

What *else* is going on at the Goetheanum!

Issue No. 7 / 5 September 2019

This newsletter is an independent and private initiative on current and historical questions and affairs concerning the General Anthroposophical Society and its environment. Each author is solely responsible for his articles. Unlabelled articles originate from the publisher himself. Editor: Thomas Heck. Imprint at the end of this issue.

Seminarankündigung (German only)

Die Neugründung der AG an der Weihnachtstagung – was ist daraus geworden?

Samstag, den 21. September 2019, 9:30 - 18 Uhr

Themen

- Die Stellung des Weihnachtstagungsgeschehens in der Menschheitsentwicklung
- Rudolf Steiners Mission
- Rudolf Steiners Intentionen im Hinblick auf die Weihnachtstagung
- Was zur Weihnachtstagung und zur Neukonstituierung der Gesellschaft führte
- Zur Form: Wie wollte Rudolf Steiner die einheitliche Konstituierung realisieren?
- Zur Identität: in welchem Zusammenhang steht die AAG mit der Weihnachtstagungs-Gesellschaft?

Seminaristische Arbeit mit Thomas Heck

Anmeldung: thomas@lohmann-heck.de
oder 061 / 599 16 47

Kostenbeteiligung: 80 CHF, Ermässigung möglich.

Maximal 20 Teilnehmer

Ort: Veranstaltungsraum der Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft in der Schweiz
Oberer Zielweg 60, 4143 Dornach.

Bei Interesse kann das Seminar auch an anderen Orten zusätzlich stattfinden.

«*Not* ‘General Anthroposophical Society’ after all!»

The following contribution “*Not the General Anthroposophical Society after all!*” as a reaction to the article “Why General Anthroposophical Society?” by Uwe Werner in “Anthroposophy Worldwide” No. 6/2019 should, according to the will of the author, also have appeared there. Since unfortunately this was not possible, as is clear from the preliminary remark, the article now appears here in an extended form.

Preliminary remark

At the 2019 Annual General Meeting, Justus Wittich presented “improved” communication, which was achieved with considerable - and also financial - effort. However, this “improvement” turned out to be a “restriction” more than anything else: “Anthroposophy worldwide” will in future be limited to 12 printed pages - a reduction of one third compared to an average of 18 printed pages in 2018. This already had an effect at the 2019 General Assembly, where the publication and translation of the complete motions and concerns, which had been common practice for decades, was dispensed with - without comment. The improvement now allegedly lies in the fact that the same “reduced” contents are communicated on different “channels” (paper, newsletter and online versions), whereby separate preparations are necessary in each case. This means you get less content, but you get it more often.

I therefore wrote to the editor: “*I have already tried to keep my article as short as possible, because I was aware that AWW is now very limited indeed. However, it is not possible for me to shorten the text again by about another 20% without omitting essential statements necessary for understanding, and certainly not within the given deadline [a few hours]. In fact, a much more detailed answer would be necessary and appropriate to ensure that the thoughts are as comprehensible as possible for the reader, and he himself can form an opinion. ... In this respect I would suggest that my article now appears unabridged (if the reply [to this article] by Justus Wittich is omitted, there would be more space for that) and that in the next or one of the next issues a presentation by Justus Wittich should appear which is based on facts and is realistic and accurate from his point of view, and I would even welcome an objective refutation of my presentation.*”

This proposal has not been taken up. The following version has been revised with a view to facilitate better understanding and, without listing any additional facts, has turned out about 50% longer than the version intended for “Anthroposophy Worldwide”.

«Not ‘General Anthroposophical Society’ after all!»

By assuming that the Society founded at the Christmas Conference bore the name “General Anthroposophical Society”^a, Uwe Werner in AWW 6/19 falls behind the level of knowledge of the Executive Council of 2002. Following good legal advice they had issued an invitation to an extraordinary general meeting of the «Anthroposophical Society» on 3 November 2002 in order to reconstitute the Christmas Conference Society. It was of paramount importance in this regard to use the legally binding and correct name in order to avoid a formal mistake. As early as 23 March 2002 the Executive Council had already declared that the General Anthroposophical Society was the «Bauverein» (founded 1913) and not the Christmas Conference Society. The correctness of this fact was confirmed by Justus Wittich in a letter to me dated 7 March 2017: “Of course the “*Anthroposophical Society*” was newly founded at the Christmas Conference (following the previous one of 1913). From a legal point of view, there has been no question of this since the end of the 1990s, and this was quite obvious in 2002 when the attempt was made to “save” the legal personality of the Christmas Conference [Society]. ... Clearly, our current entry in the commercial register [that of GAS]^b (first entry 1913!)^c is also based on the former Bauverein.» For Justus Wittich it is therefore unquestionably correct that the General Anthroposophical Society is the Bauverein, renamed on 8 February 1925 (Executive Council declaration of 23 March 2002 in newsletter No. 20/2001).

But on closer inspection even the evidence mentioned by Uwe Werner proves that the adjunct “general” was not used as a part of the name, but as an explanatory adjective by Rudolf Steiner. From Rudolf Steiner’s handwritten original of the 13 January 1924 report quoted by Uwe Werner, “Die Begründung der *allgemeinen* Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft” (The foundation of the general Anthroposophical Society), it is clear that the “... *handwritten original in the facsimile uses a lower case “a” for “allgemein”*”, according to Justus Wittich in the above letter.

According to Uwe Werner, Rudolf Steiner stated at the opening of the Christmas Conference “that the term ‘International’ must be replaced by ‘General’ (GA 260, p. 41)”. However, Rudolf Steiner does not speak here of a “designation” or a “name”, but asks to “never use the term “international society”, but only to speak of the existence of a *general* Anthroposophical Society^d. Uwe Werner’s inaccurate account results in a false picture.

From a legal - and certainly spiritual - point of view, it is imperative that names are used in a clear and truthful manner, especially when legal or business relationships are established with people (members), companies or government

agencies. It therefore seems quite unlikely that Rudolf Steiner would design a layout for the newsletter entitled «What is going on in the *Anthroposophical Society*” *without* using the actual or complete name of the Society and then, as assumed by Uwe Werner, only has it appear in the title of his report. This also applies to the other official documents designed by him (letterhead^e, membership application, membership card and statutes). Is it feasible to assume that *none* of these documents show the actual and complete name of the Society? And is it also to be assumed that Rudolf Steiner would have signed 12,000 membership cards in the name of the “Anthroposophical Society” if indeed the actual name was “General Anthroposophical Society”?

Anyone who nevertheless wants to assume that the name of the Christmas Conference Society is “General Anthroposophical Society” should realize that he - indeed not intentionally - but implicitly and effectively assumes the following:

1. If the applications for membership and the membership cards do not indicate the full and true name of the Society which one wishes to be or is a member of, this basically constitutes deception.

2. Rudolf Steiner would then have used this false name for the Society to enter into transactions with people, companies and authorities outside the Society, e.g. on the letterhead, and would have concluded legal transactions. Here, too, the generally applicable principle of truth would not have been observed due to the incorrect name of the Society.

3. Statutes are elementary identity-forming tools for a society. Is it really conceivable that Rudolf Steiner would design and use statutes in which the actual name of the Society did not appear at all? Even at the actual foundation meeting on 28 December 1923, the Society was exclusively referred to as the “Anthroposophical Society”.

The matter becomes particularly precarious if you add the fact that on 8 February 1925, according to Rudolf Steiner’s wish (which is documented by his signature on the application to the Commercial Register and his subsequent actions), the “Verein des Goetheanum der freien Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft” was renamed and given the name “Allgemeine Anthroposophische Gesellschaft” (General Anthroposophical Society). Thus two societies with absolutely identical names would have existed simultaneously at that time, which would not have been legally permissible at all. This is something that Rudolf Steiner would most certainly not have overlooked.

For many decades it had been assumed that on 8 February 1925 the original statutes of the Christmas Conference Society had been replaced by statutes which represented the origin of today’s statutes, in order to make an entry in the commercial register possible. Additionally, the Bauverein “Verein des Goetheanum der freien Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft” was supposedly merged into the Christmas Conference Society. If this had really taken place, a concealed transfer of assets from the Bauverein (land and the insurance

money for the burnt Goetheanum) to the Christmas Conference Society would have taken place, unlawfully avoiding respective tax liabilities. This would have been a clear case of tax evasion and could not possibly have been arranged by Rudolf Steiner, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

An addendum

The already mentioned letter by Justus Wittich contained the following statement at the end: *“I am somewhat perplexed by your statement of 2017 that “to this day, the leadership of the General Anthroposophical Society still publicly adheres, in word and writing, to the fact that the ‘General Anthroposophical Society’ was founded at the Christmas Conference”. Where is this the case? I would ask for appropriate information. In its legal sense, this opinion has certainly not been held by the Executive Board and nowadays the Goetheanum Leadership for more than 10 years”^f. An astonishing assertion, because corresponding examples could easily be given, especially by himself (!) (AWW 1-2/2014):*

“From the point of view of the competent cantonal courts, the legal conduct of the Executive Council and the members of the Anthroposophical Society over decades had led to an “implied amalgamation”^g of the General Anthroposophical Society (founded during the Christmas Conference 1923/24) [here the Christmas Conference Society is referred to as the General Anthroposophical Society, the name of the Bauverein] and the Bauverein”.

More recent examples can be found in the documentation of the Goetheanum World Conference^h by Paul Mackay (page 10) and Christiane Haid (page 37). And the new booklet for people interested in a membership, presented at the 2019 AGM, says: *«With the founding of the General Anthroposophical Society at the Christmas Conference ...»* (page 5). A very current example is the invitation to a colloquium, the focus of which is precisely the clarification of constitutional questions and which says: *«With regard to the event of the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the General Anthroposophical Society ...»ⁱ* This wording, which Justus Wittich claimed had not been supported by the Goetheanum leadership for more than 10 years, is used on this invitation of all places and he himself belongs to those responsible and issuing the invitation, along with Gerald Häfner and Michael Schmock!

Justus Wittich has repeatedly stated that due to the complexity of the issue, my representations are not realistic - according to the announcement of a reply to this article by the editors of AWW. This is what I wrote to the editor on the subject: *“With regard to what you write about Justus Wittich’s reply, I have to note that he is obviously repeatedly claiming here that a fact is not being represented realistically and that a generalised reference to the complexity of the matter is given as justification. In essence, it is claimed that my remarks are not realistic, but without in turn offering a realistic account of them or elaborating on particular points. Such a reply is without cognitive value and the reader can believe it or not - the reader who trusts in authority will of course believe it. It remains unclear to what extent this view (the reply) is based on subjective or objective foundations.*

Thus something is called into doubt from the position of the Executive Council, without a constructive discussion - in an ideal case a joint effort at knowledge finding - being possible. Whereby it is a characteristic of the leadership of the Society that for queries pertaining to the undoubtedly identity-forming questions of the Constitution there is no recognizable desire to gain real knowledge. But I had already pointed this out in my motion^j to the AGM 2019.»

I had also asked the editor:

“Have you ever even read a substantive article by Justus Wittich on the subject? I certainly don’t know everything that has been written on the subject, but I know a lot: I am not aware of anything by Justus Wittich. So there is no qualification at all by means of corresponding substantive statements; his statements gain weight due to his position alone. ... And the credulity of the membership is promoted.” It should be added that this also applies to the faith in authority displayed by many members of the Goetheanum Leadership, for who knows enough about the history of this society to be able to judge for himself/herself?

When in relation to the constitutional question Justus Wittich states that “from the point of view of the executive Council this has been clarified” and in doing so only refers to a plethora of - partly contradictory - publications^k without being able to refer to an explanation or documentation by the Society - although the subject has been virulent for decades - it becomes clear that either the interest or the will - or perhaps both - for a real recognition in the Goetheanum Leadership has so far been lacking.

Thomas Heck

Annotations

- a) Details to the name: <http://www.lohmann-heck.de/documents/Name-WTG.pdf>
- b) Supplementation: Thomas Heck.
- c) Supplementation and highlighting: Justus Wittich.
- d) Spelling adapted analogously in contrast to GA 260, highlighting by TH.
- e) In the art volume K45 of Rudolf Steiner Verlag a letterhead is reproduced, however from the 30s, which results from the 5-digit telephone number, which was introduced only in these years.
- f) Societies represent social interrelationships and thus belong as such to legal life, even if spiritual goals, purposes or tasks are pursued.
- g) The theory of an “amalgamation by conclusive action”: <http://www.lohmann-heck.de/documents/Myths-amalgamation.pdf>
- h) https://www.goetheanum.org/fileadmin/aag/GV2017/GWK/Weltkonferenz_deutsch.pdf
- i) Electronic Newsletter of the Anthroposophical Society in Germany or https://www.anthroposophische-gesellschaft.org/contents-statische-inhalte/agid-aktuell/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=366&cHash=831c8ed307f57c60f4dc06ccd8709181
- j) <http://www.gv-2019.com/documents/Antrag-Identitaet.pdf>
- k) AWW 1-2/2014.

Imprint

Please note

«Deepening Anthroposophy»

An independent newsletter for members of the Anthro-osophical Society and friends of anthroposophy

Responsible: Thomas O'Keefe

Email: deepen-ing@use.startmail.com

«Ein Nachrichtenblatt»

Newsheet for members of the Anthroposophical Society and friends of anthroposophy

Published twice a month (German only)

Publishers: Roland Tüscher and Kirsten Juel

For more information: www.iea-enb.com,

Email: ein.nachrichtenblatt@startmail.com

«KERNPUNKTE»

Newspaper for threefolding, spiritual science and current affairs

Newspaper

12 issues per year (German only)

Published by: Kirsten Juel and Roland Tüscher

Further informations, test issues, subscription

Email: redaktion@kernpunkte.com

Web: www.kernpunkte.com

This newsletter is an independent and private initiative on current and historical questions and affairs concerning the General Anthroposophical Society and its environment. Each author is solely responsible for his articles. Unlabelled articles originate from the publisher himself. Electronic ordering is free of charge, postal delivery only on request. The newsletter can be passed on with pleasure. As far as possible, all articles appear in German and English. Further contributions can be found on the website: www.gv-2018.com. The Internet page, especially the English part, is under construction.

Editor: Thomas Heck, Dorneckstr. 60, 4143 Dornach / Switzerland. Email: thomas@lohmann-heck.de
Subscription and unsubscription at www.gv-2019.com or per e-mail.

All articles were translated from German with assistance and editing by Olga Shimell. Thank you very much for that.

thomas@lohmann-heck.de
www.gv-2019.com

Subscription or unsubscription
www.gv-2019.com or by Email.

Former newsletters:

<http://gv-2019.com/newsletter-archiv/>

The existing copyrights of third parties to the images shown must be observed.