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Public letter
to Anna-Katharina Dehmelt
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Dear Mrs. Dehmelt,

Thank you very much for your letter of June 3, 2018 ¹, which I would here like to answer. That there can be no question of putting up citations from Rudolf Steiner's Complete Works against each other – this I can fully agree with. And incidentally, this is not even possible in our discussion, for this is not just about meditation, or about imagination, inspiration and intuition, no, it's about essentially more: namely, about the nature of Anthroposophy. And here I notice, once again in your letter, that you have a *completely different concept of Anthroposophy* than I do.

At the moment, I am writing a continuation of my article "Meditation and Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy – Where is the connection?" ² With your letter, you refer once again precisely to the elements that are the most important to me, and which I will also deal with in my continuation article. This is why I would like to focus here only on those parts of your public letter in which our fundamentally different views become especially clear.

In the explanation of your approach to the Anthroposophical Meditation advocated by you, you write in your public letter on page 2f:

"For this, I have often made use of a comparison: in evolution there are always repetitions of repetitions of repetitions of previous states. Thus the 'Old Sun' begins with a repetition of 'Old Saturn', the 'Old Moon' with a repetition of 'Old Saturn' and 'Old Sun', within the latter 'Old Saturn' is then repeated again in a smaller period – thus it is a matter of continual repetitions of repetitions of repetitions. Imagination will be fully developed as a world-forming state of consciousness on 'Jupiter', inspiration on 'Venus' and intuition on 'Vulcan'. However, just as there are repetitions of repetitions of repetitions, there are pre-stages of pre-stages of pre-stages. This is why today, at least in a beginning way, we are able to build up the state of consciousness of imagination: as a pre-stage of something increasingly realizing itself in future, yet already announcing itself today.

You, it seems to me, look at imagination more in the sense of the fully developed 'Jupiter' form, I in the sense of a pre-stage of a pre-stage of a pre-stage. Can one not understandingly acknowledge each other [literally wave at each other-tr.] from these two points of view?"

With this comparison, which is probably often used in your seminars and workshops, you want to point out that a development always takes place via various preliminary stages. You use

the earth's development described by Rudolf Steiner, in which – before reaching a new state – there were always repetitions of already past states, and then transfer this image over to the coming pre-stages to the higher states of development of the earth. Then you add to this your idea of the development of the higher stages of knowledge; only from an initially incomplete imagination, can the true imagination first be build up to a higher stage of earth development (here on Jupiter), etc.

With this, however, you touch on one of the greatest of all secrets of development, and you answer it in the sense of Darwin. The great idea of Rudolf Steiner's earthly development points, however, to something else: The more perfect cannot develop out of the imperfect; in the Saturn state, all the future states of development of the earth are already contained, but especially the last, the Vulcan state; likewise in the Sun state, that of Venus, etc. For the perfect cannot be a product of the imperfect; it is always there at the beginning of development, yes, it forms the beginning itself. Development is "only" the unfolding of what is already contained in the being. Thus, true imaginations cannot evolve out of forms of experience in which these are only imperfectly contained, as you would seem to hope. For imagination cannot be developed at all; *"the meditator can only prepare to receive such a thing"*. And what that person then receives is always a complete imagination, not just some kind of pre-form of it.

The fact that you assume that meditators themselves can form imaginations, inspirations and intuitions becomes very clear from your letter. In particular, in the following way:

A central statement of my article wanted to show that an assertion continuously maintained by the representatives of "Anthroposophical Meditation", with which they made out that it was based on Rudolf Steiner, does not go back to Rudolf Steiner. Namely, the one according to which it deals with imagination in the form of a transformed 'placing of something before the mind', with inspiration in the form of a transformed feeling, and intuition in the form of a transformed willing. On page 5 you answer this with a quotation from **Von Seelenrätseln** – to my knowledge the only place where Rudolf Steiner shows these connections so directly. You quote the following:

"Just as from the body, awareness rests on the activity of the nerves, so from the other side it streams out of a spiritual being that is revealed in imagination. ... The feeling of ordinary consciousness rests, from the body side, on what happens rhythmically. From the spiritual side, it flows out of a spiritual being, which is found within Anthroposophical research by methods that I in my writings characterize as those of inspiration. ... Willing, which, from the bodily side, rests on the metabolic processes, streams from the spirit for the beholding consciousness through what I in my writings call real intuitions." (Rudolf Steiner, **Von Seelenrätseln**, p.160f.)

Probably there is no quotation in Rudolf Steiner's works that can make clearer what I mean, and the difference between our two views can hardly be seen so clearly at any place other than this one.

You understand the words quoted above as if one could develop imaginations directly from ideas, inspirations directly from feeling and intuitions directly from willing. The exercises given by "Anthroposophical Meditation" are all built up in this way: One takes ideas and forms "imaginations", one takes "feelings" and develops "inspirations", etc. The point of view from which Rudolf Steiner presents these connections, however, is a completely different one. These connections result from supersensible knowledge; they stream, as it were, out of this

knowledge. This does not in any case mean, however, that one can directly develop out of the activities of ordinary consciousness that with which that – flowing in from the other side – is connected in a definite way.

If one reads the quoted sentences of Rudolf Steiner more precisely, this connection between the physical-sensible on the one side and the spiritual on the other, becomes particularly clear:

*"Just as from the body, awareness rests on the activity of the nerves, so it streams from the other side out of a spiritual being that is revealed in imagination. ... The feeling of ordinary consciousness rests, from the body side, on what happens rhythmically. From the spiritual side, it flows out of a spiritual being, which is found within Anthroposophical research by methods that I in my writings characterize as those of inspiration. ... Willing, which, from the body side, rests on the metabolic processes, streams from the spirit for the beholding consciousness through what I in my writings call real intuitions."*³

The same gesture follows three times: that from the body, on the activity of the nerves, on the rhythmic events or on the metabolic processes, the 'remaining still' of 'placing something before the mind', of feeling and of willing "flows", "runs" or "streams" from the other "spiritual side", for the beholding consciousness, as imagination, inspiration and intuition. This flowing "from the spirit", however, the meditator cannot produce. Such a person can only receive it.

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The way in which "Anthroposophical Meditation" works, bypasses the decisive step: that of the meeting at and through the threshold between the physical-sensible and the spiritual world. Thereby, the transformation possible at this threshold also does not take place, which the meditator first has to experience for themselves in order to be able to receive the completely transformed gesture of what is flowing towards them.

In the form presented by "Anthroposophical Meditation", there is no such threshold; here, the one goes directly over into the other; and the result of a work based on such ideas is that with the activities designated as "imagination", "inspiration" and "intuition", nothing else is generated and beheld other than "*different variations of the ordinary consciousness that does not grasp itself*".

At this point I would like to make a more personal remark. Particularly distressing to me is the widespread idea today that one can develop "inspirations" out of a feeling. In this direction, many, many participants have been practicing for many years. That such a peculiar connection – in the name of Rudolf Steiner! – has been created and that it can assert itself among so many people, this testifies that Rudolf Steiner is no longer read. For how different are the instructions and explanations he has given for this, from what is practiced here! How is it possible that many hundreds of people do not notice this?

But now back to your letter. I repeat: The perceptions experienced by "Anthroposophical Meditation" spring from the, not yet recognized as such, ordinary consciousness. They remain captured by it, but how is such a fundamental error possible?

This question, too, you answer in your open letter itself. On page 6, you say the following:

"The difference (of imaginative – I.D.) to ordinary ideas lies in the fact that they depict something external, while these bring something inward to expression. This difference can be learned quite precisely in the exercises for imagination.

Thus I can establish: Everything that appears to you as "something inner" you already take to be something that no longer belongs to ordinary ideas. How great and unknown is this "something inner", and how exactly does this "something inner" correspond to "ordinary consciousness"! The area of the unconscious and subconscious is in fact the greater, the less it is considered at all; and this is why it also belongs to one of the basic experiences that a seeker always makes when approaching the threshold: *At first in any case one does not encounter a "spiritual world", rather always only again oneself – in the until now remaining unconscious areas of one's unconscious.* If this knowledge does not stand at the beginning, the whole further path leads to error; and instead of a supernatural knowledge, the meditator only repeatedly experiences the different shades of themselves and of their unconsciousness that has remained completely unconscious!

This is one of the main topics with which in the sequel to my article "Meditation and Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy – Where is the connection?" I will be concerned. More detail about this most important step of a seeker after knowledge will thus come in this article.

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The appearance of Rudolf Steiner marks a turning point in the world. I know that something like this, people do not like to hear today. People want to belong and make Rudolf Steiner belong. But this is not done with such words, still less with such an attitude as I have made known precisely at this point; and one would like to show – ideally firsthand – that Anthroposophy is not difficult at all. That everyone can achieve it – immediately, as quickly as possible and without bumps, painlessly, fluidly, as it were according to the general Wellness-Trend.

I know I do not make myself popular with my sentences. They are uncomfortable and for many look antiquated and plain. But I am not interested in "Wellness Anthroposophy." What interests me is the certainty that the person I am today is the one who will develop herself – on and with Rudolf Steiner – over many incarnations; and it is from this, in which the hunger and the thirst for Anthroposophy has grown so strong, that it cannot be satisfied, that I also try to mold each one of my words and deeds.

Best regards,
Irene Diet

Footnotes:

1 <http://www.infameditation.de/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Dehmelt-Diet.pdf>

2 This sequel will appear in: www.ignisverlag.com

3 Emphasis mine - I.D.