

Second Public Letter to Anna-Katharina Dehmelt

July 3, 2018, Berlin,

Dear Mrs. Dehmelt,

Thank you very much for your second open letter of June 30, 2018, which continues our exchange of letters.¹ You again ask me to respond to your offer of a conversation by turning more to those questions that have been at the centre of "Anthroposophic Meditation" for years. Here you refer, among others, to a comment in my last newsletter², whereby I told my readers that I needed more time for the continuation of the article that was the original initiator for our discussion³ than I initially suspected. Following on that you formulate your wish that I might "develop my beliefs on my own," and "not in a struggle with" what I have in mind as "Anthroposophic Meditation", and with regard to which, you list several of those questions that characterize "Anthroposophical Meditation". – Exactly at this point, however, you hit a nerve with regard to my struggle of the last few weeks and months: What is this "Anthroposophical Meditation"? Where does it come from? What are its origins? How has it developed, and what does it represent?

Rarely have I struggled so hard in my life for answers as in the search for these, for it is becoming increasingly clear to me that this is about much more than "just" a particular stream; it is about much more than "just" about meditations; and above all, this is not at all about how the so-called "higher levels of consciousness", imagination, inspiration, and intuition are interrelated, or similar questions that you put in your letter. No, this is about the especially decisive question: What is the Anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner? And I have come to realize: If, given the dimensions that this Anthroposophical Meditation has assumed, this question cannot be answered clearly – then we have failed.

I have spent the last few months struggling with these questions, and now a realization has come to mind more and more clearly: There cannot be an "Anthroposophic Meditation" that actually takes its start from the Anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner, for Anthroposophy is a whole, in essence one being; it cannot be divided and dismembered in the way that is done by "Anthroposophical Meditation". Anthroposophy is just as much a given, living whole as – and this is now our task – an entirely individual one, which it increasingly has to become. But by no means can such reflections on how any higher levels of knowledge, or the like, are to be attained, be separated out of it and placed in the centre, for then we would only have to do with a dead, insubstantial image of what has entered into the world as Anthroposophy.

I know it is very difficult to make oneself understood on this point, for our reading and understanding, including the texts of Rudolf Steiner, is to begin with always just "cookbook" reading⁴; indeed, this cannot even be otherwise! The experience with these texts and books, that it is a question of living texts we are always killing whenever we tear them apart – here, for example, from the point of view of their practical points of view for meditation – when we make use of them for ourselves as we are always used to making use of things for ourselves,

this experience totally contradicts our age and the soul configuration of the modern human being.

Time and again, the representatives of "Anthroposophical Meditation" remark and complain that Rudolf Steiner expressed himself in much different ways and often even opposing ways about imagination, inspiration and intuition. Yet let's take a closer look: In "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds/How to Know Higher Worlds"⁵, for example, he does not speak of imagination, inspiration and intuition at all, for this is a book that applies to the Anthroposophical path of training, which, incidentally, already takes place in the reading of the book, and not only in the carrying out of the "instructions" contained within it. (And by the way: Every book and writing of Rudolf Steiner applies to this path of training, even if this is not immediately apparent to the reader.) The path of training proposed by "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds", however, consists primarily of an encounter with and work on oneself; whether and which meditation is eventually added (or even not) – this will be given by the completely individual path of each person. And further: In one of the main essays on this theme, Rudolf Steiner does not treat primarily of imagination, inspiration and intuition, rather actually "Knowledge of the State Between Death and a New Birth"⁶. But it is in this very concrete context that he then makes very concrete, only from these statements really understandable, statements on imagination, inspiration and intuition! Yet these contexts need to be discovered and experienced, for only from such an experienced discovery can a form of meditation be developed that rightfully refers to the Anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner. And even in the much cited "Stages of Higher Knowledge"⁷, it is about something quite different than the technical, so-called "practical questions" that are central to "Anthroposophical Meditation". For all these works, all these writings, have one thing in common: What is here called meditation, etc., results from these writings themselves, so it can only become visible at all to begin with in the struggling of the reader with these writings!

As already indicated, I am in the process of writing a continuation article on these questions. I can therefore here only hint at certain elements and know full well that such hints can only be an attempt – knowing very well the limitations of such an attempt. But at this point I would like to refer to a work that is close to your heart, Dear Mrs. Dehmelt, as well: "Occult Science - An Outline". There appears the chapter "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds," to which you refer again and again, following the chapters "The Character of Occult Science," "The Nature of Humanity," "Sleep and Death," and especially following the incredibly important remarks by Rudolf Steiner on "World Development and the Human Being". Why is this so?

At this point I touch on a particularly difficult and particularly tragic side of what has come about. Namely, that Rudolf Steiner did not stand at the historical origin of "Anthroposophical Meditation", rather quite other streams and individualities. Even for you, the decisive step, as you yourself describe it, did not become possible through the work with Anthroposophy, rather in your encounter with Andrew Cohen's meditation form based on a Hindu tradition⁸. Cohen, however, represents a so-called "developmental spirituality," which is based on the idea that the latter is always also at the same time the higher. This idea corresponds to the Darwinian theory of development, and that you do follow this, I could already show in my previous public letter. Now such a materialistic concept of development, however, stands in complete contrast to the crucial chapter "World Development and the Human Being" of Occult

Science, which is the precondition for the following chapter "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds". If one approaches this chapter, however, with a precondition that is not appropriate to "Occult Science - An Outline", it cannot at all be read and understood in the sense of Rudolf Steiner.

Yet not only Andrew Cohen is one of the fathers of "Anthroposophical Meditation." It is also the so-called "Academic Meditation Research" around Ulrich Ott, which is based on academic brain research (in the year of birth of "Anthroposophic Meditation", they even measured the brain waves during meditation, imagining, etc.), just as does Zen Buddhism or the like. For it was the fashion, which strongly came to the fore in the 90s of the 20th century, to occupy oneself with "meditations" that in fact first opened the view to wanting to separate them out of Anthroposophy. Previously, one's view could not even turn in such a direction, because the actual inspirers of "Anthroposophical Meditation" were not yet visible. And thus "Anthroposophical Meditation" is nothing else than a part of this fashion trend. Without it, it would never have arisen, for in Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy it would not have been able to find such an origin.

With best regards,

Irene Diet

Footnotes:

1. <http://www.infameditation.de/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Dehmelt-Diet-II.pdf>
2. This Newsletter appears irregularly in IGNIS Verlag: www.ignisverlag.com.
3. The article is called: „Meditation und Anthroposophie Rudolf Steiners: Wo ist der Zusammenhang? Siehe: <https://ignisverlag.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/meditation-und-anthroposophie-wo-ist-der-zusammenhang-21-mc3a4rz-20183.pdf>. <https://ignisverlag.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/meditation-und-anthroposophie-wo-ist-der-zusammenhang-21-mc3a4rz-20183.pdf>. This article will be continued and will appear in the Newsletter and on the website of the IGNIS Verlag.
4. See also: <https://ignisverlag.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Rudolf-Steiner-Ein-Verfasser-von-Kochbüchern.pdf>
5. CW 10.
6. In: CW 35.
7. CW 12.
8. See: Dehmelt, A.K., Vom lebendigen Denken und vom leeren Bewusstsein, in: **Die Drei** 7-8/2012, S. 21ff.

