of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede from the Executive Council and the British and Dutch national societies from the General Anthroposophical Society.

The foundation of the General Anthroposophical Society at the Christmas Conference in 1923/1924 was an act of mystery which established the **new mysteries of the consciousness soul epoch**. Mysteries that took place in certain mystery centres had in all times the task of enabling selected, suitable people through spiritual training (initiation) to lead the peoples entrusted to them in such a way that the next cultural epoch is prepared.¹⁰

In the **ancient mysteries**, the initiate was elevated to the spirit through certain practices so that the spirit revealed itself in him and through him. These ancient mysteries gradually began to fade and lose their spiritual power after the burning of the Artemis temple in Ephesus in 356 BC. This process continued after the event of Golgotha, through which the I-power became accessible to all human beings through the Christ on earth, until the Platonic Academy of Chartres in the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. Then the *Mystery Being or Mystery Principle* withdrew into the spiritual world and worked down to earth through the Platonists gathered in the spiritual world, who were unable to incarnate in the time of the Aristotelians that had now dawned.¹¹

In the consciousness soul age, **human collaboration** is based on completely different foundations than in earlier ages, in which people were led by the spiritual hierarchies. Due to *the awakening of the I-power* in each individual human being, cooperation can no longer be led hierarchically by individual specially authorised or legitimised people, but each human community of tasks must shape and lead itself in *self-administration* entirely from within by the people involved. The mystery principle or being can no longer work through individual outstanding people, but only through communities of spiritually striving people. Since the I-power

¹⁰ "The first post-Atlantean cultural period, the ancient Indian, had to prepare in its bosom the ancient Persian, the ancient Persian in turn the Egyptian-Chaldean, and so on. And our fifth post-Atlantean cultural period must prepare the sixth cultural period of the next era. It has often been said that it is our spiritual-scientific task, through that which we acquire, not only, which is quite right, but not the only thing, to gain spiritual knowledge for our individual souls – that is allotted to us for the eternal life of our soul – but it is also our task to prepare that which the sixth cultural period is then to have as its content, as its special external work. So it was in each of the individual post-Atlantean cultural periods. And those places in which preparations were always made for what was to be the significant outer work of the next cultural period were the Mystery Centres. These were those associations of people in which other things were cultivated than those cultivated by the outer world." (Rudolf Steiner: *The Mystery of Death*; GA 159; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Basel; 2024; pp. 322-323)

¹¹ And in the 13th century there was a marvellous interaction between what happened on earth and what flowed in from above. Often the people who worked on earth were not even aware of this interaction, but those who worked above were all the more aware of it. It was a living co-operation. One might say that the Mystery Principle had ascended to heaven and let its sunbeams fall on what was at work on earth. (Rudolf Steiner: *Esoterische Betrachtungen karmischer Zusammenhänge*, Volume 3, GA 237; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, 1991; p. 97)

of every human being strives towards freedom, the new mystery being can only be founded in the *collaboration of free people on the basis of ethical individualism*¹².

In **Rudolf Steiner's work**, the foundation of the new Mysteries was foreshadowed early on, as early as 1894, in his most important written work "The Philosophy of Freedom – Basic Features of a Modern World View – Results of Soul Observation According to the Scientific Method" (GE 4). In it, he describes the **free human being** who is connected to the *spiritual primal ground* common to all human beings and who consciously draws from it for his decisions and actions and acts on intuition through individual free decision. "The free person lives in the confidence that the other free person belongs to a spiritual world with him and will meet with him in his intentions. The free person does not demand agreement from his fellow human beings, but he expects it because it is part of human nature."¹³ "The **co-operation of free people** takes place on the basis of trust in the unifying power of the spiritual world they share, in the "*primordial ground for compatibility*" and thus on the *basis of mutual trust*. Therefore, the *basic maxim of free people* is: "Live in the love of action and let live in the understanding of the will of others".

The foundation of the new Mysteries began publicly, but not yet obviously, in 1917 with the first publication of the idea of the *threefold nature of the human organism* ("The Riddles of the Soul"¹⁴) and in 1919 with the first publication of the idea of the *threefold nature of the social organism* as the future social order ("Basic Issues of the Social Question"¹⁵), continued in 1919 with the foundation of a new *Mystery Pedagogy* at the Waldorf School in Stuttgart ("General Human Studies as the Basis of Education"¹⁶) and in 1920 with the foundation of a new *Mystery Medicine* ("Fundamentals of Therapy"¹⁷). When Ita Wegman first asked Rudolf Steiner about a new Mystery Medicine at the summer conference in Penmaenmawr in Wales in September 1923, this gave the final impetus for the preparation of the Christmas Conference, at which the New Mysteries, which are based entirely on the free human being and prepare for the next cultural epoch, were founded with the establishment of the General Anthroposophical Society and Independent University of Spiritual Science.

This made it possible for the Mystery Being or Mystery Principle dwelling in the spiritual world to incarnate in metamorphosed form as the **new Grail**¹⁸. At the beginning of the introductory

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¹³ Living in the love of action and letting live in the understanding of the will of others is the basic maxim of free people. They know no other will than that with which their will is intuitively harmonised; their faculty of ideas will tell them how they will want in a particular case. If the primordial ground of compatibility did not lie in the human being, it would not be inculcated by any external laws! It is only because human individuals are of one spirit that they can live side by side. The free person lives in the confidence that the other free person belongs to a spiritual world with him and will meet with him in his intentions. The free person does not demand agreement from his fellow human beings, but he expects it because it is part of human nature. (Rudolf Steiner: The Philosophy of Freedom; GA 4; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Basel, 2021; page 166)

¹⁴ Rudolf Steiner: The Riddles of the Soul; GA 21; Rudolf Steiner Publishers, Basel, 2023

¹⁵ Rudolf Steiner: Basic Issues of the Social Question; GA 23; Rudolf Steiner Publishers, Basel, 2022

¹⁶ Rudolf Steiner: General Human Studies as the Basis of Education; GA 293; Rudolf Steiner Publishers, Basel, 2019

¹⁷ Rudolf Steiner, Ita Wegman: Fundamentals of Therapy; GA 27; Rudolf Steiner Publishers, Basel; 2014

¹⁸ But also during this time [the fifth period, the fifth cultural epoch of the consciousness soul, phj] there developed what can be called an ever-increasing flow of the insights of modern supersensible consciousness into the human souls. The "hidden knowledge" flows, even if quite imperceptibly at first, into the ways of thinking of the people of this period. It is only natural that, right up to the present day, the powers of the intellect are hostile to this knowledge. However, what is to happen will happen, despite all temporary rejection. One can call the "hidden knowledge", which seizes and will increasingly seize mankind from this side, the realisation of the "Grail" according to a symbol. Whoever learns to understand the deeper meaning of this symbol, as it is given in tales

course in the new Mystery Pedagogy for the teachers of the new Waldorf School, Rudolf Steiner had given the teachers a *Grail meditation* describing how the teachers form a community in which each teacher is backed by his or her angel. Archangels carry the work done by each teacher to their colleagues and form a bowl of courage into which the Archai drop a drop of light. The newly founded General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference formed the new Grail into which the essence of "Anthroposophia" can incarnate through the Independent University of Spiritual Science.

By establishing the new mysteries of the consciousness soul epoch through the sinking of the spiritual foundation stone into the hearts of the members present by means of the foundation stone mantra, Rudolf Steiner simultaneously performed **cult and reversed cult**. Through the *invocation of the hierarchies* in the foundation stone mantra, the *spiritual being "Anthroposophia"* could sink into the hearts of the participants. At the same time, by *invoking the Trinity*, the participants were able to raise themselves to the two Archai "Michael" and "Anthroposophia". In this way, the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society could become an *esoteric society* – the **new Holy Grail** – in the name and power of the Archangel Michael, who had risen to become Archai, the spirit of the age.

With the incorporation of the various anthroposophical *institutions of free spiritual life* – the Waldorf School in Stuttgart, the Clinical Therapeutic Institute in Arlesheim – as well as the anthroposophical *enterprises of economic life* – "Der Kommende Tag", "Weleda", "Futurum AG", the Goetheanum administration ("Johannesbauverein" or "Verein des Goetheanums") and others. – The aim was to create a **forward-looking society**, the "most modern society in the world", with a truly *free spiritual life, a legal life that was truly based on the equality of its members, and a truly fraternal economic life, as a shell for the entire anthroposophical movement and the Independent University of Spiritual Science at its centre*, which with its Sections would radiate spiritual impulses into the world through spiritual scientific research, teaching and training.

In accordance with the **social principle of equality**, the active principle of legal life, the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society should be based as purely as possible on the *trusting, living dialogue between equal human beings* – from mature human being to mature human being – and not on abstract principles or power-related regulations – "a *society of convictions*, not a society of statutes"¹⁹, a place and space free of hierarchy and power, which remains largely closed to the powers of the adversary, as an earthly *soul-space and body for the spiritual being "Anthroposophia"*. According to *the motto of social ethics*, the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society should be a completely *future community of free, equal and fraternal people*:

and legends, will find that it meaningfully symbolises the essence of what has been called above the knowledge of the new initiation, with the mystery of Christ at its centre. The modern initiates can therefore also be called the "initiates of the Grail". The path into the supersensible worlds, which is described in the first stages of this book, leads to the "Science of the Grail". (Rudolf Steiner: *Occult Science in Outline*; GA 13; Rudolf Steiner Publishers, Basel; 2021; pp. 406-407)

¹⁹ You see, with this I have at least indicated to you the basic conditions that must be placed before our hearts at the end of our conference for the foundation of the General Anthroposophical Society. In the sense I have indicated, it must be a society of convictions, not a society of statutes. The statutes must only express outwardly that which is alive in the souls. (Rudolf Steiner: *Die Weihnachtstagung zur Gründung der Allgemeinen Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft 1923/1924*; GA 260; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Basel; 1994; page 48)

"Salutary is only when
In the mirror of the human soul
The whole community forms itself
And in the community lives
The strength of the individual soul."²⁰

It is only socially beneficial if
the individual acts from the consciousness of the
whole community in free initiative for it
and the community receives in freedom
the individual's power of initiative for it.

The General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference should be a **purely human society**, with "*greatest possible publicity and deepest, truest esotericism*"²¹ that is to say, as broadly applicable to the world as possible, or *exoteric*, and radically spiritual, or *esoteric*, in order to create the right conditions for the incarnation of the *being "Anthroposophia"*, the sister being of the Archangel Michael who ascended to the Archai, the administrator of cosmic intelligence, who had handed over its administration into the hands of human beings.

The task of the Independent University of Spiritual Science was to place itself as an **independent university on an esoteric basis** with three esoteric classes entirely in the *academic discourse of the time* and to contribute *answers to* all important scientific, artistic and social questions of the time *from the point of view of spiritual science*. With its sections and faculties, the Independent University of Spiritual Science was to place itself fully in the respective areas of life, research and work and expand and stimulate them through spiritual science.

2.4 The leadership of the esoteric General Anthroposophical Society by the esoteric initiative board

In order to give the General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference and the Independent University of Spiritual Science a social form corresponding to their nature and task, Rudolf Steiner designed the *statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society* in a minimal form with as few regulations as possible as a *reflection of the real working situation of the people at the Goetheanum in Dornach* and as the freest possible basis for an **esoteric society**, as a *body-forming legal shell* for the spiritual being "Anthroposophia", for the Independent University of Spiritual Science and the anthroposophical world movement.

As an esoteric society, the General Anthroposophical Society linked the spiritual and earthly worlds; through the spiritual foundation laid in the foundation stone mantra, it brought the spiritual world down to earth as a *cult*, and it raised earthly life up to the spiritual realm as a *reversed cult*.

Accordingly, the board of the Anthroposophical General Society of the Christmas Conference was, on the one hand, an *initiative board* through its primary task of stimulating, accompanying, supporting and coordinating *anthroposophical initiatives* of all kinds in the world - freely, without hierarchy - and thus developing an *overview awareness of the worldwide anthroposophical movement*, and, on the other hand, an **esoteric board** through the spiritual striving of its members, accompanied by Rudolf Steiner.

²⁰ Rudolf Steiner: Truth-Wrought Words; GA 40; Rudolf Steiner Publishers, Basel; 2019; page 298

²¹ I do not think that we need to debate this very much during this conference, but we must solve this basic problem in our hearts. We must realise that it is precisely our society that will have the task of combining the greatest conceivable publicity with genuine, true esotericism. [...] The difference must be that, through the power of anthroposophy itself, this possibility exists to connect the greatest conceivable public with the truest, most inner esotericism. And esotericism must not be lacking in the future, even in the most outward acts. (Rudolf Steiner: The Christmas Conference on the Founding of the General Anthroposophical Society 1923/1924; GA 260; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Basel; 1994; page 92f)

It is said that the General Anthroposophical Society failed because Rudolf Steiner did not appoint a successor to himself as chairman. He did not do this consciously, not because there was no one to do so or because he died beforehand, but because the **leadership of a spiritual community** in the age of the development of the consciousness soul can no longer be done by a single person, no matter how competent, not even by an initiate, but only by a *community of spiritually striving and training people* who place themselves completely at the service of the task and can rise to the spirit as a community in *reverse cultus*.

Rudolf Steiner appointed to the Executive Council spiritually striving persons who were close to him as spiritual disciples, and whom he trusted to be able to continue to form the **esoteric Executive Council** after his death, even without him. He knew that he would not be able to remain in his earthly body for much longer, because during the fire at the Goetheanum he had to withdraw for a short time in order to consciously hold his etheric body within his physical body. From then on he was weakened, because his spiritual members – etheric body, astral body and I-organisation – were no longer properly anchored in his physical body, which manifested itself, for example, in his inability to digest physical food properly. On New Year's morning 1924 – the anniversary of the Goetheanum fire – he suffered a fainting spell during a reception and said he had been poisoned. This was interpreted as an attempted poisoning attack, which seems possible but not necessarily so. It can also be understood as poisoning due to digestive failure, triggered by the reactivation of the shock caused by the Goetheanum fire following the passage through the entire zodiac within a year as the rhythm of the physical body.

At the beginning of the tenth scene of the third mystery drama "The Keeper of the Threshold", Benedictus, the spiritual teacher and leader of the shown spiritual community, describes such an esoteric initiative board right before the appointment of his disciples to the new leadership of the Temple of the Mystery Covenant:

My disciples have opened up to their souls / The spiritual light in that way, / Which is appropriate to their destiny. / They shall, what they have gained, / make fruitful for each other. / This can only happen when their powers / At the place of consecration, ordered by measure and number, / Will bind themselves to the high unity, / Which only can awaken to true life, / What individually must only remain in being. / They stand at the threshold of the temple of consecration. / Let their souls unite / And according to the rules that are recorded / In the book of the world's destiny, sound together, – / That harmony of spirits may work, / What they are unable to do for themselves. / They will bring the new to the old, / Which has reigned here worthily since days of yore. ²²

This requires of the individual *member of such an esoteric leadership group* – in fact of the leadership of every task community – that he is able to withdraw his personal, his ordinary human being and to subordinate it to the task, thus making room for his **"second human being"**, his **"second self"** i.e., his higher I or higher self.

Johannes Thomasius, one of the most advanced spiritual disciples of Benedictus, the spiritual teacher and leader of the shown spiritual community, expresses this in the same tenth scene of the third mystery drama "The Guardian of the Threshold" – just a few pages later – as follows:

Spiritual discipleship has bestowed upon me / A self that will prove powerful even then / And can fully unfold its own creativity, / When the bearer must know himself still far away

²² Rudolf Steiner: Four Mystery Dramas; GA 14; Rudolf Steiner Publishers, Basel; 2024; page 404

from the highest goal of the soul. / If in such a situation his duty grows / To give the second man who awakens in him / In service of the evolution of the earth, / That he may one day become what he knows / To be his own being's aim far in the future. / He will carry his own worries through life / Firmly locked away within the soul. ²³

As long as Rudolf Steiner was alive, he was able to support this kind of co-operation in an esoteric board and push back the workings of karma between the board members. When the Goetheanum Association (“Bauverein”) was renamed the General Anthroposophical Society on 8 February 1925 and the Christmas Conference statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society disappeared by being replaced by the statutes of the “Bauverein” according to Swiss law, and when shortly afterwards, on 30 March 1925, Rudolf Steiner died, karma was able to work between the board members as he had predicted to Ita Wegman.

Through the substitution of the statutes, the esoteric society, the new Grail, became an earthly **administrative society** after Rudolf Steiner's death and the esoteric board became an **administrative board**, creating the current situation. This gave the opposing powers the opportunity to work, which then led to the expulsion of Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede from the board in 1935 and the exclusion of entire groups of members from the General Anthroposophical Society. The **comparison of the two statutes** clearly shows why the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society could be an esoteric society with an esoteric board and why today's General Anthroposophical Society cannot be.

Since the violation of the statutes can be healed again, the administrative society can once again become an **esoteric society**, and because the accompaniment of anthroposophically striving members of the Independent University of Spiritual Science by Rudolf Steiner still happens after his death, as long as people consciously cultivate contact with his individuality in the spiritual world, an administrative board can once again become an **esoteric board**.

2.5 The effectiveness of the Independent University of Spiritual Science after Rudolf Steiner's death

From the 1923/1924 Christmas Conference onwards, the General Anthroposophical Society Board was identical to the College of Spiritual Science; all Board members were to lead a section. Edith Maryon should have taken over the leadership of the section for fine arts but died on 2 May 1924.

The **sections** are not explicitly mentioned in the statutes of the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society. Rudolf Steiner describes them and names their leaders in connection with the discussion of Article 7 of the statutes²⁴ at the Christmas Conference. The Sections have the task of researching the spiritual connections and laws of their field of life and of bringing the results of their spiritual scientific research into the worldwide academic discourse and representing them there. The **three** designated **esoteric classes** were meant to support on different levels the university members in their spiritual development and lead them to their conscious crossing of the threshold into the spiritual world.

In order to bring the Independent University of Spiritual Science and its sections to their full effectiveness, Rudolf Steiner planned to establish **three classes of esoteric work**. Unfortunately, during his time on earth he was only able to establish *the first part of the first class*

²³ Rudolf Steiner: Four Mystery Dramas; GA 14; Rudolf Steiner Publishers, Basel; 2024; page 407

²⁴ Rudolf Steiner: The Christmas Conference on the Founding of the General Anthroposophical Society 1923/1924; GA 260; Rudolf Steiner Publishers, Basel; 1994; page 51

with 19 lessons. Due to his early death, Rudolf Steiner was unable to establish the *second and third parts of the first class*²⁵. There were not yet enough people with sufficiently developed intellectual abilities to establish the second and third classes.

The question arises as to whether **the founding of the Independent University of Spiritual Science** was really successful and whether it can really work and be effective with only the first part of the first esoteric class and without an initiated leader. This question can basically be answered in the affirmative because Rudolf Steiner has given humanity all the necessary foundations for the conscious development of the consciousness soul and for the encounter with the etheric Christ.

The **quality and effectiveness of the Independent University of Spiritual Science** depends not only on the individual professional and personal, mental-spiritual abilities of its co-workers in the sections, but also on the *spiritual capacity of its communities for inverted cultus*, as described at the beginning of the tenth picture of the third mystery drama "The Guardian of the Threshold" by Benedictus and Johannes Thomasius (see above). And this is the path that a **Michael Community** can and must take within the framework of the Michael School in times when people have to find their way into the spiritual world independently, without an incarnated initiate.

If reversed cult takes place and succeeds in the sections of the Independent University of Spiritual Science in connection with **anthroposophical community building**, the good inspirations from supporting spiritual beings also materialise through the employees. The corresponding abilities of the Independent University of Spiritual Science staff can and will continue to develop – even with only the first part of the first esoteric class – and the time will come when there are enough people to establish a second and third part of the first class and a second or third esoteric class and to continue Rudolf Steiner's work.

3. The situation of the General Anthroposophical Society and the global anthroposophical movement

The **global anthroposophical movement** is a global community – with estimated one million members – and includes not only the members of the General Anthroposophical Society but also all co-workers of all enterprises and institutions in all fields of work who work on the basis of anthroposophy in the periphery of the anthroposophical world movement throughout the world in cultural, artistic, medical, educational, nursing, pastoral, social, therapeutic, economic or scientific fields, irrespective of their individual relationship to anthroposophy and membership of the General Anthroposophical Society.

²⁵ And now we are standing in front of this anthroposophical school founded by Michael. We feel part of it. It is Michael's words that should characterise the path that leads into the spiritual world and into the human I, Michael's words. These Michael-words of the esoteric Michael-school, they formed the *first section*, so to speak. When – as will be announced – we meet again in September for these class lessons, then it will be the will of the Michael power to first describe the imaginative cult revelations from the beginning of the nineteenth century. This will be the *second section*. The mantric words that have now reached our souls will continue to stand before our souls in images which – as far as this is possible – will be the downplayed images of the supersensible imaginative cult from the beginning of the nineteenth century. The third chapter of this school will be that which will lead us directly to those interpretations which were given to the mantric words in the supersensible Michael school of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. (Rudolf Steiner: Esoteric Instructions for the First Class of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum; GA 270; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Basel, 2022; pages 364 - 365)

Because they work in an institution or profession on an anthroposophical basis, they are representatives of anthroposophy for the public and thus belong to the anthroposophical world movement, whether they are aware of this or not, whether they want to be or not, whether they are members of the General Anthroposophical Society or the Independent University of Spiritual Science or not.

This leads to the *dilemma* that these co-workers are seen by the public as representatives of institutions that work on the basis of anthroposophy, but many of them are insufficiently connected with anthroposophy and are unable to cultivate and develop it in their field of work, which weakens anthroposophy.

3.1 The internal situation of the General Anthroposophical Society and the Independent University of Spiritual Science

- The **current General Anthroposophical Society** is the General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference in name only. The statutes of today's General Anthroposophical Society are not those presented and decided at the Christmas Conference, but those of the former "Johannesbauverein" or "Verein des Goetheanums", renamed General Anthroposophical Society on 8 February 1925, whose task was the organisational and financial *administration of the Goetheanum*.
- As so-called "*principles*", the **statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference** as a whole are an ineffective, purely *idealistic appendix* to the statutes of the current General Anthroposophical Society, in which the article on the Independent University of Spiritual Science refers to three articles of the statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference.
- The General Anthroposophical Society is a completely regular **association** according to *Swiss civil law* ZGB Art. 60ff, i.e. according to *hierarchical Roman law*, in which the General Assembly of Members, as the legislative organ, is the supreme organ of the association, superior to the executive board, which elects it and delegates certain tasks to it, which requires a *regulatory hierarchy* that makes the executive board a fulfilling organ.
- As a result of the amendment to the statutes of 8 February 1925, the *esoteric society* "General Anthroposophical Society" with an *esoteric executive board* has under the same name become an **administrative society** with an **administrative executive board** which therefore can't be neither an initiative board nor an esoteric board, as the statutes of the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society stipulate, but only *an administrative board*, as the current statutes require.
- The administrative society tends to foster a certain **bureaucratic or functionary mentality**, which relies on rules and formalities and also produces them, and is characterised by the fact that belonging to a certain group and one's position or status within it or the administrative process are more important than the quality of an idea or impulse and determine what happens or does not happen in an organisation.

When Rudolf Steiner speaks of **club-like**²⁶, which should have no place in the General Anthroposophical Society, he is basically referring to the bureaucratic or functionary-

²⁶ There has been virtually no meeting held recently within the Anthroposophical Society in which the problem has not been present as a background, unnoticed by many, behind everything else: How do we combine full public engagement with the deepest, most serious, most inner esotericism? To this end, it is necessary that all our future meetings be lifted out of everything that can be called club-like. Anthroposophy does not need the

mentality. Both hinder the development of both the artistic and esoteric impulses at the Goetheanum and turn the General Anthroposophical Society and the Goetheanum into an administrative society.

This bureaucratic or functionary mentality influences the entire **culture of collaboration** and, even when people reject it, has an effect also because it is a consequence of the *intellectualism* (see below) that prevails at the Goetheanum, which strives in a completely unartistic way to understand life from abstractions and to press it into abstractions.

- The **general meeting of the General Anthroposophical Society** thus becomes a *place of hierarchical encounters* where the endeavours of different groups trying to assert *their own interests* meet and even fight each other. This, lately, has improved.
- In terms of its structure, the **current General Anthroposophical Society** is the exact opposite of what Rudolf Steiner intended and inspired with the General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference. It is *hierarchically organised, regimented, enabling power struggles*. This prevents anthroposophy from radiating out into the world in a spiritually stimulating and healing way. This also facilitated the misunderstandings and *power struggles* within the General Anthroposophical Society that have continued to this day since Rudolf Steiner's death.
- Through its *materialisation and crippling* due to the substituted statutes, the General Anthroposophical Society is at the mercy of the **work of the opposing powers**, which hinder the working of the spiritual foundation stone into the world from the hearts of the people connected with anthroposophy. The basic esoteric current of the Christmas Conference is thus weakened and with it the incarnation of "Anthroposophia".
- One result of the work of the opposing powers is the **intellectualism** that prevails in the Goetheanum leadership leading to a lack of artistic impulse and artistic competence in the organisation and management. This is evident in the design of conferences such as the *Goetheanum World Conference 2023 'Redesigning the World Movement'*. Its results were described in the form of 'three creative impulses', 'seven perspectives for the coming seven years' and 'twelve fields of action', which may be intellectually impressive, but are purely theoretical and have no real connection to the practice of the anthroposophical world movement.

This was inevitable, because the main method used to arrive at these results consisted of having the participants discuss these topics in working groups and then deriving conclusions from the recorded group discussions. This is the 'evidence-based' **summative method** commonly used in academic science, in which seemingly objective, supra-individual results are derived from the sum of subjective individual contributions in the form of conclusions. This is a totally intellectual and completely unartistic method that stands in complete contradiction to spiritual science.

To spiritual science would correspond the **Goethean method** of starting from the whole, that is from the question about the being of anthroposophy and the Goetheanum and then asking in which direction these spiritual beings want or should develop in their current earthly manifestation and what they need to do so.

It would be **socially artistic** to merely initiate and stimulate this process at and with continental or regional conferences, so that it can be worked on intensively in all anthroposophical institutions on the respective continents. The result of this process in and

club-like in the ordinary sense of the word. (Rudolf Steiner: The Christmas Conference for the Founding of the General Anthroposophical Society 1923/1924; GA 260; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Basel; 1994; page 92)

through the periphery would flow back to the World Conference at the Goetheanum through continental conferences, which would convey a **living picture of the anthroposophical world movement** and initiate subsequent, further development processes. This did not happen, and so the Goetheanum continues to navigate aimlessly and without leadership through increasingly difficult times in protected but meaningless niches. (See also Chapter 4 Principles of Social Design and Chapter 5 The Redesign Process of the AAG as a Scientific-Artistic-Spiritual Breathing Process)

- Intellectualism is also a major problem when it comes to **filling vacant positions on the Executive Council and in the Goetheanum leading council**, because intellectual academics know mainly other intellectual academics and work with them, and so there is a strong tendency to fill vacant positions with intellectual academics. Since intellectualism and social-artistic competence are fundamentally polar opposites and largely mutually exclusive, the artistic impulse has little chance of finding its way into the executive board and the Goetheanum leadership, not even into the artistic sections for the performing and musical arts and for the visual arts. In the intellectual climate that prevails at the Goetheanum, professionals who truly think, feel and act artistically have hardly a chance of being appointed to leadership positions.
- The **Independent University of Spiritual Science** has so far been unable to fulfil its actual task of contributing to the solution of contemporary issues with answers from spiritual science through its sections due to *a lack of competence and funding*. For a long time the Independent University of Spiritual Science was equated with the *first esoteric class* and the **Section for General Anthroposophy (SGE)** concentrated on acting as the guardian of the implementation of the *class lessons* by recognised readers – today's mediators. In opposition to this, the **main task of the SGE** consisted of stimulating and coordinating *the further development of spiritual science* in all sections of the Independent University of Spiritual Science through *basic research into the scientific nature of anthroposophy*.
- Despite the confusion, aberrations and attacks within the General Anthroposophical Society caused by the substituted statutes, despite the failure of the SGE and despite the resulting attacks from the public, the General Anthroposophical Society and the Independent University of Spiritual Science miraculously still exist, because all this time there has been a struggle to organise the anthroposophical movement as well as possible in the spirit of the Christmas Conference. This was made possible by the **spiritual work with the foundation stone mantra** with which and through which Rudolf Steiner sank the *spiritual foundation stone* into the hearts of the Christmas Conference participants. This laid the *solid esoteric foundation* of the General Anthroposophical Society and the anthroposophical world movement.
- As the founding meeting of the General Anthroposophical Society, the **Christmas Conference of 1923/1924** was the only *general meeting of the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society* to date. All subsequent general meetings of the General Anthroposophical Society were those of the former "Verein des Goetheanums", renamed General Anthroposophical Society, the so-called "Bauverein" for the financial and organisational administration of the Goetheanum building.
- The **true General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference** has been spell-bound and paralysed since the substitution of the statutes and is waiting for its redemption. The central question is how this can happen and what significance the *statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference* have in this process.

3.2 The inner situation of the anthroposophical world movement

- In the anthroposophical fields of work and through them, the anthroposophical movement has in fact become an **international world movement** with institutions working on the basis of anthroposophy on all continents. In fact, it has become a world movement, but not yet structurally or organisationally, as can be seen in the inadequate processes and structures of the General Anthroposophical Society.
- The anthroposophical world movement still lacks the necessary **processes and organs** to link the Goetheanum as the centre with the institutions and staff as the periphery efficiently and effectively. **Co-operation** between the Goetheanum and the countries is patchy because not all countries have a *country society* with a *country representative*. But even in countries with country societies, not all groups (institutions) and members are connected to them.
- Thus the **flow of information** through the General Anthroposophical Society from the Goetheanum to the groups in the countries and on to the individual members cannot flow unhindered, nor vice versa. Similarly, the flow of information through the sections of the Independent University of Spiritual Science to the countries cannot flow properly because there are still national sections in many countries. This means that *the Goetheanum or the Independent University of Spiritual Science is not present in the periphery* and is therefore not properly recognised.
- The inadequate presence of the Goetheanum and the Independent University of Spiritual Science also stems from the lack of **spiritual scientific competence** of the Sections and their staff, who are not in a position to fertilise their academic subject areas with spiritual science and to be perceived and recognised accordingly by the academic world.
- **The level of development of the anthroposophical movement** in the various countries is very different, corresponding to the extent of the work of *anthroposophical institutions* in each country to date, which has also led to *the different status of the translation of Rudolf Steiner's written work* into the respective national languages, which lags behind the needs of the fields of work.
- In particular, **GE 260 "The Christmas Conference on the Founding of the General Anthroposophical Society 1923/1924"** was only translated into relatively few languages, which was also due to the fact that Marie Steiner did not publish GE 260 until 1944, twenty years after the Christmas Conference of 1923/24. The statutes of the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society were translated into more national languages than GE 260.
- As a result, **awareness of the significance of the Christmas Conference** and the founding of the General Anthroposophical Society and the Independent University of Spiritual Science for the world is still not widespread in the anthroposophical world movement, and with it the *understanding of Rudolf Steiner's task* of founding the new mysteries and the new Grail.
- Due to the inadequate presence of the Goetheanum and the Independent University of Spiritual Science in the periphery, the awareness of the responsibility of all groups, countries and institutions in the various fields of work for the adequate **financing of the Goetheanum** and the Independent University of Spiritual Science is not sufficiently developed. Many countries still pay an amount to the Goetheanum that does not fulfil its financial needs. This cannot be otherwise, because the Goetheanum and the Independent

University of Spiritual Science cannot be financed by the contributions of the members of the General Anthroposophical Society due to the high financial requirements.

- The shortfall in funding for the Goetheanum and the Independent University of Spiritual Science resulting from the limited resources of the General Anthroposophical Society can only be made up from **economic added value**, but this does not happen. Imagine that for every product or economic service developed on the basis of anthroposophy – such as cosmetics, medicines, food, etc. – a small amount, analogous to a *licence fee*, is paid to the Goetheanum. **A continuous financial stream** would flow from the periphery to the Goetheanum in return for the *spiritual stream* that flows into the world from the anthroposophy brought into the world by Rudolf Steiner.
- Due to the **inadequate funding of the Independent University of Spiritual Science's research** by the whole anthroposophical world movement, the Independent University of Spiritual Science is unable to fulfil its task of carrying out *research on a spiritual scientific basis* in all areas of life and fields of work and participating in the worldwide *academic discourse* with the results of its research and is unable to keep pace with conventional academic research.
- **Young people** involved in anthroposophical fields of work tend not to join the General Anthroposophical Society because, firstly, they are mainly attracted to *practical anthroposophical work*, secondly, they *do not* feel that membership of the General Anthroposophical Society and participation in General Anthroposophical Society groups *is relevant* to their work – although their institution in their field of work could be an General Anthroposophical Society group in an objective field! – thirdly, they *do not* find *the right answers to their life questions* there, and fourthly, they find *the state of the General Anthroposophical Society* with its power struggles off-putting and not inviting to join.
- The members of the anthroposophical world movement are very committed to working in their **anthroposophical institutions or companies**, the "*daughters of anthroposophy or the General Anthroposophical Society*", and in doing so lose touch with and the connection to "*mother anthroposophy*" or the General Anthroposophical Society, as the *source* from which all anthroposophical life flows.

When presenting or discussing the practical results of the anthroposophical work of the "daughters", attempts are made to conceal or deny the underlying method, anthroposophy, i.e. the "mother". On the one hand, this means that the practical results of anthroposophical work are not recognised or understood by the public and, on the other hand, these institutions and companies, the "daughters", are slowly drying out from within and increasingly losing **their inner spiritual substance**, especially in Europe.

This means a disregard or violation of the central principle of the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society "**greatest possible publicity and deepest esotericism**". A secret is made of anthroposophy and its esotericism, which arouses *suspicion* among the public dialogue partners of anthroposophical institutions (media, authorities, politicians, scientists): "What are they actually doing? What are they hiding from us? They're a sect, aren't they?"

In many **anthroposophical fields of work**, such as Waldorf education, biodynamic agriculture and anthroposophical medicine, the outward approach is quite *standardised* according to tried and tested methods – curricula, formulas, therapies – often without sufficiently advanced spiritual scientific research and probably often without sufficient individual spiritual training.

- The anthroposophical world movement largely lacks the awareness that, as an employee in an anthroposophical field of work, one is always seen by the public as a **representative of anthroposophy** in this field of work and, in fact, is one through one's actions. What is essential here is how authentically a person who works professionally in the world on the basis of anthroposophy represents it to other people. Being a representative also means being aware that, as such, one is in constant *struggle with the opposing forces of Lucifer and Ahriman*. It also includes an awareness of the significance and purpose of the *class lessons in the first class of the Independent University of Spiritual Science*, which are a path of training (and not a cult!) to understand, among other things, the workings of the opposing forces on the one hand and of Christ on the other, and to prevail in the struggle with them together with Christ.
- The social impulse of the **threefolding of the social organism** brought into the world by Rudolf Steiner has so far only been insufficiently taken up and understood by the majority of members of the General Anthroposophical Society and the anthroposophical world movement, nor has its connection with anthroposophy and the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society. Thus there are quite a lot of anthroposophists who do not (want to) know anything about social threefolding and also people who are committed to social threefolding but have little connection with anthroposophy.
- Many people in the anthroposophical world movement are finding it increasingly difficult to **relate personally to Rudolf Steiner as person or individual human being**. This is reflected, among other things, in the fact that on the one hand people avoid *mentioning Rudolf Steiner* in public *as the founder of anthroposophical spiritual science* because he is seen as a guru or sect leader and they fear *a cult of personality*, and on the other hand portraits of Rudolf Steiner are removed from public or semi-public spaces, such as halls or staff rooms in Waldorf schools, or he is barely mentioned or not mentioned at all on the websites of anthroposophical institutions.

This *separates Rudolf Steiner's name from his work*, which, according to a remark Rudolf Steiner made to Ita Wegman, leads to his work becoming *the prey of Ahriman*. He also pointed out in lectures that the deceased in general, and especially the initiators of spiritual work, can only continue to work in the earthly world in the sense of their impulse from the spiritual world if people living on earth not only connect with their earthly work, but also cultivate and maintain a personal connection with these deceased as a person.

Rudolf Steiner points out that people today pass through death into the spiritual world with so much **wisdom that has not yet been utilised for the earth** that, in order to be able to make this wisdom even more useful for the earth, they are dependent on being able to work through people who are still incarnated and who connect with their work and with them personally²⁷. This applies in particular to Rudolf Steiner himself as the initiated founder of anthroposophy. Rudolf Steiner did this for many deceased people in the course of his life, especially for Goethe. He is depending on us to do this for him as well as for ourselves.

²⁷ We are sometimes so wise as human beings when we die – only our declining body is not capable of bringing out these things for ourselves – that we could still render very important services to the earth, not merely to the spiritual realm, but to the earth, through our realisations, if they could be applied. These services could then be utilised if people, as I have indicated, were to establish relationships with the dead. The dead still want to work into physical life, but they can only do so in a roundabout way through human souls, when human souls devote themselves to them in the appropriate way. (Rudolf Steiner: *Der Tod als Lebenswandlung*; GA 182; Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Basel, 1996; Lecture in Hamburg, 30 June 1918)

3.3 The external situation of the General Anthroposophical Society and the anthroposophical world movement

- Anthroposophy and anthroposophical institutions and organisations are more or less **dis-trusted** by the public in various countries, especially in Europe. Anthroposophy is increasingly being attacked and denigrated in the media in these countries as *unscientific, dogmatic, sectarian or even world conspiratorial*. Attempts are being made to restrict or even make impossible certain anthroposophical fields of work such as anthroposophical medicine or Waldorf education, for example in France, Finland and Sweden.
- In a hundred years, the anthroposophical fields of work have not succeeded in gaining the **public recognition** commensurate with their importance for the prosperous and healing development of the world. Their importance and impact on the public is still marginal and often does not correspond to their actual social significance.

Above all, the FHGW has not succeeded in demonstrating the **scientific nature of anthroposophy** as a fundamental science and its application in its various sections and fields of work, thereby connecting it with the world and bringing it down to earth. Even within the anthroposophical society and movement itself, there is a lack of knowledge about the scientific research and research results of the various sections. Due to insufficient awareness of the scientific nature of anthroposophical spiritual science, it lacks the indispensable *foundation for public recognition* in the age of the consciousness soul.

Both are related to the disregard or violation of the *principle of "greatest possible publicity and deepest esotericism"* described above, which leads to anthroposophical research not being understood by other researchers and consequently not being taken seriously and not being experienced as equal.

- Due to their inner anthroposophical weakness, the anthroposophical fields of work have withdrawn into **social, scientific or economic niches** and isolated themselves there. Due to a lack of scientific expertise – both in terms of academic science and spiritual science – and a lack of Michaelic courage, they have failed to engage in *social and scientific discourse*, which is why they lack a connection to the non-anthroposophical world and scientific and social acceptance by the latter.

4. Principles of social organisation

The current General Anthroposophical Society needs a new social organisation in line with the General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference and its statutes. This requires a process of reorganisation or re-inspiration of the General Anthroposophical Society in line with the General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference based on the following **principles of social design**.

A successful **social change process**

1. actively involves **all members of the community** and can be understood and supported by all members in order to be effective in the long term. By being involved in the redesign process, members in the *periphery* can feel like individual members of the community and identify with it individually;
2. happens **from the inside out**, so that the community changes in its *internal orientation, attitudes, processes and structures*, from which new external behaviour with a corresponding external structure then arises organically;

3. organically connects *the periphery* and *centre* of the community in a **breathing process** that oscillates back and forth between the outside and inside, constantly balancing the two opposing poles. It is an interactive creative process between the centre and the periphery, which is *stimulated and guided with a clear goal from the centre*, always taking up the impulses from the periphery and integrating them into the process;
4. **starts with the original impulse of the community** and continues it organically, modifying or metamorphosing it according to the circumstances. Measures that do not continue the original impulse either act as *disruptions* and jeopardise the healthy continued existence of the community or are not absorbed or are rejected by the community organism and cannot be sustained;
5. is an **organic process** with different *phases*, comparable to the growth of an annual crop: a seed or seedling is placed in suitable, prepared soil with a question. The question is worked on in the periphery, the seed begins to germinate and grow, developing leaves and forming flowers, which then become many answers, fruits and new seeds for further development. Throughout this time, the plant needs the right environmental conditions and, especially at the beginning, special protection and constant care. This is a *developmental process* with a clear *beginning* and a clear *goal* and a definite duration, which consists of the plant – the question – bringing its sensually hidden *spiritual being* to a sensual-physical manifestation;
6. is a holistic **scientific-artistic-spiritual process**; *scientific* in the sense that the conditions of the process are scientifically researched and transparently documented; *artistic* in the sense that, firstly, the goal is only generally named as a direction of development, but results concretely from the creative process itself, and secondly, the process is designed in a dialogue between all participants and between the centre and the periphery; *spiritual-esoteric* in the sense that the aim is to enable an esoteric spiritual being – in this case "Anthroposophia" – to incarnate into earthly conditions and to support this incarnation process.
7. is a **process of legal life** on the basis of both *free spiritual life* and *fraternal economic life*, i.e. the individual *abilities* of all participants on the one hand and the individual *needs* of all participants on the other, is a process of *shaping law and relationships through agreements between equal – equitable and equivalent – responsible people*, combining and balancing their individual abilities and needs.

5. The renewal of the General Anthroposophical Society as a scientific-artistic-spiritual breathing process

Based on the existing situation of the current General Anthroposophical Society and the anthroposophical world movement (see: 5. The current situation of the General Anthroposophical Society and the anthroposophical world movement) and the validity of the aforementioned principles of social organisation (see: 4. Principles of social organisation), the following **thirteen conclusions** can be **drawn** with regard to the process of reshaping or refounding the General Anthroposophical Society – referred to in the following as the "*reshaping process*":

1. If the impulse of the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society intended by Rudolf Steiner and shaped accordingly is to be resumed and continued, the statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference must be *resurrected* in the statutes of a new General Anthroposophical Society in a contemporary form by

amending the statutes, replacing the statutes of the current General Anthroposophical Society, which are the statutes of the former administrative association (“Bauverein”).

2. Although **the renewal of the General Anthroposophical Society statutes** in line with the statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference is the essential condition for the reorganisation process of the General Anthroposophical Society so that the General Anthroposophical Society can continue to develop in line with the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society, it is not the beginning, but the *end*.

In order for this conclusion – the reorganisation of the General Anthroposophical Society statutes – to be successful, the reorganisation process must be implemented and shaped by all its members in all fields of work in all countries. This requires as a precondition **the translation of the Christmas Conference volume (GE 260) into all the national languages of the anthroposophical movement** in order to be accessible to all its members.

3. The whole process of reorganisation is based on **the central organ of the anthroposophical world movement**, formed by the *Goetheanum leadership (General Anthroposophical Society Executive Board and Independent University of Spiritual Science section leaders)*, which is extended to include all the country representatives. This central organ stimulates, shapes, organises and leads the process of reorganisation in such a way that it reaches and involves all members of the General Anthroposophical Society and all collaborators in all anthroposophical fields of work, as the periphery of the anthroposophical world movement, across all *country organisations and specialist organisations*, regardless of the nature and location of their work. This requires a corresponding organisation of the General Anthroposophical Society with national societies and country representatives and of the Independent University of Spiritual Science with section representatives in all countries.

All co-workers working on an anthroposophical basis can contribute to the reorganisation process according to their possibilities, provided they wish to do so. In this way the central organ enters into a **constructive dialogue** with all members of the anthroposophical world movement. Certain tasks can also be *delegated* to specially formed organs or groups, such as the "*Convention*".

4. The **reshaping process** extends over **two annual cycles**. It is framed by **three world conferences**, at the beginning, in the middle after the first year and at the end after the second year, which take place in parallel centrally at the Goetheanum and decentrally as *country conferences* in countries or regions of the anthroposophical world movement – connected online around the globe.
5. The **aim of the first world conference** is to create a common understanding for the whole anthroposophical world movement
 - a. to make conscious the events at the *Christmas Conference of 1923/1924* for the founding of the General Anthroposophical Society and the Independent University of Spiritual Science and their further development up to the present day and understandable for the whole anthroposophical world movement by means of the translation of GE 260 into the respective national language,
 - b. to familiarise themselves with the questions emanating from the Goetheanum and to be dealt with by the whole anthroposophical world movement – individuals and institutions (see 6. below),

- c. to organise this one-year process in the respective countries.
6. This **process of cognition**, involving and uniting the whole anthroposophical world movement, should enable it to develop an *awareness of the essential and existential conditions for the incarnation of "Anthroposophia" and the public recognition of anthroposophy* by working on essential **questions** concerning the individual and institutional relationship to the central foundations of anthroposophy.

Such **questions** relate above all to the **individual and institutional handling** of the following essential and existential conditions of anthroposophy and its public recognition:

- the **scientific nature of anthroposophy** and one's own individual and institutional anthroposophical work;
- one's own **individual and institutional relationship to anthroposophy** as the source of all anthroposophical work and as the *mother of* all anthroposophical institutions and enterprises;
- adhering to and putting into practice the principle of "**greatest possible openness and deepest esotericism**" in one's own anthroposophical work;
- one's own individual and institutional **relationship with the General Anthroposophical Society and the Independent University of Spiritual Science**;
- one's own individual and institutional **relationship to Rudolf Steiner** not only as the founder of anthroposophy on earth and as a spiritual teacher, but also as person and individual;
- the **representation of anthroposophy** in and towards one's own individual and institutional public through one's own individual and institutional work in the respective anthroposophical field of work, i.e. *relations with the public* and *co-operation* with it;
- one's own individual and institutional **relationship to the (etheric) Christ**, as the main task, the main goal of anthroposophy;
- **evil** in one's own individual and institutional behaviour, as an essential task in the consciousness soul age.

Through an **interactive process**, these questions are carried out via the *national organisations* of the General Anthroposophical Society and also via the *specialist organisations* of the sections of the Independent University of Spiritual Science in the respective national language to the outermost periphery of the anthroposophical world movement, to all its members in all fields of work in all parts of the world, so that they can be dealt with *locally, regionally and nationally*.

7. The answers to these questions are brought back to the Goetheanum in Dornach as the results of the work of the local, regional and national groups through the national and specialist organisations and are perceived there by the central organ as an **overall view of the inner and outer situation of the anthroposophical world movement**.
8. The **second World Conference** marks the transition from the first cycle of the General Anthroposophical Society's reorganisation process to the second. In the first part of the second World Conference in all countries, the presentation and discussion of the overall view of the inner and outer situation of the anthroposophical world movement communicated by the Goetheanum will mark the end of the first cycle of the process of renewal of the General Anthroposophical Society, with which the *intellectual and emotional*

foundations for the reorganisation of the General Anthroposophical Society were created throughout the anthroposophical world movement.

9. In the *second part of the second World Conference*, the *second annual cycle* of the General Anthroposophical Society's *reorganisation process* begins with **the renewal of the General Anthroposophical Society's statutes**. This second cycle takes place analogously to the first: starting from the central organ at the Goetheanum, carrying it out to the periphery via the national and specialist organisations, where it is worked on locally, regionally and nationally, and then flows back to the Goetheanum via the national and specialist organisations.
10. On the occasion of the **third world conference** – in a form analogous to the first and second – the **worldwide foundation of the new General Anthroposophical Society** with the new statutes corresponding to the General Anthroposophical Society of the Christmas Conference takes place as the conclusion of the reorganisation process, with the visualisation of the whole process and its results and as a *harvest festival*, with corresponding public relations work.
11. This process organisation enables a so-called "**bottom-up process**", in which the foundations are first laid in the periphery of the entire anthroposophical world movement for understanding the Christmas conference and the whole process, and thus for the joint drafting of the statutes and the final re-founding of the General Anthroposophical Society.

If the new statutes – without this groundwork – are drawn up at the very beginning of the reorganisation process, the process must remain a "**structural top-down process**", because – without a developed understanding of the Christmas Conference – the impetus emanating from the centre will not meet any spiritual substance in the periphery that could take up and further develop this impetus.
12. Such a shaping of the reorganisation process of the General Anthroposophical Society makes it possible for it – starting from the central organ at the Goetheanum – to flow into the periphery, to penetrate it, and from there to flow back to the Goetheanum as a **scientific-artistic-spiritual breathing process** *in several waves*.
13. Unfortunately, the process has already been initiated in a structurally top-down manner with the **drafting of new statutes** by a specially formed, twelve-member **convention** at the Goetheanum, composed of equal numbers of representatives from both sides, which will present its draft at the General Assembly of the General Anthroposophical Society in April 2026. The draft is then to be discussed over the course of a year by all groups of the General Anthroposophical Society worldwide, with the *final version* coming into force at the 2027 General Assembly.

What will be decisive is how the **work in the periphery** is organised during this year. The work should not be limited solely to the members of the General Anthroposophical Society in the various national societies or countries but should be discussed across the worldwide network of sections throughout the *anthroposophical world movement*.

However, because no **systematic preparatory groundwork** – working through the Christmas Conference statutes and comparing them with current statutes, working through GE 260 on the Christmas Conference, addressing fundamental questions (see above, requirements 3 to 8) – this seed will fall on barren ground or among thorns, and many members of the Anthroposophical Society and the global anthroposophical movement will either

assess the draft statutes subjectively rather than objectively, or, out of ignorant disinterest, will not participate in this process at all.

Attachments

- Comparison of the statutes of the Christmas Conference-General Anthroposophical Society and the current General Anthroposophical Society

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