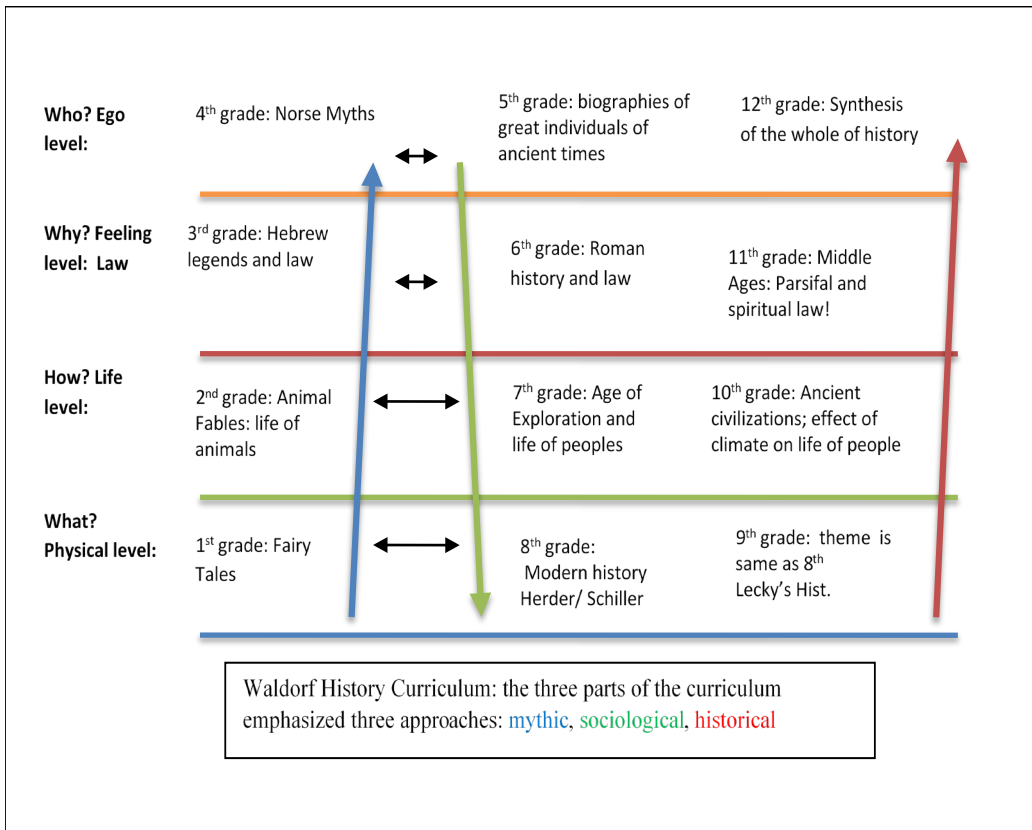


The End of Waldorf Education 1919-2020: 101 years of the Waldorf Movement Ignoring Rudolf Steiner's Goal of Inaugurating a New Thinking School

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Fundamentally, the Waldorf School does not want to educate, but to awaken.... First of all, the teachers must be awakened, and then the teachers must awaken the children.

Rudolf Steiner, (GA 217 p. 23)

It is natural that today these things can only be seen as an *ideal for the future*, because we are living in a materialistic culture, which takes its toll on curriculum and curriculum goals.

Rudolf Steiner (GA 301 p. 88)

Change can be scary, but you know what's scarier? Allowing fear to stop you from growing, evolving, and progressing.

Mandy Hale

Point of view: Rudolf Steiner wanted his Waldorf School to teach a new form of dynamic, organic thinking. Unbeknownst to his colleagues, Steiner employed this 'new thinking' in the organic style in which he wrote his books and designed his Waldorf School. Steiner never gave a systematic account of his new thinking but instead gave examples particularly in his Waldorf School lectures and in remarks he made about his writing style about his Philosophy of Freedom.

An American anthroposophist and Steiner researcher, George O'Neil, "decoded" this new thinking in Steiner's Philosophy of Freedom and many other projects that Steiner completed. O'Neil taught Steiner's method initially to Anthroposophical students from the 1950s to the 1970s; and to a few gifted spiritual students one of whom, Florin Lowndes, published O'Neil's findings in his Das Erwecken des Herzdenkens (Freies Geistesleben Publisher: Stuttgart, 1998) a systematic account of Steiner's new thinking.♥

Although Lowndes presented this material to the Waldorf Pedagogical Section leaders in Dornach in 1994, their complete rejection of the new thinking marked the *end of Waldorf Education* in official Waldorf channels. A golden opportunity was missed for a completely new impulse to have been inaugurated into the organizational health of Waldorf Education.

The lack of understanding of the new thinking continues to be universal in the entire Waldorf educational movement. This rejection shows that it may be indeed still too early for Steiner's new spiritual form of thinking to be taken up by majority of Steinerians, or reflects that the Waldorf Movement has drawn leaders into its ranks who have *antiquated modes of thinking*, contrary to the highest mission of its founder. In the following, I will show in outline what this new thinking is, and how it was

♥ This essay is the second part of series on George O'Neil, an important anthroposophical researcher. The first essay is called "Compositional Style and Meditation on Rudolf Steiner's Philosophy of Freedom: Some tips from the O'Neils." George O'Neil put his research results together in his mimeographed manuscript "A Work-book to the Philosophy of Spiritual Activity" available at www.organicthinking.org or the Rudolf Steiner Library in Hudson. Although O'Neil presented Philosophy of Freedom in its organic form, he gave scant indications on how to meditate on the form. O'Neil pulled together all the necessary information to make one of greatest accounts of Steiner's Philosophy of Freedom and the new thinking. Lowndes's Das Erwecken des Herzdenkens is very thorough in terms of Steiner quotes and of examples of Steiner's new thinking system including a large survey of Steiner texts For English readers, I followed the middle ground in presenting this new thinking in my Logik of the Heart: the Organic Templates of Spiritual Writers, Rudolf Steiner, and the Philosophy of Freehood, a translation of Education of the Child highlighting its form, called Primer for Spiritually Thinking Educators.

employed in Steiner's Waldorf School purpose and design. I believe there are enough quotes from Steiner to point to a new thinking and that Steiner expected this new thinking to be first mastered by Waldorf teachers and then employed in the lifeblood of the school's methods and consciousness.

In the article, I tackle in an uncompromising manner the fact that Rudolf Steiner's organic method of thinking, also called "the new thinking," has not yet been practiced by the Anthroposophical Society and thus never incorporated into Waldorf Education. The result has been that Waldorf Education was from its very founding, and despite all its amazing offerings, never in a position to fulfill its founder's ultimate goal: *a new thinking school*.

Steiner's new form of thinking was based on his model of the seven-fold human being and Goethe's Archetypal Plant. This seven-fold model of thinking and organizing, in its various forms and sub-forms, was used by Steiner in all aspects of his Waldorf School design, lesson plan format, curricula selection. Because the Waldorf school is constructed from this new thinking, it is reasonable to conclude that there is a higher mission of the Waldorf School as a new thinking school meant to inaugurate a new "logic of the heart" and thus a new era of consciousness. This thinking must be grasped first before the higher mission of Waldorf can be achieved.

Those who are already committed to Waldorf and Anthroposophy will necessarily take issue with this thesis. Obviously, no one wants to be told after a lengthy career in Anthroposophy/Waldorf that they were neither taught, nor did they seek Steiner's new thinking essential to understanding his work. But Anthroposophy is about truth, not feelings. Reports about the decline of the quality of Waldorf education were appearing in Germany as early as the 1990s, and anyone who is familiar with Waldorf knows that our American Waldorf schools pale in comparison to the well-established German ones in terms of resources, quality, and idealism. To compound this, the Waldorf movement has already moved away from studying Steiner's basic books which are the sources for the new thinking, and some schools have gone as far as divorcing themselves from Steiner's name altogether.

To be fair to those who love Steiner's work but were not introduced to his method of writing and thinking during their anthroposophical training and mentorship, Steiner did not give an account of his new thinking and was restrained as a spiritual master unless asked direct questions. Tongue-tied, Rudolf Steiner often made challenging statements intended to provoke questions about his method and purpose of his book. Late in his career he proclaimed - seemingly begging the question from his audience as to how his books should be read:

That, however, is just where people have not gone along: they have not read The Philosophy of Freedom in another way than other books are read. And that is it whereon, with all possible sharpness, stress must be laid. Otherwise, it is simply the case: the development of the Anthroposophical Society will completely and totally fall behind the development of anthroposophy itself. Then through the channel of the society, anthroposophy must be completely *misunderstood by the world*. And then, out of it all can come, *only conflict upon conflict*.

The audience should have asked Steiner: "What does it mean to read the Philosophy of Freedom in a "another" way, Dr. Steiner?" Missed opportunities! Is there not conflict upon conflict within anthroposophy, and misunderstood by the world?

My critique is not simply of the Waldorf Movement but of its mother organization the Anthroposophical Society. Both groups are called to investigate Steiner's method of thinking

according to the prefaces to the Philosophy of Freedom, Theosophy and other works.♥ Treating the Philosophy of Freedom as a mere philosophy text goes completely against Steiner's call for deciphering the method, or "thought-style" of his book. Are anthroposophists not disquieted by the fact that the ideas and conclusions in the Philosophy of Freedom can be found in Steiner's earlier and later works, thus pointing to the importance of the form of the writing, not the content. In simple English, the same 12 or 13 concepts reappear in all of Steiner's earlier works which forces the question as to whether Steiner was hoping that the style of thinking (method of writing) underlying his books would be discovered.*

Section 1: The Seven-Fold Human Being as a Model for Steiner's New Thinking

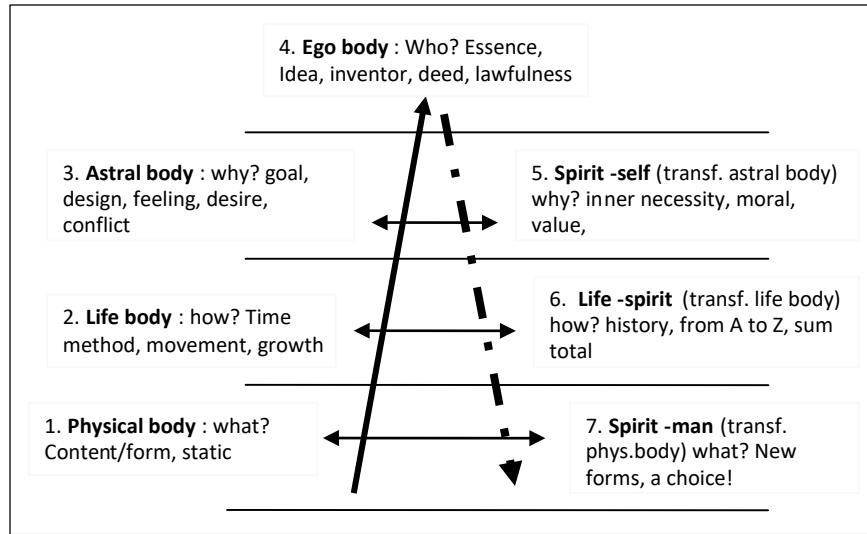
George O'Neil asked himself the question as to what living thinking was. After observing plant growth and carefully reading Steiner's texts for 'organic patterns,' O'Neil worked out thought-forms for the Philosophy of Freedom, and later followed up with Theosophy, Occult Science, Calendar of the Soul and many other aspects of Steiner's work.* The seven-fold human being and its various forms (9-fold, 6-fold, 4-fold) are the living schema that Steiner was able to use for his ideas and writings.

What was the schema Steiner used for his writings? The seven-fold human being has four levels (physical, etheric, astral, and I-level) and polarity/inversion. The physical body stands in polarity to the spirit-man, and the etheric body to the life-spirit and so on. The "I" or ego body stands alone in the middle. Each of the seven aspects has their own question and quality. Steiner uses this model as the basis for his new thinking. The wave-form is its important characteristic.

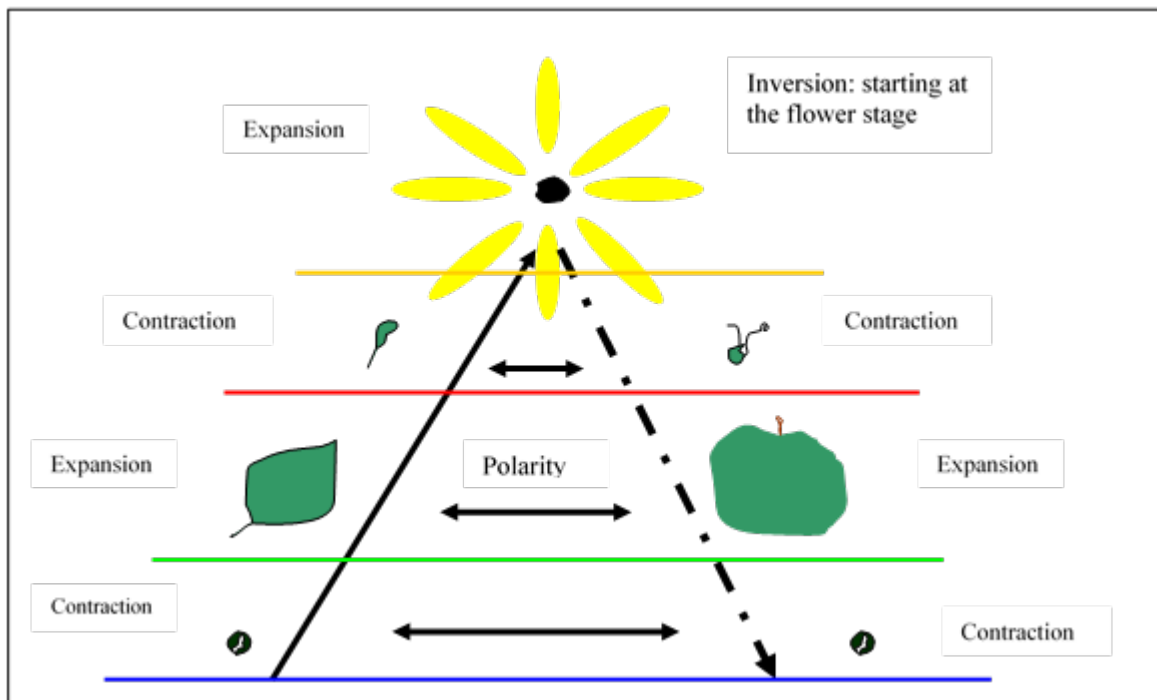
♥ The Preface and the Second Appendix to the Philosophy of Freedom point out that the key to the book is the concrete grasping of the book's style of thinking/writing. It is a question of how it was written. And according to Steiner it was written in a compositional style. From the Preface we have the provocation "to enter into the style of the writing": "Und diese Rechtfertigung ist so unternommen, daß man wohl nirgends bei diesen Ausführungen schon auf die später von mir geltend gemachten Erfahrungen hinzuschließen braucht, um, was hier gesagt ist, annehmbar zu finden, wenn *man auf die Art dieser Ausführungen selbst eingehen kann oder mag.*" [All italics are mine]

* I am always tickled about how few Steinerians have actually read (Complete Edition numbers 2 through 6) Goethean Theory of Knowledge (CE 2), Truth and Science (CE3), Philosophy of Freedom(CE 4), Friedrich Nietzsche (CE 5), and the Goethean Worldview (CE 6). Some of these books have identical chapter titles and Steiner's repeatedly references his Philosophy of Freedom in these other works.

* George O'Neil was very old school. He only handed out his findings to close associates and never published them with a press. These study notes are difficult to find and except for the Philosophy of Freedom, none of the old, mimeographed manuscripts are available at the Steiner Library. For copies of his work go to www.organicthinking.org.



One sees the same structure in Goethe’s Archetypal Plant. The plant also contains the four levels and moves with the same interrelationships of rhythm, enhancement, polarity, and inversion.



One can see why Steiner was able to connect his work on the seven-fold human being with Goethe’s seven-fold thought-form, since they are both highlighting the laws of the new thinking. “Living thinking” for Steiner is a thinking in which one idea grows out of the other, that has elements that live in polarity (contrast of outer and inner) and at the mid-point invert (umstuelpen). These two quotes from Steiner highlight these laws and relationships:

Style, however, requires *continuity* of thought. Anyone setting out to write an essay, and to write in style, ought already to have his last sentence within the first. He should in fact pay even more attention to the last than to the first. And while he is writing his second sentence, he should have in mind the second to last one. Only when he comes to the middle of his essay can he allow himself to concentrate on one sentence alone. If an author has a true feeling for style in prose, he will have the whole essay before him as he writes.

In this quote, Steiner applies the seven-fold human being and the law of polarity to writing. Imagine that one can examine Steiner's own paragraphs "decoding" his use of polarity. This is what George O'Neil basically discovered in the Philosophy of Freedom. The quote below could explain how Steiner uses seven for the life cycles, planets, pillars of the Goetheanum and many other projects he undertook. In the case of his writing, Steiner did not limit himself to seven-fold forms, and even when writing a 5-sentence or 13-sentence or 3-sentence paragraph, the organic relationships are always present, just in different constellations.**

Think of the many themes that were really fundamental themes, and how we had to build up our whole *thought-structure* time and again out of the basic scheme: physical body, etheric body, astral body and ego.... But this is and remains a reliable thread on which to string our thoughts: these four members of man's being and their interworking; and then on a higher level, the transformation of three lower members: the third into the fifth, the second into the sixth and the first into the seventh member of our being.... You are laying down the plan or basis for your system of thought, as once the gods laid down the plan for the wisdom of the world.

For those who seek a still stricter schooling, my books Truth and Knowledge and The Philosophy of Freedom are particularly suitable. Those two books are not written like other books; no sentence can be placed anywhere but where it stands. *Each of the books represents*, not a collection of thoughts, but *a thought-organism*. Thought is not added to thought, each grows organically from the preceding one, like growth occurs in an organism. The thoughts must necessarily develop in a like manner in the reader. In this way a person makes his own thinking with the characteristic that is self-generating. Without this kind of thinking the higher stages of Rosicrucianism cannot be attained. However, a study of the basic spiritual scientific literature will also school thinking; the more thorough schooling is not absolutely necessary in order to absolve the first stage of Rosicrucian training.

Thus, you have two aspects of this new thinking: the seven-fold structure and thought-organism. When reading the Philosophy of Freedom, these are the keys for understanding how to think like Steiner. One should then be able to find such structures in the Waldorf School if its true mission is to teach children how to think livingly and in levels of quality.

** The reader will have to test Steiner's method. Gather for example a bunch of 7-sentence paragraphs out of the Philosophy of Freedom and compare their structure. (Of course, please use only a pre-1925 German Edition for this exercise since translators have hacked and distorted the clause-, sentence-, and paragraph-integrity of Steiner's original work.) Then look at a bunch of 6 sentence paragraphs and so on. The process is so simple and enlivening it is amazing that the Pedagogical Section, The Christian Community Leadership, and many local Branches reject what is obvious to open eyes and ears.

Section 2: To Make the Organic Thinking Visible

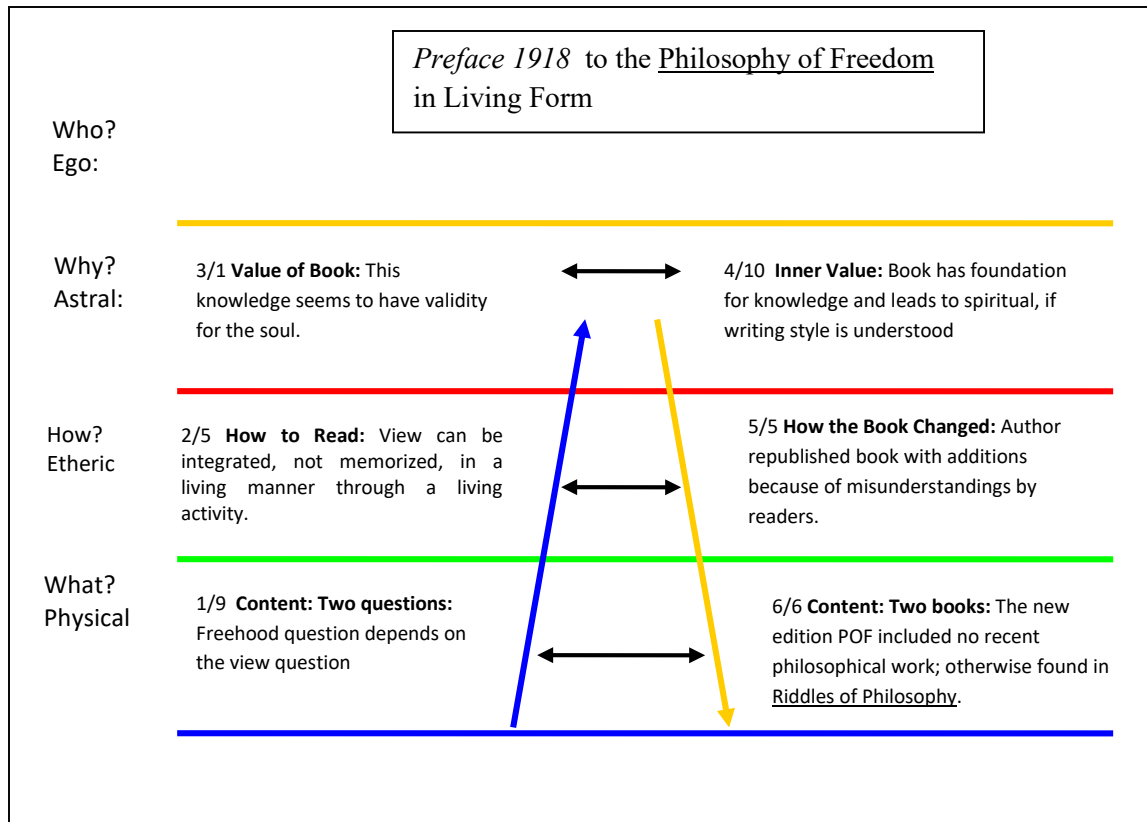
This simple and artistic step of making the organic visible could have produced an interesting development within Anthroposophical study groups. This approach allows participants to survey a whole chapter at a glance. By comparing the paragraphs, their themes, and their polarities the mind becomes artistic and living as it moves through a quasi-musical score of Steiner's ideas. Steiner in his Youth Course, titled The Younger Generation, goes to the extreme by pointing to the *Preface* to his Philosophy of Freedom as a source of new thinking:

In what I have named Anthroposophy, in fact in the *Preface* to my Philosophy of Freedom, you will meet with something which you will not be able to comprehend if you only give yourself up to that passive thinking so specially loved today, to that popular god-forsaken thinking of even a previous incarnation.¹

Here Steiner includes his *Preface* as a source of new thinking which goes against the assumption that his dogmatic followers maintain when they argue that the Philosophy of Freedom does not even get into meat and potatoes of important information until Chapter III and VII where one finds his refutation of Kantian dualism, naïve realism, and metaphysical realism. But as we can see plainly from the quote above, it is not about a new content, although fun to read, it is about a new thinking.

If one has a quick gander at the six paragraphs of the *Preface to the 1918 Edition* to the Philosophy of Freedom, one sees immediately how it lives in polarity and symmetry just like the archetypal plant and the sevenfold human being:

¹ Rudolf Steiner, The Younger Generation (New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1967) p 107



The reader may want to quickly grab their Philosophy of Freedom to see the obvious truth that Steiner's *Preface* is written in polarity.^{ΩΩ} A fact that many Ph.Ds. and Steiner researchers of "Steiner's method" have ignored in spite of Steiner's provocative remarks about the uniqueness of his *Preface* being written in a new thinking, and not in a "godforsaken thinking" of even a prior incarnation. In Steiner's organic thinking frame of mind, even a 'preface' is a teaching moment; in the intellectualized anthroposophical mind, only the content is worthy of one's time!

The purpose of a Steiner book like the Philosophy of Freedom is to learn a new thinking in that the reader digests the content by practicing the living form! (Recall "living" means studying and mapping the book according to the wave-forms of enhancement, polarity, and inversion.) George O'Neil's four-level diagrams help tremendously in understanding Waldorf's true purpose. This approach ultimately clarifies many of Steiner's otherwise cryptic remarks about the new thinking based on the four levels and laws (polarity, enhancement, and inversion). For example, he says the Philosophy of Freedom has to be experienced as art:

To know this second man, a kind of artistic activity must be unfolded. Hence there is this mood in the Philosophy of Freedom which most people never discover - everywhere it touches the level of the artistic. Only most people do not discover this because they look for the artistic in the trivial,

^{ΩΩ} Readers may find that their translation of the Philosophy of Freedom (Philosophy of Spiritual Activity or Intuitive Thinking as Spiritual Path) deviates from the original German editions. Translators have combined or broken up paragraphs, left out significant punctuation and deleted clauses! Thus, the form of the book is distorted. For a faithful edition of the Philosophy of Freedom go to my website, www.organicthinking.org, for The Philosophy of Freehood (Heart-logik Edition).

in the naturalistic and not in free activity. Only out of this *free activity can education really be experienced as art, and the teacher can become an artist in education when he finds his way into this mood*. Then in our epoch of the *consciousness-soul* all teaching will be so arranged as to create an artistic atmosphere between teacher and pupil.²

What is art? Simple answer: art is contour, color, and composition, and in this sense, Steiner composed his books in organic art-graphs. To fulfill Steiner's prerequisite of being a consciousness-soul teacher, you need to first experience the Philosophy of Freedom artistically. Steiner's highest intention with the Philosophy of Freedom goes against the current Waldorf practice of making everything "artsy"[^] as opposed to a teacher who thinks artistically i.e., in tableau form.

For the person seeing through the eyes of his consciousness-soul, the Philosophy of Freedom brings together thinking, music, art, and religion. *Thinking* by recalling the thought process of the book; *music* by reciting each paragraph as if they were notes on a scale of the seven fold human being; *art* because of the position of the thoughts in symmetry, because they are compositional, they must be seen in relationship to one another; and *religion* because this thinking leads to spiritual experiences and capacities if practiced properly and piously (each chapter form of the Philosophy of Freedom should be practiced 50 times (Pentecostal number) according to Steiner).

From approaching the Philosophy of Freedom in graphic form to the deciphering of Waldorf Education in an artistic format, it is plain to see that the *organic thinking* contained in the Philosophy of Freedom was in fact inserted into Waldorf Education in its curriculum selection, lesson plan format, and whole-to-the-parts method of teaching.

² Steiner, The Younger Generation, Lecture X.

[^] The overabundance of art in Waldorf education is a completely dangerous dumbing down of a very powerful spiritual idea and of a new thinking system that Steiner was attempting to establish. If Steiner and his followers had been successful in this inauguration, it would have been an event with same historic gravity of Aristotle's introduction of formal logic into civilization. The continued retardation of the growth and expansion of Steiner's new thinking will bring the complete demise of Anthroposophy and will continue to lead Waldorf down its current dogmatic path, or even worse, down its overly self-critical, anti-Steiner path. Waldorf leaders may squirm in their chairs at these trends, but will they start to study the Philosophy of Freedom together to get where they need to be in terms of acquiring an art of freedom as a soul mood via proper group work?

Section 3: Waldorf as a New Thinking School

It is essential not to lose sight of our own goal, and therefore we must work to develop this consciousness, the “Waldorf teacher’s consciousness,” if I may express it so.... We must realize that we really need something quite specific, *something that is hardly present anywhere else in the world*, if we are to be capable of mastering the task of the Waldorf School.³

Rudolf Steiner

Rudolf Steiner did not need to remind himself what the steps and properties of organic thinking were since he had internalized their patterns early on in life.* He acted out of his special organic consciousness. In the quote above, he wanted to share this new consciousness with his Waldorf teachers. Although there are many different soul abilities one can have such as clairaudience, clairvoyance, empathy, healthy moral judgment, intuition, healing, and so on, Steiner here is pointing to the type of compositional-artistic thinking based on the sevenfold human being. Why do you think you find Steiner repeating over again the four, or seven members, of the human being in so many of his lectures and books?

Once you have internalized this thinking system that lives in four levels, polarity, and wave-forms, you can become creative in the way you teach and approach others. You too will start to see life in tableau, and organize facts/ideas/elements in artistic tapestries. It is a whole-to-the-parts consciousness. This consciousness needs to be acquired before “we are capable of mastering the task of the Waldorf School.”

Beholding the Seven-Year Cycles:

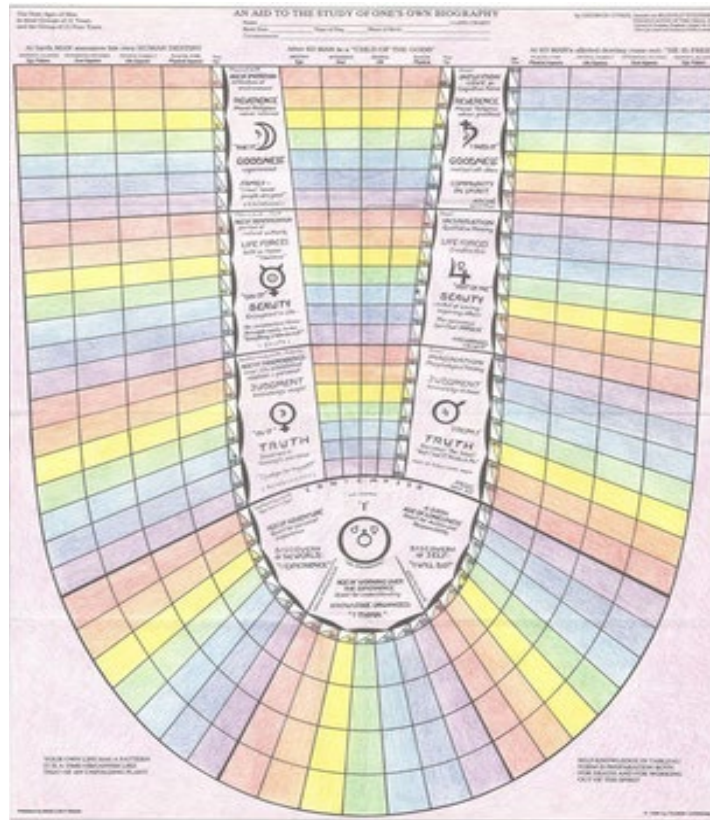
The first living tapestry Steiner laid out was the seven-year cycles as the basis for education. In his first educational lecture cycle, Volkspaedagogik, Steiner called for a “Gesamtschule,” “comprehensive school” experience that covers ages 7 through 20/21. Steiner understood one had to start with living thinking, that living thinking was also found in the seven-year cycles and the nine-fold human being, that the faculty needed this new thinking in order to live in the laws of the unfolding child. The new thinking teacher would model this new thinking and would aid young people in finding their vocation by way of multiple disciplines, experience of different industries, and even spiritual guidance.

When educators can see how the 63 years of life are a living tapestry, that their actions as teachers will codetermine the later unfolding of the students’ abilities in the later life periods (ages 42 to 63), then suddenly it dawns on the educator how serious and life sustaining/damaging their work can be. But in order to survey the life-span of the human being, its inner connections and development, one needs the type of thinking that an artistic study of the Philosophy of Freedom contains, since the human life and its seven-year cycles also contain the laws of enhancement, polarity, and inversion. Waldorf teacher training institutions do not require their students to study the seven years cycles systematically as one finds in George O’Neil’s The

³ Rudolf Steiner, Deeper Insights into Education (Hudson, New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1983) p.21

* Florin Lowndes has done the great research on Steiner’s biography and the development of the new thinking. His notes to the Philosophy of Freedom can be found in the brilliant Code-X editions of Steiner’s basic books.

Human Life, and the Philosophy of Freedom is studied only for its inspiring message and not its artistic form.



Steiner's Waldorf Compromise:

One of the most significant compromises Steiner had to make - in addition to the fact that his followers never grasped his new thinking in the Philosophy of Freedom - was that the seven-year cycle had to be ignored in all of its implications in the school formation of the first Waldorf school. Steiner once said in a lecture unrelated to Waldorf that an *ideal school* sequence would consist of a *seven-grade school*, not an eight-grade school like we currently have:

And if, for example, such things would receive more attention in the classes, then one could work in an unbelievably beneficial manner. One could work in a beneficial manner for example, if one would divide the consecutive classes into a *seven-grade school*. One could create so-to-say a middle grade which stood by itself; and then one would repeat in the fifth grade -however in a changed form- what was taught in the third grade, and in the same way in the sixth grade would be repeated what was covered in the second grade, and in the seventh what was covered in the first grade. This would mean an advantageous strengthening of the memory, and people would

see, *if this was put into praxis*, how beneficial these things would work, simply for the reason, that they have their origin in the laws of real life.⁴

Here we see how a true Waldorf school would be organized around the seven-year cycle or the laws of real life. Without an understanding of the new thinking, these quotes are hard to grasp. Waldorf apologists told me that: “there are in fact 8 grades in one 7-year cycle!” As the scales slowly fall from people’s eyes, they will begin to see the compromises Steiner made to found the first school.

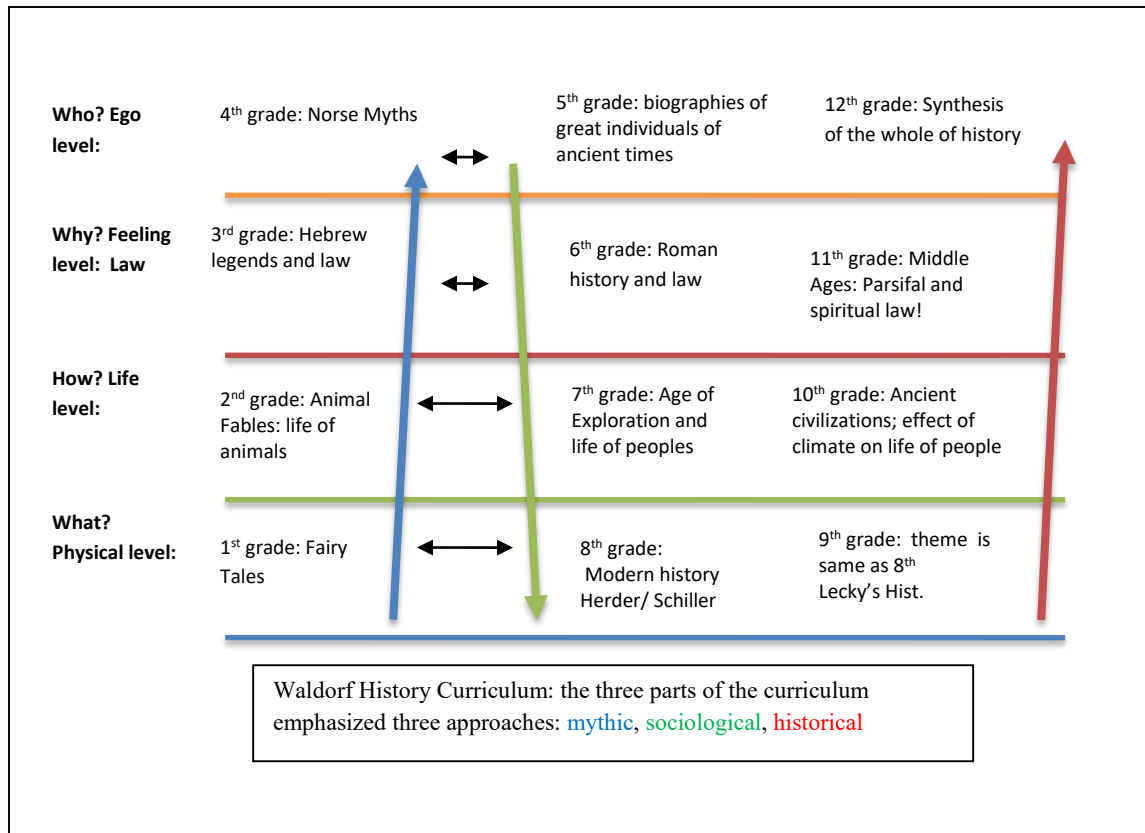
Steiner had to make an eight-grade elementary school because it was required by school law, not because he thought developmental perfection was to be sought in a twelve-grade school. Recall that in his first educational lecture series, he suggested a fourteen-grade school sequence since he thought schooling should be completed around age 20 or at the end of the third seven-year cycle. Because there had to be an eight-grade sequence, Steiner *adjusted the polarities* in the curriculum to make an adjusted organic form. Where one sees in the seven-grade elementary school that there are polarities between the first and seventh, second and sixth, and third and fifth, with a fourth grade in the middle, in an eight-grade sequence the first and eighth grades are polar, second and seventh, third and sixth, and fourth and fifth at the top. Here Steiner in fact highlights this connection/polarity in a lecture:

That is why such importance is placed on the fact that the pedagogue is master in the school and not just that any school norms dominate which one must adapt himself to, but that the teacher is himself master in the school, that he grows not only into the methods, but that he grows with the *form of the school*, that he grows into the Configuration of the first eight grades, whether he, in one year, teaches the first or eighth grade that *he teaches in such a way in the first grade, that in this way of teaching* (of first grade), *the way is also given in which the pedagogue must teach in the eighth grade.*⁵ (emphases mine)

As well as not covering the human life tapestry in their teacher training, I am sure that Waldorf scholars (leaders) also have no idea what Steiner meant when he said that the first and the eighth grade should be taught in a similar spirit. Out of this Steinerian organic logic, one would then teach 2nd and 7th grade in a similar way, 3rd and 6th grade in a similar way, and finally 4th and 5th grade in a similar way. But by what measure does one teach “in the same way”?

⁴ Rudolf Steiner, my trans. GA 115 Anthroposophie-Psychosophie-Pneumatosophie, (Dornach, Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag) p 203 my emphases.

⁵ Rudolf Steiner, my trans. GA 301 Die Erneuerung der pädagogisch-didaktischen Kunst (Dornach, Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag 1993) p.88



Rudolf Steiner broke his elementary curriculum into two parts: grades one through four, and five through eight designated by the ascending blue line and descending green line. The first half has a mythological quality while the second half a sociological one. (Real history is taught in grade 9 through 12.) One sees how the course work/themes have a similar quality:

- 1) blue (physical) themes are archetypal (fairy tales and modern man),
- 2) green (etheric) themes have to do with living or life (life of animals and life of peoples),
- 3) red (astral) themes with law (Hebrew and Roman law), and
- 4) yellow (the I-level) Norse myths (pure will) and great individuals (pure innovation).

In this way Steiner was able to sneak in his new thinking schema, however so gently. Back to the question as to what the “same way” means? It means bringing in the color and quality of the level of the subject matter. If eighth and first grade are polar then give them a foundational quality of the physical level. One doesn’t have to paint the walls of the classroom *blue* to create such an atmosphere, but starting with the consciousness of the teacher i.e., the teacher can show how “modern human beings” (presented in the material of 8th grade) represent the fulfilled archetype presented in the fairy tales (presented in the material covered in 1st grade).

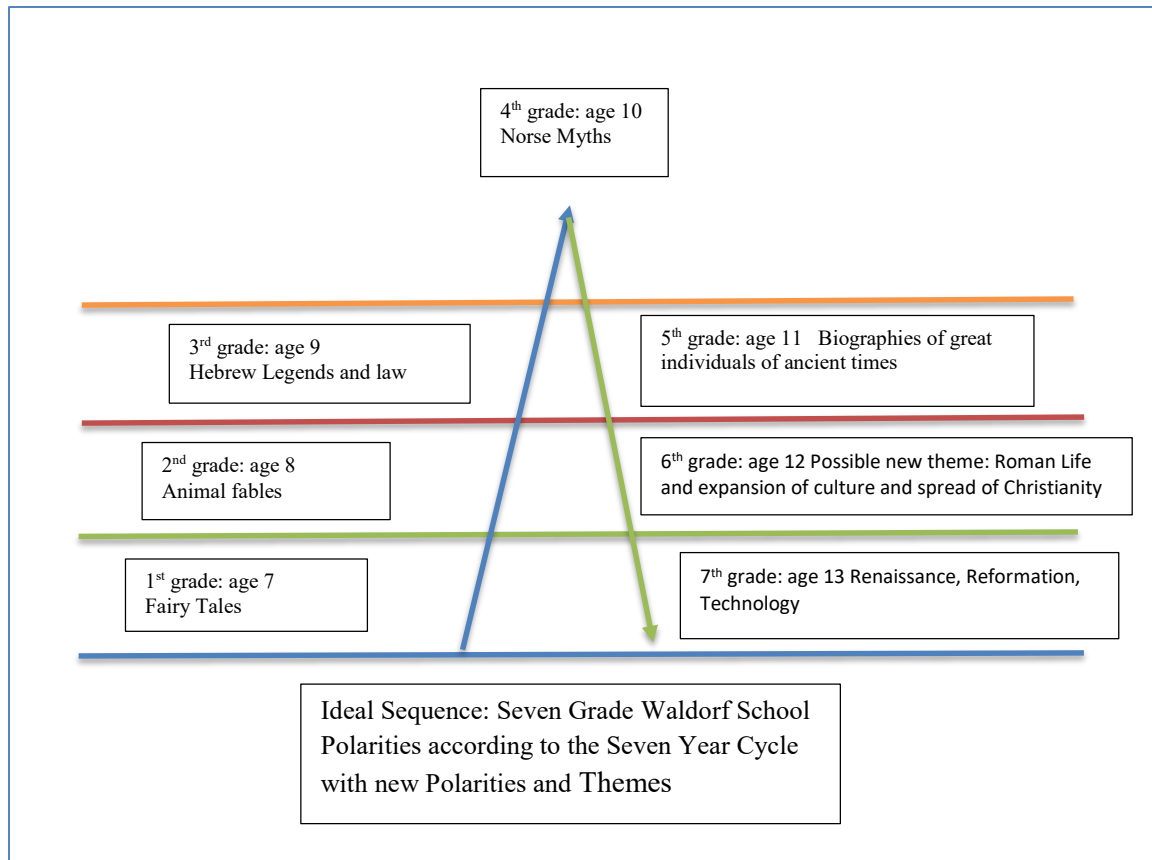
It suffices that the teacher has a consciousness of the blue level, and out of that knowing of the entire configuration of the eight grades, new intuitions, and behaviors may issue forth that would not normally cross one’s consciousness. The Waldorf teacher’s consciousness starts with

the organic form of the curriculum, but the organicism of the curriculum doesn't have to be thrown in the face of the students, since the students will begin to imitate that dynamic tableau consciousness of the teacher unconsciously. Children often pick up intuitively on interconnections and will declare them for you. In the future such comments by Steiner begin to make sense, however radically phrased:

The whole school should be a living and spiritualized organism ... In the teachers' meetings, a real attempt is made to have something like a spirit of the school as a unified organism. ... There one experiences how the class, which one teacher teaches, affects, in particular, another class which a second teacher teaches. It is not matter of indifference in the human organism, if the head is in proper proportion to the stomach; in the same way, it is not a matter of indifference, if, in our school, the class time from 9:00 until 10:00 in third grade corresponds, in the correct manner, to the class time from 11:00 till 12:00 in the eighth grade. These are things, I am saying in a radical and extreme way, which however cannot be fulfilled in this extremity and radicality, but I must say them in this way, because they must become true.⁶

If Waldorf would change its eight-grade sequence to a seven-grade one, it could keep the same themes as they seem to fit the psychology of that designated age, but instead could emphasize different aspects of themes to make them reflect their place in the organic schema. Where Romans and Hebrews were bringers of law in the eight-grade sequence, in the seven-grade sequence the Romans could be approach from the point of view of conquerors and later the carriers of Christianity thus giving them a green or etheric level quality. (Recall how on the green level stood "age of exploration" for seventh grade, a very dynamic green topic.)

⁶ Rudolf Steiner, my trans. GA 306 Die Paedagogische Praxis, (Dornach, Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag, 1991) p149



Waldorf teachers are not trained in, nor do they practice coordinating their schools in this way. It may be asking too much for today's Waldorf schools to begin to conceive of themselves as a "unified organism" in harmony with the "artistic" thinking of the Philosophy of Freedom. However, by using the tableau or organic-thinking graph, teachers can begin to see the whole and the parts of the curriculum. Where one finds in materialistic teaching only linear thinking, lesson plans, and teaching goals, Waldorf is attempting to teach a new consciousness by modeling. Without this consciousness, the Waldorf schools are left with the mere Schillerian devotion to beauty in the form of blackboard drawing, song, and Eurythmy. Who does not love to see Waldorf students basking in their teachers' amazing efforts of beautification of their class room and teaching materials, - but unfortunately, who would turn a blind eye to the students' deepest need for *a new type of organic thinking-teacher*,^Φ not just the outer beauty of their surroundings. Steiner provided the unique task of owning the Waldorf teacher's consciousness:

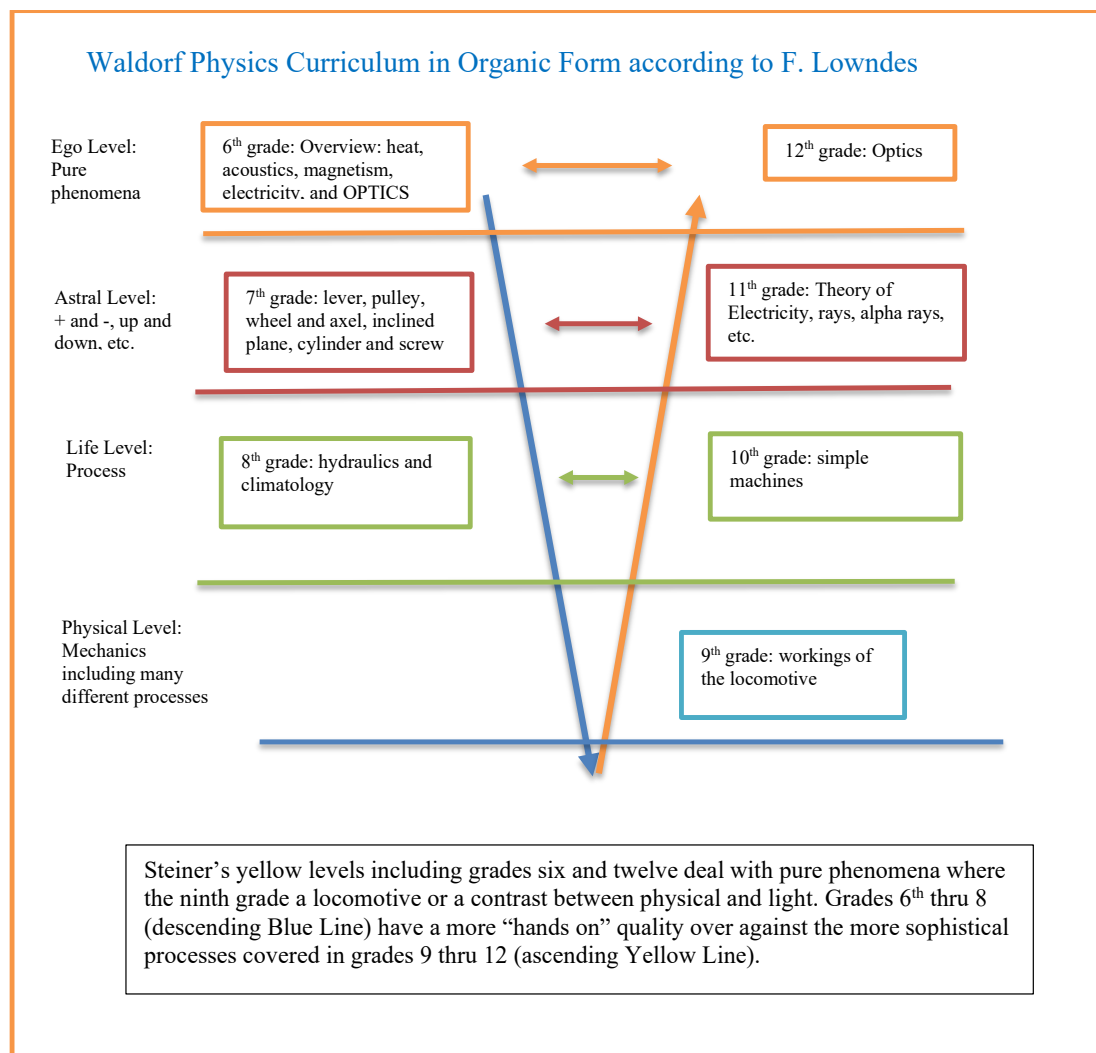
It is essential not to lose sight of our own goal, and therefore we must work to develop this consciousness, the "Waldorf teacher's consciousness," if I may express it so ... We must realize that we really need something quite specific, *something that is hardly present anywhere else in the world*, if we are to be capable of mastering the task of the Waldorf School.⁷ (emphasis mine)

^Φ The Flensburger Hefte, *Jugend Ideale*, carries an interview in which Florin Lowndes states that the anger expressed by the young generation is caused by the lack of new thinking in the elder generation. Young children can perceive this absence of the new thinking in the aura of the adults and it causes despair and revolt. This lack of new thinking is responsible for the generation gap.

⁷ Rudolf Steiner, Deeper Insights into Education (Hudson, New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1983) p.21

Further research:

Waldorf education's next step would be to analyze all of the curricula and see to what extent Steiner utilized this new thinking in the form and choice of themes for each grade. Math, English, Foreign language all seem to have organic structures at least in part. The art/art history teacher at the Waldorf school I worked at said after one of my presentations on the four levels in the Philosophy of Freedom that Steiner's art curriculum fit the organic thinking levels perfectly. A Waldorf representative in Germany said that he thought the French curriculum may consist of two parts, an elementary school curriculum and a high school curriculum with unconnected forms. Most research points to how the material fits the age group but never on the inner structure of the curriculum. Experienced Waldorf teachers can feel these organic schemata. Here is a graphic of the Physics curriculum (discovered by Florin Lowndes and presented by Alan Denjean to the Pedagogical Section in Dornach) which spans elementary and high school.



As teachers start to work out of these graphics of the various curricula and start comparing the music to the Eurythmy, the French to the English, and so on, the Waldorf teacher sees the tableau Steiner made to start to make sense.

Section 4: The Waldorf Lesson Plan

Rudolf Steiner sought to establish a new thinking school and when presenting how to teach a history lesson, stated that the lesson must be adapted to “life processes.” One can understand his use of the term “life processes” on different levels. Is he referring to the life process of the child, to the life process as it takes place in the organic thinking model (enhancement in the plant or seven-fold man) or perhaps both? We know that the life process moves from the physical to the etheric, to the astral, and to the ego levels both in the plant and in the human being. Steiner concludes that he uses the *three-fold human being* as a model for his lesson plan in order to harmonize the students:

I must find a way of again adapting the lesson to the *life processes*, and I can do this as follows.

I give the children the mere facts that occur in space and time. Their whole being is again addressed just as during an experiment, because the children are called upon to make themselves a mental picture of space. We should see to it that they do this, that they see what we tell them in their minds. They should also have a mental picture of the corresponding time.

When I have brought this about, I shall try to add details about the people and events, not in a narrative way, but merely by characterization. I now describe and draw the children’s attention to what they heard in the first part of the lesson. In the first part, I occupied their whole being; in the second, it is the rhythmic part of their being that must make an effort. I then dismiss them.

When they return on the following day, they again have the mental photographs of the previous day’s lesson in their heads. I connect today’s lesson with them by a reflective, contemplative approach, for example, a discussion on whether Alcibiades or Mithridates was a decent or immoral person.

When I make an objective, characterizing approach on the first day, followed on the next day by reflection, by judgments, *I shall allow the three parts of the three-fold human being to interact, to harmonize in the right way.*⁸ [emphasis mine]

Thus, Steiner has the three parts of the lesson plan: first, facts and space and time forming a mental picture of space; second, add details by characterizing the facts - the rhythmic part; third, the next day use a reflective approach, judgments about their character. In simple English: when you use the seven-fold human being model (in its truncated three-fold form) for a lesson plan then you are harmonizing the three parts of his being: body, soul, and spirit.

Steiner presents the science lesson plan in the same three-fold way:

I teach a physics lesson, make an experiment, then repeat the stages of the experiment without the apparatus. On the following day, we discuss the previous experiment, contemplate it, reflect on it. The children are to learn the inherent laws. The cognitive element, thinking, is now employed.⁹

The same pattern is followed without Steiner mentioning he is following a human being model. However, in a science lecture cycle called “the fruitful use of anthroposophy in the various

⁸ Rudolf Steiner, *Education for Adolescents* GA 302 (Hudson, N.Y.: Anthroposophic Press, 1996) p. 52-53.

⁹ Rudolf Steiner, *Education for Adolescents* (Hudson, New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1986) p. 49

scientific fields,” Steiner actually used the fourfold human being as a model for organizing scientific facts:

That the human being consists of a physical body, life body and feeling body etc., must be clearly understood. This one can know from the very beginning and in fact must know this; this knowledge must, however, become a deed, method, manner and way of organizing the empirical facts.¹⁰

How does one organize “empirical facts” according to the fourfold human being? Just follow the four-levels: the physical level has to do with form, materiality, space and so on; the etheric level has to do with processes, life, time, formative force, manufacture, growth; the astral level has to do with feelings, design, purpose, consciousness, polarity, sympathy and antipathy, analogy; and the ego, or I-level concerns itself with idea, essence, will, thinking, invention, identity, name. By setting up living categories for information (“empirical facts”), a new way of seeing or surveying may give rise to new types of conclusions and intuitions. This is the fruit of anthroposophy in the sciences.

This question of the new thinking also applies to textbooks according to Steiner and in the quotation below from GA 302a. Steiner is rarely read at his word, and when he uses the term “human being systematic,” Waldorfians erroneously think the term has to do with “humaneness” or gentleness:

And we must be clear about this fact; it gives us great difficulties that in the textbooks we can use, the scientific systematic [wissenschaftliche Systematik] and not the *Human being systematic* [menschliche Systematik] has crept in. We must free ourselves from ... the scientific systematic.¹¹

For the English ear, we have no clue what “human being systematic” or “scientific systematic” could mean. However, in light of O’Neil’s work it starts to make sense in that the scientific systematic is mere logical-empiric organization, while the “human being systematic” is an artistic seven-fold method of organizing. Such confusion has eclipsed the obvious existence of Steiner’s *sevenfold human being systematic*. If Waldorf researchers had only known what George and Gisela O’Neil and later Florin Lowndes knew about Steiner using a sevenfold method, Waldorf educators could have created books that are based on the human being systematic. If Waldorf grows into this new thinking, individuals will come forth with original ways of teaching and choosing literature that aid in learning to think in this new way.

And other important quotes from Steiner could now be interpreted in a light of a human being systematic:

(We must) go back to the inner life of the human being, in order to change our dead thinking into a living thinking, in order to change our logical, inorganic thinking into a characterful thinking, penetrated by the whole human being, alas, in order to change our thinking into a *human being thinking*. Thereby, the Idea must begin to become living in the teacher.¹²

¹⁰ Rudolf Steiner, my translation Die befruchtende Wirkung der Anthroposophie auf die Fachwissenschaften (Dornach: Rudolf Steiner Verlag, 1977) GA76 p.130

¹¹ Rudolf Steiner, my trans. GA 302a Erziehung und Unterricht aus Menschenkenntnis (Dornach Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag, 1986) p.93 (emphases mine)

¹² Rudolf Steiner GA 307 Gegenwärtiges Leben und Erziehung (Dornach Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag, 1986) p. 70 (emphasis mine)

Steiner challenges the teacher to start moving in the direction of a sevenfold human being thinking. Dead thinking is mere logical thinking which, although necessary, is in contrast to the human being thinking. Here we see the radical mission of Waldorf education as an inaugurator of living thinking, of teachers who think in a human being systematic.

In GA 307, it seems Steiner was really pushing the idea of a new thinking school. Steiner's cryptic remark that the "Idea" the children feel in the Waldorf School is not a mere concept but a plastic form with *human gestalt*:

The children in the Waldorf School, they don't just have an Idea, but they feel this Idea every moment. This Idea passes over into their entire feeling-life.... This Idea is not a concept, this Idea is a plastic form. The idea-connections take on *human Gestalt*. ["Gestalt" means shape, formation something a more defined than the word "form."]¹³

The sevenfold being is a plastic-form in the sense that one can organize one's thoughts according to the levels of the human being. The Idea, or plastic form, lives in the lesson plan, curriculum form, and some day it will live consciously in the teachers. Once the teachers learn to think in the human being systematic, it will trickle down into the minds of the students.

¹³ Rudolf Steiner, my trans. GA 307 Gegenwärtiges Leben und Erziehung (Dornach Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag, 1986) p. 230. (emphasis mine)

Section 5: The Whole-to-the-Parts Methods and its Place in Waldorf Education

The whole-to-the-parts method is an important aspect of Waldorf education and Goethean thinking. One noticed how in Steiner's description of the physics lesson above, there are three steps arising out of the "human being method." To clarify things further, the activity during the physics lesson was Goethean observation of the process at hand, that is, no preconceived ideas or theories are given since they must be discovered by the students. The lesson plan format is based on organic thinking while the activity in the lesson plan is pure Goethean observation i.e., no preconceived theories. Steiner adds that the *lab report* could be constructed according to the four members of the human being, or the what? how? why? and who? of the experiment! These different approaches must be made clear otherwise one ends up in the morass of "anthroposophical method" confusion.

Steiner often recommended a whole-to-the-parts teaching approach. For example, in the first grade, the teacher introduces all four mathematical symbols at once in story form of course: Mr. Plus, Mr. Minus, Mr. Times, and Mr. Divide. Thus, the students compare the whole of the mathematical functions with the parts i.e., each separate function. (In other types of education, the mathematical functions are introduced in different grades.) In addition, Steiner has the students start with the sum first and then looks at the parts: $10 = 9+1$; or $8+2$; or $7+3$ and so on. The same whole-to-the-parts approach goes for the teaching of writing: a story about a letter of the alphabet morphs into a picture where the storyline has the main character create the form of the letter in a life situation, which morphs into the actual letter. Steiner was attempting to enhance the thought patterns of the students, to heal atomistic tendencies in thinking.

Other courses are conducted from this whole-to-the-parts approach such as the foreign language class (speaking thru conversation i.e. whole sentences are taught not vocabulary), Eurythmy (too obvious to warrant explanation), painting (colors meeting, not shapes to be filled in). There are many other practices Steiner suggested such as starting each history block with an overview of world history up to that point. The overview is a powerful form of whole-to-the-parts teaching and on a positive note there are many excellent anthroposophical teachers who practice this with skill and brilliance.*

Let us recall the quote above about the school as a unified organism, "*In the teachers' meetings, a real attempt is made to have something like a spirit of the school as a unified organism.... There one experiences how the class, which one teacher teaches, affects, in particular, another class which a second teacher teaches.*" Thus, the main lesson teacher would coordinate with the music, foreign language, eurythmy, crafts, *teachers* respectively in order to work on thematic connections in their lesson plans. This type of inter-faculty consulting would

* A recent book, [The Seven Core Principles Of Waldorf Education](#), an anthology of essays written by the members of the American Pedagogical Leadership has **nothing** to say about the whole to the parts method, the coordination of main lesson and skills classes, and the human being systematic. It is almost as if these current Waldorf leaders are further from the Waldorf ideal than were Heydebrandt and Stockmeyer. Their book is full of anthroposophical double talk telling readers Waldorf is compromised to the demands of society but is nevertheless in harmony with child development. All with a straight face. Compare this myopic vision with the vision of one of the Waldorf great pioneers, E. Gabert, who once said in 1956 at the Waldorf Internen Tagung: "In this sense Waldorf Pedagogy as it stands today before the world is no way a finished chapter, but it is in fact a unique form that develops itself livingly. Waldorf pedagogy *must and will* in the coming centuries develop itself ever further."

be part “new thinking,” part Goethean, part consciousness-soul activity in that the teachers know the children are imitating their coordinating and inter-relational thought-patterns. How many Waldorf school have their teachers consult each other to connect their lesson plans? None, there is not even a name for this process in Waldorf education.* How can the students imitate living thinking if the teachers themselves are not practicing it?

Obstacles to Coordinating Classes: Waldorf Atomization

I witnessed the lack of coordination of main lesson and skills classes while working at a Waldorf school. The thinking processes in Waldorf education are atomized, that is, individual teachers are concerned with one’s own limited sphere of duties as opposed to the experience of the school as a living organism. At one school, the teachers were at war with each other to the point that the students in their disappointment asked the teachers why they continued fighting amongst each other. Faculty meetings were an ugly experience filled with the evil eye and reciprocal faculty eye rolling. There was not even a pretense of a healthy faculty nor desire to improve it.

At another Waldorf school I worked at, the faculty meetings were never a place where teachers discussed pedagogy or coordinated their classes, in spite of the fact that the small fulltime faculty of eight members contained at least four 1st Class Readers and lifelong anthroposophists.^ϕ They had no concept of the whole-to-the-parts ideal of the coordination of the main lesson and skills classes, and some faculty members probably would have experienced such a coordination of themes as an infringement on their academic freedom. ‘Every man for himself’ was the leading thought at this Waldorf school. This is a consequence of a lack of new thinking.

I have heard a wide range of horror stories from scores of former Waldorf teachers. It is particularly harrowing to hear stories from former teachers whom you know are loving and effective educators but have been forced to leave ‘faculties-gone-mad.’ This does not need to continue in this way. How do we overcome this atomization of the collegium and such disconnected thought-patterns in Waldorf education?

The Philosophy of Freedom group study developed by George O’Neil brings harmony to these deadly “human, all-too-human” patterns. Rudolf Steiner said in his Education of the Child that he is a moderate, certainly no radical or conservative in terms of educational reform. Thus, in following the moderate path of reform, each teacher will have to go step by step, insight by insight, as current teachers start to learn the Philosophy of Freedom and its new thinking method.

* I have had many conversations about these questions with a head of a Waldorf teacher training institute in Germany who had 40 years of classroom experience at nearly all grade levels. He admitted that in only one year during his teaching career did the teachers coordinate their classes as Steiner indicated. Imagine his sadness to have to admit that the social aspect is completely missing from his lifetime spent in various Waldorf faculties.

Germany has many beautiful Waldorf schools, but none seem to be interested in this new thinking. There was a teacher in Stuttgart who excelled in the new thinking and was a major player in Waldorf education often publishing and leading conferences. He reported how he employed the new thinking successfully for his own classroom, and, sadly, when he wrote his book he made no mention of his “new thinking teaching” as if in order to keep his position in the hierarchy of Waldorf hierarchy, it was necessary to deny affiliation to the new thinking. Since I am on the topic, I know several Christian Community priests who do not publish or teach this new thinking although they have decades of practice and study. Because of this lack of sharing, the fruits of this thinking are never transferred to the public domain.

^ϕ Thank the Anthroposophical gods that one of these high schools closed its doors in 2018 and the other school should be on its way shortly. Being a witness to such timewasting, I can only say that Waldorf in its present form is very seriously compromised, mainly because *there cannot be true Waldorf education without teachers doing the inner work of the new thinking.*

When group study is done properly, this new thinking method opens the *chakra of the heart*. Atomization is something one works on correcting everyday of one's life, (just like equanimity or forgiveness) by way of self-study and new thinking group work. ♥

Atomization is the anthroposophical norm, and it is common knowledge that the Anthroposophical Branches do not have a connection to the spiritual life of their local Waldorf schools. There has been no counterforce to this inevitable atomization process issuing forth from the Anthroposophical leadership since they have not yet embraced O'Neil's organic thinking group study. One never sees this atomization process addressed in the glossy Anthroposophical and Waldorf publications, as ever more superficial, self-congratulatory articles and programs are promoted each year. *Careful study of Steiner's basic books is never propounded by institutionalized Anthroposophists as an antidote to this inevitable disaster, "inevitable" because Steiner said this would happen if the Philosophy of Freedom was not read correctly.* The devil in anthroposophy is the inability to engage in meaningful and loving group study such as the type O'Neil modeled. Steiner's new thinking in the Philosophy of Freedom is challenging and requires commitment and self-discipline to be attained. The loss of ego that comes through genuine group study, will lead to that brotherhood essential for the foundation of a free cultural life and living education. *If Waldorf is to be christened, it needs the four-leveled "Christ-thinking," as Steiner called it, of the Philosophy of Freedom.*

♥ One can start the group work process by going to my PDF "A Study Guide For Rudolf Steiner's Heart-Thinking" on my website www.organicthinking.org. Otherwise see the Logik of the Heart on Amazon.com. Reading the Preface and Second Appendix is a great introduction to new thinking as Steiner put the nine-basic thought-forms that are the basis of all his later work in them. The groups enters into a very special bonding process that only experience can do justice to.

Section 6: Inaugurating the New Thinking Teacher Training

“Although no one can go back and make a brand-new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand-new ending.” - Anonymous

A New Thinking Waldorf Seminar:

Is there a need for a New Thinking Teacher Training? Waldorf has many successes and challenges, however there are very few long-term teacher training institutions, none of which recognize Steiner’s method of thinking. Nevertheless, there are many great Waldorf teachers as well as many not-so-good Waldorf teachers. What they both have in common is that neither group is using the new thinking. Naturally, there are some teachers that *unconsciously* use aspects of new thinking because this new thinking is found in everyone born with a developed consciousness-soul. The common denominator is that no one is addressing, *in full consciousness*, the very thinking that is at the foundation of all of Steiner’s work. Thus, Waldorf needs to open itself up to consciously acquiring the new thinking.

We need to imagine a day that both good and improving teachers are thinking in a completely new and dynamic way. It is understandable that many cannot imagine that studying the Philosophy of Freedom for its organic thinking will bring about significant changes in the faculty’s day to day running of the school. But there must be some awake souls within Waldorf education that know the school would birth its innate Genius, once this new thinking was practiced and became the lifeblood of the faculty meetings, class coordination, and lesson plan goals as Steiner indicated.

For Waldorf teachers who have already been working, a weekly new-thinking faculty study combined with two-week summer intensives would be enough to get a school gradually on a new thinking track. (It would be quite a surprise if the Waldorf School I attended would invite me to teach them how to do the new thinking.) A Waldorf teacher who follows Steiner’s indications carefully will have an easy time seeing where the new thinking simply enhances what they have already been doing. After all, there is no single ideal Waldorf model because proper practice of the new thinking leads teachers to new intuitions and inspirations in their work thus *the principles of the new thinking could create new forms of Waldorf education*. The new thinking would influence the way the main lesson and skills classes are coordinated, organic structuring of the lesson plans (including telling stories or presenting in material according to the new thinking), the bond between teachers would be strengthened via new thinking text study, and most importantly teachers would start using the new thinking in their own personal lives. The new thinking opens the heart chakra so one could expect some very special inner transformations. There are plenty of materials to get started.^α

^α For English speaking Waldorf Teachers there is The Logik of the Heart: the Organic Templates of Spiritual Writers, Rudolf Steiner, and the Philosophy of Freehood which covers many aspect of the new thinking. It includes aspects of Waldorf education and how to conduct group study. Florin Lowndes’ The Enlivening of the Chakra of the Heart could serve as a nice introduction to the esoteric aspect of heart thinking. The first exercise outlined by Lowndes is an organic writing exercise that sheds much light on how to think organically. In addition, my website has translations of the Philosophy of Freedom, Theosophy, and Education of the Child designed with new thinking study groups in mind.

Waldorf Teachers will find this new type of Philosophy of Freedom study rewarding. Group study of Steiner's books has nearly disappeared from the Anthroposophical Movement and Waldorf Education because study of the contents alone is empty. When done correctly, learning the four-level new thinking brings energy, love, and excitement. It is a new way of seeing and organizing and the new thinking approach is excellent for people wanting to go deeper into the text. Most importantly, the new thinking connects the many dots of Steiner's work into a coherent picture as I showed here in the case of Waldorf Education.

The Younger Generations have been looking for the New Thinking:

Florin Lowndes explained in an interview with the anthroposophical journal, *Flensburger Heft (Jugend Ideale* edition, English translation "Youth Ideals"), that the younger generation has been looking for a new thinking promised to them before birth, and cannot find it in the aura of the adults around them. As a result, the youth start to rebel, and a lack of trust develops between generations. In addition, people's spiritual constitution has also been changing and the harmony between thinking, feeling, and willing is falling out of alignment due to chakra organization evolving. Even though Steiner's designed his Waldorf Idea to address exactly this gradual dissolution of soul harmony, today, one hundred years later, and we are still no closer to the Waldorf new thinking ideal that Steiner wanted to inaugurate in order to remedy these developments.

But there are other urgent issues that need to be addressed. Self-aware anthroposophists know that Waldorf Education should have become a type of haven for advanced human beings who were seeking a spiritualized education that would help them unfold. It is hard to imagine that *every* Waldorf school in the world would serve this mission, but it would be important to have at least a *few* model Waldorf schools with spiritually practiced teachers who are free to engage in an education without materialistic constructs and barriers. Recall that famous anecdote from Steiner that reincarnating anthroposophists would be thrown out of existing Waldorf schools because the schools would fail them. It is to be expected that schoolmen often "hire down": why would Waldorf administrators employ people who have various spiritual gifts if the profane Waldorf school is selling a mere "creative" education that gets you into a good college? There are currently no *esoteric* Waldorf schools.

What if Leonardo Da Vinci or Saint Augustine or Catherine the Great reincarnated in your neighborhood? The little lady would enter into the local Waldorf class and would probably not be recognized for her spiritual prowess. With the tremendous level of light and wisdom this little gal carries, teachers would be unconsciously fearful and shut down the crown chakra of this little gal because her gifts and spiritual clarity would be too much to handle. (No teacher appreciates a student who can read their thoughts.) The teachers might label her choleric and hope her fire goes away with time; and she might in turn label the teachers "spiritually lacking" as they have done little work on themselves. New thinking practice leads to the abilities teachers need to meet these kids.*

* Is the current Waldorf state of mind ready to engage the possibility of the reincarnation of amazingly spiritually developed souls i.e., humanity's new thinking leaders? This topic is not new to anthroposophical readers and Steiner often indicated that education could make or break the healthy unfoldment of a person's destiny. If the Waldorf school has been filled with reincarnated great souls, where are these personalities today? Did these great souls avoid the Waldorf school as part of their destiny?

Does the Anthroposophical Pedagogical Section(s) understand the gravity of the Waldorf Movement's mission as a necessary place for great souls to develop? One hears Waldorf table talk of 'karmic groups' at Waldorf gatherings, but one never hears discussions as to whether the spiritual needs of these newly incarnated are actually being met. Steiner must have known on some level that Waldorf Education would never fulfill its mission succumbing to materialistic thinking and compromise. Would Steiner have spoken differently if his anthroposophical colleagues had practiced this new thinking in the Philosophy of Freedom and its seven-fold human being method?

From the Ideal into Reality:

There have been some organized attempts to bring this new thinking training into institutionalized form. In 1995, Florin Lowndes called together a group of 36 new thinking individuals from 6 nations consisting of Anthroposophical Doctors, Christian Community Priests, and anthroposophic university students in Haus Oberlin in France to create a new thinking seminar. This endeavor never produced a new thinking school, and the participants went their own way continuing their work in their small study groups. Nearly 25 years later that group is scattered and the majority of those 36 kept the new thinking for themselves. Surprisingly one of the most active new thinking study groups of the 1990s was carried out by faculty members of the Stuttgart Waldorf school, the very school Steiner founded.**

German Anthroposophists are more familiar with Lowndes' work (compared to the English-speaking anthroposophical sphere), and often use aspects of it in their own writings and lectures since his new thinking magnum opus, Das Erwecken des Herzens, is only available in German. Lowndes' work is often borrowed by mainstream anthroposophists although never officially recognized or incorporated into the work of the Anthroposophical Literary Section. ^ The Anthroposophical Medical Section used Florin's four-fold model of text meditation in their training brochure when covering the Fundamentals of Therapy, unfortunately without citation. The new thinking is never brought to the Anthroposophical Society as a whole systematic

** At one point in and around the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart Germany, Lowndes started teaching the new thinking in the early 1990s. His work spread like wildfire throughout the anthroposophical circuit. I met him in 1993. There was a new thinking faculty study group in the original Stuttgart Waldorf school and at least half of the faculty at the Anthroposophical Studien Seminar were students of Lowndes. Lowndes at the time was at the Christian Community Seminary where he introduced the new thinking to Priest Circle. Stuttgart's Anthroposophical Society could have set the tone for the rest of Germany.

Imagine if the Christian Community Priest Seminary and the Stuttgart Teacher Training had taken on the role of new thinking training by embracing George and Florin's work and skills. Imagine if the Youth Seminar in Stuttgart had adopted this new thinking into its otherwise fine program. Students from all over the world could have found the new thinking they were searching for in Steiner's work.

^ Manfred Schmidt Brabant, former Leader at the Goetheanum, told my father in-law that he saw Florin Lowndes' work as the proper path to understanding Steiner's new thinking in the Philosophy of Freedom. It is a shame he died so early.

I chatted once with Chris Wiechert, former Waldorf Education Czar, who politely read my new thinking Waldorf dissertation. I asked him why not introduce organic thinking of the Philosophy of Freedom into the teacher seminar in Dornach. He chuckled, I guess at my belief that such a measure would reenliven Waldorf Education. Chris likes to use O'Neilian diagrams in his articles whereby he highlights polarities, but other than that it is hard to tell where he stands on the new thinking.

Heinz Zimmermann of the Pedagogical Section - after telling Florin Lowndes that the Pedagogical Section "was not interested in a systematic approach to Waldorf education," - faithfully retold Florin's lecture on the new thinking, as if his own research, at Fichtehaus in Tuebingen where I sat in the audience. Speechless was I.

account and remains the treasure of a few. New thinking is for everyone, not just anthroposophical specialists.

This whole question of a new thinking Waldorf training could be inaugurated by *a stroke of the pen in Dornach*. The Goetheanum leadership could establish a new thinking seminar in one of many empty spaces in the Goetheanum tomorrow. It would not cost much, and it could be a light onto the world. There is a great picture of the Goetheanum leadership team on their website laughing together in front of their building. However, knowing what I know, they should be crying: “Why did I reject Steiner’s new thinking? What is my karma?” Maybe Eric Hoffer’s words ring true here: “Every great cause begins as a movement, becomes a business, and eventually degenerates into a racket.”**

From the Organic Text Study to Waldorf Teaching to Threefold Society:

Could the stagnation of the Anthroposophical Society be due to the fact that group study has been focused on the mere content of the Philosophy of Freedom, Theosophy, and so on? Did you know that O’Neil’s work includes fluid/dynamic meditations on Steiner’s thought-forms? In fact, there are four levels to the O’Neil work on the Philosophy of Freedom that lead to serious personal and spiritual development. These four levels are the basis for the re-enlivening of Anthroposophic study group and the foundation for exercising the freehood and intuition that Steiner promised. Sigfried Voitinus, the founder of the anthroposophical institution Forum Drei and author of many anthroposophical books, told our Steiner-seminar in Stuttgart that the future of the Threefold Social Order, according to Rudolf Steiner, lay sometime in the future when *80 individuals have attained freehood*. (Interesting threshold number!) Organic study may open up these nearly forgotten freedom possibilities in the Anthroposophical Movement and we can get back onto task.

The argument here is that proper group study would change Waldorf because living in the thought-forms of the Philosophy of Freedom gives teachers a teaching technique, a way to harmonize the faculty, a path to enter into the consciousness-soul systematically, and an experience of what freehood is (pure thought-streams). It is a call to group study. But who will lead and why has group study declined? There is no roll-up-your-sleeves leadership in anthroposophy – it is a society of talkers. In my experience, Anthroposophical luminaries rarely lead study groups and when they do, Steiner’s main books are treated from an academic point of view: ‘Steiner says this about reincarnation, and Buddhism says that.’ In the United States, I do not see any Philosophy of Freedom study groups in New York, LA, Chicago, or any other major branch listing for that matter. What are the luminaries and branch leaders teaching in the United States these days?

Florin Lowndes and George O’Neil were the type of teachers who sat with their students for hours working on Steiner texts and meditations together. They did not travel far and wide as is popular today holding lectures that do not require much participation from the audience. Because anthroposophical leadership chooses not to enter deeper into a Steiner book (into its form), the popular method for novice anthroposophists is to gain an overview of Steiner’s main

** A friend once pointed out that Anthroposophy’s main problem is a lack of capacities. For example, instead of teaching people how to read the akasha record to learn about history, we have the anthroposophical historians who use footnotes. Instead of having training with advanced individuals in angel communication, we are told to listen to some anthroposophical authority on angels. There is also no meditation course or any spiritual training at Dornach. But there is theater and lectures and organic food in abundance. Bread and Sport.

ideas by reading Theosophy, Occult Science, Christianity as Mystical Fact, and then jump into the lectures cycles. Steiner warned repeatedly that his books had to be read in a different way and this is confirmed in the *Afterword* to Knowledge of Higher Worlds says that the book must be read *completely* (vollstaendig) and *correctly* if one is to work spiritually *without a teacher*. Not everyone has access to an Initiate, and as far as I know there are few-to-none offering their services in Dornach. Thus, for those of us who are still not initiated, we can nevertheless do great work together in study groups!

Steiner's Philosophy of Freedom has great and inspiring content, but group study requires looking at the form of each chapter and practicing the inner structure by way of enhancement and polarity. The *Second Appendix* to the Philosophy of Freedom describes some of the attributes of this new thinking. Steiner describes how our consciousness can stand above ideas and that we should put ideas on a kind of tableau or canvass. He also says that this new thinking is a thinking in the levels of the human being: physical, etheric, astral and ego. This first step can be applied to all of his books and projects. When reading a chapter of the Philosophy of Freedom or Occult Science, summarize the main idea of a paragraph and put it on a large sheet of paper. Compare the qualities of each section, paragraph and so on, and see to what extent the same idea is cast from a different perspective. This is the beginning of new thinking group work.

If Anthroposophists made organic study of the texts a priority and members experienced inner transformation and bonded, then the idea of promoting the Three-Fold Social Order into a reality would not seem to be a fool's errand. Imagine if just 500 people in the United States were able to work together studying the thought-forms of The Philosophy of Freedom; and were able to generate a morphogenetic field of sense-free thinking radiating through the nation, then the "magical idealism" and will-forces created thereby would be nearly unstoppable. The Three-Fold Social Order would become a reality since on some level every human being is seeking freedom and renewal in their cultural life.

Try to imagine is the possibility of Waldorf educators as new thinkers becoming the driving force behind an emerging Threefold Society. Since Waldorf teachers already have a gift for lecturing and teaching children, they would be instrumental as teachers of the new thinking to being promoters of cultural freedom in the educational/social sphere. This all depends on practicing the new thinking in the Philosophy of Freedom and other works. New thinking Waldorf teachers could reenliven the senile Branches by teaching Steiner's various basic books for the organic content and form. Finally there would be a proper path for anthroposophy that channels human energy to the highest ideals of freedom: the path includes everything from new thinking study and group formation to the promotion of the ideals of freedom and innovation in society and ultimately into our political system.

A New Thinking Waldorf Training:

It is important to consider this new thinking from the point of view of a comprehensive training for budding teachers. This way one can have a full range of possibilities of how to prepare oneself academically and energetically. The goal is to unfold the capacities in the teachers, not simply to pass on tons of information. Capacity development defines the consciousness-soul activity, and it requires a living thinking to jump start it.

There are four main aspects to the new thinking teacher training: 1) New Thinking Practice; 2) Pedagogy, Books, Teaching; 3) Artistic Activities, and 4) Energy Work, Spiritual Capacities, and Health.

The New Thinking Training: Students cover the Philosophy of Freedom and Theosophy both their content and organic forms. Students learn how to read carefully, give oral presentations of entire chapters and discuss their form (Enhancement, Polarity and Inversion). Students write essays and give speeches in their own original organic forms. They will also learn how to organize meetings, main lesson blocks, child study (The Human Life) in light of the organic methodology. New thinking, whole to the parts, and other methods are covered. This includes everything to do with enhancing the thought-patterns of teachers from scattered thinking to organic-living thought-patterns.

Pedagogy, Books, and Teaching: Pedagogy is a meeting of student and teacher. Teachers practice teaching the all Waldorf blocks and as many of skills classes as possible. There will be a regular teacher-seminar where trainees present their lesson plans and share materials. This seminar is the heart of the college where trainees present and receive critique and encouragement in their work. Steiner's educational lectures and supportive literature are discussed as well as the books necessary for the blocks. Trainees incorporate their new thinking studies into their pedagogical planning.

Artistic and Life Activities: Acting, dancing, drawing, painting, speech, woodworking, gardening, sculpting, music, Bothmer, and Eurythmy are practiced in preparation for the classroom and personal development. In a future college these activities will be taken to a much higher level than today. Ideally, one could add such skills as shoemaking, house building, and food preparation.

Energy work, Spiritual Capacities, and Health: Much of the work covered here has been recently developed. It deals with how the teacher stands energetically in the world: grounding exercises, connecting to food, habits of forgiveness, opening the heart, intimacy, light work, auric expansion, space clearing, and enlivening the chakras meditations. The goal of this practice is to learn how to stay grounded and energetically expanded at the same time. Teachers will learn by enhancing their own energy and capacities in order to make themselves and their teaching space vibrate at a high level. An important component is learning to read the energy of others including past lives, auric field, empathic experience of the other's health, and other intuitive faculties.

The main emphasis of this training, compared to existing Waldorf teacher training, is on the new thinking and the energy work. In my experience, only a small portion of Waldorf training comprises of regular teaching practice, so this change is extremely important. I have written a proposal for the "Useful Teachers College" which is a four year college-community where individuals can gather and work on themselves in a deeper way than is normally done.* The ideal is that through various experiences some academic and some practical graduates can go on to found their own self-sufficient community centers. A model center to be imitated would be the ideal.

* The Useful Teachers College Proposal can be found on my website: www.organicthinking.org.

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To inaugurate a new thinking culture only a few good leaders are necessary, and the rest will follow their good example. With this essay, Waldorf folks can judge the validity of what Steiner said about his four-level new thinking and then make a commitment. The details will become clear with time and practice as the new thinking takes at least a year or two of practice. I promise you that practicing the new thinking is completely a rewarding and empowering experience. Consider whether it is your destiny as a Waldorf teacher to do the right *thinking* thing, since doing the right thinking thing may not be in the short term politically wise within Waldorf's politically correct culture, but in the long run it may be the only wise and fruit bearing decision. As the bible says: "Metanoia" (Meta = beyond, noia =mind, thus think beyond/above normal thinking,) or ***think organic-livingly***. Changing the actual thought-patterns has always been the ultimate task^Ω of the Steinerian educator.

^Ω One of the most important quotes in Anthroposophy is the fact that Steiner said Waldorf should be part of a culture of Initiation. Steiner said: "If one is required to treat writing in the way it is done today, then one ruins spiritual progress. That is the reason why in our Waldorf pedagogy, so much value is placed on keeping the child from progressing too quickly in his writing classes, as is the case in conventional pedagogy, so that the child can truly remain in the spiritual. For this is a necessity.

It must be the case that the world is able to come to the point once again, where it can take up the Initiation Principle [Einweihungsprinzip] as such, as one of the many civilization principles. For only in this way will it come about that man gathers in his soul here on earth something with which he steps before Micha-el so that the nod of approval reaches him: that is fair to the world. – Then thereby the will is made strong man, is included in the spiritual continuation of the world. Then thereby man is a coworker in that which through Micha-el, now beginning in the Micha-el epoch, should be connected to humanity's evolution and earth evolution." GA 233a (1/13/1924) Mysterienstaetten des Mittelalters p. 245

Background:

My life and the new thinking: My life with Anthroposophy started in first grade at the Waldorf School in New York. I graduated in 1986. That was the year I read the first few chapters of Steiner's Theosophy while I was a Waldorf exchange student in Marburg, Germany. I also regularly attended the Christian Community. I joined the branch at age 22 attending various study groups for a year. Our group leader assigned us presentations of chapter or lectures because he believed there was a power in recalling a Steiner lecture.

In 1992 I went to Germany for an Anthroposophical Foundation year. The seminar was led by Frank Teichmann who led us in careful readings of Philosophy of Freedom, Theosophy, and Occult Science. His emphasis was on the application of Steiner's ideas to questions of science, human conduct, and the History of Consciousness (sentient soul culture of Egypt, intellectual soul culture of ancient Greece, and the consciousness soul culture in our modern era). Teichmann was a great teacher and he challenged us to figure out what *truly contemporary* (zeitgemaess) culture is. For examples, is today's university education "contemporary" (contemporary meaning in this case: appropriately suited for us) for our modern consciousness or is it a leftover from a bygone age that prevents our evolution toward freedom? Is our economic system contemporary and so on? Teichmann preached that human beings cannot progress without practice or working on themselves if they want to have a culture that reflects their inner soul stature. Teichmann felt that questions of content and form were essential to evolution.

While at the Teichmann seminar, I met Florin Lowndes an anthroposophical esotericist who claimed that the new thinking was hidden in plain sight in the very fabric of the Philosophy of Freedom. In 1992, there were no documents, books, or essays on the new thinking at least not ones that could be used as a study guide or primer for Steiner's new thinking. (There were only private manuscripts that George O'Neil had handed out to select people.) Florin showed me the *Preface to the revised 1918 edition of Philosophy of Freedom* and through homework assignments had me discover on my own the thought-structures or wave forms that Steiner used. In other words, these structures could be discovered by any motivated individual when given an understanding of the seven-fold human being and laws of enhancement and polarity.

Over the next few years, I started study groups which covered the *Preface* and *Second Appendix* to the Philosophy of Freedom with Florin's instructions on how to practice the new thinking. The text work worked its magic on the participants: the study brought joy, focus, and deep insights into what Steiner was attempting. In one group, three very shy students were able to open their heart-chakras and find an intimate partner for the first in their lives! This story has been repeated by people whose interpersonal/romantic lives were closed down but after some study were able to open up and connect with others. In true heart thinking, the magic comes from the practice of the form.

Bringing something new: When I was in New York I held several study groups at the Branch and at Sunbridge College. The participants were of all ages, some drawn out of the branch, some from Columbia University. I occasionally taught the new thinking to grad school classes as a presentation on pedagogy. The response to this new form of Steinerian thinking has always been amazing.

My faith in the new thinking became a reality when I had a “light-body experience” two years into my thinking meditation practice, a first profound spiritual result of Steiner’s new thinking. Other transformations included deep states of love, opening up to past lives viewing, ability to understand things that were formerly impenetrable (Hegel), and an ability to organize in tableau. Other fellows on this path were also presented with profound spiritual experiences. A topic that Florin and George never addressed. I was on my own.

In 2001, I finished my doctoral dissertation which has been condensed into this essay. I completed my first translation in heart-thinking format of Education of the Child in light of spiritual science. I wanted to share my experience of the value and pleasure of studying the Philosophy of Freedom in the heart thinking method.

In 2002, I moved to Hawaii where I met a spiritual master, an Christ-centered initiate, who clothed in simplicity, taught me many things such as exercises on how to be completely grounded energetically, how to develop empathy, how to expand with light one’s auric space, how true forgiveness works, how to make love with full energetic-loving presence, and how to do very deep body work. For me, Steiner’s work now had the missing piece. Steinerian meditation - heart thinking practice, - could now be complemented by these grounding and other techniques. Without these techniques, people could have un-grounded spiritual experiences and ungroundedness creates much of the nonsense intellectualism found in modern new age spirituality and branch-level anthroposophy. These were valuable lessons and my question as to why anthroposophists were not able to incorporate the new thinking were more apparent: Steiner’s work in order to be made safe must be accompanied by grounding work, breathing/vigorous physical exercises, and awareness of spiritual openings in the form of mutual group support.

My new thinking groups are all based on staying very grounded through various exercises. We then approach the text strictly from a grounded energetic position: master the content, master the form, meditate, and share together in creative ways. In this way, people gradually release their intellectualized habits, their spiritual laziness, share their work with the group, work on their ungroundedness, and learn to bring harmony to their four bodies.

The goal now is to educate people on how to run organic thinking groups so that they can experience this pure, wavy heart-thinking. Once this is established, we can work in concert on how best to save Waldorf Education and Steiner’s work by actively leading group study. Then we will be able to promote it in the form of the threefold ideas that can lay the foundation for a free cultural life in our nation. New Thinking brings will forces necessary to make such lofty ideals realizable. To start this process, I have founded The George O’Neil Group, a foundation for promoting new thinking education, spiritual cooperation, and Three-Folding.

The New Thinking Materials: Throughout this article I have mention some of literature necessary for starting one’s own study. For the German speakers, Lowndes has written much material on how to practice Steiner’s new thinking. Lowndes’ work includes many articles both in English and German. His main works on the structure and practice are: Das Erwecken des Herzdenkens: Wesen und Leben des sinnlichkeitsfreien Denkens in der Darstellung Rudolf Steiners. Umriss einer Methodik¹⁴ and as a free download from his website, an introduction to his Code-X

¹⁴ Go to this website for a description. <https://www.geistesleben.de/Wissenschaft-und-Lebenskunst/Anthroposophie/Das-Erwecken-des-Herz-Denkens.html>

Editions, Einführungsband: Leitfaden zur Code-X-Ausgabe (2009)¹⁵, and his well-researched editions of Steiner's Theosophy, Philosophy of Freedom, Truth and Science, Friedrich Nietzsche, and The Goethean Theory of Knowledge (CE 2) all unfortunately in German. (I have made aspects of his Philosophy of Freedom and Theosophy editions available in English.) Although the Germans are a creative, brilliant, and charming people, they have nearly no aptitude for Steiner's new thinking. I do not expect the Germans will change anytime soon. And did Rudolf Steiner not say that the future of this thinking would be in the United States? (But clearly at this point of development it would seem the Americans have gone the way of the Germans, making the Philosophy of Freedom and group study a heady affair instead of using the artistic approach of George O'Neil. I think Steiner said Brazil would take over if America failed its mission.)

I have already mentioned my book The Logik of the Heart: the organic templates of spiritual writers, Rudolf Steiner, and the Philosophy of Freedom. (Also available in Spanish.) I tried to write a useful beginner's text that covers many aspects of the new thinking. Recently I have provided corrected editions of Theosophy and Philosophy of Freedom for my students so that they do not have to go through the trouble of "fixing" an existing translation. There are so many aspects to Steiner's new thinking such as the role of the ubiquitous dash, how Steiner wove quotes into a text, how each Steiner book has a completely different often contradictory form. There is so much to learn and research. The place to start is by founding a real study group.

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In the English-speaking world, branch life is dead and anthroposophical study groups are rare. Without a reformation of group study, the collective of Steinerians will continue to dissipate and disappear as they have nothing in common and at best show up to their monthly meetings. The various anthroposophical publications and organizations do not promote serious study and anthroposophical leaders do not lead study groups. Group study is the social and spiritual life of Anthroposophy. If you agree, come join The George O'Neil Group and learn how to read and practice Steiner's organic thinking. Currently I am running online study groups on the new thinking in the Philosophy of Freedom (one beginners' group and one for advanced students), Theosophy, Knowledge of Higher Worlds. If you are interested go to my website.

¹⁵ <http://www.heartthink.org/downloads.php>

