

# TRIUNE

## NEWSLETTER FOR SHAPING A NEW FORM OF UNIVERSITY

- ❖ The cultivation of a living, imaginative thinking as the fundamental aim in teaching and research – the inseparability of science and art.
- ❖ Goethean-style phenomenology as orientation in relation to all faculties; awakening the eye of the spirit.
- ❖ The university as the expression and practice of the threefold social life.

### EDITOR: Nigel Hoffmann

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## LIBERTY AND DEPENDENCE: REFLECTIONS ON HIGHER EDUCATION, ACCREDITATION, CERTIFICATION AND EXAMINATION

Nathaniel Williams

**W**hen considering the organisation of a new kind of university the inevitable question of accreditation and certification emerges. Seeking certification and accreditation can relate to receiving funds, forms of public legitimacy and access to practice in a regulated professional field. Sometimes the reasons for this relate to ethical considerations concerning public safety. The fields of engineering, medicine and, in the United States,

law, stand out as examples. There needn't be an intention to undermine these ethical concerns when observing the tension they create with one of the central ideas of liberalism, even if this concern is largely forgotten in contemporary educational discussions and policy: the intrinsic dependence on the quality of educational activities on conditions that promote independence, individualism and inner initiative. Today these terms have become associated with free – market capitalism, the entrepreneur and special interests, but this is only proof that “liberal” political discourse has evolved in such a way that central concerns that characterized its genesis have been largely forgotten. This involves a narrow-minded association of liberty with economics instead of culture and education, and the notion that anyone who argues for independent, state free schools or universities is arguing for the establishment of



“Meeting in Jena”. From left: the poet Friedrich Schiller, Wilhelm and Alexander von Humboldt and Johann Wolfgang Goethe in 1794. Picture coloured later; based on a drawing by Ludwig Adrian Richter.

During the years 1794 and 1795 Wilhelm von Humboldt and his brother, the geographer Alexander, were in Jena working on a daily basis with Goethe on the dissection and observation of anatomical specimens. Wilhelm von Humboldt went on to apply Goethe’s approach to anthropology and later to history. The German scholar Chad Wellmon writes about “the efforts of [Wilhelm von] Humboldt’s lab partner in Jena, Goethe, to imagine a new scientific method and, more precisely, a new form of observation that might adequately account for the dynamism of nature.” (C. Wellmon, *Becoming Human*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010, p.237).

Wilhelm von Humboldt was later given the task of developing the founding principles of the Berlin University and was its director of education from 1809 to 1810. This university is widely held to be the first modern university and universities all over the world today still look to the “Humboldtian university” as a model and reference point for academic freedom.

exclusion. The exclusive nature of many independent educational initiatives is not necessarily connected with elitism or exclusion based on financial standing or class. Noam Chomsky, one of the most outspoken critics of such anti-egalitarian tendencies, has argued exactly this.<sup>1</sup>

Accreditation and certification for institutions are framed as necessary to guarantee quality and to produce equivalences. The central problem that was faced by the classical liberal thinkers in regards to education was: If the quality of education and culture require spontaneity, motivations and methodologies that result from intrinsically and individually informed insight, what is the role of a central authority? (This has traditionally been associated with the state and not non-governmental organisations that regulate certification in a profession, such as the bar association in the USA).

Wilhelm von Humboldt’s *Limits of State Action* is concerned with exactly this dimension of civil society, not with free markets. It is interesting that while Humboldt explicitly presses the importance of a separation of school and state in this book, it was published posthumously, and that his own latter life involved building up a public university in Berlin, Germany. As is well known, Humboldt’s work was a major inspiration for John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty*. The vision these authors evoke is that cultural and educational quality is dependent on high degrees of innovation and forms of self-accreditation. This is not only an argument for pluralism in approaches, but for the conditions best suited to bring embers to flame. State regulation of education can dampen the tinder of the spirit by flooding educational centres and schools not only with recommended, but required, pathways

<sup>1</sup> Noam Chomsky (2013) *On Anarchism* (The New Press).

of learning and set curricula. The central concern need not be censorship, but rather vitality and pertinence.<sup>2</sup>

If we return to the field of legal education in the USA we find a few states that do not require the completion of law school for individuals to pass the exam that allows them entry into the professional field. Many students see a wonderful opportunity in this, given the price of, and limited positions in, law schools. The simplest justification of the liberalism of these few states is that it focuses on actual capacities instead of institutional ceremony. The deeper question involves comparing the anti-individualistic "training" in law schools with the individual style of learning an aspiring lawyer can pursue in preparing for the exam.<sup>3</sup> The classical liberal argument that the independence to pursue individualised pathways, goals and associations relates to the intangible dynamics of ethical power, innovation, scope and dynamism of culture was conceived not only as important on an individual level, but also for societies overall organisation of education.

It is not only pertinent when considering the path a learner might take to develop their

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<sup>2</sup> Thomas Jefferson's legislation that led to the separation of church and state was also not concerned primarily with censorship or hegemony through a state church, but impotence and corruption.

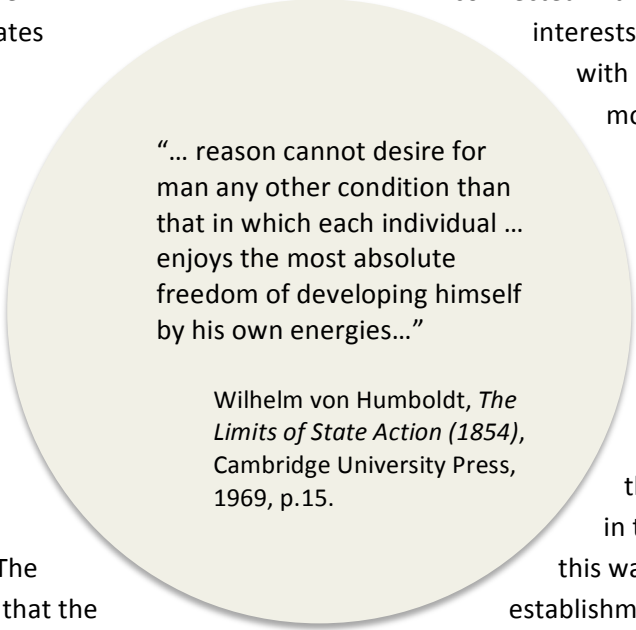
<sup>3</sup> See "Law School: Caught in the *Paradigmatic Squeeze*" by John Bonsignore.

capacities and understanding but also the way these capacities might best be demonstrated, or find acknowledgement, in any given field. One of the critiques of the requirement by most states that lawyers must attend law school to pass the bar exam is that it makes law schools into gatekeepers with all the financial and cultural implications this brings with it. It is not only in a highly professionalised, and in many ways anachronistic, field such as legal practice that, that questionable requirements are instituted connected with massive financial

interests. Economic organisations with narrow (if not only profit) motives are exercising a massive, global influence on exactly this dimension of education.

When Rudolf Steiner emerged as the leader of a widespread movement for the establishment of the Threefold Social Order in the aftermath of the war this was his central concern. The establishment of the Waldorf school

in Stuttgart was to be an example (which indeed it has become for educators all over the world this past century) of a teaching style inspired by the developmental possibilities of the human being, not the needs to the state or the economy. His innovation in this area was comprehensive insofar as it also included a vision for how independent schools could be funded for a widespread, democratic education, without relying on tax schemes that inevitably lead to undue influence from the state. This latter project of his was not successful, however. He once commented to a young person that until new cooperative associations in economics were established as well as independent schools it was impossible to work honestly as a teacher. There was a social lie at work, namely that education was to be paid for like a commodity.



"... reason cannot desire for man any other condition than that in which each individual ... enjoys the most absolute freedom of developing himself by his own energies..."

Wilhelm von Humboldt, *The Limits of State Action (1854)*, Cambridge University Press, 1969, p.15.

The eradication of this lie was dependent on the realization and practice of associative economics.

More recently, in a public debate, initiated by Dr. Heinz-Dieter Meyer's open letter addressing Andreas Schleicher and the Pisa league tables, a stark picture of new forms of transnational, corporate influence on the process of learning came into view.<sup>4</sup> Some of Meyer's research has focused particularly on the anarchic cultural lineage of liberalism formulated by Humboldt, where he has shown the idea of a separation from state and higher education, not only the separation of church and state, was one reason that no national university system was established in the USA.<sup>5</sup> This helped create the conditions for educational innovations in the USA that include colleges such as Black Mountain, Deep Springs, Oberlin or St. John's.<sup>6</sup>

One obvious argument for public education, funded and therefore regulated by the state, is driven by a dedication to widespread, democratic forms of accessibility and equity in education. This is a challenge that cannot be evaded, but neither must it be evaded. It is one dimension of the poverty in the current discourse around higher education that it seems impossible to discover ways to finance widely accessible, democratically oriented education in society that is also independent and individualized. The strong association of

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<sup>4</sup> H.D. Meyer (2014) OECD and Pisa tests are damaging education worldwide - academics. *The Guardian*, 6 May. Available at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/may/06/oecd-pisa-tests-damaging-education-academics>

<sup>5</sup> H.D. Meyer (2015) *The Design of the University: American, German and Global Perspectives*. (Routledge).

<sup>6</sup> One place to learn about other examples is through Jacob Hundt's podcast on micro-colleges: <https://thoreaucollege.org/microcollege-podcast/>

liberalism with free-market economics, already mentioned, is one major obstacle in this regard. It relates to a superstition that increased forms of mutual aid and voluntary, cooperative efforts in the economy and investment are counter to human nature, while ignoring the research of recent decades in numerous fields.<sup>7</sup>

The more education is envisioned and structured like a licensing process that is justified by the access to privileges it offers, or the benefit it is supposed to provide the state, the more it loses the intrinsic meaning that can only emerge spontaneously out of genuine, individual interest. Understanding this spontaneous, intrinsic interest, that depends on idiosyncrasy and unmanageable dimensions of subjectivity, is perhaps the essential element of the miraculous process we call education (especially for those whose headstrong ways ultimately lead to creations that fructify society at large), will certainly be important for any improvements in the university of the future, or to the creation of an altogether new form of university. ≈

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<sup>7</sup> Y. Benkler (2011) *The Penguin and the Leviathan: How Cooperation Triumphs over Self-Interest*. (Crown).

## VISION FOR A FREE UNIVERSITY

Pieter Lottering and Nigel Hoffmann

**F**reedom is usually thought of as freedom *from* something – but freedom is also freedom *for*. The two belong together. We can't understand Steiner's insistence that tertiary education must be free from the state unless we value what a truly free education is *for*, what it can give birth to in the lives of young people.

What is said here relates to the Australian situation; different hindrances and different potentials will apply in other countries but there will be similarities. What is the same everywhere is the need for an anthroposophically-inspired university education to be free (not in the sense of gratis), so that it can help bring out the greatest in the young people of today and the future.

Universities pride themselves on their independence; academic freedom is their central ideal. What follows is part of the Magna Charta Universitatum, first signed in 1201 by 430 rectors of European universities and since by some 600 universities from all continents:

[T]he academic mission to meet the requirements and needs of the modern world and contemporary societies can be best performed when universities are morally and intellectually independent of all political or religious authority and economic power".<sup>8</sup>

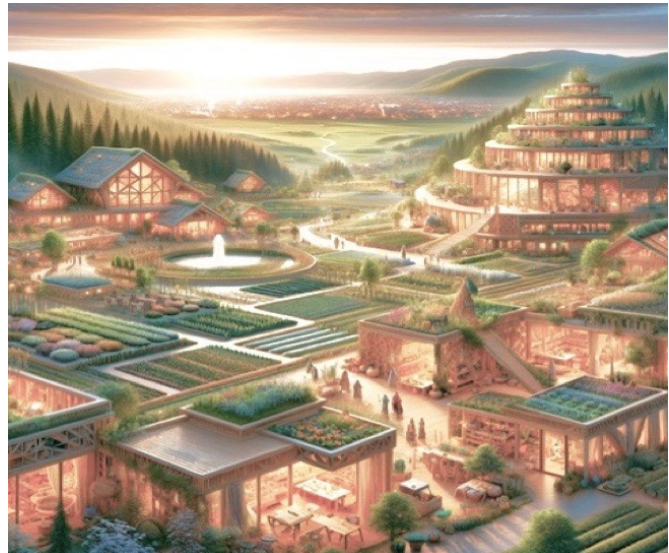
It would be difficult to find a more concise statement about the need to separate the three spheres of the social organism as Steiner conceived it. A university, as a central organ of the cultural-spiritual life, must not be impinged

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<sup>8</sup> See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magna\\_Charta\\_Universitatum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magna_Charta_Universitatum)

upon by either the state (the political-rights sphere) or the economic sphere.

However, in Australia, the federal government has claimed for itself the right to decide what is and what is not a university. Accredited universities can decide what and how they teach although they remain dependent on the government for research funding. If an educational institution is not a university then all its courses are regulated and controlled by the bureaucratic accreditation process. There is no way a humble "institute" or "college" of adult education can be truly free in Australia if it wants to offer accredited courses.



The word "university" stands for a great deal in our cultural life. So much takes place in a university – in research and teaching – which relates to every dimension of life. These days a large percentage of school-leavers pass through university on their way to employment. A university should be both a melting pot of ideas and creative venturing and a source of social and spiritual transformation. It should serve as a radiant beacon of truth, beauty and goodness within the social whole.

In Australia the government exerts control of the use of the word "university" in a few different

ways. If an educational institution is any kind of corporation, company, legal association – that is, if it is what is called a “regulated entity” – it must comply with the regulations.<sup>9</sup> It also controls whether an individual or organisation can use the word “university” or “uni” as part of an Internet domain name.<sup>10</sup> Notwithstanding, we submit that this important word “university” actually belongs to humanity’s freedom-being.

A few years ago a few of us carried out a feasibility study for a free university in Australia, inspired mainly by anthroposophical insights; the first stage we named the Indus Project.<sup>11</sup> It is founded upon Steiner’s vision of the threefold social order and, in relation to freedom, goes far beyond what is stated in the Magna Charta.

The vision of the Indus Project is to be separate from the state in terms of regulation of teaching content and methods and of finances. Does it plan to do this by means of some clever scheme to bypass governmental requirements? Not at all. The teaching and researching aspect of a university, which we have called “the faculty”, isn’t (or shouldn’t be) any kind of corporation or legal association. The teachers are not employees and it is not a money-making organisation because they are cultural-spiritual workers. What binds the teachers and researchers is an agreement they make with each other which is legally binding.

The faculty is not a corporation for reasons strictly to do with the threefold social outlook. A teacher does not offer a service or a good – in a lecture or seminar there is no economic

*exchange*. Indeed, a lecturer or tutor may gain as much as the students in the process.<sup>12</sup>

Money will of course be involved in the Indus vision because teachers need to buy what they need to live, in order to be free to teach. Facilities need to be built and maintained. But no money will come from the government. Financial contribution from students will be of the nature of a *contracted contribution*; it is not a fee.<sup>13</sup> Rather, it is gift money, with an expectation that a course will be run which the student has the right to attend. Other gift capital will come from free donations, from businesses or individuals.

Part the Indus vision is for a dedicated economic sphere which will also provide gift money. This would take the form of a biodynamic farm and associated businesses (for example, a bakery). All gift capital is free because it is only the faculty or legal-rights workers who decide on the use of this capital.

*The campus is not the university* – this is a key point. After all, the word “campus” means “a field” in Latin. This field, in the Indus vision, is extremely fertile and bountiful; it is a biodynamic farm which can flourish independently and self-sufficiently. The campus can accommodate the university through a legal agreement; it can be the situation where educational buildings can be erected and teaching can take place. However, the university is *only* the spiritual-cultural working together of teachers, researchers and students. It is a spiritual union of striving human individuals. Because the campus is a self-sufficient farm it means the university can grow in its own way and time – starting small and taking perhaps a

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<sup>9</sup> See:

<https://www.teqsa.gov.au/provider-registration/new-providers/before-applying-registration-higher-education-provider>

<sup>10</sup> See:

<https://www.education.gov.au/quality-and-legislative-frameworks/guidelines-use-word-university>

<sup>11</sup> To view the Indus Project Feasibility Study, go to:  
<https://www.educationforsocialrenewalfoundation.com/>

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<sup>12</sup> See Michael Spence, *After Capitalism*, Adonis Press, 2014, p.89.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, p.128.

decade, perhaps even a hundred years, to reach its full potential.

This leads to a second key point in the Indus vision of a free university. The university seeks to be authentic, to be true to itself, and not create itself merely in conformity with the usual social expectations of higher education. We *could* ask: will young people want to attend a university which offers no accredited degree? Rather, in the spirit of freedom, we ask: how can this university be brought in being so that it becomes a uniquely attractive situation, a lodestar for the spiritual yearning of the young people of today and tomorrow?

All of this, so far, has a lot to do with freedom *from*. But what about freedom *for* in the Indus vision? This relates to the experience of the students in lectures and seminars and, when the vision is fulfilled, in the architecture and general inspiring surroundings. Students won't be compelled by course-work which is tested by examinations, with degrees offered at the end. Everything will depend on students' free initiative, on the love for what they are doing or could do.

Lectures won't be intended to merely impart information; they will offer only great, inspiring vantage points on a subject. Students can research the course work, in their own way on the Internet or in relevant books. Seminars will

mainly involve self-directed project work on the basis of Goethean-style phenomenology, with public presentations at the end of the year. The project and the presentation are both the test and the fruit of the course-work. Presentations can be attended by employers or staff from other tertiary institutions, if wished by the student. Every opportunity will be given for the students to realise themselves as free, responsible, creative human beings who have attained to some degree of spirit vision.

This gets to the heart of why this new form of university will not, and could not, proceed according to the old "vessel waiting to be filled" approach to tertiary teaching and learning. It has to do with freedom *for*. The aim of a course of study in the Indus vision is not to present a set of concepts, theories, facts, for the student to assimilate and be examined on. Here we can refer to an indication of Steiner given in one of the "university courses" in the last years of his life:

"It is said that freedom of teaching and learning prevail at universities. People get carried away by the idea that when they move from secondary school to university, they enter the realm of freedom of teaching and learning. What, for example, does freedom of learning consist of? Well, it consists of buying the university program and finding in it: If you want to become an engineer, or if you want to become this or that ... then you need this timetable, which you have to follow, otherwise you cannot pass the exam. That is to say: on the one hand, the phrase 'freedom of learning' is elevated to a cultural element, but on the other hand, the most terrible learning compulsion is made reality."

Rudolf Steiner, excerpt from a lecture given in February, 1919, to the Federal Council for the Threefold Order of the Social Organism, GA 332b.

...*reading* is the goal of looking at phenomena. In other words, what I see as the essence of natural laws is already in the phenomena, in the same way that the meaning I discover when I read a word is already in the letters. If I remain within the phenomena, lovingly, and I do not attempt to impose some kind of hypothetical thought system on reality, then my sense of science will be free to develop new concepts. This ability to

remain free is what we need to establish.<sup>14</sup>

The students are learning to be free *for* the phenomena of the world so that the phenomena can be free to speak of who or what they are in truth. This is heart-knowing, knowing as caring, a Goethean-style phenomenology.

This is also the reason why we won't be splitting the students' studies into "vocational" and "non-vocational" (the latter meaning a general studies or liberal arts curriculum which might involve the study of great classical works of literature and philosophy). In conventional universities the first is intended to guide students into the practicalities of social life (professions), the second into themselves as individuals in order to find their way to authenticity in conformity with inspiring thoughts and ideals coming from tradition. The Indus vision builds on the dictum of Goethe: "To know the world is to know the self". When we learn to know the world through a heart-thinking, we begin to live in the realm of creative freedom. The students learn, for example, to study the organs of a plant, or specific social phenomena, or architectural forms, or the symptoms of an illness, in such a way that they actually *experience* the freedom-nature of things and themselves. This is what we mean by "a degree of spirit vision".

In the last years of his life Steiner offered the world many indications towards a truly free form of university education. Now, hopefully, such indications can bear fruit. ≈

Pieter Lottering is a life-long student of Rudolf Steiner, and co-author of the Indus Project Feasibility study. His passion is to create organisational forms and systems that maximises human freedom and creates places that encourages full authentic

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<sup>14</sup> R. Steiner, *Reimagining Academic Studies*, SteinerBooks, 2015, p.12.

participation from people engaged in organisational team-work. Nigel Hoffmann is editor of TRIUNE newsletter, and author of *The University at the Threshold: Orientation through Goethean Science*, Rudolf Steiner Press, 2020.



## FREEDOM IN HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH SPIRITUAL SCIENCE

Rudolf Steiner

Over the last three to four centuries we have become accustomed to the suggestion that the unitary state must do everything. One could say that the unified state has gradually occupied the university system as well. The university system was annexed and occupied.

Just consider that this university system has developed out of intellectual life itself. Consider that, in a time not so long behind us, the validity of the university system was based entirely on the individual fertility of the individual universities. Consider how people spoke of the law faculty in Bologna, how they spoke of the medical school in Salerno, how they spoke of other important schools; how they derived the reputation of the university system in the world from the special individual achievements of what was available in the individual universities.

And it is basically only a more recent occupation or annexation, carried out by the states that were increasingly seizing power, that our higher education system finally ended up serving the external needs of the individual states. Today, in particular, anyone who feels connected to the pursuit of knowledge and the spirit and to the cultural aspirations of humanity should have



some kind of historical memory of times when it was up to the universities to decide what they wanted to give the state and what they wanted to make of the state.



The liberation of intellectual life, the independence of the intellectual organism, cannot be achieved through tirades or rhetoric. That which has been absorbed by the state must be pulled out again. But this can only happen if there is a real intellectual force. And just as in the age of materialism science was powerless in the face of the state's desires for absorption, so would a material science remain powerless in the face of the state's desires for absorption, transforming science into barbarism.

To lift the spirit of science and knowledge out of politics, out of all that it is involved in today to its detriment, can only have a positive effect. Just as material science has fallen prey to unscientific powers, so too will spiritual science, through its own essence, through its own power, be able to pull this science out of the unspiritual powers again. And only it will be able to establish the free spiritual life, the spiritual part of the social organism that is independent. ≈

Excerpt from a lecture given by Rudolf Steiner, 1<sup>st</sup> October 1920, GA 217a.



## **FREEDOM AND THE TASK OF KNOWING FOR TODAY'S UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

Rudolf Steiner

**C**onsider how little university students in our present civilisation are inwardly connected to the field of knowledge they

are striving to master. It cannot be otherwise today, for academic subjects are brought to students as something more or less external to them. They encounter a system that is not at all adapted to express or even to speak of what are often extraordinarily significant aspects of empirical knowledge.

Staggering truths, really staggering truths, are inherent today in every field of knowledge, every science or academic subject. And these are truths that, if young people were to encounter or experience them, would give them a kind of microscope or telescope of the soul. If young people were able to approach these truths through their faculties of soul, they would be able to unlock mighty secrets of existence.

The investigations that would lead to enormous discoveries if they were properly cultivated, are precisely the ones that would delight the hearts and souls of young people. It would enrich students enormously if they were to find within their academic studies the acknowledgement of the depths of human nature and the individual personality. We have to point out again and again that students living within a system of indifference recognise that the subjects they study are also presented with indifference.

As a result, the relationship of students to the many-faceted examples of unlocking truths or discovering new knowledge in empirical science remains at a superficial level. I would even say that some, or even the majority, of our university students go through their entire course of study without an inner experience of the academic disciplines they study. They allow the subject matter to wash over them; and then, having reviewed sufficiently beforehand, pass the required exams and find a position with which they can make a living.

It sounds almost paradoxical to say that the hearts of university students should be

addressed in everything that is brought to them. It sounds like a paradox, but it actually could be so! For young people who have a subjective capacity and inclination may respond to a subject out of the depths of their own heart, even though they may encounter something in the driest book or driest lecture and cannot understand the intent of the author or lecturer.



Anyone who looks around at what exists in the sciences today encounters great cosmic questions embedded within the narrow descriptions of phenomena. And these detailed formulations that arise out of the truths of natural science press into the soul the impulse to articulate the riddle that has to be solved. Human beings long to solve these riddles; otherwise we feel an inner paralysis and oppressive constraint.

If only this anguish, this paralysis, could be transformed into a beneficial fruit of our study of the natural sciences! For out of the anguish that grips the entire human being, there could arise not only the longing for the spiritual world, but also the capacity to see into the spiritual world. And so when the human being has to absorb knowledge in a way that cannot satisfy one's inner being, this experience ignites a powerful impetus within the soul and heart to overcome what is inwardly so unsatisfying.

That is what one finds so terrible, so shattering in the pursuit of knowledge today; no effort whatsoever is made to understand that the current situation can work upon the entire human being in such a way that young people are prevented from reaching up to what is worthiest in humanity. Only young people acting out of their own deep longing are able to free themselves from the hindrances that have been laid in their way.

And when we turn from the natural sciences to the humanities, we discover that during this era when the natural sciences have ascended in their influence, the humanities also have been affected by the methods used in the natural sciences. If students could be guided to the humanities in a way that restores a fully human perspective to the humanities, they would experience something that I would like to call an inward soul shortness of breath. For it all of the abstract ideas, the results of documented research, and everything else that can be found typically in the study of humanities today, were brought with human sympathy to young people, it would produce a kind of soul shortness of breath in the individual. This gasping for breath would awaken the impulse, the necessity, to reach higher into fresh air, and thus enter the realm of spiritual observation that supports an anthroposophic world perspective.~

Excerpt from a lecture given by Rudolf Steiner on Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>, 1923, GA 220. Printed in *Awake! For the Sake of the Future*, SteinerBooks, 2015.



## LINKS AND INITIATIVES

This space is reserved for news, relevant links and outlines of initiatives.

Please send any information to be included here.

### AUSTRALIA

#### INDUS UNIVERSITY PROJECT

The Indus Project is a pioneering tertiary educational initiative feasibility-researched for Western Australia. The educational dimension of the campus (the "faculty") is not any kind of corporation or legal association which pays salaries. Tuition is paid for through gift capital.

Go to:

<https://www.educationforsocialrenewalfoundation.com/>

## **MISSION STATEMENT OF THE NEWLETTER**

To help develop an international community of people together striving to shape a new kind of university. To share insights and information which will help to develop the content, methods and organisational principles of this kind of university

### **BACKGROUND – ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY**

The university, since its inception in the medieval people, has become a central organ of the cultural and spiritual life of society. It has been called a “little city”, a melting pot for new ways of thinking and for shaping the world creatively.

All knowledge in the medieval university was unified by faith in a transcendent God. During the time of Renaissance humanism, and later in the early-modern Kantian and Humboldtian universities, the human rational faculty became seen as the unifying power. The university came to be thought of as a centre for universal knowledge. The modern university can better be called a “multi-versity”; faith in God or the rational striving toward the universality of knowledge is not its central concern. It is essentially materialistic in outlook, serving mainly practical ends through its teaching and research.

### **SHAPING A NEW FORM OF UNIVERSITY**

This means stepping toward a future in which the university is completely free of the state – financially, in terms of course content, and in relation to the awarding of degrees. This freedom is the responsibility and duty of this central organ of the cultural-spiritual sphere of the threefold social organism; it is already recognised in academic freedom. Ways this freedom can be further achieved can be discussed and advanced through this newsletter.

Following the indications of Rudolf Steiner, the aim of lower and higher schooling is not to educate but to awaken – to help awaken the modern human being to the spirit, the spirit working in the human being itself. What can be achieved at the tertiary level will fructify the whole field of education into the future.

Thus we can state boldly: the aim of the new university is to help open the “eye of the spirit” to the working of creative spirit in all forms of nature and the human world. In every faculty, in every aspect of teaching and researching, the task will be to advance human life towards an understanding of the world as a manifestation of spirit.

For this reason the orientation of the new university is fundamentally phenomenological. This is the method which is taught, guided and inspired by what others have perceived in this way. Modern individuals need to learn to see for themselves.

Seeing is grounded in physical perception, in what appears to us in the world (phenomenon literally means – “what appears”). But physical appearance hides what is invisible and essential. When teaching and researching focuses one-sidedly on the physical we have everything technical, the approach which considers what is “real” as only observable, empirical phenomena. Academic thinking then becomes highly materialistic and objective. However, when teaching and learning reaches through what appears to us physically, it rises to the artistic through a

“knowing of the heart”. In the works of the later Heidegger and the later Merleau-Ponty we have the vision of the invisible within the visible. We find that “more appears than appears to appear”.\* The appearance hides the innate idea (*eidōs*) which may nevertheless come to presence through the pathway of phenomenology; this innate idea Plato equated with *to ekphanestaton* (“what properly shows itself as the most radiant of all is the beautiful”).

The new university is focused on a highly practical, applied phenomenology, on all the phenomena which come within the scope of the different faculties. Different minerals and soil forms; plants and animals; the forms and structures of the human body and human consciousness; the different stages in the growth of children, their different soul gestures and temperaments; all the disease and health appearances; social forms and social processes – and so on. For this advanced practical phenomenology, we look mainly to the indications of German philosopher and artist Rudolf Steiner, who in turn drew greatly on the artistic phenomenological natural science of the poet Johann von Goethe.

Editor

\* R. Bernasconi, “The Good and the Beautiful” in *Phenomenology in Practice and Theory*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Dordrecht, 1985, pp.179-184.