

MICHAELA GLÖCKLER

WHERE ARE WE NOW IN THE CORONA-PANDEMIC?

WHAT CAN HELP US TO LIVE CONSTRUCTIVELY

WITH THE CONSEQUENCES?

THE STATE ITSELF IS NEVER AN END, IT IS ONLY IMPORTANT AS A CONDITION
IN WHICH THE PURPOSE OF HUMANKIND CAN BE FULFILLED,
AND THIS PURPOSE OF HUMANKIND IS NONE OTHER THAN THE CULTIVATION
OF ALL HUMAN FORCES, PROGRESSION.

Friedrich Schiller

Preliminary remarks

In the course of the Corona pandemic, so much has already been published on the subject that the question is only too justified: What more should be written? Who would be served by it? For whom would this be helpful? Who might still be interested in the flood of different views and interpretations of numbers, facts, statistics? In addition, the pandemic has polarized society to such an extent that many are now tabooing the subject in order not to further strain social peace. Therefore, it is only too understandable that uncertainty, fears and disorientation are the result, despite the political and media uniformity in communicating strategic goals and measures. In any case, it was the speechlessness and the feeling of powerlessness that I encounter in many conversations on this theme that ultimately motivated me to write this contribution. Especially since the crisis threatens to become chronic, and the call for compulsory vaccination with an unknown number of follow-up vaccinations is in contrast to the hopes that the pandemic could become endemic in the

foreseeable future and end. In the meantime, only one thing is really clear: The emergence of the Omicron variant which is spreading faster and more extensively among the vaccinated and unvaccinated, underscores the fact that we must learn to live with the virus and its mutations. Moreover, as the pandemic has unfolded, it has become clear that it is a source of debate on three different levels: On the level of personal concern in the event of illness or the worry related to friends and acquaintances, on the level of the various countries with their in part differing approaches, and finally on the global political-economic level. It is my objective to point out constructive perspectives for the future concerning these three levels of discussion - as well as to characterize the sources of strength that can contribute to inner stabilization in the face of worries and fears.

THE THREE LEVELS OF DISCUSSION OF THE PANDEMIC

1. The Global Level

The pandemic was and is a global event that hardly left anyone untouched. We could also globally experience the consonance in the basic strategic orientation that the international community of states chose to cope with the pandemic. The economic-political context shows clear prospects for development. They are characterized by the *mechanization* and *digitalization* of all areas of work, which have developed continuously since the Second World War and have become established globally. Linked to this is also

the *worldwide development of electronic control- and monitoring-systems in the service of security and health*, which has consequently been pushed forward in the context of the pandemic. And where it already existed, as in China, it has been perfected. Because of widespread fears of serious illness and death, great social acceptance can and could be counted on. However, many people have also been sensitized to the fact that this development represents a major challenge for the democratic Western world. This reminded me that as early as 1984, in an interview given in Germany, the American computer specialist Josef Weizenbaum answered clearly in the affirmative to the question posed by journalists whether the computer would bring the surveillance state. Of course, this would be the case, he stated; it had been worked towards right from the beginning. However, if this surveillance state would come, he noted, then it would not be the fault of the computer, but of the people who do not defend their freedom.¹

Today, books such as “Covid-19: The Great Reset” by Klaus Schwab and Thierry Malleret² or “Chronicle of an Announced Crisis” by Paul Schreyer³, as well as the educational books and videos by Ernst Wolff on global financial management and its future⁴, have become classic

¹ Joseph Weizenbaum: *Kurs auf den Eisberg. Die Verantwortung des Einzelnen und die Diktatur der Technik.* (Headed for the Iceberg. The responsibility of the Individual and the Dictatorship of Technology). Piper, München und Zürich 1987.

² Forum Publishing 2020

³ Paul Schreyer, *Chronik einer angekündigten Krise: Wie ein Virus die Welt verändern konnte*, Westend 2020. Available in German.

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/c/ErnstWolff1/videos>
Ernst Wolff: Die 4. industrielle Revolution - Ende aller Demokratie? Oder Aufbruch in eine neue Welt? - YouTube

Ernst Wolff: *Wolff of Wall Street: Ernst Wolff erklärt das globale Finanzsystem*, Wien 2020 (Ernst Wolff explains the global financial system)

eye-openers by underpinning the discussion on this topic with striking facts from economics and politics.

The fact that China, due to its communist social understanding, is the great pioneer with regard to the introduction of surveillance technology and is also already working on a digital national currency as a model for the world is openly apparent. It also seems almost self-evident that in times of pandemics, the majority of people place security above freedom and social requirements above personal needs, out of fear for life and limb. The fear of the virus not only legitimizes the shift of many areas of work into virtual space but also justifies the enormous digitalization push in education and the establishment of control systems for monitoring chains of infection, test-vaccination- and recovery-status in the public sphere.

At the same time, this development is taking place so unbelievably fast under the pressure of events, that it eludes democratic control, leaving decision-making to a few experts and responsible parties. Moreover, the danger of peaceful demonstrations being infiltrated by right-wing groups ready to use violence and the media discrimination against peaceful dissenters do not contribute to the motivation to comment on and question these developments publicly either. The fear of being pushed into the corner of conspiracy theorists and corona deniers and no longer being taken seriously is too great.

In my attempt to better understand this global situation, I was greatly helped *by the interview with Bill Gates on German television broadcast on Tagesthemen (Themes of the Day) on April 12, 2020.* His distinct description of the pandemic situation and what he recommends to the global community of nations made it clear why only *one* way out of the crisis has

been identified and implemented worldwide so far.⁵ I briefly summarize his statements here, but it is worth listening to this programmatic interview in its entirety. Because here, one of the most powerful and richest men in the world addresses the population directly and thus makes transparent and understandable what we all have been experiencing for almost two years.

For, what we are dealing with here is a presentation of clearly conceived strategic goals that are not only fixed, but apparently also have the consensus of some 200 states worldwide - which in itself is a miracle, considering how difficult it otherwise is to reach any kind of consensus on important issues. Why was it possible here, as if in the blink of an eye, for everyone to pull together, while on other important issues such as climate and environment, hunger and social misery as a result of wars and migration, nutrition and soil health, we have to be content with the smallest of tenaciously achieved milestones?

In any case, in this interview Bill Gates enthusiastically advocates a global, joint strategy to combat the corona pandemic. The better all countries cooperate and support the construction of factories at suitable locations worldwide to produce sufficient high-quality vaccine, the faster we will manage - according to Gates - to cope with this pandemic. But more importantly, it will prepare us for future pandemics that are sure to come. This goal is also served by the intensive research and development of mRNA vaccines, which will be tailor-made for all possible viral infectious diseases and can then be made available significantly faster than was the case with Covid 19.

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=083VjebhzgI>

Because if you do not find miracle cures for dangerous viral diseases, it needs the vaccines to be able to avoid the isolations, school closures, lockdowns, etc. in the future. But if we succeed in vaccinating 7 billion people “we’ve done it together!” We can then be proud of this and will live in a new age where future pandemics can no longer spread terror.

The almost two years that have passed since this interview have shown how countries around the world - supported by media coverage - have done everything possible to implement pandemic management in accordance with these strategic guidelines and to create the necessary legal basis for them. Politicians, scientists, lawyers and medical experts all pulled together. The fact that major economic power factors are the decisive driving forces behind such rapid international agreements is one thing.

The other, however, is the even deeper-lying question of *what type of thinking underlies such motivation* and gives the associated economic-political will such a thrust and convinces the majority of people. Why was and is this way of thinking able to prevail “without alternative” until today?

Such a strategy can only inspire if one has a conception of the human being *in which the human organism in health and disease represents a controllable object in a society that can be powerfully controlled*. However, this is not only the scientific-materialistic, but also the social-Darwinistic and transhumanistic approach. As is well known, this approach is also the basis of racist ideas, as well as of national socialist and communist dictatorships.

But now, when health is at stake and the fear of becoming seriously ill or dying has gripped most of humanity, this fact seems to be suppressed, although the protective measures, which deeply interfere with personal and social life, have spoken and continue to speak a clearly anti-life language. This includes the fact that the people who came to harm as a result of the measures or died as a result of hunger, poverty, loneliness, were not registered and communicated nearly as much as the positive test results and proven Covid19 infections, where one also misses to learn just as regularly how many vaccinated people are among those who tested positive and fell ill.

Why are these ambiguities accepted, why has the immense collateral damage to children and adults caused by the measures not yet been taken as an opportunity to rethink the crisis management or at least to allow fair public discussions about it? If this could happen, a different way of thinking and acting would have to be adopted. However, that does not seem to be the intention at present.

Therefore, I am not surprised that the transformation of hospitals into economically profitable enterprises, which has been taking place for decades, has gone and continues to go almost unopposed. The provision of beds and qualified personnel - i.e., the precautionary provision of beds that are not occupied for possible emergencies - means investments without profit. And who wants that?

Doesn't this mean that personnel must be cut wherever possible and surplus beds eliminated? The better occupied, especially in the intensive care unit, the more profitable the hospital. It goes without saying that with such profit-

oriented management, the limits of capacity are quickly reached, and that the pandemic regime then adapts to this, because it is governed by the same economically oriented logic. *However, if the rules of the world market also become the yardstick for health care and the treatment of people in need of help, this will necessarily be at the expense of human values and development opportunities.*

A human-centered way of thinking cannot be primarily oriented toward “homo oeconomicus,” since the ethical and moral deficits associated with this are all too obvious. After all, everyone basically knows that if you don’t invest in the development of humanness, it disappears. If political action is primarily oriented toward numbers and statistics and not toward real-life conditions, it must run the risk of becoming inhumane.

In addition, extremely well-funded representatives of the transhumanist idea not only dream of humans technically perfected by artificial intelligence but have long been working on the realization of these visions. What seemed to be science fiction decades ago is increasingly becoming reality, even if this is not yet in the foreground of public perception. However, the corona pandemic with its painful collateral damage has contributed to more and more people waking up and asking anew the question of what is really essential.

What is my image of the human being? How do I imagine the future? What kind of society do I want to live in? What role should technology play in my life? To what extent does artificial intelligence, which is becoming more and more independent, still serve the progress of civilization and the individual? How does it affect the development of human beings? Where does it start to take over and control

people to such an extent that self-determination and autonomous development of the individual are obstructed or made impossible? Not to mention that many areas controlled and further developed by AI, have now become so complex that they can no longer be surveyed by humans without the support of artificial intelligence.

The authors Kissinger, Schmidt, and Huttenlocher are taking a hard look at these issues, including AI-assisted control of advanced weapons systems and security issues.⁶ In addition, there are the transhumanists' visions of the future. Do I really want to connect my brain with AI for the optimization of my consciousness? And - when this brain biologically declines and the body decays - have a technically perfect eternal life as a robot of myself? What do I think about the visions of the future in which human and artificial intelligence will increasingly merge?

How does it affect us when they think and work consistently in this direction: "Machines will be human, even if they are not biological. Therein lies the next evolutionary step, the next great paradigm shift."... "Most of civilization's intelligence will ultimately be non-biological. By the end of the century, it will exceed human reasoning ability many billions of times over" (According to: Ray Kurzweil: *Humanity 2.0*). "AI Day will replace Christmas as the most important holiday in less than 25 years (...) One thing for the human species is certain: the birth of advanced artificial intelligence will become much more important than the birth of Christ. Christmas, if it

⁶ Henry A. Kissinger, Eric Schmidt, Daniel Huttenlocher: *The Age of AI. And Our Human Future*, London 2021

⁷ Ray Kurzweil, *Menschheit 2.0: Die Singularität naht*, p. 31, Lola Books 2014

survives at all, will be relegated to a merely commercial and cultural holiday that supermarkets and large corporations will resurrect. Meanwhile, sensible people will celebrate AI- Day as the real moment in history when the savior of civilization was born.” (According to Zoltan Istran: Huffpost, 11/24/2013)

Prominent transhumanists such as Elon Musk, Google co-founder Larry Page and Ray Kurzweil are great visionaries. With their plans for digital transformation and their consistent implementation for the creation of a new global science- and technology-based culture, they have gained a decisive influence on the everyday life of every individual. Even if this influence is beyond democratic control - it is all of us who, through our willing participation in the digitalization hype, help to shape this culture and thereby also legitimize it. Edwin Hübner has explored this fact in his extensive research on artificial intelligence and the human mind⁸.

However, he also impressively contrasts this new technocratic worldview with the spiritually based Anthroposophic worldview. Anthroposophy, too, is about visions for the future of humanity, and here, too, the attainment of a comprehensive “eternal” consciousness is at the center of efforts - but built on the spiritual power of thought and its further development through concentration and meditation.

Of course, it is fascinating to be served by the intelligence of technological service providers. But the fine threshold that separates dependence from autonomy passes through

⁸ Edwin Hübner: Menschlicher Geist und künstliche Intelligenz. Die Entwicklung des Humanen inmitten einer digitalen Welt. (Human Spirit and Artificial Intelligence. The Development of the Humane within a digital World).

every human heart. There rumble also questions like: *Why do we still not take these global technological developments and the ever more perfect control and monitoring instruments seriously enough so that the civil society will clearly demand its right to help shape things here by democratic means?* Apparently, the majority of people so far consider these developments to be the modern inescapable future perspective for the 21st century. Others, however, are worried and ask: what else will have to happen; when will the threshold of pain be reached, so to speak, for the environment and the people, so that a rethinking can lead to a life-appropriate and ecologically sound political decision-making? Or: When does the so-called tipping point occur, that not only the ecological balance gets irreversibly out of joint - but also the human being himself becomes so alienated from his own possibilities of spiritual development, and the anti-human and destructive impact of this economic-technological oriented way of thinking will begin to show itself everywhere? Of course, such questions cannot be answered in terms of an either-or with reference to “progressive-technological” or “regressive-anti-technological”.

Rather, it is a matter of how each and every one of us struggles to find our own individual answer, and correspondingly become active, and think through the question of where and how we want to position and engage ourselves personally and socially in this digital age. In his “Fairy Tale of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily,” Goethe has the old man with the lamp say: a single person does not help, but he who unites with many at the right hour. The European Alliance of Initiatives of applied Anthroposophy was also founded under this motto as a contribution to rethink and support cultural initiatives oriented towards human values⁹.

⁹ www.eliant.eu

Technology functions intelligently - but is itself dead objectivity. *Life*, on the other hand, is a comprehensive complex context, from which nothing isolates itself in a healthy state, but each part serves the whole and at the same time has its own clear functional identity. In order to understand life and to serve life, a way of thinking oriented to the conditions of life is needed. This cannot be linear or causal - it needs complexity and multiperspectivity.

The Russian poet and philosopher Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) characterized this need impressively in his book "Life" using many examples. It is particularly touching how he also integrates death into life and describes his own experience of postexistence after death:

“My brother has died, his cocoon, it is true, has become empty, I no longer see him in the form in which I saw him before, but his disappearance from my gaze has not destroyed my relationship with him. I have been left, as we say, with the memory of him. (...) And this memory is all the more vivid, the more the life of my friend, my brother was in harmony with the law of reason, the more it revealed itself in love. This memory is not merely an idea, but this memory is something that affects me in the same way as my brother’s life affected me during the time of his earthly existence. This memory is the same invisible immaterial atmosphere that surrounded his life and had an effect on me and on others during his physical existence, just as it has an effect on me after his death. (...) More than that: this memory becomes much more binding for me after his death than it was during his lifetime. That power of life which was in my brother has not only not disappeared and not diminished, it also has not remained the same, it has even become greater and has a stronger effect on me than before. The power of his life works on

after his bodily death just as or even stronger than before his death and works like everything truly living. (...) This life of my brother, which is invisible to me, does not merely affect me, but it penetrates me. (...) The human being has died, but his relationship to the world continues to have an effect on people, and not only as in life but much stronger, and the effect increases in the measure of reason and love and grows like everything living, without ever stopping and without knowing interruptions. His particular living I, his relation to the world becomes mine.”¹⁰

That fact that Tolstoy can write in this way, filled with the deepest inner certainty, is the result of his intense lifelong search for the meaning of human existence, for his own spiritual identity, which then led him at the age of forty-nine into an inner encounter with Christ so that only from then on did he really experience himself as a human being. The thoughts and feelings that are not perceptible to the physical eye become for him real soul- spiritual life, just as the complex connection of his bodily life has its biological basis in the natural and social environment.

Conclusion: *Our future in global perspective will depend on the way we humans answer the question “what is the aim and purpose” of a human life on earth? Friedrich Schiller has already given the forward-looking answer to this question, which I have prefixed to this article as a motto. One thing seems to be certain to me: If the transhumanistic groups of people and those who are seeking their further development on spiritual paths keep their balance, it will continue to be interesting and constructive. If the latter are ridiculed, denigrated and possibly eliminated, unpleasant times are ahead.*

¹⁰ Leo N. Tolstoj: Das Leben, Bd. 7 der gesammelten Werke Diederichs (*Life*, vol.7, collected works), Jena 1911, Kapitel 31, Seite 219 ff.

2. Regional-national level

This is about the situation of the health care systems in different countries, and the way in which appropriate measures have been and are being taken in response to statistical predictions and recommendations by opinion-leading scientists and physicians. It is interesting to note that the course of the pandemic in the various countries shows no significant differences regarding stricter or looser pandemic control measures. A good example of this is the comparison of England and Germany.¹¹

Even the chief virologist in Germany, Professor Drosten, has confirmed this and also honestly clarified that such a virus pandemic with its mutations will only end when the population is thoroughly immunized - through a mix of vaccination *and* infection of the population. Why do Sweden and England not have a fourth wave, but a near-normal life? Because, in addition to their more or less high vaccination rate, they have significantly more recovered people than is the case in Germany.

In an interview with the weekly magazine "Die Zeit" on November 11, 2021, Drosten summarizes: "Before the virus variants appeared, we could hope that there would also be months of transmission protection after vaccination. At that time, we rightly discussed possible herd protection: vaccinate 70%, and the rest gradually become infected over the next few months and years. After a year and a half most of the infections would be finished, and the intensive care units would be busy for a long time but not overloaded. Then

¹¹ <https://www.welt.de/kultur/plus235506042/Corona-Politik-Das-Beispiel-England-spricht-gegen-die-Impfpflicht.html>

no further control measures would have been needed. (...) Now we can no longer hope for this effect. The Delta virus continues to spread to a significant proportion of the vaccinated. (...) the viral load - and I mean the isolated infectious viral load - is quite comparable in the first few days of infection. Then it drops faster in vaccinated people. The trouble is this infection is transmitted right at the beginning.”

When asked: How do you see the next year? Drosten replies, “The virus will become endemic. There’s no way we can vaccinate it away because we can’t vaccinate the whole world population. And soon there will also be immune escape variants where the vaccination is no longer effective. That’s why we have to enter the endemic phase consciously.”

And when asked what that might look like, Drosten points to England: “You can observe that in England. England has about as high a vaccination rate as we do and, unfortunately, twice as many deaths per capita. England is now in a post-contamination phase that has been going on since late summer. *These natural infections are building up the community protection* (italics by the author). In our country, this is not yet possible, *because there are fewer people who have recovered*, and the old people are less well vaccinated. In our country, an uncontrolled post-infection would mean at least another 100,000 deaths if we do not close the vaccination gaps beforehand.”

To the question, if everyone will then become infected as part of this post-contamination, he notes, “I think it’s inevitable. We’re all going to have to get infected - hopefully on the foundation of full vaccine immunization - at some point, if only to get relevant immunization.”

Apparently, immunization through vaccination is not enough, which is why Drosten follows up by saying, “vaccine immunization has a systemic effect, it protects the lungs, you don’t suffer a more severe course of illness anymore. But the basic immunity gradually fades, and the mucous membrane in the nose and throat is again unprotected. This is also the case with all other corona viruses. *Every year and a half, we pick up each of these four corona viruses, whether we get sick from them or not. So our immunity is always updated. With this corona virus, we have to get into this mode as well.*” (Emphasis added by the author).

The assessment of the further course of the pandemic could also give rise to much more differentiated and humane strategies for coping with the pandemic and put into perspective the repetition of the paradigm “vaccinate, vaccinate, vaccinate as *the only way* out of the crisis”.

The interview then concludes by saying that in the coming years, the virus will then become harmless, like a normal cold virus, and we will eventually be immune to it as a society. Asked whether new viruses of a pandemic nature might then emerge, Drosten points to the poor living conditions in many parts of the world and the brutal treatment of animals, which clearly encourage the emergence of pandemics.

It is regrettable, however, how consistently one-sided the media coverage of the pandemic is in almost all countries with the vaccination paradigm at the center (see the article by Thomas Hardtmuth). Why do voices of renowned experts from psychology, sociology and philosophy at best appear in guest commentaries in the leading media, whereas they have no voice in the decision-making bodies? But they also risk their reputations and professional

positions if they publicly express criticism of the pandemic measures. A typical example of such action is the scientist and general practitioner Andreas Sönnichsen in Austria, who has vehemently opposed the compulsory vaccination already adopted there. In the meantime, he has also been relieved of his executive function as Head of the Department of General Medicine at MedUniversität in Vienna.¹²

Even Gabor Steingart, who usually represents the mainstream narrative with astonishing consistency, writes musingly in his morning briefing on 16.11.21: “With the infection figures, the pressure in the cauldron of democracy is rising. In many places, people are no longer talking, they are poisoning. The tyranny of the unvaccinated, some are ranting. Others are speaking of the Corona dictatorship. The opponents of vaccination and their antagonists are sometimes more similar to each other than they want to admit (...) The aggressive intransigence of some is the problem, which is intensified and not alleviated by the demonstrative lack of understanding of others. Private fear meets state authority, so often and so violently, until we will presumably experience more of both: more fear and more authority.”

A thinking oriented to human beings and to the reality of life would

¹² <https://www.heute.at/s/corona-kritischer-professor-andreas-soennichsen-von-med-uni-wien-gefeuert-100179350>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZaMxzt8cV0&ab_channel=FP%C3%96TV

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3H-JVJ-Q2w4&ab_channel=Wienertv

ensure mutual understanding and emphasize the legitimacy of the two polar views as contributing to the whole. Ways and means would be found for the diversity of opinions to be articulated constructively on the situation in the social discourse. Whereas unilateral thinking needs enemy images to legitimize itself and strengthen its own ability to assert itself.

This makes it all the more gratifying to see occasional guest commentaries in major newspapers, such as the one in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* of October 30, 2021, in the *article by Kristina Schröder and Andreas Rödler* “For a civic renaissance. Open societies are more innovative, more efficient, and more humane. But what might new concepts of civic politics look like without prohibitions on thinking?” It says: “A new civic politics responds to all the above challenges neither with retro-nostalgic ignorance nor with the ideological temptation to shape a new world. Rather, a sustainable and future-oriented civic politics seeks new answers from the proven principles that have established an unprecedented level of freedom and quality of life since the Enlightenment: Self-responsibility and subsidiarity, freedom and pluralism, the rule of law, regulatory policy, social market economy, competitive orientation and openness to technology. All of these are not to be taken for granted in the face of state-led transformation and new social structures, single couch and Twitter mobs, nationalist resentment, fake news, or alleged pandemic imperatives.”

The two authors are co-founders of the think tank R21: “We want to work toward a broad respectful public discourse without prohibitions on thinking and speaking, by reasserting the Enlightenment achievement: it doesn’t matter who says something, but what he or she has to say.” And, “For citizens do not see themselves as prisoners of

overpowering external forces, but as shapers of their own happiness.” It will be interesting to see which ways of thinking will be discussed there - and in what form, the results will be taken up by the media.

For it is extraordinarily depressing how currently courageous individuals from journalism like *Ole Skambraks*¹³ are dealt with after his critical contribution¹⁴ on the one-sided reporting in the leading media. He concludes this reporting and the questions it raises about the corona pandemic and its contradictions with the words: “Writing these lines, I feel like a heretic; someone who commits treason and must expect punishment. Perhaps it is not so at all. Maybe I am not risking my job, and freedom of expression and pluralism are not at risk. I wish it very much and look forward to a constructive exchange with colleagues.” Unfortunately, this was not the case. And this because he asked fact-based uncomfortable questions that live in many people who dare to take note of different views and form their own independent judgment. What did he write? He compiled a list of inconsistencies and unanswered questions - well substantiated and commented - that have not received

¹³ *Ole Skambraks, Jahrgang 1979, studied Political Sciences and French at the Queen Mary University, London as well as Mediamanagement at the ESCP Business School, Paris. He was a Moderator, Reporter and author with Radio France Internationale, Onlineredakteur und Community Manager bei cafebabel.com, Sendungsmanager der Morgenshow bei MDR Sputnik und Redakteur bei WDR Funkhaus Europa/Cosmo. Zuletzt arbeitete er als Redakteur im Programm-Management/Sounddesign bei SWR2. (born 1979, studied Political Science and French at the Queen Mary University, London, as well as media management at the ESCP Business School, Paris)*

¹⁴ [https://multipolar-magazin.de/artikel/ich-kann-nicht-mehr-translated at https://www.thelibertybeacon.com/i-cant-do-it-anymore/](https://multipolar-magazin.de/artikel/ich-kann-nicht-mehr-translated-at-https://www.thelibertybeacon.com/i-cant-do-it-anymore/)

substantial media coverage.

I can warmly recommend reading these on the Internet.

A few are cited here as examples:

- Why does the new Infection Protection Act state that the fundamental right to physical integrity and the inviolability of the home can henceforth be restricted - even independently of an epidemic situation?

- Why is the “Event 201” and the global pandemic exercises in the run-up to the spread of SARS-CoV-2 not talked about, or only in connection with conspiracy myths?

- Why has the internal paper from the Federal Ministry of the Interior, known to the media, not been published in its entirety - and discussed in public - which called for authorities to create a “shock effect” to emphasise impacts of the Corona pandemic on human society?

- Why aren't people with severe vaccine side effects portrayed to the same degree as people with severe covid-19 histories?

At the end, the editor writes:

“The restriction of the discourse has now gone so far that the Bavarian Radio, when broadcasting parliamentary debates of the Landtag, has on several occasions omitted to broadcast speeches by members of parliament critical of measures. Is this what the new understanding of

democracy of public broadcasting looks like?”

Michael Esfeld, professor of philosophy at the University of Lausanne and member of the German Academy of Sciences, Leopoldina, got to the heart of the problem in his paper, “The Return of Collectivism¹⁵.”

“The knowledge of modern natural science cannot, by its very nature, be used to control society. From the theories of natural science follows only technical knowledge, which can tell us how to realize a concrete goal originating in each case from outside this knowledge. (...) The problem now is that there are no uniform shared goals in life suitable for all and no uniform risk assessment for all.”

By contrast, in a November 2, 2020 interview with the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, *Nobel Prize winner for literature Mario Vargas Llosa* remarks on this problem: “The line between reasonable measures to contain the pandemic and usurpation of power by politicians is by its very nature very thin ... And when we lose freedom, in the long run we lose everything. Without it, everything is nothing.”

What is the focus of the “political will”?

The interview cited with Professor Drosten was characteristic of the pandemic dilemma we are all currently witnessing. The systemic causes of the pandemic can only be tackled slowly and on the basis of growing insight.

¹⁵ In der Wochenschrift „Das Goetheanum”

Health care with more rather than fewer intensive care beds and better equipment - including financial and human resources - in the area of qualified care is also something that the primary political will is not applied to. On the contrary: *the mayor of Neubaun am Rennweg in Thuringia* even admits publicly- combined with an apology to the citizens of his area - that for economic reasons quite a few intensive care beds have been cut since the beginning of the pandemic and that the hospitals have received a bonus of Euros 4500 to 12000 for each intensive care bed cut.¹⁶

In such a situation, of course, the vaccination paradigm and contact restrictions remain as the only way to normalize the process of immunization of the entire population so that the cash-strapped health care system is not overwhelmed. The consequences of such a one-sided prioritization are borne by the population as a whole - with all the painful restrictions, financial losses, destruction of jobs, and last but not least, the generation of students psychosocially damaged by school closures and other restrictions.

To be honest, I would like to say that even as a medical student in the 1970s, I never experienced a cold season between fall and spring where clinics did not have a temporary admission freeze and patients had to be transferred to other clinics because all beds were occupied locally. And back then, there were significantly more hospitals and beds than there are today! We can say that the argument of overloading hospitals and intensive care units was quite understandable in the first wave, because

¹⁶<https://www.epochtimes.de/gesellschaft/ueben-wir-toleranz-appell-eines-thueringer-buergermeisters-a3655563.html>

the necessary preventive and protective measures were not yet sufficiently known, and the initial assumptions were that severe cases would be far more frequent than actually was the case.

But why then accept so many restrictions on basic rights and freedoms and social misery in the aftermath, simply because the political-economic will is lacking to focus on how to improve the nursing and inpatient care situation in hospitals and optimize the protection of vulnerable groups? Moreover, after the second wave, it was clear to the experts that the virus would not be stopped - despite all the measures taken. That, of course, like all other viruses, it would change but not disappear. So why not change the strategy now to reflect the actual situation?

In view of these facts, the painful question is justified, why is the political will still in panic mode? Why is the political will not moving in the direction of a possible “risk-stratified” crisis management oriented to real risk? I borrowed this term from Prof. Harald Mattes. As head of a large corona outpatient clinic and upgraded corona intensive care unit in Berlin, he has already publicly advocated for a “risk-stratified” action in the pandemic after the experience with the first wave in October 2020. He knows the disease and its risks well, but also the fact that the vast majority of the population has nothing to fear.¹⁷

Conclusion: *Democracy and its foundation, the fundamental and human rights, are in danger due to crisis management that has become*

¹⁷ S. z.B. www.berliner-zeitung.de/news/leitender-arzt-corona-massnahmen-sind-in-dieser-pauschalitaet-nicht-mehr-zu-rechtfertigen-li.108933-

chronic. The surveillance instruments installed in the course of pandemic management will remain and be further developed. The population is to be forced to receive regular immunizations. Crisis management, which has its deep justification in acute emergencies, is no longer without alternative!¹⁸ However, a space for debate free of fear is needed so that proposals for risk-stratified action can be thought through and - if necessary, also regionally limited and scientifically accompanied - implemented. Otherwise, there is a danger that the economy-driven scientific or health directorial conditions will persist, and a way of thinking will take over that cannot do justice to the spiritual part of the human being.

3. Civil Society, personal level

At this level, the focus is on the personal concerns of each individual, familial and occupational-social: Fear of infection or also of possible side effects of the recommended vaccination, existential worries about economic decline and poverty, fear of the future, especially among the younger generation. Society has become polarized, and aggression and depression are placing an unprecedented strain on family and work relationships.

Vaccination is being propagated as the only source of hope in the face of the entire pandemic. The introduction of compulsory vaccination for almost everyone by means of coercion and exclusion also show that the conformist and

¹⁸ <https://info3-verlag.de/blog/die-corona-massnahmen-sind-in-dieser-pauschalitaet-nicht-mehr-zu-rechtfertigen/>
<https://dasgoetheanum.com/alles-fragt-nach-dem-sinn/>
https://www.anthroposophie-lebensnah.de/fileadmin/anthroposophie_lebensnah/user_upload/Memorandum_Version_4.4.pdf

technocratic control thinking mentioned above has not only reached our everyday life, but already dominates it and creates degrading, inhuman everyday scenarios.

My personal Covid 19 experience and a plea against fear:

Since I have gone through the Covid 19 illness myself in the meantime, what I wrote from a purely medical perspective in two earlier publications on the subject¹⁹ has been confirmed to me once again: it is an independent clinical picture, not a “normal flu”. However, a severe illness up to possible death *is rare* and has to take into account either age- or health-related preconditions and risks. Or we are dealing with unexpected, special, fateful events when, for instance, a previously healthy younger person dies as a result of the infection. However, to generalize such very rare and individual cases, in the sense of “this can happen to anyone”, and in this way stir up fears is unwarranted scaremongering. Even if we realize that in Germany in 2020 there were 40,000 people who died from and with Covid-19, to which approx. 60,000 were added by the end of November 2021, and that the total population is about 83 million, it is still very unlikely that someone will fall ill in a life-threatening way. The enormous spread of the milder Omicron variant has not changed this fact. Therefore, I still find it almost

¹⁹ Michaela Glöckler, Andreas Neider, Hartmut Ramm: Corona-eine Krise und ihre Bewältigung (How to overcome the Corona Crisis), Stuttgart 2020; Michaela Glöckler, Andreas Neider, Thomas Hardtmuth, Christoph Hueck, Bernd Ruf, Hartmut Ramm: Corona und das Rätsel der Immunität (Corona and the Riddle of Immunity) Stuttgart 2021.

unforgivable that, in view of these figures, there is not a better health care investment²⁰ and protection of vulnerable groups, but instead consistently and daily more than 99% of the population are frightened who are nevertheless not seriously at risk. At least this is the case in Germany, while all-clear signals can already be heard from Spain, England and Switzerland, for example. All this was and is particularly problematic for children and young people and those whose economic livelihood is destroyed as a result. So the question must be allowed:

Why should a rare but potentially severe covid 19 disease not be part of the risks of life that everyone has to face and live with? Why is there no appeal here to personal responsibility and self-protection, as is the case with the widespread diseases of civilization, which are socially accepted and also cause high health costs and many hospitalizations?

And: why should the announced Covid-19 vaccination requirement take away the freedom of the individual to decide whether they want to live with the risk of disease or with a possible side effect as a result of the vaccination? Especially since this vaccination does not protect against infection, nor against infecting others? It is only meant to offer protection against a severe course of illness and even this only for a few months.²¹

²⁰www.zeit.de/kultur/2021-12/pflegenotstand-intensiv-stationen-corona-pflegekraefte-10ach8?wt_zmc=sm.ext.zonaudev_mail.ref.zeitde.share.link.x

²¹ Weltbild der Medizin - Medizin ohne Menschlichkeit | Cicero Online
Immer mehr stehen auf - Impfen & Impfentscheidung - Ärztinnen und Ärzte für individuelle Impfentscheidung (individuelle-impfentscheidung.de)
Pressekonferenz kritischer Ärzte: Impfung hat versagt, Impfwang kostet Menschenleben (report24.news)

Also, each course of the disease is very individual. In my case, the first week after infection with the Delta variant, I had a headache that I had never experienced previously, a fever, a hard dry cough, loss of smell, astonishing weakness of the circulatory system, loss of appetite and insomnia. As a 75-year-old living alone and having to care for myself under these circumstances, I repeatedly considered whether it would not be wiser to seek care in a clinic. However, since I was always in telephone contact with my doctor, I was really grateful to her that she trusted me to manage the situation at home with the help of anthroposophic medicine²². It was also true for me: *the virus is one thing, the susceptibility to the virus is another*. Why didn't I get sick the first year, but in October 2021?

What caused the susceptibility to the virus and what could support the recovery process are questions that every affected person can ask themselves. This is because the immune system reacts sensitively in a psychosomatic context. In my case, the susceptibility to the virus was clearly related to an overload situation and the illness provided the necessary compensation. In the second week the fever subsided, in the third it disappeared and beginning with the fourth week, I slowly regained my strength. Anthroposophic medicines, especially by way of

Ein neuer Trick des RKI um den hohen Anteil der Geimpften an den Intensivpatienten zu senken – Geld und mehr (norberthaering.de)

²² Matthias Girke(Ed.), Michaela Glöckler (Ed.), Anthroposophic Medicine - Medicinal Therapy for 350 Diseases, Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft, Stuttgart 2020

inhalation and for strengthening the circulation, proved to be of impressive help²³ and I have once again regretted that the mainstream media only report that orthodox medicine is working on remedies and that some of those already available are used with limited success in severe cases in the clinic - but not what successes the complementary and integrative medical treatment methods have in daily practice.

Not to mention the lack of coverage of positive and negative psychological factors influencing the immune system and its reactive competence. It is therefore all the more gratifying that a publication has now appeared on this subject by proven experts from the perspective of psychoneuroimmunology (PNI), which informs in a generally understandable and versatile manner and which I would like to recommend for reading²⁴. The field of psychoneuroimmunology has been investigating for decades the extent to which thoughts and feelings influence the health-/disease-dynamics and the functioning of the immune system.

They also investigated how much positive feelings strengthen the immune system, whereas fear, insecurity, mistrust - in short negative feelings - have the opposite effect. So I would also like to say honestly that fear would probably have worsened my condition - at least I wouldn't have hesitated to be admitted to the hospital.

²³ Johannes Wilkens, Frank Meyer: Corona natürlich behandelt. (Corona treated naturally)

²⁴ Christian Schubert, Magdalena Singer: Das Unsichtbare hinter dem Sichtbaren. (The Invisible behind the Visible.) Gesundheit und Krankheit neu denken, Perspektiven der Psychoneuroimmunologie, (Rethink Health and Illness anew, Perspectives and Psychoneuroimmunology), Norderstedt 2020

What are the merits of an individual Covid 19 vaccination decision?

In view of the gradual introduction of the Covid 19 vaccination requirement, the authors of the “Guide to Child Health”²⁵ have written an appeal to those responsible in the health care system as well as to the members of the German Bundestag, citing four good reasons that speak against a vaccination requirement²⁶. The European Alliance of Initiatives of Applied Anthroposophy/ELIANT also wrote to all Members of the European Parliament for this reason - based on the resolution of the European Parliament of January 27, 2021. This resolution clearly opposed mandatory Covid 19 vaccination. They wanted to make sure “*that no one is discriminated against because they are not vaccinated, because they may have health risks or they do not wish to be vaccinated*”.²⁷ What are the main points of view that speak against a mandatory Covid 19 vaccination?

Scientific reasons: In a pandemic it is about protection against infection^{28/29}, disease³⁰ and possible death.

²⁵ Kindersprechstunde. Ein medizinisch-pädagogischer Ratgeber, (Guide for Child Health) Stuttgart 2018

²⁶ https://eliant.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/eliant_Aufruf_fuer_freien_Covid_19_Impfentscheid_02pdf

²⁷ <https://pace.coe.int/en/files/29004/html> (s. Punkt 7.3.1 und 7.3.2)

²⁸ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS14733099\(21\)00648-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS14733099(21)00648-4/fulltext)

²⁹ <https://www.tagesschau.de/newsticker/liveblog-coronavirus-montag-235.html#Drosten-Geimpfte-mit-substanziellem-Risiko>

³⁰ <https://www.bmj.com/content/375/bmj-2021-067873>

However, the vaccines developed to date provide this protection only to a certain extent. They do offer more vulnerable people with pre-existing conditions and those of advanced age temporary protection against severe *courses* of disease. However, they can neither prevent the occurrence of the disease nor a possible infection of others in the long term. Also, the side effects that have become known so far are more frequent than known from conventional vaccines, especially in younger people. I find this especially troublesome since they still have their whole life ahead of them.³¹ We therefore consider an individual risk-benefit assessment to be indispensable.

Hospitals operated for profit quickly reach their capacity limits:

The whole pandemic management has been based on hospital capacity. The hygiene measures and lockdowns served to slow the spread of the pandemic in the hope of soon having a vaccine that could stop further spread. However, the indirect threat to the population posed by overloading the health care system should have been countered by an increase of capacity. Compared with the restrictions on civil liberties and the prospect of compulsory vaccination, this is a more proportionate, patient-oriented and sustainable option.

Salutogenetic Points of View:

We know from salutogenesis, resilience- and psycho-neuro-immunological research that people with an inner value system, optimistic outlook on life, and religious or spiritual orientation have stronger resilience resources.

³¹www.pei.de/DE/newsroom/dossier/coronavirus/coronavirus-inhalt.html;jsessionid=B5DDF4217EAD1D9212E90CE0E013ADE9.intranet221?nn=169730&cms_pos=6 (09.12.2021)

Fear and coercion, on the other hand, are associated with emotions that undermine resilience. Therefore, everyone, but especially those who work in health care and are thus exposed to higher risks, should be allowed to decide freely and independently for or against a COVID-19 vaccination. On the one hand, health care workers know best how to protect themselves and others - after all, hygiene rules are part of their daily routine. On the other hand, they most frequently experience on site that even vaccinated and boosted people can fall ill and pass the disease on to third parties.

Without freedom and respect for the human dignity of individuals, democracy loses its ground: how often could we hear, I am getting vaccinated for social reasons! Unvaccinated people are antisocial! Quite apart from the fact that one could also say the opposite: Unvaccinated people know about the risk for themselves and others. Vaccinated people, on the other hand, feel safe and often do not realize that they can pass on the disease, even if they have no or only minor symptoms. But the attitude that deprives the individual of the dignity to make decisions for themselves in intimate matters of health is also problematic. On the one hand, doesn't the greatest danger to democracy come from conformist systems, as we know them from National Socialist or Communist dictatorships? There, it was taken for granted that the individual had to subordinate himself to the good of society. Another danger is that of egoism. It is expressed in profit-driven economic capitalism and its great influence on politics. What both have in common is that the individual's opportunities for development are restricted or taken away. It is therefore all the more gratifying that more and more professional associations and citizens' initiatives are speaking out in support of a free and individual Covid 19

vaccination decision.³²

The need for a new Educational Culture

I have repeatedly wondered why media professionals and politicians, in the context of their moralistic accusations against the “selfish unvaccinated,” do not remember that, for example, the social-sounding slogan: “Gemeinnutz geht vor Eigennutz” (Public welfare takes precedence over personal welfare) was *the* moral compass in the National Socialist dictatorship, as it was for other totalitarian regimes. That is, anyone who behaves in conformity with the state - also in matters of personal health - is social. In serious cases, this can mean that the individual counts for nothing, but only the welfare of the community. Culture, on the other hand, thrives on the creative tension between the developmental needs of individuals and what is socially indispensable.

A functioning democracy has suitable instruments for this, which should not be negotiable. Rudolf Steiner formulates this constructive antagonism as follows: *A healthy social life is found only when, in the mirror of each soul, the whole community finds its reflection, and when, in the whole community, the virtue of each one is living.*³³ But how can something like this be practiced? The current educational system is characterized by adaptation to certain requirements, tests, and examination procedures. *However, we need an educational culture that takes every human being in their developmental needs seriously and supports them.* The fact

³² Vgl. dazu auch die Zusammenstellung auf der Webseite der Akanthos-Akademie: <https://www.akanthos-akademie.de/übersicht-probleme-mit-der-impfpflicht/>

³³ Rudolf Steiner, GA 40, S. 298

that the state school system does not do justice to this has been lamented by experts for decades, most recently by people like Joachim Bauer and Gerald Hüther³⁴. It is therefore all the more gratifying that, in view of the problems that have arisen for many children and young people as a result of school closures, forced digitization, compulsory testing and masking, a great many people have also begun to think differently about development and about the importance of school for adolescents.

On this level of personal concern, however, the Corona crisis has already set many positive things in motion. Quite a few people are asking themselves: what has happened since the beginning of the pandemic to me and to my surroundings? What have I learned so far by witnessing the crisis? What can I really count on in moments of danger? What has fear done to me? What have I been able to hold on to internally?

Because no matter how one may interpret the arguments of politics, the leading media and representative individual voices, it is ultimately a question of how I, as an individual, position myself in relation to it. It is an opportunity of the greatest magnitude for each of us to become aware of this inner freedom and to take a stand. Even if the temptation is great to renounce autonomy and to allow ourselves to be taken over by opinion leaders, by groups, by social contexts that generate moral pressure – to capitulate, so to speak, in the face of massive new conformity and the need to “belong, to be part of” and not to feel marginalized.

³⁴ Joachim Bauer, *Lob der Schule*; (Praising school), Heyne Verlag
Joachim Bauer, *Prinzip Menschlichkeit*, (The Principle of Humanness)
Heyne Verlag
Gerald Hüther, *Würde*, (Dignity) Knaus-Verlag

How often have I heard: “I’m not an expert, I can’t judge that”. “Our politicians are doing their best - I wouldn’t want to be in their shoes”. As correct as this may seem, the consequences are problematic, because with such sentences one enters a self-chosen immaturity. “Sapere aude” was the motto of the Enlightenment, “dare to be wise”.

Conclusion: *Many people feel that it is more important than ever to dare to “think for oneself”. But how do I learn to find my own point of view? How do I regain my optimism about life, my self-confidence? Where are the sources of courage, soul health and confidence located? How can I unfold my health potentials and work constructively on the complex aftermath of the pandemic? What does our heart say about all this, what message does our voice of conscience have? Does it exist, the common sense that I can trust? and: what image of the human being is the basis of today’s medicine? Doesn’t medicine in particular need an integrative view of man that takes into account human soul-spiritual forms of existence as well as his physical one?*

Spiritual sources of strength?

Through a healthy common sense

This sounds simple and challenging at the same time. Simple, because every human being, regardless of the level of education, has a disposition for it. Challenging, because it is becoming more and more difficult to consciously take hold of and develop it. For, it lives off the interest in finding the truth and off the love for life. People with common sense are widely interested, but they check what they have heard and read to see what consequences are

likely to follow in their everyday lives. Therefore, they have a healthy basis for judgment - because what serves life cannot be wrong, even if one or the other detail should be supplemented, revised, or even replaced in the course of further research.

In any case, they do not bring blind faith to the “latest state of science” or a comfortable: “I can’t judge that anyway”. Rather, through genuine interest in the facts and their possible consequences, they develop an eye for the essentials.

Because facts are one thing - their interpretation and for everyday life are another. And anyone who does not dare to make a judgment in this situation is saying goodbye to their common sense. Because healthy common sense can only be maintained if a person has presence of mind and knows why they do or believe this or that. If it later turns out to be wrong or unproductive, then they are glad to learn how to do it better next time. Confucius already said, there are three ways to learn: an easy one by imitation, a painful one by experience, and a difficult one by insight. Those who practice common sense realize what is at hand and how these learning strategies complement each other.

Common sense is also characterized by not looking at facts in isolation but in the context of life experiences. Because where I can build on my own experiences and on processing them, inner security and self-confidence develop and with it a healthy self-esteem. A healthy common sense develops in life for life. It’s about staying awake and taking what you read and daily experience

seriously and questioning when something seems strange.³⁵

The more people do this and have the courage to share it, the less fear and worry one has to have about a possible total surveillance. In the fully digitalized everyday life, where the possibility of paying cash, of studying a real-world menu and ordering, etc. is increasingly disappearing and an incalculable flood of new data is waiting to be centrally evaluated, new forms of privacy protection and democratic participation are needed. But these will only come about if the majority of people turn their attention to this problem and get involved accordingly.

Healthy common sense is not compatible with complacency, superficiality and security thinking, but is the result of personal initiative and genuine interest in people and in the world, that is, in what Friedrich Schiller calls the purpose of being human: *the development of all human powers, progression*. These human strengths include, in particular, freedom and dignity, self-determination and social competence. *However, that freedom in thinking, courage and willingness to take risks do not lead to chaos - that is a central question of education in our time.*

The current school and education systems do not meet this moral challenge. On the contrary, through their one-sided performance orientated test culture, they promote conformity and safeguarded thinking. And by constantly comparing “better” and “poorer” students, they corrupt the development of healthy self-confidence and respect for weaker and stronger students. The “better” students

³⁵ See also Michaela Glöckler, *Corona and the Human Heart: Illuminating riddles of immunity, conscience and common sense*, InterActions, Stroud 2021

become arrogant - the “poorer” depressed³⁶. *A healthy self-confidence needs as a basic condition for its development that every child is compared only with themselves and experiences joy in their own progress.* And it needs the support of educators who help children to learn from their mistakes. Because without this competence of self-reflection and learning from one’s own mistakes and the mistakes of others, common sense can develop as little as healthy self-confidence can. Neither can understanding for the misbehavior of others, i.e. social competence develop.

It also guards against overestimating or underestimating other people. Such an approach to life and basic attitude cannot be taught - it has to be exemplified to children and young people and practiced with them - which is what a development-oriented education can do. For this, good and binding human relationships are needed. Anyone who thinks that this can be replaced by learning software, no matter how well thought out, is sadly very much mistaken³⁷.

This is why the experts of the “Alliance for Humane Education” rightly call the digitalization of kindergartens and elementary schools a threat to children’s well-being³⁸. *Why spend precious time of development with machines instead of whole-body and real world active interaction with nature and human beings, as required for healthy brain maturation?* The thoughtless and uncritical use of digital devices in childhood and

³⁶ Compare Michaela Glöckler: Education for the Future: How to nurture health and human potential? InterActions, Stroud, 2020, UK.

³⁷ Edwin Hübner, Michaela Glöckler: Growing up Healthy in a World of Digital Media, Hrsg. Diagnose:media

³⁸ www.aufwach-s-en.de

adolescence is a serious failure of common sense on the part of politicians, experts and lay people.

Through a Culture of Conscience

Can you explain to me the nature of conscience? Heinrich von Ofterdingen asks the physician named Sylvester this question in the second part of Novalis' novel of the same name. The latter answers: *If I could do that, I would be God. For by understanding conscience, it comes into being.* An intensive dialogue develops, at the end of which it becomes clear that the voice of conscience is "The Word of God". Through conscience, human beings have an immediate connection to the level of spirituality, that is, to inspirations that are not of this world, but arise from a more comprehensive higher insight. In order to become sensitive to this, we need the aforementioned common sense and genuine love of truth. Without these, we lack provisions on spiritual paths of development and an ear for the voice of conscience.

Of course, everyone knows the so-called "good" or "bad" conscience. It develops depending on environment, educational practice and experience. *However, what has to be learned newly and independently is to become sensitive to the fine voice of conscience that speaks only when we ask honestly and want to know what is right in a certain situation.*

The spontaneously occurring "good" conscience serves the need for justification in the sense of: I have nothing to reproach myself for! The spontaneously occurring "bad" conscience makes a person aware of how they are possibly seen or judged by others. It torments and creates dependence on authority or opinion leaders. Both qualities

hinder honest self-knowledge and the will to take responsibility for everything we have done, for better or for worse. Those who recognize their wrongdoing on their own accord and want to learn from it for the future, they rest in themselves and stand by what was and is. They are self-motivated to do what is necessary or possible in order to compensate and correct.

Just as the doctor in the end is responsible - by professional law - only to his conscience, so can this also be the privilege of every human being. But this presupposes an educational culture that allows for the cultivation of a healthy conscience³⁹. This decision to answer in the last instance not to the state, church or science, but to one's autonomy-gifted "better self" or "higher I" stimulates independent thinking, gives courage, strengthens the heart and thus also the immune system, and becomes an important source of spiritual strength.

Of course, in view of the Corona pandemic, one takes regulations, worries and fears in one's own environment into consideration - however, one is sure that the decision about death and life does not depend on official regulations but is deeply rooted in one's own life destiny. It will also not be difficult to strike a balance between the acceptance of regulations that actually serve to protect life and the absurdity of regulations that become an end in themselves and thus alien to life. *Placing safety higher than freedom, demanding blind obedience and making guidelines more important than the reality of life, are typical of the logic of materialism and the optimization of power.* Admitting to oneself that the only certain thing in life is death - this releases forces to

³⁹ Gerald Hüther: Würde, (Dignity), Knaus-Verlag

appreciate the preciousness of life all the more intensively and to experience trust in destiny.

In this sense, the pandemic regime in Sweden was exemplary, where the focus was on life realism and personal responsibility. As a result, they were able to maintain a largely normal life. They have also learned from their initial mistakes and admitted this publicly. However, I can only explain why they propagated compulsory vaccination when the pandemic was dying down in terms of economic/political policy. Medically and epidemiologically everything speaks against it.

The voice of conscience speaks to every human being - regardless of gender, level of education, skin color and social position. Before it, all humans are equal, and “gifted with an I”. Tracking down this I-endowment is at the same time also the way to understand our own conscience. For, when we follow our conscience, we follow on the one hand ourselves and on the other hand also a higher wisdom, if we do not let ourselves be distracted by the so-called good or bad conscience. But the connection to this higher wisdom is the strongest source of spiritual power that we can tap into.

Through “Awakening in Thinking”

In the third chapter of St. John’s Gospel, Jesus instructs Nicodemus the Pharisee about the second birth “of water and spirit” without which we cannot enter the Kingdom of God. And in the Apocalypse of John, the “second

death” is spoken of in various places (e.g. Revelation 20:6) as the soul death. Birth and death limit our life’s course. To accomplish the second birth, in order to escape the second death - is the task, that poses itself to the self-knowledge of each human being: If I can understand myself as an “eternal” being already during life by the strength of my thinking, feeling and willing, then this body-independent consciousness remains with me even after death, and I do not fall asleep or lose self-consciousness after death.

As difficult to understand as this may seem - it can be clarified by a simple consideration: if I cannot take hold of myself in thinking, if I do not give myself a model (Leitbild) for my own development, I do not make myself aware of the meaning and value of my I. Of course, I remain part of this creation, but then I do not use my potential to develop into an autonomous, self-thinking, and decisive being. In the Gospel of St. John, this idea of autonomy, this individual decision-competence, is at the very center.

It is directly formulated like this in the eighth chapter: *You will know the truth and the truth will set you free* - it is rather the core message, the path of development, which runs through the entire Gospel, including the Apocalypse. It is a question of our inner compass, our ideals in life, which give us orientation in all the ups and downs. For example, anyone who identifies with the three developmental ideals of truthfulness, love and freedom and uses his life to practice these character traits as much as possible has an inner purely spiritual guide. For these three ideals are not something that belongs to the sense world. They cannot be defined mathematically either. However, they acquire the power of orientation when we live with them. We can think them, get enthusiastic about them and try to realize

them in our actions. When we work with them in this way, we can experience these ideals as an inexhaustible source of strength.

And when we then read in the Gospel of John: *I am the way and the truth and the life* (John 14:6), *I am among you if you love one another* (John 15:9), *and the truth will set you free* (John 8:32) - then you can also sense where the inner strength comes from. This is the secret of identification: what I associate myself with also strengthens me, it lives in me. In his book on self-development, Rudolf Steiner described this inner culture of confronting yourself in simple words: Create for yourself moments of inner peace and learn in these moments to distinguish the essential from the non-essential⁴⁰.

Through a spiritual image of the human being

Since spirituality is not a sense perceptible tangible fact, it is the subject of philosophy, religion and esoteric aspirations in both East and West. Those with a materialistic upbringing not only find this world closed to them, but consider it unnecessary, aberrant, not to mention weird or crazy. Conversations about it may also cause fear, because there is no safe ground under our feet. However, if we make clear to ourselves that every person is spiritually gifted and also has spiritual abilities, even if they did not notice these at all up to then as really existing, this can change quickly. If we think just a little about thinking or realize the strengthening or destructive effect feelings can have, we become attentive to this invisible world of inner

⁴⁰ Rudolf Steiner: How to know Higher Worlds? GA 10, p. 25

realities with which we have to come to terms just as we do with the outer circumstances. Nothing else is meant by “higher worlds”.

For even religious documents reveal themselves through thoughts and words, via mythologies, and images, that modern people can also only access through reflection and artistic sensibility. When, for example, the Gospel of John describes Jesus walking on the Galilean Sea, we can take this literally and marvel at a miracle. But we can also let the image speak to ourselves and feel that it is here about the archetype, and how the power of the ‘I’ in humans can reach such a level of development that it becomes ruler in the ups and downs of the soul fluctuations.

Thinking is, so to speak, the bridge between the sense world and the spiritual world - the visible and the invisible. It explains the world phenomena to us but is not sense-perceptible itself. Rudolf Steiner called mathematics a preschool for knowledge of the spirit⁴¹, because here we work quite consciously on laws which the visible world obeys, but which are not themselves of a sense perceptible nature.

Fortunately, we can convince ourselves of the spiritual regulatory competence of our thinking even without deeper mathematical knowledge and discover the bridging function of thinking between matter and spirit: Just as mental images are formed directly at sensory perceptions, so concepts already completely elude the sensory experience. The concept of the circle applies to all

⁴¹ Louis Locher-Ernst; *Mathematik als Vorschule zur Geist-Erkenntnis*, Verlag am Goetheanum (Mathematics as Pre-school to Spiritual Knowledge)

conceivable circles. Therefore, concepts are also defined and not imagined. The circle is defined as geometrical location where all points, are of equal distance from a center. It is different again with thoughts that we call ideas.

Ideas we cannot acquire conceptually. They have to “come” to us. We are very pleased about good ideas; however negative frightening ideas worry us. But we rarely ask ourselves from which invisible world such ideas originate and whereto they disappear again. It is also interesting that great scientific discoveries are often made in the same period in different places.

The world of thoughts is accessible to all human beings and connects them with the external world and its beings. For this world of thought Rudolf Steiner uses the concept “etheric world”. This Greek word Ether referred to the sunny blue sky. Its light, as a source of energy, enabled plants to photosynthesize. Steiner’s discovery was that biological life on earth is brought about by the same laws and forces that also are at work in thought, in the so-called “eternal life”. He called this new psychosomatic paradigm that he had found: the metamorphosis of growth and life activity into thought activity.⁴²

If we test this interesting approach in order to understand the nature of thinking on our own thinking capacity in relation to the biological state of development of our body, we can notice, for example: alert, self-conscious thinking usually begins only in the third, or fourth year of life and

⁴² Rudolf Steiner: Theosophy, Anthroposophic Press, N.Y.
Rudolf Steiner und Ita Wegman: Fundamentals of Therapy, an
Extension of the Art of Healing through spiritual-Scientific
Knowledge, Mercury Press, N.Y.
Rudolf Steiner: Study of Man, General Education Course. U.K.

matures to full adult competence only after the adolescent growth spurt of age 15/16. It then continues to increase in the second half of life, even as aging processes begin and the regenerative power begins to wane. In a healthy aging person, mental freshness may well be compatible with physical frailty. That is, the etheric forces that the body does not need any more for its own growth and development are now available for increasing wisdom in old age. Also, the well-documented near-death experiences⁴³ show that in the apparent moment of death an awakening occurs in the thought organism, which is convincingly described as an out-of-body experience. In the body the etheric forces appear as life energy, as transient lifetime. In thinking, however, they appear as thought force and carrier of the “eternal life”.

The following sketch may clarify this and at the same time bring the spiritual view of the human being in Anthroposophy into the picture. Besides the metamorphosis of the etheric forces from growth forces into thought forces, the sketch also shows two other force metamorphoses: The “astral” forces cause cell and organ differentiation in the body and metamorphose afterwards into the tension- and differentiation- rich feeling life. The laws, however, which cause the formation of a harmonious overall form in which one can experience oneself as a focused, self-conscious I, are called “I-organization” by Steiner. These are the forces of integration, of focus. Steiner does not use the word energy for the soul-spiritual

⁴³ z.B. Pim van Lommel: Endloses Bewusstsein, (Endless Consciousness) Patmos

forces but prefers the expression strength, correspondingly also for the strength of the personality, of the I.

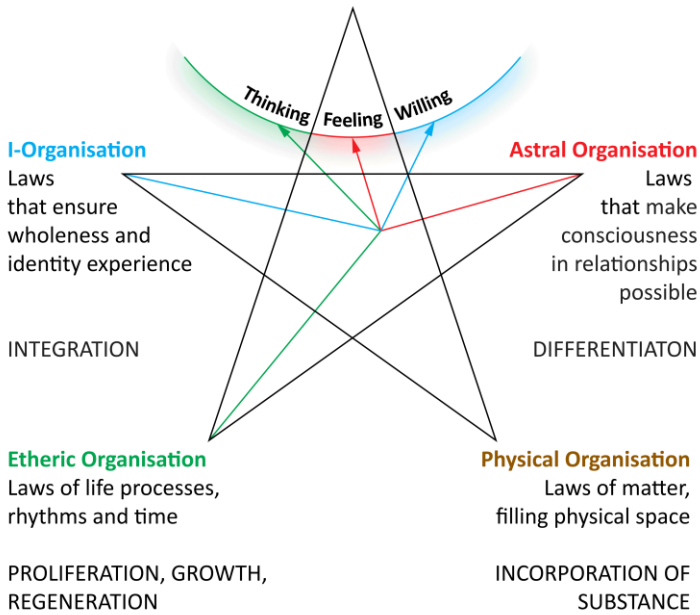


Fig. The spiritual image of the human being in anthroposophy with its four interrelationships of laws, which in their interaction make possible the bodily, soul and spiritual existence of man⁴⁴.

Such a psychosomatic approach makes it conceivable to see human life embedded in a concrete pre- and postexistence. After all, it is the same laws which connect with the fertilized ovum at conception and make the “embodiment”, the “incarnation”, i.e. the “incorporation” possible. These then become conscious individually as

⁴⁴ Michaela Glöckler: Education for the Future: How to nurture health and human potential? InterActions, Stroud, UK, p. 66

“life”, “soul” and “spirit” and then detach themselves in death again from the material field of activity for an out of time existence. What speaks for it is that human development progresses inexorably, every century gives a different face to the human communities and the earth because every human being can process the accomplished experiences after death in a purely spiritual world and can then enter with new impulses into a following earth life. Also, this approach offers the possibility to describe free will as an “out-of-body”, i.e. truly indeterminate-free activity. Since this is no longer subject to the biological natural law in the body, the human being must first learn to take responsibility for the now “free”(according to the disposition) soul and spirit forces. However, this also opens the door to the possibility of abuse of this freedom. Based on a similar view and experience, Goethe formulated in his verses in prose that the animal is instructed by its organs, the human being, on the other hand, is in a position to give instructions to his organs. Rudolf Steiner formulates this fact in his Philosophy of Freedom as follows: “Nature makes of man merely a natural being; society makes of him a lawful acting being; however, only he can make a *free* being of *himself*”.⁴⁵

The sources of strength mentioned in the previous subchapters can perhaps be better understood on the basis of this brief sketch of the human being. As human beings, we are on the one hand part of this creation and on the other hand the only place in the natural kingdoms known to us where the effective laws of this creation become detached from the context of nature and appear as pure laws that can only be experienced in soul and spirit.

The “Physiology of Freedom” is based on this, so to speak. We ourselves determine the way we deal with our out-of-body, “free” thinking, feeling and willing. But we are also

⁴⁵ Rudolf Steiner: Philosophy of Freedom.

responsible for it - and, as a result, live in the consequences of what we have thought, felt and done. These consequences then in turn also have an influence on the formation of our body in the following earth life. We become more and more the one who we want to become.

Friedrich Schiller, who was also a doctor, lets Wallenstein say in the drama of the same name: *It is the spirit that creates the body*. For the representatives of German idealism and early romanticism this was a self-evident assumption and also an inner quality of experience. Those who study anthroposophy more thoroughly and read for example Rudolf Steiner's lectures on "Evolution in the Light of Truth", can on such a basis also more easily imagine that there are higher beings who can communicate in a soulful and spiritual way with human beings, but who do not "incarnate" physically such as human beings, animals, and plants do.⁴⁶

"Zumutung Anthroposophie" (Anthroposophy a Demand) - this is the title of a book that is worth reading, written by the longtime editor at the Norddeutscher Rundfunk in the departments of science and contemporary history.⁴⁷ In the jacket text he writes: "The Steiner phenomenon remains amazingly easily assailable. Only those will consider it relevant who, at least in certain parts, gain the clear impression that great vistas have been achieved here that are bitterly lacking in our time; and who are willing to acknowledge that significant things do not

⁴⁶ Rudolf Steiner: Evolution in the Light of the Truth, GA 132
Rudolf Steiner: The Spiritual Beings in Celestial Bodies and in the Realms of Nature, GA 136
Rudolf Steiner: Spiritual Hierarchies and their Reflection in the physical World, GA 110

⁴⁷ Wolfgang Müller: Zumutung Anthroposophie. (Anthroposophy an imposition. Rudolf Steiner's importance for our present time) Rudolf Steiners Bedeutung für die Gegenwart, Frankfurt 2021

always enter the world in the way one would expect according to the usual categories.”

Steiner’s life task was to place a spiritual science at the side of natural scientific materialism. Whoever studies this spiritual science learns to view all material conditions in their emergence and decay in terms of spiritual causes and objectives – including health and illness⁴⁸. This new Western spiritual understanding of humans and the world, built on clear thinking, is suitable for creating a healing balance to the one-sidedness that has arisen as a result of the economization and mechanization of all areas of work.

However, mutual respect is needed for this. And so I would like to conclude this contribution with the hope that in the further course of “living with the virus” such respect can grow again and the destructiveness of enemy images is recognized. But it also needs the courage to stand up for a spiritual world view and cultural work just as clearly and self-confidently as the representatives of the optimization of man with the help of technology and the transhumanist visions do.

Conclusion: *Spirituality is not only a private matter or a matter of faith. It is today an urgent time requirement, in order to help to repair the damage which developed as a result of the one-sided technocratic progress of our culture. Since this brings with it immaterial developmental goals and values, it leads of itself to the renunciation of non-essentials, to a conscious consumerism, to tolerance and an understanding of humanity, while also working for a culture of peace.*

Translation: Astrid Schmidt-Stegmann

⁴⁸ Michaela Glöckler: Meditation in Anthroposophic Medicine, Berlin 2016

M. Glöckler (Hrsg.) | A. Neider (Hrsg.)
Chr. Bernhardt | Th. Hardtmuth | Chr. Hueck
H. Ramm | B. Ruf

Corona – Was uns die Pandemie lehren kann

Diagnosen, Erfahrungen und
Kraftquellen für die Zukunft



AKANTHOS AKADEMIE EDITION · ZEITFRAGEN