

Wilfrid Laurier University

Scholars Commons @ Laurier

Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive)

2009

Illusion of Coexistence: The Waldorf Schools in the Third Reich, 1933–1941

Karen Priestman

Wilfrid Laurier University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholars.wlu.ca/etd>



Part of the [European History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Priestman, Karen, "Illusion of Coexistence: The Waldorf Schools in the Third Reich, 1933–1941" (2009).
Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive). 1080.

<https://scholars.wlu.ca/etd/1080>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive) by an authorized administrator of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact scholarscommons@wlu.ca.

NOTE TO USERS

This reproduction is the best copy available.

UMI[®]



Library and Archives
Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file *Votre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-54260-6
Our file *Notre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-54260-6

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.


Canada

**ILLUSION OF COEXISTENCE:
THE WALDORF SCHOOLS IN THE THIRD REICH, 1933-1941**

by

**Karen Priestman
Bachelor of Arts, Wilfrid Laurier University, 2001
Master of Arts, Wilfrid Laurier University, 2003**

DISSERTATION

**Submitted to the Faculty of Arts
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for**

Doctor of Philosophy

Wilfrid Laurier University

2009

© Karen Priestman

ABSTRACT

From 1933 to 1941, the eight existing Waldorf schools in Germany were forced to close. As an alternative system of education, they were considered a threat to National Socialism. Yet, they were not systematically nor uniformly brought into line with the Nazi state through the process of *Gleichschaltung*. Very few studies address the history of the Waldorf schools under National Socialism, and those that do are invariably written by members of the Waldorf school community. By examining correspondence between the Waldorf school administrators and Nazi officials, this study helps to fill the void. This investigation reveals that the personalities of both the local Nazi officials and the leadership of particular Waldorf schools played a large role in determining the fate of each school. The ambitions and attitudes of Nazi officials in each state determined the amount of pressure each school felt. In turn, each school was free to determine for itself how best to respond to this pressure. As a group, the schools were motivated by a desire to preserve the pedagogical philosophy Rudolf Steiner, the founder of the Waldorf schools. As such, they were initially eager to cooperate with the demands made of them by the Nazi administration and prove that they were not a threat to National Socialism. As Nazi demands encroached on the schools' freedom to practice Rudolf Steiner pedagogy, however, the schools' cooperation decreased. As each school reached its limits of compromise, they chose to close their doors rather than compromise Steiner's pedagogy. By investigating the eight German Waldorf schools, this study reveals that *Gleichschaltung* was not always an efficient and successful process and that local authorities heavily impacted the course of Nazi education policy. Moreover, it reveals that individuals did have some room to make choices in Nazi Germany; choices that did not always conform to Nazi wishes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This long journey has finally come to an end because of the many people who supported me. My greatest debt of gratitude is owed to my advisor, Erich Haberer. It is impossible to adequately describe the ways in which he has helped bring me to this point. Beyond his patience, understanding, and support, what I am most grateful for is his genuine interest in my research. His sustained enthusiasm for my topic helped fuel my own interest, particularly in those times when it inevitably waned. This was more valuable to me than anything else.

I have also benefitted from the unwavering daily support of Jeff Nilsson. He had the dubious distinction of seeing me through this process on a daily basis, from my highest highs to my lowest lows. There were many times when I doubted I would ever reach the end of this project. At those times, only Jeff's absolute faith in me sustained me. Without him, I cannot say I would have succeeded.

My years at Wilfrid Laurier University have indebted me to many people, including Terry Copp, George Urbaniak, and Eva Plach. I would also like to thank David Monod for turning my attention to Waldorf schools in the first place. The Tri-University program afforded me the benefit of having Lynne Taylor of the University of Waterloo as one of my Major Field instructors. She provided me with a much-needed wake-up call for which I will always be grateful. My time at Laurier has also brought me into contact with many people who have been crucial to my success, including Andrew Iarocci, Jim Wood, and especially Stephen Connor. He has been a mentor, informal advisor, and most importantly, a friend.

My research in Germany was aided by numerous archivists whose enthusiasm for their work was expressed through their helpfulness and knowledge. My greatest stroke of luck was to

be introduced to the archival system by Volker Riess. His day-long tutorial in the *Staatsarchiv* Ludwigsburg ensured my continued success throughout the rest of my research trip. In addition, I was assisted by Wenzel Götte, Uwe Werner, and Peter Augustin.

Finally, I want to thank my family, not just for supporting me in this endeavour, but for supporting me in all my endeavours. As much as they have always cheered me on and encouraged me to strive towards success, I have always known their support would be no less if I failed. The security of knowing this prevented me from doing so. My parents' constant pursuit of their dreams, their tenacious refusal to be beaten, and their stubborn, sometimes incomprehensible, optimism inspires me every day.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------------|--|
| AHS: | Adolf Hitler School |
| BAL: | <i>Bundesarchiv Lichterfelde</i> |
| BFWS: | <i>Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen</i> |
| BFWSA: | <i>Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen Archiv</i> |
| IfZ: | <i>Institut für Zeitgeschichte</i> |
| <i>Napola:</i> | National Political School |
| NSDAP: | <i>Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei.</i> |
| NSLB: | <i>Nationalsozialistische Lehrerbund.</i> |
| PLANS: | People for Legal and Non-Sectarian Schools. |
| WSV: | <i>Waldorfschulverein</i> |

GLOSSARY

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| <i>Abitur</i> | school-leaving exam administered by the state |
| <i>Abteilung</i> | Department |
| <i>Amt</i> | Office |
| <i>Bezirk</i> | District - smaller in size than a <i>Kreis</i> . |
| <i>Ernährungsamt</i> | Office for Nourishment or Health |
| Eurythmy | a form of expressive movement developed by Rudolf Steiner |
| <i>Führerprinzip</i> | leadership principle |
| <i>Gau</i> | region - territorial division of the NSDAP |
| <i>Gauleiter</i> | regional leader of a <i>Gau</i> (NSDAP) |
| <i>Geländesport</i> | open country sport practiced by the Hitler Youth |
| <i>Gleichschaltung</i> | 'coordination' - the Nazi policy of bringing all social, political, and labour organizations under party control |
| <i>Kreis</i> | District - subdivision of a <i>Gau</i> , part of the territorial organization of the NSDAP |
| <i>Kreisleiter</i> | district leader of a <i>Kreis</i> (NSDAP) |
| <i>Kriegsbeschädigt</i> | referring to wounded war veterans of the First World War |
| <i>Land</i> | state in the German Reich |
| <i>Landjahr</i> | a program started by Reich Education Minister Bernhard Rust which required students to spend nine months living in a camp in the country. It was meant to teach German youth techniques of farming as well as develop their physical strength and an appreciation for the land |
| <i>Lehrerkollegium</i> | teachers' council. The method of self-government practiced in Waldorf schools |
| <i>Ministerdirektor</i> | head of a department in a Ministry |

| | |
|---|--|
| <i>Ministerdirigent</i> | head of a section in a Ministry |
| <i>Ministerialrat</i> | advisor to a ministerial official |
| <i>Minister Präsident</i> | the head of the civil government of a Land |
| <i>Prüfungskommissar</i> | Examination Commissioner |
| <i>Oberpräsident</i> | head of the civil government in a Prussian province |
| <i>Odenwaldschule</i> | the German school founded and headed by Paul Geheeb, in the tradition of Progressive Education |
| <i>Ordensburgen</i> | the elite schools which served as Nazi colleges |
| <i>Ortsgruppe</i> | local branch - subdivision of a <i>Kreis</i> , part of the territorial organization of the NSDAP |
| <i>Ortsgruppenleiter</i> | local branch leader of an <i>Ortsgruppe</i> (NSDAP) |
| <i>Rassenkunde</i> | 'Racial Theory' - a new subject introduced into German schools by Reich Education Minister Rust to teach students the basics of Nazi racial theory |
| <i>Referat</i> | advisor or desk within a department |
| <i>Regierungsrat</i> | advisor to officials in the government |
| <i>Regierungsdirektor</i> | subordinate to the <i>Regierungspräsident</i> |
| <i>Regierungspräsident</i> | head of the district |
| <i>Reichsverband deutscher freier (privater) Unterrichts- und Erziehungsanstalten</i> | Reich Association for Free (Private) Instruction and Education Schools |
| <i>Reichsleiter</i> | the highest party rank |
| <i>Reichstatthalter</i> | (Reich Governor) - instituted by Hitler in 1933 to oversee Land governments |

Umschulung 'retraining' - the process that the Waldorf school students went through to prepare them for integration into state schools

Waldorfschulverein the institution responsible for the financial and legal administration of the Waldorf schools

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| ABSTRACT | ii |
| ACKNOWLEDGMENTS | iii |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS | v |
| GLOSSARY | vi |
| Chapter | |
| Introduction - The Waldorf Schools: Controversies and Historiography | 1 |
| 1. The Waldorf Schools: Anthroposophy and Steiner Pedagogy | 26 |
| 2. The Nazi State and Education | 51 |
| 3. Ideals in Conflict: Waldorf and Nazi Education | 70 |
| 4. Consolidation and Disintegration: The <i>Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen</i> | 89 |
| 5. A Strategy for Coexistence: Cooperation and Compatibility | 112 |
| 6. Nazi Officialdom and Waldorf Illusions | 142 |
| 7. The Beginning of the End: School Closures | 156 |
| 8. Disillusion: Closure of the Last Two Waldorf Schools | 182 |
| Conclusion - Accommodation and the Irreconcilability of <i>Waldorfism</i> and Nazism | 208 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 225 |
| LIST OF APPENDICES | 235 |

INTRODUCTION

THE WALDORF SCHOOLS: CONTROVERSIES AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

The Waldorf schools emerged in Germany in the 1920s as the educational outgrowth of Anthroposophy. Founded by Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) in 1913, the Anthroposophy movement gained in popularity in the early twentieth century. Based upon principles of humanity, spirituality, and the interconnectedness of all living things, Anthroposophy insisted that humans were spiritual beings capable of making their own morally correct decisions and that these decisions not only determined the course and quality of one's life, but of the world in general.

An increasingly important aspect of Steiner's philosophy was his pedagogical theory. He was able to put this theory into practice in 1919 when Emil Molt, the manager of the Waldorf-Astoria Cigarette Factory in Stuttgart, asked Steiner to establish a school for the workers' children. This became the first Waldorf school. The popularity of the schools grew throughout the 1920s and by 1933 there were eight schools with approximately 3200 students throughout Germany in Stuttgart, Hamburg-Wandsbek, Hannover, Berlin, Dresden, Kassel, Breslau, and Altona.¹ Though they were private schools that charged tuition, Steiner insisted they be open to all students, regardless of income. If the parents were unable to pay the full tuition, the remaining amount would be subsidized.² Instruction at Waldorf schools was based upon Steiner's belief in basic stages of child development in which certain colours and subjects could be harmful to a child's future development. The schools practiced coeducation, emphasized

¹ Uwe Werner, *Anthroposophen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933-1945* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999), Appendix 4, 374-375.

² Usually the difference was paid by the increased contributions of another parent of better means. This was always, of course, voluntary.

language, art and music over mathematics or reading, and taught a form of sound-based movement, Eurythmy, that was unique to the schools.

Despite their growing popularity during the years of Weimar Germany, the Waldorf schools did not enjoy universal acceptance. The advent of the National Socialist government in 1933 did not improve the situation for the schools and indeed brought about serious consequences for them. No stranger to suspicion and outside incursions, the schools now had to face “coordination” or *Gleichschaltung*. However, the Nazis dealt with the Waldorf schools in piecemeal, rather than uniform fashion. Although the Anthroposophy Society was prohibited in November 1935 and Reich Education Minister Bernhard Rust forbade all private schools from accepting new students in March 1936, the last Waldorf school was not closed until 1941.

This haphazard approach to *Gleichschaltung* was not typical of the process in general. By no means do historians of the Third Reich contend that *Gleichschaltung* was identically experienced by all sectors of society or by all geographical areas equally, but it does seem that, in general, *Gleichschaltung* was implemented in a coordinated and swift manner and was often accompanied by violence.³ This was the fate of the *Odenwaldschule*, a reform school in Oberhambach, Germany, which was quickly and violently taken over by the Nazis in the process of *Gleichschaltung*.⁴ Denis Shirley’s detailed examination reveals that the *Gleichschaltung* of the *Odenwaldschule* was accompanied by violence and intimidation - Gestapo searches, arrests,

³ The Churches in Germany seem to be the exception to this rule. See William Sheridan Allen’s *The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town, 1930-1935* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965), for a good description of *Gleichschaltung* and its permeation of all aspects of society.

⁴ Denis Shirley, *The Politics of Progressive Education: The Odenwaldschule in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992).

beatings - and was accomplished swiftly, even before other institutions were coordinated.

Moreover, faced with strong opposition from the school's founder and leader, Paul Geheeb, the Nazis removed him and replaced him with more conciliatory leaders.

This was not, however, the experience of the Waldorf schools. As part of the same broadly defined "reform pedagogy" movement as the *Odenwaldschule*, it might be assumed that the Waldorf schools would experience a similar, if not even more vehement "coordination."⁵ On the contrary, however, their *Gleichschaltung* lacked the violence, physical intimidation, denunciations and coordination endured by the *Odenwaldschule*. Thus, if the *Odenwaldschule* represents the "typical" experience of *Gleichschaltung*, then the Waldorf schools represent the exception to the rule. Shirley's study provides interesting insights into the experiences of those who were successfully "coordinated" by Nazi standards, whereas the Waldorf schools can offer insights into the experiences of those that were less timely and successfully "coordinated." In addition, Shirley's study of one school cannot offer insight into the role of the local authorities in the process of *Gleichschaltung* because it offers no opportunity for comparison with other like-minded schools in Germany. The Waldorf schools however, provide a useful case study. On the one hand, their nation-wide distribution allows for comparison and assessment of the role of local authorities in *Gleichschaltung*. Their small numbers, on the other hand, allow for an in-depth examination of the individual schools, their responses to Nazi incursions, and the role of

⁵ Shirley contends that Paul Geheeb "is generally recognized as one of the best German representatives and practitioners of 'new education'," which included American "progressive education" and the French "*education nouvelle*" in addition to the German "reform pedagogy." (Shirley, 7). In very general terms, this "new education" was concerned with emphasizing a "hands-on" approach to learning, both by the teachers and by the students. As well, it eschews rigid curriculum-based teaching in favour of experience-based teaching. This form of education also stresses practical life skills and promotes community-mindedness.

personality in the formation of policy and responses to that policy. Thus, a study of the Waldorf schools can combine the comparative aspect of the larger, nation-wide public schools with the more intimate detailed study of an individual school like the *Odenwaldschule*.

The very uniqueness of the Waldorf schools offers the historian both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of a study of the Waldorf schools are, first, that they are an easily identifiable group. This means that they were easy for the Nazis to identify and target and are directly referred to in the documents. Secondly, the Waldorf schools were private schools operating largely independently of the state. They trained their own teachers, developed their own curriculum, and administered their own schools. In addition, while some enjoyed city-administered subsidies, the schools largely financed themselves through tuition and donations which meant the removal of state funding did not impact the Waldorf schools directly nor as heavily as it might have other schools.⁶ This also means that the National Socialist state had one less implement of control over the Waldorf schools which perhaps allowed them more room for manoeuvre than public schools. Thirdly, the pedagogic and philosophical foundation of the schools reduced the influence of Nazi ideology and made them their own masters; they were a community which stressed individuality, independent thinking, and was no stranger to popular disapproval. One need not fear ostracism from the Waldorf school community for going against the grain. All of these unique circumstances fostered an atmosphere that was conducive to opposition against the Nazi regime and made the tasks of the Nazi administration more difficult. Not only did they have to capture the minds of students and parents who already enjoyed a strong

⁶ This was by no means the only way the Nazis could influence the Waldorf schools' actions, but it was an important one.

sense of community and a defined and contradictory world view, but the Nazi administration had to “coordinate” an institution that was largely independent and, therefore, not as vulnerable to Nazification through *Gleichschaltung*.

Finally, the schools kept their own archives, now housed in Stuttgart and called the *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen Archiv* (BFWSA). This archive offers a rich deposit of documents which allows the researcher to trace the paper trail of Nazi decrees, directives, and instructions, as well as correspondence between the school and with Nazi authorities. Moreover, the existence of internal Waldorf documents allows us access to the opinions expressed by the schools’ faculties and their response to various Nazi measures. While it is true that an internally-administered archive raises questions of reliability, these are quickly put to rest. The archive at Stuttgart is professionally maintained and organized, covering the school’s entire life span rather than just the Nazi period. There is no evidence to suggest that it has been culled to exclude documents that are unflattering to the Waldorf schools - many documents there cause the researcher to question the motivations of some of the faculty. Their authenticity is also corroborated by documents found in the files of Rudolf Hess and Alfred Rosenberg at the *Bundesarchiv* and Alfred Bäumler at the *Institut für Zeitgeschichte* (IfZ). The easy identification of the schools helped immensely when wading through the files in these two latter archives. The existence of the BFWSA increased the feasibility of this study and offers the researcher access not only to the Nazi point of view but, perhaps more importantly, to the point of view of Waldorf school teachers, administrators, and sometimes parents.

While the repository of documents in these archives, especially those housed at the BFWSA, allow for a detailed analysis of the relationship between the Waldorf schools and the

agencies of the Third Reich, they are sparse of information regarding the relationship between the schools and its Jewish teachers and students. Here the source material is not sufficient to provide much insight into the fate of Jewish students or the presence or absence of antisemitism at Waldorf schools. What we do know must be pieced together and cannot tell us much about the attitudes of students, Waldorf teachers, or the Waldorf school leadership toward Jews. Still, circumstantial evidence, as discussed in chapter four, indicates that contrary to claims made by the detractors of the schools, charges of their supposed collaboration with the regime and alleged shared sentiments of racism and antisemitism are insubstantial and generally highly questionable.

* * *

Charges of racism, antisemitism, and even Nazism against the Waldorf schools are not new, but have increased in vehemence and visibility over the last two decades. As Waldorf schools have increased in popularity worldwide, so too have their detractors. In a lawsuit filed against two Sacramento, California school districts, the People for Legal and Non-Sectarian Schools (PLANS), argue that Waldorf schools operating in these two districts are religious schools and therefore the fact that they are publicly funded violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.⁷ Filed in 1998, this lawsuit has experienced many successes and failures, including the latest appeal by the California school districts in January 2008 for dismissal of the lawsuit.⁸ Though the lawsuit is based on the belief

⁷ “Press Release: 11 February 1998,”
<<http://www.waldorfcritics.org/active/pressreleases/PR19980211.html>>.

⁸ “Californian School District Files for Dismissal of PLANS Legal Action,” (23 January 2008) <<http://www.nna-news.org/news/en/index.cgi>>.

that Waldorf schools are religious in nature, the real basis of PLANS' attacks upon the schools is the accusation that Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Anthroposophy and the Waldorf schools, was a racist who developed ideas which should be considered precursors to Nazism and the Holocaust, and that modern Waldorf schools worldwide still believe in and teach this "proto-Nazi racial theory."⁹

Though PLANS is not the first to make these accusations against Steiner or the Waldorf schools, the advent and growth of the internet in the last two decades has created an arena in which detractors and defenders alike can wage their war and has increased the frequency and intensity of the attacks.¹⁰ At the forefront of the controversy is Dan Dugan, General Secretary of

⁹ "Press Release: 4 December 2007,"
<<http://www.waldorfcritics.org/active/pressreleases/PR20071214.html>>.

¹⁰ The journal *Info3*, published in Germany, was created in 1986 - long before PLANS existed - specifically to address accusations similar to the ones made by PLANS, and to provide a more "accurate" history of Anthroposophy. Dan Dugan, the General Secretary of PLANS, has noted that the growth of the internet offered him a forum in which to express his opinions. *Info3* (Frankfurt: Info3-Verlag, 1986-2009). The website www.stelling.nl, includes a forum for those critical of Anthroposophy, and posts articles by staunch anti-Anthroposophists like Peter Staudenmaier. In one article Staudenmaier reasons that the fact that the Anthroposophy Society was not banned until 1935, "long after most other independent cultural institutions had been destroyed," can only be explained by their affiliation with Nazism. He also makes unfounded claims that Uwe Werner's book, *Anthroposophen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus, 1933-1945*, confirms most of his assumptions, and that the passages in Werner's book that contradict Staudenmaier's claims cannot be fairly assessed because Werner used "internal documents unavailable to other scholars." The "inaccessible documents" he refers to form the basis of the present study and were accessed without restrictions. Peter Staudenmeier, "Anthroposophy and Ecofascism" *Communalism* 13 (December 2007), 26 December 2008
<<http://www.communalism.org/Archive/13/ae.php>>. Peter Bierl's book, *Wurzelrassen, Erzengel und Volksgeister: Die Anthroposophie Rudolf Steiners und die Waldorfpädagogik* (Hamburg: Konkret-Lit Verlag, 1999), is also often cited by Steiner detractors because he argues that Anthroposophy is an irrational anti-humanistic theory and the Waldorf pedagogy that is based upon it can lay the foundations of authoritarian and fascist thought in its pupils. Helmut Zander's book, *Anthroposophie in Deutschland: Theosophische Weltanschauung und gesellschaftliche Praxis, 1884-1945* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2007), because it argues that

PLANS and key personality behind the California lawsuit. His website, www.waldorfcritics.org, provides a forum for disillusioned parents and educators to voice their criticisms of the Waldorf school movement. It also includes a members-only forum for Waldorf school “survivors” where they are encouraged to share their stories of traumatic experiences at Waldorf schools. Dugan himself has devoted his time to studying Steiner’s writings in search of “racist” passages which he posts on the website. He also uses the website to solicit funds for his ongoing lawsuit.

On the other side of the debate are supporters of Steiner, Anthroposophy, and Waldorf education who argue that accusations of racism are the result of misinterpretations and distortions of Steiner’s writings.¹¹ They attempt to show how detractors such as Dugan misquote and misrepresent Steiner and point to support of Steiner and Waldorf schools by several prominent philosophers and authors as evidence of Anthroposophy’s legitimacy.¹² The findings of a Dutch Commission released 1 April 2000 have lent further credibility to defenders’ claims. Over four years the commission examined 245 quotations dealing with race, which were gleaned from the 89,000 pages of Steiner’s collected works. In its 720-page report, titled, “Anthroposophy and the Question of Race,” the commission determined that neither Steiner, his

Anthroposophy was a form of *völkisch* thought, is often cited by Steiner detractors as proof that Anthroposophy is a racist philosophy.

¹¹ For example, see www.waldorfanswers.org; www.defendingsteiner.com; www.americans4steiner.com; as just a few examples of websites devoted to the defense of Steiner and Waldorf schools. Particularly interesting is the website www.uncletaz.com, administered by Tarjei Straume, an anarchist who is trying to start a movement he calls “Anarchosophy,” presumably a hybrid of Anthroposophy and Anarchism. “Taz,” as he calls himself, is particularly critical of Staudenmaier who also has Anarchist ties.

¹² This is the particular slant of the website www.defendingsteiner.com, run by Daniel Hinder, who explicitly refutes articles that attack Steiner and Anthroposophy.

writings, nor the Waldorf school movement in general were Anti-Semitic.¹³ It did, however, indicate that the Dutch schools investigated indeed participated in ethnic stereotyping.¹⁴

Central to arguments on either side of this debate is the relationship between the Waldorf schools and the Nazi regime. The eight Waldorf schools that existed in Germany in 1933 were slowly and individually shut down over a period of six years, from 1936 to 1941. Dan Dugan and other detractors argue that their relative longevity under Nazism can only be explained by the fact that they were working with the Nazis because they shared a kinship. Defenders of the schools argue that they were in fact persecuted by the regime, and even in the face of this persecution they were able to maintain their loyalty to Steiner's ideals, suffering the ultimate consequence - the loss of their schools - for this opposition.

From a historical perspective the fate of the Waldorf schools in the Third Reich is a curious one. The fact that they were not shut down as an institution, raises interesting questions about the process of *Gleichschaltung*, the implementation of Nazi policy, the role of local

¹³ Inspectors (*Onderwijsinspectie*) from the Dutch education ministry, inspected the Dutch Waldorf schools as a result of a complaint. A mother was shocked to discover that one of her daughter's school books claimed that "Negros have thick lips and an inherent sense of rhythm." In 1995 she filed a lawsuit against her daughter's teacher at the Waldorf school. The fallout included both the inspections of the schools by the education ministry and the four-year commission, "Anthroposophy and the Question of Race." Since the publication of the "Anthroposophy and the Question of Race" report, the publishing house of the Anthroposophy Society's international headquarters in Dornach, Switzerland, has begun systematically revising all of Steiner's published works. Using the report as a guideline, new publishing standards require that footnotes accompany the "racist" passages in order to explain the historical and philosophical context in which the passages were written and to ensure that they are not misinterpreted as modern-day racist remarks condoned by the Anthroposophical Society.

¹⁴ "Anthroposophy and the Question of Race," Press Version (abbreviated). English translation found at <www.info3.de/ycms/artikel_190.shtml>. The schools now voluntarily participate in Education Ministry inspections to prevent the problem from recurring.

authorities, and the ability of an institution like the Waldorf schools to circumnavigate certain policies, if only temporarily. As this study will show in addressing these questions, Waldorf school teachers and administrators (as well as most parents) failed to grasp the true ideological and political nature of National Socialism. In their attempt to cooperate with the regime's *Gleichschaltung* policies they were misled by its ideas of national renewal and *Volksgemeinschaft*, and its polycratic character of administration - and, thus, fell victim to the illusion of coexistence in a nazified "new Germany."

That this illusion could take hold, and was sustained for as long as it did before disillusion set in, was not entirely unreasonable considering that at the inception of the Third Reich in 1933 the Waldorf schools found themselves in a unique situation. As private schools, their reliance on state subsidies was minimal. They also had their own standards for teacher training which were not dependent upon state qualifications. Additionally, the philosophical-ideological nature of the schools gave rise to a highly developed, unique, and supportive community. All of these factors increased the autonomy of the Waldorf schools in the Third Reich. However, it also shielded the schools from the reality of Nazism. Believing they could exist outside of the state school system, as they had in Weimar Germany, and confident in the immense value of Steiner pedagogy, the schools did not immediately feel threatened by the advent of the National Socialist state. The situation they faced in 1933 did nothing to convince the schools that there was serious cause for concern. The conflicting and overlapping policies and jurisdictions reinforced the schools' belief that there was room for manoeuvre in the Nazi state. Lulled into a false sense of security, the school leadership fundamentally misunderstood the nature of Nazism and developed the naive impression that by cooperating with the new

government they could find a way to coexist in the Third Reich.

Until now, attempts to investigate the fate and actions of the Waldorf schools in Nazi Germany have come only from members of the Anthroposophic community and are influenced by the ongoing debate concerning the alleged racism of Steiner and the schools. While there is indeed a vast body of literature written with no regard to this debate, it is written by scholars of education whose interest is limited to the purely pedagogical aspects of Steiner's philosophy and the Waldorf schools.¹⁵ In the historical field, while Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophy, and the Anthroposophy Society are widely covered and their Anthroposophic authors are undoubtedly aware of the controversy surrounding Anthroposophy and the Waldorf schools, their studies usually do not deal directly with the subject matter of the controversy and therefore are not heavily influenced by it.¹⁶ It is only when scholars move into the time period of the Third Reich that the weight of the controversy comes to bear. First, the pool of studies on Anthroposophy under National Socialism is substantially smaller than those dealing with Anthroposophy in

¹⁵ See, for example, Freda Easton, "The Waldorf Impulse in Education: Schools as Communities that Educate the Whole Child by Integrating Academic and Artistic Work" (Ed.D diss., Columbia University Teachers College, 1995); Jack Petrash, *Understanding Waldorf Education: Teaching From the Inside Out* (Beltsville, Maryland: Gryphon House, 2002); P. B. Uhrmacher, "Uncommon Schooling: A Historical Look at Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophy and Waldorf Education," *Curriculum Inquiry* 25, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 381-406.

¹⁶ Henry Barnes, *A Life for the Spirit: Rudolf Steiner in the Crosscurrents of our Time* (Hudson, New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1997); Johannes Kiersch, *A History of the School of Spiritual Science: The First Class* (Forrest Row, Sussex: Temple Lodge Publishing, 2006); Walter Kugler, *Rudolf Steiner und die Anthroposophie: Weg zu ein Neuen Menschenbild* (Cologne: DuMont, 1978); Henk van Ort, *Anthroposophy: A Concise Introduction to Steiner's Spiritual Philosophy* (Forrest Row, Sussex: Temple Lodge Publishing, 2008); and Sergei O. Prokofieff, *Relating to Rudolf Steiner: And the Mystery of the Laying of the Foundation Stone* (Forrest Row, Sussex: Temple Lodge Publishing, 2008), are just a few of the works that deal with the philosophical and historical aspects of Anthroposophy.

general.¹⁷ The number of studies on the history of Waldorf schools in Nazi Germany is smaller still.¹⁸ Moreover, these are always written by Anthroposophists and are invariably influenced by the existing controversy. Their orientation prevents the authors from writing a truly balanced history of Anthroposophy or the Waldorf schools in the Third Reich.

The closest a study can claim to being such is Uwe Werner's 1999 *Anthroposophen in der*

¹⁷ On Anthroposophy in Nazi Germany see Lorenzo Ravagli, *Unter Hammer und Hakenkreuz: Der voelkisch-nationalsozialistische Kampf gegen die Anthroposophie* (Stuttgart: Verlag Freies Geistesleben, 2004), which, as the title implies, argues that the Nazis systematically attacked Anthroposophism. Johannes Tautz, *W. J. Stein: A Biography*, trans. John M. Wood (Forrest Row. Sussex: Temple Lodge, 1990), mentions Anthroposophy in Nazi Germany but is focused mostly on Stein. Bente Edlund, "Anthroposophical Curative Education in the Third Reich: The Advantages of an Outsider," *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research* 7, no. 3&4 (September 2005): 176-193, focuses on the fate of Curative Education centres in Europe after the Nazis came to power in Germany, revealing that most were successful in protecting their students from the Nazis' T4 Euthanasia program. A book by the Grandt Brothers has several injunctions against it because it is so defamatory. Michael and Guido Grandt, *Schwarzbuch Anthroposophie: Rudolf Steiners Okkult-Rassistische Weltanschauung* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1997). Michael Grandt also wrote *Cosmic Connection: Rudolf Steiner und die Anthroposophen* (Aschaffenburg: Alibri, 1999); which has also raised controversy as a result of its polemical style. See also Helmut Zander's massive 2000 page study, *Anthroposophie in Deutschland*. Zander's book is not focused exclusively on the period of the Third Reich. Rather, it is written from the perspective of historical science and compares and contrasts Theosophy and Anthroposophy, beginning in the nineteenth century. Although Zander is not an Anthroposophist, he has become indirectly involved in the debate because his argument has been twisted by Steiner detractors to support their arguments.

¹⁸ See Norbert Deuchert, "Zur Geschichte der Waldorfschule im Nationalsozialismus," *Flensburger Hefte*. (Sonderhefte 8, 1991): 95-108; Norbert Deuchert, "Der Kampf um die Waldorfschule im Nationalsozialismus," *Flensburger Hefte*, (Sonderhefte 8, 1991): 109-130; Detlef Hardorp, "Die Deutsche Waldorfschulbewegung in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus," *Basiswissen Pädagogik: Reformpädagogische Schulkonzepte* 6 ("Waldorf-Pädagogik": 2002): 132-141; Arfst Wagner, "Anthroposophen und Nationalsozialismus," *Flensburger Hefte*: (Sonderhefte 8): 6-78; "Anthroposophen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus" *Flensburger Hefte* (Sonderhefte 8): 50-94. Wenzel Götte's "Erfahrung mit Schulautonomie: das Beispiel der Freien Waldorfschulen" (PhD diss., University of Bielefeld, 2000) is also a well-researched a relatively balanced study but it has not yet been published.

Zeit des Nationalsozialismus, 1933-1945, which is also the most recent study on this topic.¹⁹ As the only monograph-length analysis it has become the definitive work on the subject. Although his treatment of the Anthroposophists is fair and scholarly and his research is sound, his study is focused on the Anthroposophists in general rather than the schools in particular. While his discussion of the schools is quite thorough, Werner does not delve deeply into the relationship between the schools and the Nazi state.²⁰ Moreover, Uwe Werner is the head archivist at the Goetheanum, the international headquarters for Anthroposophy. He is a prominent Anthroposophist who is aware of and has been involved in debates concerning the alleged racism of Steiner. This is not to detract from Werner's scholarly achievements, his careful research nor his insightful analysis. Rather, it is to say that his study, along with the others mentioned here, reflects the viewpoint of an Anthroposophist who is implicitly defending his philosophical beliefs and has something to gain or lose as a result of his analysis.

Others who also have dealt with the topic in a scholarly manner are Detlef Hardorp, a Waldorf school science teacher, Norbert Deuchert, now with the Villa-Rot Museum for Handwork and Crafts, and Arfst Wagner, a member of the editorial staff of the Anthroposophist journal *Flensburger Hefte*.²¹ Not surprisingly, these works all argue to varying degrees that

¹⁹ Uwe Werner, *Anthroposophen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933-1945* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999).

²⁰ Werner's book contains substantial sections on the Waldorf schools. *Ibid.*, 94-138; 225-241.

²¹ Wagner's academic credibility might actually be in question as he has involved himself, quite heavily on occasion, with the debate. However, he did edit and publish a series of quite useful historical documents concerning the history of Anthroposophy under National Socialism and is still a member of the editorial board of the Anthroposophic journal, *Flensburger Hefte*. See Arfst Wagner, ed., *Dokumente und Briefe zur Geschichte der Anthroposophischen*

Anthroposophy in general and the Waldorf schools in particular were not handmaidens of Nazism but rather were willing to cooperate with the Nazi administration to a certain degree in order to keep Rudolf Steiner's ideas alive in Nazi Germany. Each study focuses on a different aspect of Anthroposophy and the Waldorf school movement to make this point.

The first study on the subject of the Waldorf schools in the Third Reich, however, was conducted by Achim Leschinsky, professor of education at Humboldt University, and not a member of the Anthroposophy community.²² As a professor of education, he focuses solely on the Waldorf schools, paying particular attention to the Stuttgart school which enjoyed the special status of the first or "mother" school. Unlike other studies by scholars of education, Leschinsky is interested not in the pedagogy of the schools but in their reaction to the Nazis. Unfortunately, in the 1980s, when his article was written, he only had access to limited documents and could only write a short article. As might be expected, Leschinsky's study is the least flattering to the Waldorf schools, arguing that the Nazis' lack of coherent policy *vis á vis* the schools gave them some room for manoeuvre but that ultimately it was the attitude of the local Nazi authority that determined the fate of a school in a given state (*Land*). In Stuttgart's case, the attitude of the Württemberg Culture Minister, Christian Mergenthaler, was an uncompromising one. He was determined to close the Stuttgart school, and implemented his own restrictive policies on it without waiting for the Reich Education Minister's approval. Compounding the problem, Leschinsky argues, were the divisions within the Stuttgart school faculty which hindered its

Bewegung und Gesellschaft in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus. 5 Volumes.

²² Achim Leschinsky. "Waldorfschulen im Nationalsozialismus," *Neue Sammlung*, (May/June 1983): 256-278.

ability to defend itself against Mergenthaler's particularly harsh attacks. Ultimately, it was the role of the local authority, in the person of Mergenthaler, that largely determined Stuttgart's fate.²³

In addition to the role of local authorities, Leschinsky points to the intervention of some Nazi officials on behalf of particular schools as a factor in their survival. He singles out the Dresden school whose principal, Elizabeth Klein, was a main figure among the Waldorf schools in the Third Reich, owing to her unique ability to form personal friendships with Nazi officials. He also points to Klein's willingness to emphasize similarities between National Socialism and the aims of the Waldorf schools in a bid to keep the Dresden school open. While these tactics may be morally questionable, they enabled the Dresden school to remain open until 1941, longer than any other Waldorf school.²⁴ According to Leschinsky, administrative confusion, local authority, and varying degrees of willingness to accommodate the Nazis accounts for the relative longevity of the Waldorf schools in the Third Reich.

Opponents of the Waldorf movement have taken this balanced - if somewhat critical - argument out of context to support their own conclusions.²⁵ Though Leschinsky's argument is more critical of Waldorf behaviour than later interpretations, by no means does it support the idea that the Waldorf schools were staffed by Nazis. Rather, Leschinsky argues that some schools (though not all) were willing to cooperate with the Nazis in order to survive in the Third

²³ See, in particular, Leschinsky, 262-264.

²⁴ Leschinsky, 269-270.

²⁵ Staudenmaier, in particular, argues that Leschinsky's (and Werner's) work supports his own belief that the Waldorf schools should be seen as Nazi sympathizers.

Reich. While it may be possible to draw the conclusion that some individual Waldorf school teachers were guilty of Nazi sympathies, this was not typical of Waldorf school teachers and certainly not the policy followed by Waldorf school leadership and did not reflect supposed Nazi leanings in Rudolf Steiner's pedagogy or philosophy.

Detlef Hardorp's short article presents the schools in a more positive light, attributing to them more agency than Leschinsky allows. He echoes Leschinsky's portrayal of a polycratic Nazi state, but argues that the schools deliberately and skillfully manipulated the poorly coordinated Nazi bureaucracy to their advantage. He concedes, however, that their success in this regard was only temporary.²⁶ In contrast, Norbert Deuchert's two articles discount the possibility of manipulation of the system on the part of the schools by describing a school leadership that was itself confused and divided. In response to Nazi incursions, the schools decided to form a federation to unite all the German Waldorf schools into one administrative body, the *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen* (BFWS). This was an unprecedented step for the highly individual schools and was meant to act as a unifying force and to facilitate negotiations with the Nazi administration by presenting a unified front. Instead, the Bund degenerated into rival factions and quickly became an ineffective tool against the Nazis and a source of jealousy and conflict among the schools. Rather than their own agency and manipulation of the system, Deuchert instead points to Rudolf Hess, Deputy Führer, as the source of salvation for the schools. Presenting evidence of Hess' sporadic involvement with the schools, Deuchert reasons that, because the last school was shut down immediately after Hess' flight to England in May 1941, he must have been responsible for their survival and must have acted as a protector within the Nazi

²⁶ See, in particular, Hardorp, 135.

administration.²⁷

While Werner offers arguments similar to Deuchert's, his much longer work allows for a more nuanced interpretation. Like Deuchert, Werner highlights the initial success and then ultimate failure of the Bund, but differs in not viewing the Bund as the schools' only avenue for success. He points out that while the Bund as a whole may have been ineffective, the faction within it led by Rene Maikowski and Elizabeth Klein did achieve longer-term successes. Werner shows that many of the schools were willing to make certain concessions to the Nazi administration in order to secure their continued existence. The most successful in this regard was Elizabeth Klein, whose personal friendships with several members of Hess' staff helped her to keep the Dresden school open longer than all the other Waldorf schools in Germany, an argument that comes close to Leschinsky's. In another similarity to Leschinsky, Werner also emphasizes the role played by Hess' department and staff, rather than Hess himself, in the schools' survival.²⁸

Werner also argues that 1936 marked a turning point for the Waldorf schools. Reich Education Minister Bernhard Rust's prohibition of new admissions for all private schools in March of that year proved decisive, forcing the schools to make a decision about their future. While some were determined to find some *modus operandi* with the Nazi government, others took Rust's March prohibition as a sign that their struggle was futile and quickly took measures

²⁷ Deuchert, "Der Kampf," 119. He also argues that Mergenthaler took the opportunity presented by Hess' absence during the Austrian *Anschluss* to finally close down the Stuttgart school. Deuchert, "Zur Geschichte," 100. Werner, however, discounts this argument, Werner, 223.

²⁸ On the divisions within the Waldorf faculty and the role played by various members of Hess' department, see Werner, 95-97; 110-114.

to close their schools. The only hope for these schools after 1936 was to be granted experimental status, which only happened to two of them, the Dresden and Hamburg-Wandsbek schools.²⁹ Unfortunately, aside from intermittent interventions by Hess' department on behalf of the schools, Werner's study offers little insight into why certain schools remained open longer than others or why the Dresden and Wandsbek schools were granted experimental status and others were not.

As an historian and non-participant in the controversy, what is of interest to me is first, the nature of the relationship between the schools and the Nazi state, and secondly, what a study of the schools can reveal about how Nazi education policy was translated into action. The historiography of the Waldorf schools in the Third Reich is dominated by Anthroposophists who write in the context of defending themselves and their beliefs against accusations of Nazism. I seek to move beyond the controversy and an Anthroposophic perspective to situate the Waldorf schools within the Nazi state. My objective is to investigate how *Gleichschaltung* was implemented and the type of reaction it elicited from the Waldorf school leadership.

By the same token, this study contributes to the historiography of education in the Third Reich. Written mostly in German and focused on broad issues of policy, methods of implementation, curriculum reform, and the role of upper-level Nazis like Bernhard Rust, Alfred Rosenberg, Wilhelm Krieck, and Alfred Bäumler, historians of education in Nazi Germany have revealed a great deal about how Nazis viewed education and the importance they supposedly placed on it as a tool of indoctrination. For instance, Rolf Eilers' key work, *Die nationalpolitische Schulpolitik*, focuses on curriculum changes and Nazi education policy

²⁹ Werner, 225-237.

developed by Rust, Rosenberg, Krieck, and Bäumlner.³⁰ George Kneller's earlier study examines the intellectual and ideological basis of educational reform and reveals Nazi education theorists' deep-seated disdain of higher education and teachers alike; a disdain they had to reconcile with their conviction that education was the key to winning the hearts and minds of the youth.³¹

Gilmer W. Blackburn's study of Nazi-written history textbooks examines how they sought to bring Nazi racial theory into the classroom and inculcate a National Socialist world view in the students.³² While works such as these do not offer insights into how or if Nazi policy actually made it into the classrooms or, if it did, how it was received by teachers and students, these studies have helped bring to light the internal divisions and political rivalries that plagued the Third Reich.³³

³⁰ Rolf Eilers, *Die nationalsozialistische Schulpolitik: Eine Studie zur Funktion der Erziehung im totalitären Staat* (Opladen: Westdeutschen Verlag, 1963). Many Nazis had their own ideas about the purpose of education and how it should be molded to reinforce National Socialist ideals. Reich Youth Leader Baldur von Schirach, Reich Minister of the Interior Wilhelm Frick, *Reichsführer SS* Heinrich Himmler and leader of the German Labour Front, Robert Ley, all felt they were entitled to some jurisdiction over education policy and sought to influence it. Rosenberg, Krieck, and Bäumlner, however, were the leading figures in the development of Nazi education policy. They were all, of course, guided by Hitler's own views on education.

³¹ George Frederick Kneller, *The Educational Philosophy of National Socialism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941).

³² Gilmer W. Blackburn, *Education in the Third Reich: Race and History in Nazi Textbooks* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1985).

³³ The earliest histories on education in the Third Reich were written before its collapse. See, for example, I. L. Kandel, *The Making of Nazis* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1935); George Frederick Kneller, *The Educational Philosophy of National Socialism* (1941); Erika Mann, *School for Barbarians* (New York: Modern Age Books, 1938). The next wave was dominated by Eilers' study. Others of note are: Kurt-Ingo Flessau, *Schule der Diktatur: Lehrpläne und Schulbücher des Nationalsozialismus* (Munich: Ehrenwirth, 1977); Hans-Jürgen Gamm, *Führung und Verführung* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1964); Wolfgang Keim, ed., *Pädagogen*

By challenging early notions of the monolithic or totalitarian Nazi state, the historiography of education in the Third Reich mirrors similar developments in the historiography of Nazi Germany in general. Historians of the Nazi state began to recognize that Hitler was not the singular wielder of a monolithic or totalitarian state. Instead, it seemed he was a “weak dictator,” presiding over rival fiefdoms in constant conflict with one another, a system of rule coined “polycratic.”³⁴ This shift in interpretation prompted historians to investigate the ways in which the German people manoeuvred in a state that did not control all aspects of life equally. In order to answer this question historians turned their attention to individual *Länder*, to various social groups, and to “everyday life” in the Third Reich.³⁵

und Pädagogik im Nationalsozialismus (Frankfurt: Peter Lang Verlag, 1988); Karl-Christoph Lingelbach, *Erziehung und Erziehungstheorien im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland* (Weinheim: Beltz, 1969); Manfred Heinemann et al., ed., *Erziehung und Schulung im Dritten Reich*, 2 Vols. (Stuttgart, Klett-Cart: 1980); Harald Scholz, *Erziehung und Unterricht unterm Hakenkreuz* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1985).

³⁴ Ian Kershaw credits Hans Mommsen as the originator of this idea in his *Beamtenum im Dritten Reich: Mit ausgewählten Quellen zur nationalsozialistischen Beamtenpolitik* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1966). He also identifies Peter Diehle-Thiele’s work, *Partei und Staat im Dritten Reich: Untersuchungen zum Verhältnis von NSDAP und allgemeiner innerer Staatsverwaltung 1933-1945* (Munich: München Beck, 1969); Martin Brozsat’s work *The Hitler State: The Foundation and Development of the Third Reich*, trans. John Hiden (London: Longman, 1981); Peter Hüttenberger’s work, *Die Gauleiter: Studie zum Wandel des Machtgefüges in der NSDAP* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1969); and Edward N. Peterson’s work, *The Limits of Hitler’s Power* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969); as pioneers in the “polycratic” interpretation of the Nazi state. See, Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*, 4th ed. (London: Arnold Publishing, 2000). The issue of the “polycratic” nature of the Nazi state and the implications it has for the study of Nazi Germany is much more complicated than this explanation indicates. A more detailed explanation follows in the third chapter which deals specifically with the polycratic nature of the Nazi state.

³⁵ See, for example, Richard Bessel, ed., *Life in the Third Reich* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Ian Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich: Bavaria, 1933-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983); Horst Möller, et. al., eds.,

This trend is reflected in the historiography of German education as historians began to narrow their focus. By directing their studies to particular types of schools or schools in individual *Länder* or cities, historians could get inside the schools to determine the effect of Nazi policy and the reactions it prompted.³⁶ Their findings were similar to those in other areas of German history. It seems, for all their proclamations about the role of education in the development of the German *Volk*, Nazi education policy was largely left to local authorities. While Rosenberg, Bäuml, Krieck and Rust indeed developed specific guidelines as to curriculum and timetable changes, lists of books that were to be banned or introduced, and the incorporation of Nazi rituals such as the *Hitler Gruss* into school routine, how strictly those

Nationsozialismus in der Region: Beiträge zur regionalen und lokalen Forschung und zum internationalen Vergleich (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1996); Detlev Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition and Racism in Everyday Life* (London: Penguin Books, 1989); Jill Stephenson, *Hitler's Home Front: Württemberg under the Nazis* (London: Humboldt Continuum, 2006).

³⁶ For studies on schools in specific locations see Wilhelm Damberg, *Der Kampf um die Schulen in Westfalen: 1933-1945* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald, 1986); Ursel Hochmuth and Hans-Peter de Lorent, eds., *Hamburg: Schule unterm Hakenkreuz* (Hamburg: Hamburger Lehrerzeitung, 1985); Kai Langer, *Die Gleichschaltung der Schulen in Mecklenburg: 1932 bis 1934* (Weimar and Rostock: Edition M, 1997). For studies on Jewish schools see Solomon Colodner, *Jewish Education in Germany Under the Nazis* (New York: Jewish Education Committee, 1964). Though Colodner's study appeared long before the shift in the historiography, it cannot be left out of the discussion. See also Willi Holzer, *Jüdische Schulen in Berlin: am Beispiel der privaten Volksschule der jüdischen Gemeinde Rykestrasse* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1992); Ruth Röcher, *Jüdische Schule im Nationalsozialistischen Deutschland: 1933-1945* (Frankfurt am Main: DIPA Verlag, 1992); Joseph Walk, *Jüdische Schule und Erziehung im Dritten Reich* (Frankfurt am Main: Meisenheim, 1991); Gregory Paul Wegner, *Anti-Semitism and Schooling Under the Third Reich* (New York: Routledge Falmer, 2002). On Catholic schools see Manfred Köhler, *Die Volksschule Harsum im Dritten Reich* (Hildesheim: August Lax, 1985). On Progressive schools see Hildegard Feidel-Merz, ed., *Schulen im Exil: Die verdrängte Pädagogik nach 1933* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1983); Denis Shirley, *The Politics of Progressive Education: The Odenwaldschule in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992).

guidelines were enforced depended on the particular power, ambition, and interests of administrators at the *Land* or even city levels.

The real vehicle for capturing the minds of young Germans turned out to be the Hitler Youth. Intertwined with school life, the Hitler Youth and its female counterpart, the League of German Girls, achieved great success in instilling Nazi values in young Germans.³⁷ The organization, activities and evolution of the Hitler Youth, because of its success, has overshadowed Nazi education in the historiography. While most general histories of the Third Reich include a substantial section, if not a whole chapter, on the Hitler Youth, it is rare to find more than a passing reference to the fate of education and schools.³⁸ It seems that, despite a

³⁷ Incidentally, the success of the Hitler Youth contributed even more to the already existing conflicts between various branches of the Nazi government that sought to control education and the youth, a situation that will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three. On the Hitler Youth see Michael Kater, *Hitler Youth* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004); Peter H. Merkl, *The Making of a Stormtrooper* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980); Gerhard Rempel, *Hitler's Children: The Hitler Youth and the SS* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989); Peter Stachura, *Nazi Youth in the Weimar Republic* (Santa Barbara, California: Clio Books, 1975); and Peter D. Stachura, *The German Youth Movement, 1900-1945: An Interpretive and Documentary History* (London: MacMillan, 1981).

³⁸ For example, in Detlev Peukert's otherwise excellent *Inside Nazi Germany*, he dedicates 30 pages to the youth, of which only four are used to describe school life while the rest are dedicated to the Hitler Youth and their opposition to groups like the Edelweiss Pirates or the Swing movement. Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, in their book, *The Racial State: Germany 1933-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), devote 25 pages to "Youth in the Third Reich," but only four of those are allocated to schools that were not outgrowths of the Hitler Youth. Without the partnership of Wippermann, Burleigh fares even worse. In his massive 965-page work, *The Third Reich: A New History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), he finds the space to mention education only twice and devotes less than a full page to the subject. Richard J. Evans' 941-page book, *The Third Reich in Power: 1933-1939* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), devotes an impressive 80 pages to all aspects of education: public schools, teachers, the Hitler Youth, schools associated with the Hitler Youth, and higher education. Still, only ten of these are devoted to public schools, ostensibly the most important avenue for capturing the youth.

prevailing assumption that education is the cornerstone of a nation, historians of the Third Reich in fact are hard pressed to find room for it in their studies. While this study cannot seek to rectify the lack of attention paid to Nazi *education* - as opposed to German *youth* - it does hope to contribute to the field by analyzing how one private school system, the Waldorf school system, experienced the process of *Gleichschaltung*.

In turn, this examination raises important questions about how an institution like the Waldorf schools sought to navigate its way through Nazi Germany, as well as the choices that were available to individuals within that system. Did their choices make them complicit in National Socialism? Was their policy of cooperation actually a form of collaboration? Was the school leadership truly naive or just fooling themselves? It is in seeking an answer to these questions that I use terms such as “cooperation” and “coexistence” throughout this study in order to locate the position of the Waldorf schools in the Third Reich. While the schools did not seek to oppose National Socialism in any way, neither did they go out of their way to accommodate Nazi demands. Rather, they believed they could occupy a neutral sphere in which to continue their work unhindered, without posing a challenge to National Socialism - thus the concept of “coexistence.” As will be shown, the schools did not want to become a part of the National Socialist state, and, as such, did not want to be integrated ideologically and institutionally. For all their criticism of Weimar Germany, they sought to reproduce for themselves a similar sphere of existence in the Third Reich.

This belief represented a fundamental misunderstanding of the true nature of National Socialism. It informed and determined all the choices the school leadership made in the Third Reich. Thus, while their level of cooperation increased over time as more extensive demands

were made of them, this cannot be equated with collaboration. On the contrary, theirs was a policy of cooperation that allowed for a certain degree of accommodation to ensure survival. In this pursuit of coexistence, the schools were not motivated by an inherent affinity with National Socialism, as some have argued, but by their determination to continue to teach the lessons of Rudolf Steiner.

The conceptual axis around which this study of Waldorf schools and Nazism revolves is “*Waldorfism*” and the “illusion of coexistence.” The former pervaded the Waldorf universe in that the schools were pedagogically and ideologically rooted in Anthroposophy, as discussed in chapter one. It influenced all their attitudes and actions. In juxtaposition, Nazi ideology was inherently opposed to *Waldorfism*. The latter was well understood by the Nazis, but only by a very few members of the Waldorf community. Various members of the Waldorf community came to this realization at various times. Failure to understand this from the earliest days of the Third Reich led the Waldorf schools to be seduced by an illusion of coexistence. Nazi behaviour, which was inconsistent, based on ill-defined policies, and largely determined by the whims of local authorities, helped keep this illusion alive - in some cases longer than in others. This is not to say that the Waldorf leadership lacked intelligence, but rather that they were naive and, like other Germans, failed to comprehend the true nature of National Socialism.

The development and demolition of this “illusion of coexistence” will be traced in the next seven chapters. The conception of this illusion must be examined within its proper context. Anthroposophy and *Waldorfism* formed the framework through which the schools assessed Nazi intentions and will be explored in chapter one. For their part, the Nazis also formed strong opinions about the Waldorf schools; opinions that were rooted in Nazi educational philosophies

(Chapter Two). The ways in which these two educational philosophies conflicted are explored in chapter three with an eye to explaining how the Waldorf schools could have misinterpreted Nazi educational goals so completely. Against this backdrop, chapter four explains how Waldorf attitudes and Nazi policies came together, either in conflict or accommodation, by examining the development and use of the *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen* as a coping strategy and defense mechanism. As the illusion of coexistence persists, chapter five deals with Waldorf's compatibility strategy to try to achieve coexistence with the Nazi regime, as well as how the polycratic nature of the Nazi regime influenced the schools' strategies of survival and reinforced their illusion of coexistence. Chapter six provides Nazi opinions about the Waldorf schools to better understand how dangerous the schools were to Nazism. It also explores how aware the schools were of Nazi opinions and why they did not heed the warnings contained within them. The last two chapters chronicle each school's forced closure or decision to close and the specific circumstances that prompted these closures. Together these chapters trace the choices available in Nazi Germany and the way in which small decisions, while not necessarily collaborationist on their own, combined to facilitate and advance the aims of National Socialism.

CHAPTER ONE

THE WALDORF SCHOOLS: ANTHROPOSOPHY AND STEINER PEDAGOGY

When Rudolf Steiner began the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart in 1919, he did so because he sensed a need “within the body social,” a social ill that needed to be healed.¹ This “social ill” was humanity’s loss of spirituality which the Anthroposophy movement sought to recapture. As Steiner worked towards the advancement of Anthroposophy and the Anthroposophy Society, he also developed a method and philosophy of education which was rooted in Anthroposophism; this became Waldorf education. Steiner saw the Waldorf school as an opportunity to begin the third phase of the Anthroposophy movement by focusing his attention on the youth as the promise of the future. He believed that the existing educational system was flawed and he promised to introduce a fundamentally new way of educating the child. This form of education was not about conveying facts as knowledge but rather sought to use knowledge to develop children as human beings. For Steiner, this meant “harmonizing...the higher man, the man of spirit and soul, with the physical, bodily man, the lower man.”² These were the objectives that guided Steiner and the foundation of the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart.

Rudolf Steiner was born in 1861 in Kraljevec, Hungary (now Croatia).³ A brooding and

¹ Rudolf Steiner, “Lecture I: 23 December 1921,” in *Soul Economy and Waldorf Education*, trans. Roland Everett (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1986), 10.

² Rudolf Steiner, “Lecture One: 21 August, 1919,” in *Practical Advice to Teachers*, trans. Johanna Collis (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1976), 9.

³ Information for Steiner’s biography was taken from Christoph Lindenberg, *Rudolf Steiner* (Hamburg, Rowohlt: 1992); Robert A. McDermott, ed., *The Essential Steiner: Basic Writings of Rudolf Steiner* (San Francisco, Harper and Row: 1984); Rudolf Steiner, *The Story of My Life* (London: Anthroposophical Publishing Co., 1928); Colin Wilson, *Rudolf Steiner: The*

intellectual boy, he showed academic promise early and attended the *Technische Hochschule* at Vienna from ages 18 to 22. At 22, he was invited by his mentor, Karl Julius Schröer, to edit an edition of Goethe's works with Josef Kürschner. Steiner's emerging philosophical theories were heavily influenced by all three men, as well as by Nietzsche, whom he met several times just before his death. It was also in Vienna that Steiner tutored an autistic boy whose remarkable progress under his tutelage helped develop in Steiner an interest in alternative forms of education. The ideas he developed as a result of this experience eventually became the pedagogical basis of the Waldorf schools.

In 1899 Steiner moved to Berlin and began teaching at the Berlin Workers' School. In Berlin he also became involved with the Theosophical Society and by 1902 had devoted himself to it full time as the General Secretary of the newly-founded German section. After almost a decade of tireless work for the society he broke with its head, Anni Besant, over issues concerning the religious orientation of the movement. Whereas Steiner had come to see Christ as the central figure in the spiritual evolution of man, Besant and the Theosophists continued to develop and elaborate connections between their movement and aspects of Hinduism. Besant's claim that Jiddu Krishnamuri was the new Messiah prompted Steiner to formally break with the Theosophical Society and form the Anthroposophical Society in 1913.⁴ He built the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland, to serve as Anthroposophy's international headquarters.

It was not until 1919, however, that Steiner was invited by Emil Molt to put his

Man and His Vision (Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: Antiquarian Press, 1985).

⁴ This is necessarily a general account of the deep theological and philosophical divisions between Anthroposophy and Theosophy.

educational theories into practice by establishing the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart. Though Steiner had very specific ideas about what should be taught and, more importantly, in what way it should be taught, he did not write a curriculum for the Waldorf schools. Instead, the first twenty Waldorf school teachers received their training through a series of lectures given by Steiner from 21 August to 5 September 1919.⁵ In this way they were immersed in the teachings and pedagogical philosophy of Rudolf Steiner. He continued to train his teachers through lectures and conferences until his death in 1924. Over the course of those five years he wrote 38 lectures to add to the five books on the subject that he had already written in 1919.⁶ These lectures were published and still serve today as the basis of Waldorf school teacher training. Thus these lectures are a perfect guide to understanding the motivations of Steiner and his teachers and the methods they used in their classrooms.

It is important to fully comprehend the pedagogical philosophy which guided and still guides the Waldorf schools in order to fully understand the hostile situation these schools faced from 1933 to 1941. These schools were not loosely based on Steiner's ideas, the teachers were not vaguely "encouraged" to follow this philosophy, rather, it was the life-blood, the very

⁵ Translated and published as *Practical Advice to Teachers*, trans. Johanna Collis (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1976).

⁶ *The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy*, trans. George and Mary Adams (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1972); *The Kingdom of Childhood*, trans. Helen Fox (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1974); *Human Values in Education*, trans. V. Compton-Burnett (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1971); *Curative Education*, trans. Mary Adams (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1972); *Education as a Social Problem*, trans. Lisa D. Monges and Doris M. Bugbey (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1969). The lectures were published as: *Practical Advice to Teachers*; *Soul Economy and Waldorf Education*; *Deeper Insights in Education: A Waldorf Approach*, trans. Rene Querio (New York: Anthroposophic Press, Inc., 1983); *The Essentials of Education*, trans. A.C. H. (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1968).

purpose of the Waldorf schools, then and now. While the schools insisted then, and continue to insist today, that they do not teach Anthroposophy, it runs through their veins because Steiner's pedagogy was born out of Anthroposophy. It is also true that a Waldorf school teacher does not necessarily have to be an Anthroposophist. However, knowledge and understanding of Anthroposophy is encouraged because it is the basis of Rudolf Steiner's pedagogy. Certainly, at the foundation of the Waldorf school movement it was essential that the teachers also be Anthroposophists. But they were not required to be Anthroposophists and though Anthroposophy was not (and is not) taught as a subject, all of their lessons and activities conveyed Anthroposophy because it was the guiding philosophy of the schools, a point Steiner himself emphasizes in one of his lectures.⁷

“Anthroposophy” means, literally, “Wisdom of Man.” Rudolph Steiner chose this term to emphasize the role of the individual in his philosophy. He believed, first and foremost, in the eternal life of the soul. For Steiner, a person's character was determined by an eternal spirit, not by physical surroundings or people and therefore a person's primary concern was with living a spiritually moral life. He disdained many contemporaneous philosophers for various reasons, the greatest of which was their assertion that mankind was not capable of making its own moral decisions. Steiner argued that not only were individuals capable of making their own morally correct decisions, but that it was their obligation. These decisions, in turn, would affect the course of the world. Based on this idea, he developed his “threefold social order.” The three pillars of society, according to Steiner, are spirit, state, and economics. For society to work in harmony, these three pillars need to work together and be mutually respectful of each other.

⁷ Rudolf Steiner, “Lecture VII: 30 December, 1921,” in *Soul Economy*, 127-128.

Though Steiner claimed his philosophy of man was free of the moral and philosophical restrictions of religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, his ideas were, in fact, based in Christianity and he believed in the existence of both Christ and Lucifer. Among other aspects of Anthroposophy, the Christian influence can be seen in his belief in a thirty-three year life-rhythm. Steiner chose this time span for two reasons: first, because to him it represented the approximate span of a generation, and second, because Christ is estimated to have lived for 32½ years. According to this life-rhythm, a “seed” planted one year would only bear “fruit” 33 years later. This pattern, however, usually only comes to light in retrospect. For instance, one of Steiner’s greatest accomplishments was the opening of his first school in Stuttgart in 1919. The “seed” of this “fruit,” therefore, can be traced back to 1886. Something he did in that year led to the creation of the Stuttgart school (although he never identified what that act was). Though Steiner believed in a 33 year rhythm for life accomplishments and world history, he believed in a seven year rhythm for the psychological and spiritual development of the individual, a principle which also applied to the development of the child and was incorporated into Steiner’s pedagogical philosophy.⁸

As articulated in the first lectures on education given by Steiner in Stuttgart in 1919, the purpose of education is not to fill the child with facts and figures, but to nourish and nurture the

⁸ For more on Anthroposophy see, Robert A. McDermott, *The Essential Steiner: Basic Writings of Rudolf Steiner* (San Francisco, Harper and Row: 1984); Rudolf Steiner, *Cosmic Memory: Prehistory of Earth and Man*, trans. Karl E. Zimmer (New York: Harper and Row, 1959); Rudolf Steiner, *Occult Science: An Outline*, trans. Mary Adams (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1979); Rudolf Steiner, *Study of Man*, trans. A. C. Harwood (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1966); Rudolf Steiner, *The Threefold Social Order*, trans. Frederick C. Heckel (New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1972); Rudolf Steiner, *The Wisdom of Man, of the Soul, and of the Spirit* (New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1971).

child's spirit. Steiner's three-fold man, made up of body, soul and spirit, corresponds to three epochs in a child's development, each of which spans roughly seven years. In the first epoch, from birth to the loss of the first set of teeth, the body is dominant; in the second epoch, from second dentition to puberty, the spirit is dominant; and in the final epoch, from puberty to "true adulthood" - twenty to twenty-one years - the mind is dominant. In each of these epochs, the dominant part of the three-fold child should be focused on. According to Steiner, a child is like a machine - we must know which part needs to be worked on before we begin our work.⁹

In the first epoch of a child's life, from birth until the first set of teeth are lost, the body is dominant. When the child is born, it is removed from the protective envelope of the mother's body. To the detriment of the rest of the body, the child's head is already fully developed physically at birth. Therefore, in the first seven years of life what Steiner calls the "will-nature" is dedicated to developing the limbs and movement of the body, the physical. Thus in this period no attempt should be made to develop a child's intellect as all energy should be dedicated to developing limbs and organs. The child should be taught to tie his shoes or button his coat rather than to read or write. This is done through "imitation" and "example," which, according to Steiner, are the "magic words" for this period of development.¹⁰

Because the child spends this life-epoch imitating the world around him, the world around him must be worthy of imitation. Parents and teachers must be careful not to engage in

⁹ Rudolf Steiner, *The Education of the Child*, 41.

¹⁰ For his discussion of "magic words" see Rudolf Steiner, *The Education of the Child*, 23. See also Eileen Hutchins, "The Normal Child," in *Work Arising: Articles Published to Mark the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Death of Rudolf Steiner*, ed. John Davy (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1975), 77-92; and Steiner, "Lecture VII: 29 December 1921," in *Soul Economy*, 105-121.

behaviour that they would not want the child to engage in. Steiner did not believe it was acceptable to tell a child, “do what I say, not what I do.” He argued that because the will of the child is not fully developed, the desire to imitate would always dominate. Although the child may want to follow the directions given by a parent or teacher, he would be unable to deny his impulse to imitate their behaviour, good or bad.¹¹

It is not until the time the first teeth are lost that the child begins to be able to coordinate thought and action, which indicates the meeting of the forces of willing and thinking. At this point, the child can begin to grasp concepts, though only in picture form. During this second epoch, from second dentition to puberty, roughly another seven years, the etheric body is liberated from its protective etheric envelope just as the physical body was liberated from the protective envelope of the mother in the first epoch. Whereas the body was dominant in the first epoch, in the second, the soul (feeling) is dominant. “Feeling” is the meeting of thinking and willing. Steiner stresses that these two forces must be in harmony with one another or balanced by one another but that this does not happen naturally. The satisfactory union between thinking and willing form the basis for the child’s moral actions. Thus, the child must have someone to guide their actions such as their teacher or parents, which is why Steiner’s “magic words” for this epoch are “discipleship” and “authority.” By “discipleship” Steiner means that children should be encouraged to admire others. They are encouraged to admire their parents and their teacher, as well as heroes of various forms. Children are told stories from Greek and Roman legends as well as the Bible in order to find heroes. This helps make them aware that there are bigger things

¹¹ See *Education of the Child*, 24-30; “Lecture VII: 29 December 1921,” in *Soul Economy*, 105-121; “Lecture II: 9 April 1924,” in *Essentials of Education*, 27-45.

than themselves. Telling stories also encourages the development of the child's feelings, which is the dominant aspect of this epoch.¹²

Reinforcing this admiration, or "discipleship," is "authority," particularly the authority of the teacher. The child is not yet permitted to question the teacher's authority and in fact needs to believe that the teacher is the ultimate authority of any given subject. If the child senses that a teacher is insecure about his knowledge, he will question his authority to the detriment of his own development. This is why Waldorf teachers must memorize their lessons.¹³

It is also during this epoch that the child is first introduced to letters and numbers, however, Steiner stresses that this needs to be done organically. Because the thinking is not yet fully developed (this happens in the third epoch), the child is not yet at the point where he can appreciate abstract thought so instead he forms thoughts as pictures. Thus Steiner emphasized the use of pictures in this epoch to convey ideas. Rather than introduce numbers and letters simply as symbols, they should be given a context, by using pictures. For instance, a child is shown a picture of a snake. He comes to recognize the form of a snake and associate it with the "ssss" sound that it makes. Finally, when he is shown the letter "S," he will be able to understand its context and therefore the letter will hold meaning for him rather than being an abstract symbol.¹⁴

¹² See Hutchins, "The Normal Child;" and Steiner, "Lecture IX: 31 December 1921," *Essentials of Education*, 47-62; "Lecture III: 10 April 1924," in *Soul Economy*, 141-162.

¹³ For "discipleship" and "authority" see Steiner, *Education of the Child*, 30-32. See also "Lecture IX: 31 December 1921," and "Lecture X: 1 January 1922," in *Soul Economy*, 141-181. See also, Hutchins, "The Normal Child," 84-86.

¹⁴ The example for "S" is given by Eileen Hutchins, "The Normal Child," 83; Other examples used by Steiner are fish for "f," "Lecture One: 21 August 1919," in *Practical Advice*,

Pictures are also used in this epoch to guide the child morally. To build upon the lessons of the first epoch, where children only imitate the behaviour they are exposed to, in the second epoch, a child's behaviour is guided by pictures. Reprimands, according to Steiner, are ineffective in this epoch. Telling a child not to behave in a particular way or not to adopt a certain habit, has little effect. However, if the child is shown a picture of the outcome of his action, and that outcome is negative, he is unlikely to continue the behaviour or habit. In this way, the child develops a sense of morality, and develops his own personality, character, and habits.¹⁵

In the third epoch - from puberty to "true" adulthood - the child learns how to translate his moral thoughts into moral actions. At puberty, the astral body is liberated from its astral envelope and the three-fold nature of the person; body, soul, and spirit, is formed. In this epoch the spirit or thinking aspect (also called the intellect) of the child is dominant. The child is capable of abstract ideas and therefore the intellect can be developed and he can be introduced to science. The way to do this, however, is not through memorizing a set of rules, (such as the scientific method) but by observation. For instance, if the child is allowed to observe a plant from seed to death, he can reach her own conclusions about the plant, and furthermore, ask his own questions. This arouses a curiosity in the child that does not exist when all the answers are given. It also allows the child to find his own answers to the questions and his own solutions to

11; bear for "b" in "Lecture Five: 26 August 1919, in *Practical Advice*, 72; and waves for "w" in "Lecture IX: 31 Dec 1921," in *Soul Economy*, 149.

¹⁵ Steiner, *Education of the Child*, 31-35.

the problems he encounters.¹⁶

Steiner insisted that this is also the time to introduce the child to historical connections. Before this time, according to Steiner, it is futile to try to introduce the child to these ideas, for he will not be able to make sense of them. Once he reaches puberty, however, he will be able to make the historical connections which Steiner believes, along with science, forms the basis of humanity. It is no longer essential for the teacher to be the ultimate authority, as it was in the second epoch. The child's intellect is sufficiently developed so that he can make his own moral decisions and form his own thoughts. Thus he is able to disagree with an adult and properly articulate why he disagrees.¹⁷

This belief in the threefold nature of man meant that apart from the various life forces that were highlighted in various stages of development, Steiner believed it was essential to balance emphasis on these three areas. Therefore equal time is spent in movement, which serves the will, and artistic activity which serves the feeling, leaving the intellect to absorb what is appropriate to each individual.

The role of colour in a child's artistic development is crucial. Children in Waldorf schools spend a great deal of time painting and are introduced to lines and colour quite gradually. Students are encouraged not to try to create images or shapes in their painting, but to concentrate on the colours and their relationships with one another. Rather than tell a child that certain colours go together better, or teaching them the colour wheel, students are encouraged to make

¹⁶ Hutchins, "The Normal Child," 84-86. See also Steiner, "Lecture VIII: 29 August 1919," in *Practical Advice*, 115-127.

¹⁷ Steiner, "Lecture VII: 29 August 1919," in *Practical Advice*, 115-127; and "Lecture XIII: 4 January 1922," in *Soul Economy*, 223-240.

their own observations about colour, because it is thought they will internalize these lessons better. The example given is blue, green, and yellow. The child is encouraged to put yellow paint on paper in no particular shape or form. He then puts blue on the paper, again, in no particular shape or form. The child should be able to see how well these colours complement one another and the way this combination of colours makes him feel. He completes the same exercise with yellow and green. He should note whether these colours complement one another and how they make him feel. After several experiments such as this one, the child will come to feel that blue and yellow is a better combination than green and yellow, not because a teacher told him so, but because he feels it.¹⁸

Because movement was as equally important to Steiner as art and intellect, he developed “Eurythmy,” a system of deliberate movement that was intended to reinforce the lessons a child was taught. In the first epoch, when the physical body dominates, it is used to encourage the proper development of the child’s limbs and organs. In the second epoch, it was used to teach the children to “feel” the poems or stories they learned rather than just hear them. In this way, they would come to understand the stories more intimately. Steiner insisted that Eurythmy had little in common with dance, ballet or mime. It was, rather, the expression of music and language through sound “so that the whole human being becomes a larynx.”¹⁹ The whole group of people performing Eurythmy become the speech organ and recreate the movements of the larynx, tongue and air that move to produce speech and musical tones. As their names suggest, speech-

¹⁸ Steiner, “Lecture III: 23 August 1919,” and “Lecture IV: 25 August 1919,” in *Practical Advice*, 40 - 69.

¹⁹ Colin Wilson, *Rudolf Steiner: The Man and His Vision* (Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: The Aquarian Press, 1985), 140.

Eurythmy reproduces the movement of the larynx while speaking and tone-Eurythmy reproduces the movement of the larynx while making musical tones - either humming or singing. Forms of movement might include running or clapping to simple rhythms, or copper rod exercises designed to increase the strength and awareness of the limbs. In this way, Eurythmy infused healthy human energy into education to further the development of the human organism and the human soul.²⁰

Another unique feature of Waldorf school education is that the teacher remains with the same class for all the years the children are at the school. Rather than having a different teacher for each grade, they have a different teacher for each class. This way, the students have the same classmates and the same teacher from the time they enter the school until the time they leave. Steiner believed that children flourish only when they feel safe and secure, a feeling that is enhanced by the knowledge that their teacher will always be their teacher. This also allowed the teacher to come to know the temperaments of his students, an essential element of Steiner's pedagogy. By identifying a child's temperament, the teacher could accommodate his or her personality in the lessons, allowing the child to get more out of the lesson. To Steiner, the temperament of the person is what stands between the hereditary and the spiritual, the earthly and

²⁰ Though Steiner discusses Eurythmy in many of his lectures and books, his *Introduction to Eurythmy: Talks Given Before Sixteen Eurythmy Performances*, trans. Gladys Hahn (New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1984) is a good starting point. Eurythmy was developed in 1912 by Steiner and one of his young disciples, seventeen-year-old Lori Smits. He stressed there were three elements to Eurythmy: esthetic: beauty; pedagogical: the soul and physical body are united by transforming vowel and consonant sounds into physical movements; and hygienic: increasing connection between the physical body and the etheric body., 20. See also, "Lecture III: 10 April 1924," in *Essentials of Education*, 47-62.

the cosmic, the past and the eternal.²¹

Steiner identified four temperaments:

1. Melancholic: Attention is not easily aroused, strongly persevering. Usually quiet and withdrawn, deeply thinking, brooding, and appears moody and reserved. Physically they appear tall and lean, though their shoulders usually slope under the apparent weight of their bodies and their worries. They walk with measured steady steps that are, however, not firm. The ego dominates this temperament and it is associated with the earthly element. Melancholics run the danger of delusions, melancholia, and to a lesser degree, extreme depression.

2. Choleric: Attention is most easily aroused, most strongly persevering. Person of action, strong-willed, forceful, undeterred by obstacles. Though they can be aggressive and quick-tempered, they are also optimistic. Physically they are short and stocky, with square shoulders and a short neck. They walk with firm, deliberate, sometimes heavy steps. The astral body dominates this temperament and it is associated with the element of fire. Choleric run the danger of fanaticism and mania, and to a lesser degree, uncontrollable temper.

3. Sanguine: Attention is easily aroused, little strength of perseverance. Inclined to vacillation, easily distracted. Easy-going but unreliable, socially well-liked but sometimes superficial. Physically they are tall, slender and well-proportioned, with quick movements and a spring in their step. Often they are blue-eyed and fair-haired. The etheric body dominates this temperament and it is associated with the element of air. They run the danger of lunacy and

²¹ The Four Temperaments are discussed in great depth by Steiner in various works and lectures but his book, *The Four Temperaments*, trans. Francis E. Dawson (New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1968), is a good summary and starting point. See also "Lecture XII: 3 January 1922," in *Soul Economy*; "Lecture I: 8 April 1924," in *Essentials of Education*, 11-26. See also Hutchins, "The Normal Child."

insanity, and to a lesser degree, character instability.

4. Phlegmatic: Attention least easily aroused, least strongly persevering. Strong sense of inner harmony and well-being. Placid, self-contained, calm, patient and even-tempered. Often they are lazy. Physically they are often plump and portly, clumsy and slouching, as if they cannot adapt to the ground they are walking on. The physical body dominates this temperament. Associated with the element of water. They run the danger of imbecility, idiocy, and to a lesser degree, extreme disinterest.

Steiner stressed that it is very rare for a person to be only one of these temperaments - common combinations are choleric-melancholic and phlegmatic-sanguine - and even rarer are polar opposites - sanguine-melancholic and phlegmatic-choleric. He cautioned that these temperaments are in fact combined in infinite ways to form unique personalities but that, in general, one temperament dominates and it is useful to place people in these four categories.²² Knowing the temperaments of the children in the class is useful for the teacher but Steiner cautioned that a teacher should never work against a temperament in order to “balance” a personality. He also stressed that a teacher must come to know his or her own temperament in order to become a more effective teacher and to avoid trying to work against children who are their polar opposites.²³

Another benefit to having the teachers remain with the students throughout their schooling, according to Steiner, was that it created a community. He believed that a classroom is a society in itself, the bonds of which are strengthened by continuity and consistency. Part of

²² Steiner, *Temperaments*, 11-12.

²³ Steiner, “Lecture I: 8 April 1924,” in *Essentials of Education*, 11-26.

creating a successful society is to create a strong authority figure in the person of the teacher. We have already seen how important Steiner believed authority to be in the second epoch. He believed the child lacks the intellectual capacity to question his teacher until after the second epoch, after puberty. An important part of creating this authority, for Steiner, is memorizing lessons. If a teacher has to refer to his notes, whether for mathematics or art or storytelling, this has the effect of putting a seed of doubt into the child's mind, thus impeding the effectiveness of the lesson and of the classroom as a whole. Not only did this undermine the teacher's authority, it also creates a barrier between child and teacher, particularly in storytelling. If a teacher has to read a story from a book, it limits his expressiveness, the drama of the story. And drama, according to Steiner, is an important element in teaching the "whole" child.²⁴

These two aspects of Steiner's pedagogy - his belief in the four temperaments and his aversion to using books or notes - means that Waldorf school teachers do not develop traditional lesson plans. A lesson plan is too static and constraining for a Waldorf school teacher who prefers instead to base his lesson on the temperament and dynamic of the students, a skill which, according to Steiner, is essential to becoming an effective teacher.²⁵

Aside from memorizing poems, stories, and various lessons, Steiner insisted that teachers should have a good relationship with the material they present. He wanted Waldorf school teachers to "feel" the material from the inside so that the student would also "feel" it from the inside. Steiner gave the following example: When teaching a history lesson about the era of

²⁴ Steiner, *Education of the Child*, 30-32.

²⁵ See Steiner, *The Four Temperaments*. See also Steiner, "Lecture IV: 10 April 1924," in *Essentials of Education*, 63-79.

Queen Elizabeth I, the object of the teacher is not to drill a series of facts and dates into the student, it is rather to convey to the students the feeling of the time. To make the student aware of the basic essence of the era is the teacher's task. Therefore, if the teacher himself is not aware of this essence, he must first make himself aware before he can teach his students. This, Steiner recognized, may occupy much of the teacher's spare time but that, he argued, is the role of the Waldorf teacher. A teacher's calling to his profession implies great responsibility, and in some cases, great sacrifice of personal time and energy.²⁶

In order to allow both teacher and student sufficient time to assimilate ("live into") a subject Waldorf schools follow a unique timetable. In traditional schools, the day is generally divided up amongst several subjects, including mathematics, science, reading, language, and some days, gym or singing or music, with roughly an hour devoted to each subject. In a Waldorf school, however, students are given more time to spend on a particular subject. Steiner organized the day's activities according to how he believed the child's mind worked. The morning is devoted to "head exercises" because he believed that is when the child is most capable of concentration. In the afternoon, students move on to physical activities. They are given singing, Eurythmy and gymnastics classes. Steiner believed it is just as important to educate and train the body as it is to educate and train the mind. The late afternoon is devoted then to handicraft, such as knitting or crocheting or sometimes woodcutting. Steiner stressed that the boys must participate in the knitting and crocheting just as the girls must participate in

²⁶ Steiner, "Lecture VII: 30 December 1921," in *Soul Economy*, 122-140; "Lecture IV: 10 April 1924," in *Essentials of Education*, 63-79.

woodcutting.²⁷

The “head exercises” were also organized differently than at traditional schools. Rather than alternate between various subjects such as mathematics, science, and history every day for the entire school year, at Waldorf schools these “head exercises” are taught in blocks, one subject at a time. This was referred to as “epoch instruction.” Thus, the children might spend the whole morning (up to two hours) learning mathematics. They would continue in this way for the next month to six weeks, until all the mathematics lessons for that year are completed. Then they might move on to history, for instance, and spend an hour or two every morning for the next four to six weeks learning history. This continues for the entire school year so that by the end of the year the students have learned all the subjects they need to. Instead of learning them all at the same time, Waldorf students learn them one at a time. Steiner believed that this allowed the student to form a better relationship with the material to be learned and gave them time to “live into” the subject. By this he meant that the child was able to come to the subject organically and was not forced to learn certain concepts rapidly before moving on to the next subject, but rather, he was able to approach the subject at his own pace. This allowed the student to ask his own questions of the material and come to his own conclusions and in this way the lessons would remain with him for a lifetime rather than the fleeting hour or less he spent on the subject each day. Steiner believed that fragmenting the child’s day into hour-long lessons of various subjects interfered with their ability to concentrate and absorb the lessons being given.²⁸

²⁷ Steiner, “Lecture VII: 30 December 1921,” in *Soul Economy*, 122-140; “Lecture IV: 10 April 1924,” in *Essentials of Education*, 63-79.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

Thus, although Steiner established a set of principles that served as a curriculum, he stressed that this curriculum served as a guideline only and that each individual teacher (and eventually each school) should be left to decide for themselves how best to modify the curriculum to suit the temperaments and needs of their students. In fact, Steiner never wrote a formal Waldorf school curriculum but preferred instead to convey his ideas through lectures. After his initial lectures given at the opening of the Stuttgart school in 1919, he preferred to consult with the other Waldorf school teachers regarding curriculum and teaching methods at periodically held conferences. As a teacher training centre *per se* did not exist, these conferences were sufficient to complete the training to become a Waldorf school teacher. It was not necessary, as far as the Waldorf schools were concerned, to have a formal, state-administered teaching certificate, although many of the teachers did.²⁹

One thing Steiner was unwavering about, however, was that Anthroposophy is not a religion and it is not taught in Waldorf schools.³⁰ According to Steiner, Anthroposophy is a philosophy meant for adults. If it were taught to children, he believed it would make them “jump out of their skin.” He argued that the concepts were too advanced and in some cases too boring to hold the attention of a child and so trying to teach those concepts too early would only alienate the child. Steiner argued, rather, that because Waldorf schools were based on Anthroposophic principles and because most, if not all, of the teachers were Anthroposophists, the children would

²⁹ See Appendix A. “An der Waldorfschule in Stuttgart angestellte Lehrer u[nd] Lehrerinnen,” 11 June 1936, *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen Archive* (hereafter BFWSA), 4/3/162.

³⁰ Steiner became aware of the need for a ritualized aspect of Anthroposophy and so he created the Christian Community but Anthroposophy itself was not a religion.

still learn Anthroposophy. They may not learn the terminology and the advanced theories, but because their whole education was steeped in Anthroposophy, they would learn it through association. In other words, the children would come to view the world from an Anthroposophic perspective because they had been taught from that angle. Hence, even though lessons in Anthroposophy were never part of the curriculum, its philosophy was nevertheless passed on to the children every day.³¹

By the same token, while formally Waldorf teachers are not required to be Anthroposophists, in reality a strong Anthroposophic background is necessary in order to understand and convey the true nature of Steiner's pedagogy. Moreover, given the unique nature of Anthroposophy and its heavy occultist aspects, a willingness to teach in a Waldorf school also necessitates a belief that this philosophy is "correct." Thus, the Waldorf schools are more than just "alternative" schools; they are schools whose pedagogic principles and methods are rooted in and inextricably linked with a highly developed and elaborate world view or *Weltanschauung*. Becoming a Waldorf school teacher is not something one does on a whim, and it is not merely a "job"; it is a way of life. While neither a religion nor taught as a subject, Anthroposophy permeates the schools. Indeed, the teachers are rooted in and exude an Anthroposophic philosophy of life that may be best termed *Waldorfism*, denoting a unique *Weltanschauung* adhered to by teachers and administrators without explicitly teaching the tenets of Anthroposophy.

An important element of *Waldorfism* is individualism. The freedom of the teachers that is

³¹ Steiner, "Lecture VIII: 30 December 1921," in *Soul Economy*, 127-128; "Lecture V: 11 April 1924," in *Essentials of Education*, 90-92.

essential according to Steiner, depends upon the freedom of the schools, each of which is established by the initiative of a handful of teachers and parents. The exception to this was, of course, the Stuttgart school, which originated as a school for the children of the workers at the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory. When it opened in 1919, the Stuttgart school enrolled 256 students and employed twelve teachers. Its original staff included Rudolf Steiner, Emil Molt, Paul Baumann, Fritz Graf von Bothmer, Christoph Boy, Caroline von Heydebrand, Albert Steffen, and Ita Wegmann, to name but a few of the most prominent Anthroposophists of the time. The Hamburg-Wandsbek school was opened in 1922 and was the only other German Waldorf school to be established in Steiner's lifetime. It began with only seven students and two teachers but by 1933 had 388 students and 20 teachers. It was led by both Hans Pohlmann and Dr. Friedrich Kübler, at different times. In 1926 the Hannover Waldorf school was opened with 52 students and only two teachers. The leadership of the school passed through many hands, including Matilde Hoyer, before it was assumed by Rene Maikowski, who, along with Elizabeth Klein, became the most prominent figure in the negotiations between the Waldorf schools and the National Socialists.³² In Germany's largest city, the Berlin school opened in 1928 with 56

³² Born in 1900, Rene Maikowski joined the Anthroposophy Society in 1922. He taught at many of the Waldorf schools before settling in as principal of the Hannover school. His brother, Hans-Eberhard Maikowski, was an SA Major and was killed by a communist in 1933. He was held by some Nazis to be a martyr of the movement. After the Hannover school closed in 1937, Maikowski directed his efforts towards preventing the closure of the Waldorf school in Vienna. He spent the war teaching in France and returned to Germany in July 1945. Arriving in Hannover, he began teaching classes again that month with the help of a few other Waldorf teachers. The school was officially reopened on 1 October 1945. Maikowski died in 1992. This biographical information and information about Hans-Eberhard Maikowski comes from Rene Maikowski, *Schicksalswege auf der Suche nach dem lebendigen Geist* (Freiburg: Verlag Die Kommenden, 1980), 140-143; 175-176 and Uwe Werner, *Anthroposophen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus, 1933-1945* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999), 38, 99, *Anlage* 24, 450.

students and three teachers. The personal animosity felt by its principal Anni Heuser toward Elizabeth Klein of the Dresden school prevented the former from occupying a larger role in negotiations with Nazi officials. The Dresden school had been founded one year after the Berlin school, in 1929. In addition to being the principal, Klein also was one of the original founders of the Dresden school. The personal friendships she developed with Nazi officials made her the most prominent figure in the schools' negotiations, as well as caused some concern for her colleagues.³³ The next year, both the Breslau and Kassel schools were founded. Hans Eberhard Kimmich and Heinrich Wollborn both headed the Breslau school during the Third Reich which had 11 teachers and 240 students in 1934. The Kassel school began with nine teachers and 151 teachers in 1930 and its leadership was shared between Marie Kruse, Ernst Kühner and Dr. Erich Gabert at various times in Nazi Germany. A second Hamburg school was opened in 1931 in the suburb of Altona, starting with five teachers and 107 students. During the Third Reich, it was lead by Franz Brumberg.

Steiner envisioned a system of schools that would be independent of each other, though cooperative, and free from outside interference either by the state, the parents, or the Anthroposophy Society. He wanted the teachers to run the schools based on his pedagogical philosophy and according to what was best for the students. Economically, this was never

³³ Elizabeth Klein, principal of the Dresden school, was born in 1901 and died in 1983. She became interested in Anthroposophy at the age of 18 and decided to become a Waldorf school teacher after attending a lecture given in 1919 by Emil Molt, of the Stuttgart school. In 1925 she married Gerhard Klein and founded the Dresden school in 1929. She later claimed that the contacts she developed while building the Dresden school helped her to establish working relationships with several Nazi officials in the Third Reich. This biographical information comes from Elizabeth Klein, *Begegnungen: Mitteilenswertes aus meinem Leben* (Freiburg: Verlag Die Kommenden, 1978); and Werner, *Anlage* 24, 450.

feasible because the schools relied on the financial contributions of the parents in the form of tuition.³⁴ Administratively, however, Steiner's vision was achieved, at least for a while. Initially, each school was administered by a College of Teachers (*Lehrerkollegium*) which was responsible for the daily activities of the school - administration, finance, and pedagogy - and all the teachers were on a level playing field. Over time, however, leaders emerged within the *Lehrerkollegium* and took on the role of headmaster or principal, as the idea of completely equal teachers running the schools together did not work in practice.³⁵ In addition, the parents were highly influential. While Steiner believed the independence of the teachers should be maintained in pedagogical decisions, and that the parents' financial contributions did not entitle them to influence over the teachers, he also believed that they should be involved in education and attached a parents' council to the *Lehrerkollegium* to provide an advisory role. The Parents' Council was not meant to have a say in matters of pedagogy, but was to serve as a sounding board for ideas and assist with the day-to-day administration of the schools. Although the *Lehrerkollegium* and principal were the ultimate arbiters of policy, the Parents' Councils could exert a heavy influence on decisions.

The independent *Lehrerkollegien* of the different schools came together occasionally to participate in *Konferenzen* over which Steiner presided. These *Konferenzen* were an opportunity for the teachers to have their questions answered and resolve any conflicts that had arisen. Conflicts were fairly common, owing to the interpretive nature of Waldorf school pedagogy and Steiner's refusal to set strict guidelines. Conflicts could arise over a number of issues, including

³⁴ Hutchins, "The Normal Child," 87-90.

³⁵ Steiner, "Lecture VIII: 30 December 1921," in *Soul Economy*, 132-134.

pedagogical interpretation, educational goals, issues of discipline, or personal conflicts with one another. Steiner's death in 1925, coupled with the absence of any regulatory or governing body, meant that the schools and the *Lehrerkollegien* no longer had anyone to turn to in order to solve their disputes or answer pedagogical and philosophical questions.³⁶

This was the position that the *Waldorfschulverein* (WSV) tried unsuccessfully to fill. Founded at the Stuttgart school in 1922, it was meant to be an international body to handle the financial and legal affairs of the schools, including the hiring and firing of teachers, as well as the development of new schools.³⁷ It was never meant to interfere with pedagogical or educational matters or the day-to-day administration of the individual schools. The WSV arose out of the need to divorce the Stuttgart school from the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory, as well as provide a buffer between the school and the Anthroposophy Society. Although the WSV fulfilled the former mandate, it was not as successful with the latter.

While Steiner was alive, he was able to hold the WSV to its task. After his death, however, the Anthroposophy Society gained more influence over the WSV by virtue of the fact that Steiner's replacement, Albert Steffen, was head of both the Anthroposophy Society and the WSV and was also a member of the *Lehrerkollegium* of the Stuttgart school. In addition, in the early days the most prominent Waldorf school teachers were also prominent members within the Anthroposophy Society. These circumstances produced a situation where the WSV became a vehicle through which the Anthroposophy Society influenced the *Lehererkollegium* of the

³⁶ Werner, 124.

³⁷ In 1922 there were also Waldorf schools in Dornach, Switzerland and Hertfordshire, England.

various schools, particularly the Stuttgart school.³⁸ Thus, although the links between the Anthroposophy Society and the WSV were not institutionalized, they were real nonetheless.

Rudolf Steiner developed his pedagogical principles out of his Anthroposophic philosophy. What resulted was a unique form of education that stressed the relationship between student and teacher, and between the teacher and the lessons. It was determined by what Steiner identified as the three life-epochs of a child. Textbooks were frowned upon as barriers to true knowledge, and lessons were “felt” rather than planned. Steiner’s pedagogy was so deeply rooted in his Anthroposophic philosophy that in order to practice the former, one had to understand the latter. And although Anthroposophy itself was not taught as a subject, its principles permeated every aspect of Waldorf school life, resulting in *Waldorfism*.

Thus, Steiner’s desire to keep *Waldorfism* dynamic and independent in order to avoid the rigidity of conventional educational systems resulted in an administrative system that was delicately balanced between individualism and cooperation and a philosophy which was delicately balanced between definition and interpretation. His desire to maintain each school as an individual entity proved impossible as the movement grew, prompting Steiner to establish the WSV, which was meant to be responsible only for financial and legal matters while philosophical and pedagogical matters were to remain the purview of the *Lehrerkollegien*. Steiner’s position of authority as philosopher-founder of Anthroposophy and the Waldorf schools maintained the delicate balance this system required. He allowed the teachers freedom of interpretation and action while still providing the spiritual guidance the nascent movement needed. When disputes

³⁸ See Werner, 103-105; Wenzel M. Götte, “Erfahrungen mit Schulautonomie: Das Beispiel der Freien Waldorfschulen” (PhD diss., University of Bielefeld, 2000), 421, 520; “Albert Steffen an das Lehrerkollegium und Emil Molt,” 23 July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/100.

arose, his decisions were universally respected and his authority was ultimate. After his death, however, no person or institution existed to fill this role. As a result, the balance of the system was disturbed. The Anthroposophy Society tried to fill the role of arbiter, an act that some teachers welcomed and others resented as an infringement on the independence Steiner insisted was essential to Waldorf education. This exacerbated rising tensions among the Waldorf teachers and between the schools over questions of philosophy, pedagogy and administration; problems that severely weakened the schools when they had to face a new and more hostile state in 1933. As Weimar Germany became Nazi Germany, the Waldorf schools stood fragmented and leaderless, vulnerable to the Nazi *Gleichschaltung*.

CHAPTER TWO

THE NAZI STATE AND EDUCATION

The National Socialist state that faced the Waldorf schools in 1933 suffered its own lack of cohesion. At first glance it seemed to historians that the violence of Nazi Germany could only have been perpetrated by a totalitarian dictator in complete control of a monolithic state.¹ As historians delved deeper, however, their research revealed a state made up of overlapping departments, ministries and party structures, where its own participants, even at the uppermost levels, were often uncertain as to who was responsible for what. This “polycratic” state indeed relied upon Hitler as ultimate arbiter of power - not as a puppeteer bending all aspects of state and policy to his will - but as the “sanctioner” of policy.² The polycratic nature of the Third Reich, along with Hitler’s refusal to define spheres of influence served to radicalize policy in all aspects of the Nazi state and left ample room for individuals with ambition, personality, and political skill to carve out a significant sphere of influence for themselves, always at the expense of other party members and often at the expense of German citizens. This “survival of the

¹ Karl-Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship: The Origins, Nature and Effects of National Socialism*, trans. Jean Steinberg (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970); William Ebenstein, *The Nazi State* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc. 1943); Klaus Hildebrand, *The Third Reich*, trans. P. S. Falla (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984).

² Hans Mommsen, *Beamtenum im Dritten Reich: Mit ausgewählten Quellen zur nationalsozialistischen Beamtenpolitik* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1966); Martin Brozsat *The Hitler State: The Foundation and Development of the Third Reich*, trans. John Hiden (London: Longman, 1981); Peter Diehle-Thiele, *Partei und Staat im Dritten Reich: Untersuchungen zum Verhältnis von NSDAP und allgemeiner innerer Staatsverwaltung 1933-1945* (Munich: München Beck, 1969); Eberhard Jäckel, *Hitler’s Weltanschauung: Blueprint for Power*, trans. Herbert Arnold (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1972); Edward N. Peterson, *The Limits of Hitler’s Power* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969).

fittest” system allowed Hitler to remain untainted by ineffective policies and poor decisions. Keeping his image untarnished was key to the success of Hitler’s “charismatic” leadership.³ The competitiveness inherent in this system proved both dynamic and inefficient. It was this system of government and party characterized by “fragmentation of decision-making” and “confused lines of authority” that confronted the Waldorf schools in 1933.⁴

When Hitler took power in 1933, he went about “coordinating” various aspects of the existing government with Nazism. He used the Reich Interior Ministry to install Police Commissars in the various *Länder* to help coordinate their governments with the Reich. At the end of March, the “First Law for the Co-ordination of the *Länder* with the Reich” created the temporary position of Reich Commissar to replace the Police Commissars and reorganized the *Länder* parliaments to correspond to the Reichstag with its National Socialist majority.⁵ The second “Law for the Co-ordination of the *Länder* with the Reich” of 7 April 1933 replaced the temporary Reich Commissars with the newly created and permanent position of Reich Governor, which effectively took over the role of the *Länder* parliament.⁶ Most of the eleven Reich

³ Ian Kershaw characterizes Hitler’s leadership as “charismatic” in *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

⁴ Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*, 4th ed. (London: Arnold Publishing, 2000), 80.

⁵ Herbert Jacob, *German Administration Since Bismarck* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1963), 119, 122.

⁶ The “First Law for the Co-ordination of the *Länder* and the Reich” of 31 March 1933 still recognized the sovereignty of the *Länder*. The death knell of *Länder* sovereignty and the independence of the civil service was the Governmental Reorganization Act of 31 January 1934. Which finally and officially stripped the *Länder* of their constitutional and political autonomy. In addition, the *Land* ministries were absorbed by the Reich ministries, making them field agencies controlled by the Reich ministries in Berlin. To complete the process of streamlining

Governors were Nazi *Gauleiter* or party leaders. Although their position was ill-defined and ever-changing, the Reich Governors played a key role in the Nazi *Gleichschaltung* of the civil service. Moreover, they not only provided the link between *Land* and Reich, but also unified the party and state in one person.⁷ The power of the Reich Governors was largely dependent upon how powerful they had been in their pre-existing role of *Gauleiter*.⁸

The *Gauleiter qua* Reich Governor was the most important link in the parallel system of party and state.⁹ The National Socialist party structure was meant to parallel that of the state but because the party never amalgamated its regional, district, and local divisions with those of the state, the desired dualism of the two was never truly accurate and added to the chaos of competing jurisdictions in both party and state. For instance, aside from Hitler, who was head of both party and state, the highest party rank was *Reichsleiter*, while the highest state position was Reich Minister. While many *Reichsleiter* were Reich Ministers, there were in fact more of the former than the latter. Not every one of the highest-ranking Nazis therefore had his own Ministry to control.

The same was true of the second-highest party rank of *Gauleiter*. The *Gau* (or region) he

and centralization, the Reich Ministries absorbed the existing *Länder* ministries so that the Ministries lost their autonomy and became arms of the Reich Ministries. Broszat, 106-112; Caplan, 140-141; Jacob, 118-120.

⁷ Mommsen, 31.

⁸ Norbert Frei, *National Socialist Rule in Germany: The Führer State, 1933-1945*, trans. Simon B. Steyne (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993), 42; Jacob 120.

⁹ *Gauleiters* usually had a substantial regional power base which they could use, coupled with their access to Hitler, to push their own agendas and reinforce an already existing regionalism. Broszat, 109 - 114; Caplan, 165.

controlled was roughly the same size as a *Land*, although the two were never amalgamated. In the state, each *Land* had its own ministry structure. For instance, while there was a Reich Interior Ministry, there was also an Interior Ministry of Württemberg, as was the case for each *Land*. One of the *Land* Ministers would also double as Minister President, head of the state structure of the *Land*. A party *Gauleiter* would often occupy this position. For instance, the *Gauleiter* of Saxony, Martin Mutschmann, was also Reich Governor and in 1935 he also became Minister President.¹⁰ Thus he held three positions, one party position, one state position, and one position that was meant to straddle both (Reich Governor). The new position of Reich Governor complicated the system because his role and authority was ill-defined and largely depended on a *Gauleiter's* personality.¹¹ Finally, at the lower levels a party *Kreisleiter* (district leader) was often also a district leader in the state or mayor of a large city, and an *Ortsgruppenleiter* (local branch leader) in the party was often also the mayor of a small city or town. This system of personal union of party and state, as well as multiple office-holding, provided ample opportunity for overlapping jurisdictions, confusion of responsibilities, and infighting and meant that the personality and ambition of a particular individual could have a significant impact, particularly where others were weak. The newly formed Reich Education Ministry was no exception.

On 1 May 1934, Hitler created the Reich Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, and

¹⁰ Jacob, 120.

¹¹ Many *Gauleiters* gave up their positions as Minister Presidents for the seemingly more powerful office of Reich Governor. The information in this description was taken largely from Michael Kater, *The Nazi Party* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983) and Dietrich Orlow, *The History of the Nazi Party, 1919-1933* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1969).

appointed Bernhard Rust, the existing Prussian Education Minister, as its head.¹² This reflected the Nazi tendency to simply turn Prussian state ministries into Reich ministries, making use of Prussia's highly-developed administration and highly-trained civil servants. The "newness" of the Education Ministry caused problems from the beginning. Without clear lines of jurisdiction, there was ample opportunity for others to intervene in policy-making - and they often did.

The Nazis believed that "as is the state so is the school" and "who controls the youth controls the future."¹³ The aim of education in the Third Reich was to instill Nazi values into the German youth in order to make them productive and loyal members of the National Socialist *Volksgemeinschaft*. This required both a complete overhaul of school curriculum as well as the use of the Hitler Youth as the vehicle for the Nazification of the youth. Foremost Nazis like Alfred Rosenberg and Hitler argued that German education had focused too much on intellectual schooling and not enough on "practical" education.¹⁴ The former had emphasized classic literature and languages as well as philosophy, which, they argued, diluted the students' knowledge of Germany and true German culture in that it encouraged "destructive individualism" and produced cowards and "stay-at-homes."¹⁵ They sought to eliminate this

¹² This was not the only newly-created ministry. The Aviation Ministry and the Propaganda Ministry were added in 1933 and in 1935 the Ecclesiastical Affairs Ministry was created for a total of fourteen Reich ministries.

¹³ I. L. Kandel, *The Making of Nazis* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1935), 29.

¹⁴ George Frederick Kneller, *The Educational Philosophy of National Socialism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), 213; John W. Taylor, *Youth Welfare in Germany* (Nashville, Tennessee: The Baird-Ward Company, 1936), 149.

¹⁵ *The Nazi Primer*, trans. Harwood L. Childs (New York: Harper and Bros., 1938), xvi; Kneller, 142; Taylor 149.

“intellectualism” and replace it with “common sense schooling,” that is, giving students the skills they needed to become effective members of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. German school children did not need to know multiple languages, nor did they need extensive knowledge of philosophy or mathematics. Instead, they should be encouraged to develop a sense of adventure, of nationalist pride, and to see themselves not as individuals but as part of a single-minded community.

By virtue of its connection to youth, education was ascribed a key role in the building and maintenance of the Thousand-Year Reich; a role that many were keen to take on. Aside from the newly-minted Reich Education Minister Bernhard Rust, others in the government and party felt that education, and by extension youth, also belonged under their purview. Because National Socialist education ideals were simply an extension of Nazi theory in general, Alfred Rosenberg, as party theorist, had a great influence over the subject matter being taught. His ideas concerning the history of the German race and the origins of the Aryans was the foundation of the history being taught in German schools. Indeed, the guidelines for the new racial science class (*Rassenkunde*) were developed in conjunction with Rosenberg’s department.¹⁶ Ernst Krieck also became widely recognized as a leading philosopher of Nazi education by virtue of pamphlets such as, “The Education of Nation from Blood and Soil.”¹⁷ Alfred Bäumler, a professor at the University of Berlin who was best known for his appropriation of Nietzsche’s philosophy to support National Socialist racial theories, also considered himself one of the party’s top pedagogical philosophers. He acted as main liaison between the German Universities and

¹⁶ Taylor, 170.

¹⁷ Gregory Paul Wegner, *Anti-Semitism and Schooling Under the Third Reich* (New York: Routledge Falmer, 2002), 21.

Rosenberg, who in 1934 was appointed the “Führer’s Delegate for the Entire Intellectual and Philosophical Education and Instruction of the National Socialist Party.”¹⁸

The actual inclusion of their ideas in school textbooks was under the control of Phillip Bouhler. As head of the *Parteiämtlichen Prüfungskommission*, (Party Inspection Committee) Bouhler clashed with Reich Education Minister Rust over textbook standardization.¹⁹ As *Reichsleiter*, Bouhler held the same party rank as Rust and proved a skilled adversary not only to him but to Rosenberg as well. Bouhler’s textbooks, in turn, were brought into the classrooms by the teachers. As civil servants, teachers came under the purview of Reich Interior Minister Wilhelm Frick, especially after the “Law for the Re-establishment of the Professional Civil Service” of 7 April 1933 gave Frick the authority to remove any politically or racially undesirable civil servants.²⁰ This meant that Frick had the legal authority to fire teachers who did not adhere

¹⁸ Louis L. Snyder, *Encyclopedia of the Third Reich* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976), 16; Robert Wistrich, *Who’s Who in Nazi Germany* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc, 1982), 11-12, 255-259.

¹⁹ Rolf Eilers, *Die nationalsozialistische Schulpolitik: Eine Studie zur Funktion der Erziehung im totalitären Staat* (Opladen: Westdeutschen Verlag, 1963), 30-31. Phillip Bouhler was an old party faithful who had become Party Secretary by 1925. By 1934, he was appointed to the Reich Chancellery where he achieved the rank of *Reichsleiter*. It was his position within the party that served as his basis of power. He used this position adeptly to become a rather important figure in Nazi Germany. His position at the Reich Chancellery meant he was responsible for much of Hitler’s correspondence, controlling to some extent which letters got through to Hitler and which did not. He briefly spent time in Hess’ Department, where he was responsible for cultural questions, which brought him into contact with the Waldorf schools. Following this, he became responsible for ensuring the appropriateness of Nazi literature and school textbooks as Chairman of the Official Party Inspection Committee for the Protection of National Socialist Literature. He finished his career as a Nazi in the T4 department where he was directly involved in the murder of thousands of mentally ill and physically handicapped Germans. Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1973), 561, 601; Snyder, 37; Wistrich, 26.

²⁰ Caplan, 141.

to the new educational guidelines. Importantly, it also gave Frick the ability to remove Jewish teachers from their positions.²¹ From a party standpoint, teachers were under the jurisdiction of Hans Schemm, head of the *Nationalsozialistische Lehrerbund* (NSLB), which was established in 1929.²² The NSLB was responsible for ensuring the ideological compliance of teachers as well as continuing their indoctrination.²³ Indeed by 1937 fully 97% of teachers had come under the control of the NSLB.²⁴ Finally, the broadly-defined area of “youth” was largely under the domain of Baldur von Schirach, as head of the Reich Youth Department. As a special Reich Commission created by Hitler in July 1933, its head, Baldur von Schirach, was subordinate and responsible only to Hitler. Though the Reich Education Ministry administered a Youth Welfare Division, Schirach’s special status meant he wielded much more control over matters concerning

²¹ Initially, the Civil Service Act was effective in weeding out teachers but the shortage of teachers after 1936 limited the Nazis’ options somewhat. J. Noakes and G Pridham, eds., *Nazism 1919-1945 Vol. 2: State, Economy and Society 1933-39* (Exeter: University of Exeter Publishing, 1984), 431.

²² Hans Schemm was an ambitious and ardent Nazi who created his own opportunities within the party. In 1925 he established his own *Ortsgruppe* in Bayreuth, creating a position for himself as *Ortsgruppenleiter*. As the party grew, so did his position, and by the time the Nazis came to power in 1933, he had maneuvered himself into a powerful position in Bavaria as *Gauleiter* of Bavarian East March. He was also appointed as Bavarian Culture Minister and head of the NSLB. In 1935 he died in a plane crash, at which point Fritz Wächtler took over as head of the NSLB. Broszat, 110; and Kater, 161, 171, 186, 210.

²³ Noakes indicates that Rust in fact gave the NSLB this responsibility of political indoctrination in a 6 May 1936 decree, indicating that, in this case at least, Rust was willing to give up power. Noakes, 432.

²⁴ Erika Mann, *School for Barbarians* (New York: Modern New Age Books, 1938), 51; Noakes, 431. Though he lost control of the indoctrination of teachers, Rust maintained control over their teacher-training.

the “youth” than Rust did.²⁵ Thus the nature of the Nazi state produced a situation where three party departments, two ministries, and one special commission, each with countless staff members, made a significant claim to an area of policy that Rust believed was his. Rust’s personality and political skill, however, were not sufficient to fend off the attacks of the many departments and agencies laying claim to “education.”

Bernhard Rust was appointed as head of this ministry not because he was particularly politically astute but because he was an old party faithful.²⁶ Born in 1883 in Hannover, he passed his state teaching exam in 1908 and moved from Hannover to Berlin where he taught at the University there. He joined the NSDAP in 1922 and was rewarded for his faithfulness when he was appointed Prussian Education Minister in February 1933. He held this post until he was appointed head of the Reich Education Ministry which was established on 1 May 1934.²⁷

As Reich Minister, Rust achieved the rank of *Reichsleiter* which was the same rank as Rosenberg, Hess, and Bormann. His influence and authority, however, did not equal theirs. Though his party pedigree was well established, he was not highly regarded by his colleagues. He was known to be a heavy drinker and to be easily manipulated by both colleagues and subordinates.²⁸ The selection of Rust as Reich Education Minister is a peculiar one, then, when one juxtaposes his political weakness with the importance the Nazis claimed to place on

²⁵ Taylor, 68, 94.

²⁶ For descriptions of Rust, see Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), 291; Roderick Stackelberg, *The Routledge Companion to Nazi Germany* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 237; Snyder, 303; Wistrich., 262-263.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

education and the youth.

This complicated situation thwarted any attempts at comprehensive education policy reforms. First, the fact that no national education ministry existed until April 1934 meant that for roughly the first eighteen months of the Third Reich, the individual *Länder* were free to develop and administer their own education policy. All federal decrees were the prerogative of Wilhelm Frick as Reich Interior Minister. For instance, the Interior Ministry's "Law Against Excessive Enrollment in German Schools and Universities" of 25 April 1933 limited the enrollment of Jews in schools and universities to 1.5% of the population.²⁹ The next month, the Interior Ministry decreed that history was to take primacy over all other subjects in the classroom.³⁰ The Instruction Committee of the Interior Ministry, through a series of regularly occurring meetings, directed education and school reform until the Reich Education Ministry was established, a habit that was likely difficult to break after May 1934. In effect, the essential nature of Nazi education policy was determined before the Reich Education Ministry was even created.³¹

Rust attempted to put his stamp on education policy by introducing *Rassenkunde* (racial theory) into the classrooms in September 1933.³² There were also a series of *ad hoc* curriculum reforms, emanating from both the Education and Interior Ministries, aimed at incorporating National Socialist values into school textbooks. Censorship, however, was haphazard and

²⁹ Lisa Pine, *Hitler's 'National Community': Society and Culture in Nazi Germany* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2007), 48; Evans, 298; Wegner, Appendix 5, 195.

³⁰ Blackburn, 36.

³¹ See Kandel, 160; Taylor 58-59.

³² Pine, 48; Wegner, 26.

textbooks from the Weimar era stayed in use for many years because there were no suitable books with which to replace them.³³

In 1934, Rust was able to gain more control over education policy, decreeing in January that all schools must “educate in the spirit of National Socialism.”³⁴ Later that year, Rust also introduced the *Landjahr* and in fact created a division within the Education Ministry to administer it.³⁵ The *Landjahr* was a program that sent city-dwelling students to live in a rural camp and work on a farm for a year, in order to connect with the land and improve their physical health.³⁶ It became an important part of the National Socialist education program and remained under Rust’s control. Additionally, upon taking control of the Reich Education Ministry in 1934, Rust purged it of suspicious elements, removing all four *Ministerdirektoren*, (department head) both *Ministerdirigenten* (section head), and nine of the thirteen *Ministeräte* (ministerial advisor). He also established committees to report on the political reliability of teachers.³⁷

By 1937 a uniform policy began to emerge from the Education Ministry. In March, Rust set about rationalizing the German school system by replacing its complicated system of schools

³³ Evans, 264; Pine, 46; Wegner, 28.

³⁴ Eilers, 28-30; Flessau, 66-73.

³⁵ Alina M. Lindegren, “Education in Germany” *United States Department of the Interior, Office of Education Bulletin, No. 15* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1938), XI.

³⁶ Blackburn, 104 - 105.

³⁷ Noakes, 430.

with three basic types: modern languages and humanities, science and technology, and classics.³⁸ However, Rust could not claim sole responsibility for this policy as it had in fact been developed during the Weimar Republic.³⁹ Therefore, the first comprehensive school policy that Rust could lay claim to was the General School Reform of 6 July 1938 which instituted a Reich-wide requirement that children attend school for a minimum of eight years. It also finally disseminated a centrally determined curriculum.⁴⁰

The confusion and inability of the Reich Education Ministry to effect any Reich-wide policy before 1937-1938 likely contributed to the Hitler Youth's domination of youth policy which was administered by the skillful and ambitious Schirach. With an already existing structure established, the Hitler Youth grew rapidly under Schirach's leadership until it remained the only legal youth group in Germany in 1936. His success in the indoctrination of Germany's youth made the Hitler Youth an integral part of the education system, although the Interior Ministry would not risk the ire of parents by allowing it to take over the school day. In 1934 Frick sent a notice to all schools outlining the limits of the Hitler Youth's involvement in the school day.⁴¹ It is interesting to note that the Hitler Youth's role in the schools was dictated not by the education ministry but by the Interior Ministry. The Hitler Youth's ability to instill

³⁸ Eilers, 50-54; 111-114; Evans, 282; Pine, 45. Pine notes that for girls there were only two choices: modern languages or home economics.

³⁹ Evans, 282.

⁴⁰ H. J. Hahn, *Education and Society in Germany* (New York: Berg, 1998), 80-81; Eilers, 50-54; Kneller, 210-211.

⁴¹ "Verordnung die Kultministers über die Schulordnung auf Grund verbindlicher Richtlinien des Reichsministers des Innern," 24 January 1934, *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen Archive* (hereafter BFWSA), 4/2/230.

National Socialist values in Germany in fact usurped what was to be education's most important role.

The Hitler Youth's dominance in this regard was brought to stark realization with the creation of the Adolf Hitler Schools (AHS). Even before he became Reich Education Minister, Rust opened three National Political Schools (*Napolas*) on Hitler's birthday in 1933. The *Napolas* were boarding schools that were intended to be secondary schools for young men who showed leadership skills. In effect, they were elite Nazi schools. However, in 1937 Robert Ley, Chief of the Party Organization and leader of German Labour Front, with the cooperation of Schirach, developed the AHS and *Ordensburgen*. The AHS were meant to train future political leaders but were very similar in their activities and organization to the *Napolas*, except that they were institutions of the party. The *Ordensburgen* were the university equivalent of the AHS. In practice, they were rival institutions to Rust's *Napolas*.⁴² When Rust complained, Ley pointed out to him that they were party schools and therefore had nothing to do with him.⁴³ The AHS and *Ordensburgen* outstripped the *Napolas* in popularity, further reducing the Education Ministry's role in indoctrination. Even the *Napolas* themselves eventually slipped from Rust's grasp as they increasingly came under the control of the SA and the SS.⁴⁴

In addition to creating new schools that reflected their world view, the Nazis went about removing schools that were in conflict with their ideology. Confessional schools became a particular target in 1936 when the party launched its "One Leader, One People, One School"

⁴² Evans, 282 - 285; Lindegren, 35.

⁴³ Noakes, 435-436.

⁴⁴ Evans, 283; Pine, 49-51.

campaign.⁴⁵ Beginning in that year, plebiscites were held in which citizens were asked to approve the abolition of Protestant and Catholic schools in favour of one “Community School.” In some *Länder* the community schools were more popular than others, and in general the Protestant schools were more likely than the Catholic schools to support the idea of a community school.⁴⁶ Though the transition was more difficult than the National Socialist administration anticipated, by 1939 all denominational schools had been turned into community schools and all church-run private schools had been shut down or nationalized.⁴⁷ A combination of party and Education Ministry initiatives resulted in the relative success of this campaign.

Not surprisingly, Jewish schools were also targets of Nazi education policy. As a result of the “Law for the Overcrowding of German Schools” of 1933, Jewish students found it increasingly difficult to attend state schools. The lessons being taught were humiliating and their fellow students ostracized them socially. To escape this daily persecution, Jewish children began to attend Jewish community schools in increasing numbers. These schools were run by local Jewish councils and were largely financed by the Jewish community, although they continued to

⁴⁵ Pierre Ayçoberry, *The Social History of the Third Reich: 1933-1945*, trans. Janet Lloyd (New York: The New Press, 1999), 177; Evans, 246.

⁴⁶ Ayçoberry remarks that Bavaria and Württemberg were particularly receptive to the idea of Community Schools, 177.

⁴⁷ In the case of the Catholic schools, this persecution was in contravention of the Concordat of 1933. Peter D. Stachura, *The German Youth Movement: 1900-1945* (London: MacMillan Press, 1981), 150-151. See also Ayçoberry, 177; Eilers, 22-28; Evans, 246-247. “Education in Germany by two English Investigators,” (Kulturkampf Association, 1938), notes that the private Catholic schools were forbidden to accept new students, and over time were “starved.” This tactic was also employed in regards to the Waldorf schools, 66-67.

receive state funding until 1938.⁴⁸ Rust's General School Reform of 6 July 1938 created an awkward situation for the Reich because, as noted, it made it mandatory that every child attend school for a minimum of eight years. This meant that Jewish children also had to attend school for eight years, which prevented Rust from closing the Jewish schools completely. On 15 November 1938, Rust prohibited Jewish students from attending "German" schools, thereby forcing them to attend Jewish community schools.⁴⁹ On 17 December Rust transferred full financial responsibility for these schools to the Jewish community by eliminating state funding, effectively making them private Jewish schools.⁵⁰ Finally, the private Jewish schools were closed completely in June 1942 in the wake of mass deportations to the east.⁵¹ As far as the Jewish schools were concerned, Rust and his Education Ministry was in full control and he did not experience the interference and marginalization in the area of Jewish education that he did in other areas.

Whatever his personal deficiencies, it is clear that Rust was not entirely useless or incompetent, but rather that he lacked the political skill or perhaps the ambition of many of his rivals and found himself pushed to the sidelines in many areas of policy. Despite the interference of other ministries and departments, Rust and his ministry were still in control of the overall shape of National Socialist Education policy and there were several opportunities for Rust to

⁴⁸ Solomon Colodner, *Jewish Education in Germany Under the Nazis* (New York: Jewish Education Committee, 1964), 57; Joseph Walk, *Jüdische Schule und Erziehung im Dritten Reich* (Frankfurt am Main: Meisenheim, 1991), 268 - 269.

⁴⁹ Wegner, Appendix 5, 197.

⁵⁰ Colodner, 57.

⁵¹ Colodner, 57, 39; Evans, 563; Walk, 268-269; Wegner, Appendix 5, 18-20.

exercise his authority and increase his influence. One such opportunity was presented by the Waldorf schools. As private schools, they were no longer welcome in Nazi Germany after Frick's 1937 directive forbidding civil servants and party members from sending their children to private schools.⁵² Not only were the Waldorf schools private, the particular pedagogical principles they espoused were contradictory to Nazi educational principles.⁵³ Their status as private schools eliminated some of the influence that Frick and Schemm might have had over their teachers by virtue of the fact that they were not civil servants and were paid with funds raised through tuition, rather than by the state. In addition, the Waldorf schools' reluctance to adopt many Nazi reforms provided Rust with a legitimate reason to make an example of them, yet he did not.

There were those, however, who did take advantage of their positions and were able to exert influence and control over the Waldorf schools. The most prominent of these was Christian Mergenthaler, Culture Minister for Württemberg and Rust's subordinate. Christian Mergenthaler was a particularly ambitious Nazi. Born in 1888, he graduated in 1907 and volunteered for the army. He taught in Leonberg for a while and served in the artillery in the First World War. After the war he became a teacher in Schwäbisch Hall where he was co-founder of a local NSDAP group. He left the party after it was banned in 1923 but re-joined in

⁵² Kneller, 211; Peterson, 97. The Waldorf schools were considered private because they charged tuition and had independent means. The schools themselves tried to argue that they should not be considered private because they did not exclude students on any grounds and tuition subsidies were available for those who were unable to pay the full amount. This was one of the Waldorf schools' main strategies and will be examined in detail in Chapter Six.

⁵³ The contradictions between Nazi education and Waldorf education are explored in Chapter Four.

1927. It is probably for this reason that he was not made *Gauleiter* of Württemberg, a position which was given instead to Wilhelm Murr. Still, in 1933, Mergenthaler became Culture Minister and Minister President and continued to struggle with Murr for dominance but always came out second-best. In any case, he concentrated on his position as Culture Minister as his power base, which may explain his interest in the Waldorf schools. Indeed, he participated in an aggressive campaign against the churches in Württemberg which included replacing the denominational schools with community schools, a project which was close to completion in June 1937.⁵⁴ It would seem that the Stuttgart Waldorf school was just one of Mergenthaler's many casualties in his zealous Nazification campaign.

Mergenthaler paid particular attention to the Stuttgart Waldorf school which was under his jurisdiction.⁵⁵ To implement his many policies, he wielded a large bureaucracy which included his assistant, Meyding; the head of the *Ministerialabteilung für die Volksschulen* (Ministerial Department for Elementary Schools), Reinöhl, who also had two assistants, Hilburger and Fromann; and finally, the head of the *Bezirksschulamt* (District School Office) Stuttgart, Kimmich, whose assistant was Bauser. While this is by no means an exhaustive list of the Culture Ministry's administration, it represents the chain of command that the Stuttgart Waldorf school encountered most frequently as policy originating with Mergenthaler traveled

⁵⁴ Broszat, 108-110. Jill Stephenson, *Hitler's Home Front: Württemberg under the Nazis* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006); 40-79; 248-251; 349. Both Broszat and Stephenson make particular note of Mergenthaler's zealotry and his aggression towards the churches in Württemberg.

⁵⁵ The internal conflict that plagued the Stuttgart school may have also increased Mergenthaler's dominance over them. These conflicts will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Five.

this route on its way to the Stuttgart school. However, this administration was also subordinate to Rust and it is important to note that both the *Ministerialabteilung für die Volksschulen* and the *Bezirksschulamts* Stuttgart also processed correspondence from Rust, apparently making no distinction of authority between Mergenthaler and Rust. Messages from both men were forwarded with equal diligence, seemingly equating Mergenthaler and Rust's authority in matters concerning the Stuttgart school. For the most part, it seems this impression was accurate as Mergenthaler was generally allowed to administer education policy as he saw fit. However, when Rust felt Mergenthaler had overstepped his bounds, he was willing (and capable) of making his authority known by overriding Mergenthaler's decisions.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, Rust's control over Mergenthaler, and the Waldorf schools in general, was not consistent. While Mergenthaler was able to use the Waldorf school to advance his own political agenda, Rust did not seize the same opportunity.

Rust's lack of personality and political skill prevented him from making the most of the opportunity presented by the Waldorf schools. As private schools that adhered to an educational philosophy which contradicted National Socialism, and that were reluctant to adopt many of the new educational reforms, they offered an opportunity for Rust to assert his authority. The importance of the Waldorf schools in Nazi education policy should not be overstated; they were only eight schools in a country with over fifty thousand schools.⁵⁷ However, they did attract the attention of a few highly-placed Nazis, like Bouhler and Bäumler, who had insinuated

⁵⁶ "Der Kultminister an die Ministerialabteilung für Volksschulen," 4 November 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/077.

⁵⁷ According to Eilers, there were 53,417 *Volksschulen* and 679 private schools in Germany in 1931. Eilers, 53.

themselves into areas which Rust believed were his. Like other areas of education policy, however, Rust was inconsistent in his attitude towards the Waldorf schools. At times he pursued them closely and at others he backed away, allowing himself to be politically outmaneuvered.

The nature of the Nazi state, with its overlapping ministries and administrative districts, the haphazard melding of party and state, and the continual infighting this system generated, made it difficult for any coherent policy or reforms to emerge in the field of education. Moreover, the selection of Bernhard Rust as Reich Education Minister did nothing to settle the confusion and education remained a battle ground for power and influence in the Third Reich. In the Nazi state, where confusion ran riot and power was for the taking, Rust lacked the personality and political skill to rise to the top, leaving education policy fragmented and at the mercy of competing factions.

CHAPTER THREE

IDEALS IN CONFLICT: WALDORF AND NAZI EDUCATION

The implementation and organization of National Socialist education policy may have been haphazard and at the mercy of competing factions, but its goals were highly defined. Capturing the minds of the youth was essential to the success of the Thousand-Year Reich. The Nazis sought to instill in them their ideals of blood and *Volk*, strength and courage, community and nation. These values were essential elements of the racial utopia towards which National Socialist Germany worked. In the same vein, the principles and ideals that the Waldorf schools worked towards were also highly defined. They were rooted in an elaborate Anthroposophic world view which included, among other things, a unique form of education. Their principles centred around individualism, spiritualism, educating the “whole” child, and helping the child relate to the surrounding world. Both systems had unwavering principles, but both also lacked unity and organization. Nazi education policy suffered at the hands of rival factions competing for influence and power, and a leader, in the form of Reich Education Minister Bernhard Rust, who was not politically adept enough to take the reins. Waldorf education, on the other hand, was deliberate in its disorganization, for it helped protect the independence of the individual schools and teachers. Its leadership, in the form of Rudolf Steiner, was not lacking. However, when Steiner died, his absence left a void in both the schools and the Anthroposophic movement which could not be filled. The carefully constructed independence gave rise to rivalries. Despite superficial similarities, Nazi education and Waldorf education were mutually exclusive and inherently opposed to one another.

History, according to Nazi theorists, was key to developing a sense of community. Under

the Nazi regime, it became the most important subject in school.¹ From history, students could learn the true and essential nature of the German *Volk*. History, as written by the Nazis, centred on the Nordic race who had emerged during the Ice Age and migrated across Europe, conquering peoples as far east as Iran and India. Students were given heroes such as Frederick the Great and Bismarck to look up to as expressions of the true German spirit. Emphasis was placed on the Nazi revolution and the interwar period which saw the rise of Germany's greatest hero, Adolf Hitler.² These stories of adventure and heroism were meant to ignite the same feelings in students and give them a sense of national pride, further strengthening their bonds of community. Thus history provided the first essential knowledge to build the true German character and prepare them for membership in the *Volksgemeinschaft*.

History was also an important subject in the Waldorf schools. However, rather than teaching their students history mired in racial hierarchy, they taught what Steiner referred to as the "legends of civilization." History was a way of helping students see the connections between the past and current life. Teachers spent a great deal of time teaching about the ancient religions of India, Persia, Egypt and Mesopotamia, as civilizations that laid the foundation for Greece and Rome. Christianity emerged out of Greece and Rome, in turn marking the rise of a new impulse of humankind. Rather than tracing the path of one "race" and its dominance and triumph over all other "races," Waldorf history emphasized the diverse roots of the modern world. Finding its

¹ Gilmer W. Blackburn, *Education in the Third Reich* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), 36.

² Kurt-Ingo Flessau, *Schule der Diktatur: Lehrpläne und Schulbücher des Nationalsozialismus* (Munich: Ehrenwirth, 1977) 61, 131; *The Nazi Primer*, Trans. Harwood L. Childs (New York: Harper and Bros., 1938), 113-145; Blackburn, 47-64.

origins in ancient history, Waldorf history traced the coming together of many ideas, civilizations, and religions to produce modern society.³

In contrast, Nazi education used history lessons to introduce racial ideals which were also incorporated into every subject, especially biology and geography. However, none of these subjects allowed proper elaboration. This was provided by the introduction of the new compulsory subject of race knowledge (*Rassenkunde*). In fact, although history was lauded as the most important subject, Rust seemed to have contradicted this when he made it clear that “No pupil, boy or girl, should be allowed to leave school for life without this fundamental [race] knowledge.”⁴ In *Rassenkunde* classes, students were taught to identify the defining characteristics of the different “races” as designated by the Nazis - the shape of the skull, the colour of the eyes, hair, and skin, the composition of the body.⁵ They were taught the principles of race hygiene and Nazi laws of heredity. The knowledge provided by *Rassenkunde* lessons gave (Aryan) students a sense of belonging and solidarity.⁶

Although the Waldorf schools, like the rest of the schools, were expected to teach *Rassenkunde*, there is no evidence to suggest that they complied. The one reported instance of a

³ Rudolf Steiner, “Lecture VII: 30 December 1921,” in *Soul Economy and Waldorf Education*, trans. Roland Everett (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1986), 122-140; Rudolf Steiner, “Lecture IV: 10 April 1924,” in *The Essentials of Education*, trans. A.C. H. (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1968), 63-79.

⁴ 13 September 1933. As quoted in John W. Taylor, *Youth Welfare in Germany* (Nashville, Tennessee: The Baird-Ward Company, 1936), 168.

⁵ *Nazi Primer*, 5-35.

⁶ I. L. Kandel, *The Making of Nazis* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1935), 10, 39, 44, 79; George Frederick Kneller, *The Educational Philosophy of National Socialism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), 141-142, 216; Blackburn, 178; Taylor, 166-172.

Rassenkunde class being taught took place as part of the retraining (*Umschulung*) course at Hannover.⁷ According to the recollection of a Jewish student from Hannover, in the *Rassenkunde* class the students were taught the characteristics of a typical Nordic skull. As it turned out, the Jewish student's skull best matched the description. The ironic discovery, he remembered, was met with laughter by him and all his classmates.⁸ In addition, a Nazi school inspector expressed misgivings concerning the race lessons given at the Hannover school. She remarked that no mention was made of racial hygiene or the application of "Mendel laws" to the Jewish race. The inspector also noted with dismay that the teachers instead insisted that whatever physical or racial differences might exist, every person's soul was the same.⁹ The schools' emphasis on the role of ancient civilizations and diverse religious ideals in the building of the modern world contradicted the principles of *Rassenkunde*, which singled out Jewish students as inferior and privileged one race over another.

Another essential element of Nazi education was the development of physical strength. Supposedly, for too long German youth had been immersed in books at the expense of their physical development. In the Third Reich an hour each day was devoted to physical education, which comprised fifteen percent of the total instructional week.¹⁰ The Nazis saw physical

⁷ *Umschulung* will be dealt with in detail in chapters Eight and Nine.

⁸ Uwe Werner, *Anthroposophen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933-1945*, (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999), 227.

⁹ *Abteilungsleiterin Stamm*, "Report on Hannover Waldorf school," Undated, *Bundesarchiv Lichterfelde* (hereafter BAL), NS/15 301.

¹⁰ A report notes that this is more time than was devoted to any other single subject, Alina M. Lindegren, "Education in Germany" *United States Department of the Interior, Office of Education Bulletin, No. 15* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1938), 13.

education as a “moral obligation” of the student to the state, which was necessary for the vitality of the German Reich. Physical education usually consisted of gymnastics, sport and sometimes folk dancing.¹¹ In sport, the team was emphasized over individual stars to foster a sense of community and suppress individualism, while folk dancing helped reconnect German youth with their roots.¹²

Physical education was also important in the Waldorf schools, but in an entirely different manner. While Waldorf schools did not adhere to strict timetables, the school day was divided into two halves, with the afternoon devoted to the physical, meaning art, music, gymnastics and Eurythmy. However this did not equate to the Nazis’ conception of physical education. Although conventional physical education was taught, Steiner’s Eurythmy was the primary focus of physical activity in Waldorf schools. Steiner believed that movement of the body was an essential element of education as it allowed the child to become more aware of his surroundings and to connect with his body, thereby enriching his soul. A dance-like form of expressive movement, Eurythmy was meant to combine sound with movement, not by dancing to a beat but rather by equating a particular movement with a particular sound or word. Steiner believed that a person could better understand a poem, for instance, if he expressed it through movement rather

J. Noakes and G Pridham, eds. *Nazism 1919-1945 Vol. 2: State, Economy and Society 1933-39* (University of Exeter, 1984), 437.

¹¹ Rolf Eilers, *Die nationalsozialistische Schulpolitik: Eine Studie zur Funktion der Erziehung im totalitären Staat* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1963), 20-21; Blackburn, 69; Kneller, 141; Kandel, 40, 44.

¹² *Nazi Primer*, xx.

than speech.¹³ Thus, the purpose of physical movement and in particular Eurythmy, was not to foster camaraderie, encourage competition, or train children for military service, as it was with the Nazis; rather it was to increase their spirituality and the enhancement of knowledge.

For Steiner, traditional education focused too much on the intellect, a sentiment that on the surface seemed to echo the Nazis' rejection of intellectualism. The difference, however, was that Steiner saw movement and the nurturing of the physical body as an essential element of educating the child; a complement to a child's intellect. The Nazis, however, believed that physical education worked in opposition to the intellect. A person could be either intellectual or physical but could not be both. For the Nazis, the physical superceded the intellectual in importance and physical health and robustness was more revered than intellectual acumen. The physical could be developed at the expense of the intellect. In contrast, for Steiner and his Waldorf school teachers, the intellect and the physical body worked in symbiosis, one enriching the other and resulting in a perfectly balanced individual. Both the physical and the intellectual were equal in importance as both were necessary for a person's full development.¹⁴

To make room in the Nazi timetable for the extra hours devoted to physical education, history, and *Rassenkunde*, the time devoted to other subjects like mathematics and foreign languages was reduced.¹⁵ For instance, the Nazis reasoned that most students did not need to know more than one foreign language; not only did foreign languages increase intellectualism at

¹³ See Rudolf Steiner, *Introduction to Eurythmy: Talks Given Before Sixteen Eurythmy Performances*, trans. Gladys Hahn (New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1984).

¹⁴ Steiner, "Lecture II: 9 April 1924," in *Essentials of Education*, 27-45.

¹⁵ Taylor, 168.

the expense of practical knowledge, they also weakened the student's sense of German culture.¹⁶ It was better to devote this time to practical knowledge such as that gained from history, physical education, and *Rassenkunde*. This also allowed for more time to be devoted to learning their own language. Indeed, Nazi educators focused their attention on the German language, insisting that every youth know "pure" German.¹⁷ In this way, "foreign" elements were removed from German education and replaced with knowledge of all things German.

The Waldorf schools also emphasized the importance of German culture and German language, although, again, with a much different intent than Nazi education. For the Waldorf schools, knowledge of German culture and the German language served to enrich the child's knowledge of the world around him. To know one's roots was to situate oneself in relation to the rest of the world. The purpose of the German culture taught in state schools was to prove that German culture was "better" than other cultures. Thus the German language became the most important language because it was the "best" language. Waldorf schools, however, stressed the importance of foreign languages and prided themselves on their inclusion of language instruction even in the earliest school years.¹⁸

Whereas state-run schools sacrificed mathematics to the more valued subjects of history and *Rassenkunde*, Waldorf schools insisted on its importance as an essential element of knowledge. Its abstract nature meant that it could not be taught in the lower years as Steiner

¹⁶ Kandel, 40; Lindegren, 13; Taylor, 165.

¹⁷ Kandel, 44; Lindegren, 13. They also revived German script.

¹⁸ Rudolf Steiner, "Lecture Nine: 30 August 1919," in *Practical Advice to Teachers*, trans. Johanna Collis (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1976), 128-139.

believed that abstract thought should not be introduced to the child until the second life-epoch, and could be damaging before that. The absence of mathematics in the lower years, therefore, did not reflect its lack of importance, but rather its inappropriateness for certain life-epochs. In the early school years art and language were emphasized over mathematics.

The reverence of German culture in Nazi education also expressed itself in the *Landjahr*, which Rust had introduced in March 1934. At the end of their eighth year of schooling, every city-dwelling student was to spend the ninth year living in a camp in the country, rather than getting a job immediately after leaving school. The belief was that by labouring on a farm the students would develop an appreciation for the land and farming. They would become more robust, improve their physical condition and gain some practical knowledge. In addition, the communal living aspect of the *Landjahr* would further develop their sense of community and comradeship. The year in the country was meant to be a physical expression of “blood and soil” and help the students to better understand their duty to the National Socialist state.¹⁹

While it could not be argued that the Waldorf schools rejected the *Landjahr*, there is no evidence to suggest that they embraced it or that they advocated any similar program of their own. Indeed, along with his own pedagogical philosophy, Steiner also developed medical and scientific theories. His theories on plant life, which he developed into a system he called bio-dynamic farming, won recognition worldwide and is perhaps the mostly widely accepted aspect of his philosophy today. Based on the symbiosis of plants, soil, and animal life, bio-dynamic

¹⁹ Blackburn, 93, 95, 116; Kandel, 40, 58-59; Lindegren, 1-2; Taylor, 172-177. See also Jürgen Schiedeck and Martin Stahlmann, “Totalizing of Experience: Educational Camps,” in Heinz Sunker and Hans-Uwe Otto, eds., *Education and Fascism: Political and Social Education in Nazi Germany* (New York: Routledge, 1997): 54-80.

farming uses no pesticides.²⁰ Bio-dynamic farming was not taught in Waldorf schools, although its principles did inform science lessons dealing with plant life. While Waldorf schools had no fundamental objection to the *Landjahr*, its primary purpose was to increase a child's physical strength, to foster feelings of comradeship, to reinforce discipline, and teach the student to revere the farmer. Learning how to farm was a by-product of the *Landjahr* rather than its purpose. It was not a compulsory aspect of education, Nazi or otherwise, so Waldorf students were not compelled to participate. Whereas many state-taught students participated in this program, there is no evidence to suggest that Waldorf students did so.

All of these ideals - racial purity, an adventurous spirit, physical development, community and dedication to the state - were reinforced by the Hitler Youth. The Hitler Youth was not meant to be a "club" removed from school, but was rather intended by the Nazis to be an essential and integral part of German education. Baldur von Schirach, the Reich Youth Leader, argued that three forces developed the youth: home, school, and the Hitler Youth.²¹ In 1934, Wilhelm Frick, the Reich Minister of the Interior, issued a statement which defined the relationship of the Hitler Youth to the schools. The Hitler Youth was to supplement the work of the school through "character-building, education toward self-discipline and physical education." The work of the school was to "educate the youth to service to the people and state in the spirit of National Socialism."²² The Hitler Youth and the school were cautioned not to place too many

²⁰ Werner, 82.

²¹ Lindegren, 1; Taylor, 158.

²² Frick's statement, as translated and quoted in Taylor, 160-162. The Waldorf schools also received a copy of this statement: "Verordnung die Kultminister über die Schulordnung auf Grund verbindlicher Richtlinien des Reichsministers des Innern," 24 January 1934, *Bund der*

demands on the child out of respect for parent and child since the family was considered the prime unit of the Nazi state.²³

One of the most important roles of the Hitler Youth was physical training. Much of the time spent in the Hitler Youth was devoted to *Geländesport* (open country sport). In *Geländesport* boys took part in military drills, marching up to eighteen miles a day. They also learned to read maps and use a compass.²⁴ Nazi leaders argued that these were skills needed so that they would be ready to defend Germany should the need arise, but denied that they were training a military force for war. Camping trips with the Hitler Youth reinforced the ideals embodied by the *Landjahr*: “ruralization” of the youth, appreciation for the land, comradeship, physical robustness, and adventurousness. In addition, the highly developed hierarchy of the Hitler Youth enforced the *Führerprinzip* (leadership principle) for the youth, instilling in them obedience and a respect for authority.²⁵

The Waldorf schools claimed to encourage their students to join the Hitler Youth and in 1935 the Stuttgart school reported that of 800 students, 163 (20%) were members of the Hitler Youth or *Jungvolk*, and 136 (17%) belonged to the League of German Girls or the *Jungmädchen*.²⁶ The next year, the Stuttgart school reported even more members of the Hitler Youth and League of German Girls, even though their total student population had decreased to

Freien Waldorfschulen Archiv (hereafter BFWSA), 4/2/230.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Erika Mann, *School for Barbarians* (New York: Modern New Age Books, 1938), 119.

²⁵ Taylor, 83, 86.

²⁶ “Waldorfschule Stuttgart,” November 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/093.

684. Of 263 male students, 218 or 83 % were members of the Hitler Youth or *Jungvolk* and of 268 female students, 194 or 72 % belonged to the League of German Girls or the *Jungmädchen*.²⁷ While the Hitler Youth's emphasis upon fostering a group mentality contradicted the Waldorf schools' individuality, even they could not deny its attractiveness.

A final aspect of Nazi educational ideals which should be noted was their insistence upon the physical separation of boys and girls. In the Third Reich, boys and girls attended school together for the first four years at which point each student had to choose what educational path they would pursue. At that point, boys and girls attended different schools. For boys, there were three choices: the *Oberschule* which was meant to be the main school, the *Gymnasium* which was only to be allowed in limited numbers and only in large cities, and the *Aufbau* which was primarily a boarding school for rural children.²⁸ Girls had two choices: the language school which allowed girls to learn the minimum amount of Latin required for university entrance, and home economics which taught lessons the Nazis believed to be more suitable for girls.²⁹ Whereas boys were being trained, through sport and history, to become soldiers, workers or professionals, girls were being trained to become mothers. In school they learned how to cook and sew and how to care for infants and the sick. They learned nutrition, gardening and interior decorating. They even learned how to care for small animals and poultry. In this way, Nazi girls

²⁷ "Statistik," 11 June 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/163. The total number of girls and boys does not add up to 684 (the total student population in 1936) because the schools only counted students in the fifth year and up for their Hitler Youth statistics. This was also the year that the Hitler Youth was designated as the only legal youth group in Germany. See Appendix B

²⁸ Lindegren, 10.

²⁹ Lindegren, 15-18. See also Blackburn, 106-115; Kneller, 230; Taylor, 117-118.

were given the skills needed to become effective members of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. If a girl was unable to fulfill her duty to have children, she had the skills to pursue a profession suitable to women such as nursing, teaching or interior design.³⁰

This was perhaps the most marked difference between Nazi and Waldorf education. Steiner insisted upon the coeducation of boys and girls, along with their equality. Boys and girls were taught the same lessons, participated in the same sports, and even took part in the same handwork.³¹ While girls learned woodworking alongside of the boys, the boys learned to knit and crochet along with the girls, a practice Nazi inspectors found particularly disturbing.³² Indeed, this was another highly unique element of Waldorf education, even amongst the other branches of progressive education of which Waldorf education could loosely be considered a part. Even amongst the most radical forward-thinking school movements in the early twentieth century, co-education of boys and girls was strongly opposed.³³ For Steiner and the rest of the Waldorf educators, however, co-education was essential for fostering the development of the “whole” child.

Arguably the most essential element for instilling Nazi values in German youth was the teacher. While Hitler (and Nazis in general) detested teachers because to him they were both civil servants and intellectuals, he recognized that they were a vital aspect of the state and Nazi

³⁰ Eilers, 19-20; Lindegren, 16-18.

³¹ Rudolf Steiner, “Lecture VII: 30 December 1921,” in *Soul Economy*, 122-140.

³² Annemarie Pahl, “Report on Dresden Waldorf school,” 20 January 1937, BAL, NS/15 301.

³³ Peter D. Stachura, *The German Youth Movement: 1900-1945* (London: MacMillan Press, 1981), 25-28.

education system. Teachers were the implementers and front-line enforcers of Nazi education policy; they were youth leaders as well as classroom leaders.³⁴ It was up to teachers to institute the changes made by the Nazis. They had to teach the new version of history, *Rassenkunde* and physical education. It was up to them to ensure everyone greeted each other with the Hitler *Gruss* and that each lesson began and ended with it. They had to lead the *Hörst-Wessel* song and hang pictures of Hitler in the classroom, all of which were Nazi requirements.

Several methods were employed to ensure the political reliability of the teachers. First, Hitler eliminated the egalitarian teachers' councils which had been responsible for running the schools and replaced them with principals.³⁵ Nazi officials would only communicate with the principal and all correspondence, complaints and concerns on the part of the teachers had to go through the principal, even if the complaints were about him or her.³⁶ This meant that the Nazis only had to ensure the political reliability of the principal of a school rather than the whole staff. It was the principal's job to ensure compliance in his teachers and enforce the *Führerprinzip* in the schools.

Along with reforming the German education system, the Nazis also overhauled the teacher education institutes. New teachers had to learn the new subject of *Rassenkunde* and how to incorporate Nazi race theory into geography, biology, and mathematics lessons. They had to learn the new "proper" history, and how to develop Nazi values in their students. They went on

³⁴ Kneller, 80, Noakes, 430-431.

³⁵ Kandel, 80, 87, 93, 94, Kneller, 78. The principal was not a new idea in Germany but under the Weimar Republic, schools had instituted the *Lehrerkollegien* as a more effective and inclusive way to administer their schools.

³⁶ Kneller, 77.

camping trips and whenever possible training institutions were located in rural areas to instill in teachers the same respect for the farmers and the land they were supposed to transfer to their students. In this way, the teachers were indoctrinated and came under Nazi influence, which also included membership in the NSLB.³⁷

Though the Waldorf schools employed the position of principal, as the Nazis proscribed, they had already done so out of necessity before the Nazis took power. In addition, the *Lehrerkollegium*, which the Nazis had eliminated in public schools, maintained an important place and function in the administration of the Waldorf schools, marking a clear rejection of the *Führerprinzip*. In addition, because they were private schools, the teachers were not employed by the state and were not civil servants, and theoretically, they did not have to join the NSLB.³⁸ Furthermore, they did not take part in Nazi retraining courses. Instead, to be trained, the Waldorf teacher took part in a series of colloquia, usually held at the Stuttgart school, in which Steiner's lessons were taught and discussed. Training did not involve making lesson plans, taking exams, or passing a licence. Though many of the Waldorf teachers held state teaching licenses, it was not required for employment in a Waldorf school.³⁹

Though the sources make it impossible to reconstruct the backgrounds of the Waldorf school teachers as a whole, certain information can be gleaned. The teacher-student ratio

³⁷ Kneller, 216-217; Noakes, 431.

³⁸ Many Waldorf teachers did, in fact, join the NSLB as an act of good faith and on the assumption that this would complete the *Gleichschaltung* of the Waldorf schools. This event will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

³⁹ See Appendix C: "Liste der and der Waldorfschule tätigen Lehrkräfte," Stuttgart, 10 January 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/225; Appendix A: "An der Waldorfschule in Stuttgart angestellte Lehrer u[nd] Lehrerinnen," 11 June 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/162.

fluctuated between 15:1 and 19:1.⁴⁰ In 1933 there were between 115 and 150 teachers employed at the German Waldorf schools, with almost half teaching at the Stuttgart school.⁴¹ The only teachers positively identified as Jewish were four teachers from the Stuttgart school: Dr. Hiebel, Dr. Lehrs, Dr. Schubert, and Mr. Strakosch. The point was made, however, that Dr. Schubert was a veteran of the First World War.⁴² Other than Jewish background, the religion of other teachers is never indicated.⁴³ Likewise, detailed information concerning the ages and gender of the Waldorf teachers is not available, although we do know that the Stuttgart school's staff was divided almost evenly between men and women. In 1936, the Stuttgart school reported it had 25 male and 24 female teachers on staff.⁴⁴

Similar difficulties are associated with the student and parent population. Although the Stuttgart school began as a school for workers' children, it quickly moved away from its origins.

⁴⁰ Statistics drawn from Werner, *Anlage 4*, 374-375.

⁴¹ Werner, *Anlage 4*, 374-375. Teacher numbers are missing for the Hamburg-Altona, Breslau and Dresden schools for 1933. For 1934 the schools counted 12, 11, and 17 teachers respectively.

⁴² "Stockmeyer an Ortsgruppen," 11 March 1934, BFWSA 5/9/086. A letter from 1933 claims that of the non-Aryan teachers, all of them received their "Jewish element" from their mothers and all were First World War veterans, except one who was an Austrian officer who worked on the railroads during the war. The letter does not identify how many non-Aryan teachers it is referring to. See Appendix D: "Angaben Über die Frei Waldorfschule," 12 July 1933, BFWSA 4/2/089.

⁴³ The reason for this is likely twofold: first, the Waldorf school leadership was only ever asked by the Nazi administration to identify Jewish teachers, and second, while Anthroposophy claims it is not a religion, the nature of Anthroposophy precludes organized religion.

⁴⁴ "Statistik," 11 June 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/162. There is no information concerning teachers' membership in the NSDAP, although membership in the NSLB is discussed in Chapter Five, Chapter Eight, and Chapter Nine.

By 1920 Stuttgart's teachers were no longer employees of the Waldorf Cigarette Factory and by 1923 the student population was divided evenly between workers' children and non-workers' children. As with the teachers, the most detailed information about the student population is available for the Stuttgart school largely in response to requests made by the Reich Education Ministry. In 1933 Stuttgart reported that 14 of 964 students were "non-Aryan."⁴⁵ In November 1935 Stuttgart reported that of 800 students, 15 (1.88 %) were "full Jews," 1 (0.12 %) student was "three-quarters Jewish," and 10 (1.25 %) were "half-Jews."⁴⁶ In a later report, the numbers for the entire school year 1934-1935 were slightly different: 22 (2.5 %) "full Jews" and 12 (1.4 %) "half-Jews" out of 870 students. Of those, 22 had fathers who were First World War veterans, therefore, for statistical purposes, of 870 students, only 12 or 1.37 % were "Jewish." The same report gave figures for the 1935-1936 school year which included 35 "Jewish" students, of whom 17 were children of First World War veterans, resulting in a figure of 1.45 % of "Jewish" students.⁴⁷ The Dresden school reported in 1933 that of 304 children, only three were "full Jews" and seven were "Jews by law." Of the three "full Jews," two were children of First World War veterans.⁴⁸ In 1933 the schools reported that the overall Jewish student

⁴⁵ "Angaben Über die Frei Waldorfschule," 12 July 1933, BFWSA 4/2/089. See Appendix D.

⁴⁶ "Waldorfschule Stuttgart," November, 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/093. In fact, the total "Jewish" cohort was 26 out of 800 students which equals 3.25 % of the student population. However, according to Nazi definitions, because 16 of those students' fathers were veterans of the First World War, only 10 were considered "Jewish" for statistical purposes, which meant only 1.25 % of their population was officially "Jewish." See Appendix E.

⁴⁷ "Statistik," October 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/238. See Appendix F.

⁴⁸ "Nationalisozialistische Eltern der Rudolf Steiner Schule Dresden an Ministerpräsidenten von Killinger," 29 May 1933, BFWSA 4/2/027.

population of all the schools was 1.5 - 2 % and therefore did not exceed the restrictions that had been imposed on Jewish students in German schools.⁴⁹

Even less information exists regarding the parent population because the schools were never asked to provide this information. In 1935 the Stuttgart school reported that of 1084 parents, 24 (2.2%) were teachers or employees of the school, and 256 (23.6 %) were members of the Anthroposophy Society. Those Anthroposophic parents had 284 (35.5 %) children enrolled in the Stuttgart school. In addition, 67 (6.2 %) parents belonged to the National Socialist party and 22 (2.0 %) belonged to the Women's association.⁵⁰ The National Socialist Parents' Association of the Dresden school reported in 1933 that 11-12 % of the parents were Anthroposophists.⁵¹ The Association did not, however, report their own numbers. Though it is not possible to construct the class background of the parents, the fact that many of them supported the schools when they encountered financial difficulties after 1936 suggests that a portion of the parents were affluent. In addition, however, the fact that tuition subsidies were common suggests a portion of the parent population was less than affluent. Clearly, Waldorf parents came from all strata of society, although the proportion of each is unclear. What is clear, however, is that the dedication of these parents to the schools was immense. Aside from

⁴⁹ Maikowski to Bojunga, "Denkschrift," 13 March 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/020. This was in reference to the restrictions imposed on Jewish students in German schools. According to the "Law for the Overcrowding of German Schools" of 24 April 1933, Jewish students were limited to 1.5% of the total student population.

⁵⁰ "Waldorfschule Stuttgart," November, 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/093. The figure of 1084 parents was arrived at by counting mother and father as one parent. See Appendix E.

⁵¹ Letter of Rudolf Steiner School Dresden to Christoph Boy, 31 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/030.

financial support, the parents also provided personnel support for the schools, for instance, volunteering to cook in the kitchens or take care of administrative work that the schools could not afford to pay for. Philosophically speaking, the parents supported and defended the schools against attacks, as shown by the National Socialist Parents' Association's defense of the Dresden school.⁵² This dedication lent a great deal of weight to the Parents' Councils of the schools, which assisted the *Lehrerkollegium* in the day-to-day administration of the schools.

A highly involved parent and teacher population, a loosely defined and fluid curriculum, and emphasis on language, art, dance, expression, and individualism all seemed to position the Waldorf schools in direct opposition to the Nazification of education in public schools. Yet, the school leadership noted similarities between their educational ideals and those of the Nazis. Both groups emphasized history, German culture, and physical education, while rejecting intellectualism. The difference lay, however, in substance and interpretation. Whereas the Waldorf school leadership believed that these ideals indicated similarities they, in fact, did not.

Whereas the Waldorf schools used history to emphasize the diversity of modern society's origins, the Nazis used it to emphasize Aryan superiority over all other peoples. In Waldorf schools, the connections between German culture and the rest of the world were emphasized whereas in National Socialist state schools German culture was used politically and ideologically to reinforce the Nazi *Weltanschauung* and deride other cultures. Physical education in the Waldorf schools helped the child to connect to the body and spirituality, and gain a better understanding of the world, whereas the student in the state school learned competition, militarism, and physical endurance. The Waldorf schools' rejection of intellectualism was based

⁵² See Chapter Six for a more detailed account of the contents of this letter.

on the belief that in order to educate a child holistically, the physical and the intellectual are equally important. Nazi education lauded physical strength and rejected intellectualism as evidence of weakness. When these two systems confronted one another in 1933, the Waldorf schools mistakenly assumed the differences of method between *Waldorfism* and Nazism were insignificant. They believed that while their means differed, the end goals were the same.

For the Nazis, the Waldorf schools represented everything that was wrong with German education. Their emphasis on expression, individuality, and spiritualism was in direct contradiction to Nazi ideals of uniformity, discipline, and “practical” knowledge. The Waldorf schools focused too much on intellectual pursuits such as foreign languages and did not place enough emphasis upon the importance of physical training. The physical education they provided included too much of dance and expressive movement rather than the marching, hiking, and running favoured in state schools. The Waldorf schools sought to shape students into well-rounded individuals who were in touch with their spirituality and their place in the world around them. The aim of National Socialist education, however, was to produce physically robust specimens, capable of hard labour either in the field, the factory, or on the battlefield. They were trained to become members of a uniform *Volksgemeinschaft* that shared the same blood and was of the same mind. Nowhere in the Nazi ideal was there room for the spiritual and expressive individuals the Waldorf schools sought to produce.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONSOLIDATION AND DISINTEGRATION: THE *BUND DER FREIEN WALDORFSCHULEN*

When the National Socialists gained control of the state in January 1933, it prompted the German Waldorf schools to create the *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen* (BFWS). The absence of any federal advisory body prior to 1933 had caused difficulties for the schools in the past but the advent of the Third Reich forced them to come together and form the BFWS. While they were wary of subordinating their individual autonomy to a federal governing body, the schools recognized that they needed a way to communicate with the new Nazi government as a unit, rather than as eight separate entities. The purpose of the Bund was to ensure consistency in dealing with the new government across all eight schools, as well as to help alleviate some of the tensions that existed amongst the schools themselves. These tensions needed to be resolved before a coherent policy regarding the Nazi regime could be reached, not least because they centred around the Stuttgart school. As the flagship school of the Waldorf school movement, Stuttgart was to serve as a symbol for the movement itself and a focal point for the efforts of the Bund. Before this could happen, however, its internal divisions and relationship with the Anthroposophy Society in Dornach, Switzerland, had to be repaired. The Bund did not want to rally behind a school that seemed about to collapse because of its internal problems.

The absence of any nation-wide governing body for the Waldorf schools had been a deliberate decision by Rudolf Steiner to protect the autonomy and unique character of the schools. Each new school was formed by parents and teachers in one locality, of their own initiative, who raised the funds to build the school and get it started. As we have seen, each

school had its own teachers' and parents' council, which cooperatively administered the school. This method of organization meant that both the parents and the teachers were heavily involved in the day to day activities of the schools and they had a vested interest in the well-being of the school. Just as Steiner had encouraged freedom of action amongst his teachers, the same was true of the individual schools. Each school had its own unique culture and its own unique needs, and no school should presume to know what was best for another school. In this way, Steiner hoped to avoid the rigidity and doctrine of the public school system and instead allow the various schools to accommodate the individual needs of their students.

This is not to say that the schools did not cooperate with each other. As we have seen, the teachers regularly came together for teacher education courses at the Stuttgart school, and they often turned to one another for advice and support. Teachers moved relatively freely between schools, filling in at one or more schools when a particular need arose. For instance, when Rene Maikowski, principal of the Hannover school, found his school in need of a music teacher in 1935, he asked Stuttgart if they could spare one.¹ In addition, some teachers simultaneously held positions at more than one school, as was the case with Hans Jacobi, who worked at both the Kassel and Stuttgart schools. Furthermore, the *Waldorfschulverein* (WSV) was established in 1922 as a federal body which was responsible strictly for financial and legal issues. It was diligently kept away from matters of administration, pedagogy, or student concerns.

While each school was meant to be free to interpret and implement Steiner's pedagogical philosophies as they saw fit, the lack of any regulatory or advisory body had meant that when

¹ Letter of Maikowski to Bothmer, 11 September 1935, *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen Archive* (hereafter BFWSA), 3/4/112.

serious conflicts arose between faculty members, there was no mechanism in place to solve those conflicts after Steiner's death, allowing them to fester. The increasing friction among the Waldorf schools brought the need for an advisory body to the fore but the schools were reluctant to surrender their autonomy. They were forced into action, however, by the Nazi *Gleichschaltung*.² The process of *Gleichschaltung* was meant to bring all institutions in the Reich - political, social, and financial - under Nazi control. For the schools, it meant instilling Nazi values, introducing the Nazi curriculum, and joining the *Nationalsozialistische Lehrerbund* (NSLB). The Waldorf Schools, for their part, did not recognize the far-reaching consequences of *Gleichschaltung*. They hoped that by forming the Bund and attaching it to the NSLB, they would satisfy the requirements of *Gleichschaltung*.

When it was constituted, the Bund was made up of the eight principals of the eight schools and was intended to be a representative body of the schools, empowered to make decisions on their behalf. In creating the Bund its members were careful to note that its role was strictly a political one and its main purpose was to be a liaison between the schools and the Nazi administration.³ Christoph Boy, widely regarded as the most prominent and most respected Waldorf school teacher, was chosen to be the head of the Bund. Not only was he chosen because of his status within the Waldorf school community, but also because he belonged to the Stuttgart school. This choice both recognized the special status of Stuttgart as the flagship school and

² Letter of Klein to Waldorf schools, 31 March 1933, BFWA, 3/6/052; Letter of Rittersbacher to Waldorf schools, 7 March 1933, BFWA, 3/4/110; Letter of Karl Ege to Waldorf schools, 8 May 1933, BFWA 4/2/008.

³ Letter of Baumann to Maikowski, 29 May 1934, BFWA, 4/6/025; Letter of Maikowski to Baumann, 11 September 1934, 4/6/055.

assuaged the Stuttgart school's fears of misrepresentation. It also pleased the other schools because of Boy's status and reputation within the Waldorf school community.⁴

Naturally, the first and most pressing task of the Bund was to join the NSLB. The schools assumed that the task was simple. By forming the BFWS and joining the NSLB collectively instead of having the teachers join individually, their *Gleichschaltung* would be accomplished in one grand step.⁵ They resolved additionally that they should "clear up the misunderstandings" that had arisen over the nature of the schools.⁶ This two-pronged approach revealed the naivety of the schools and their fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of *Gleichschaltung*. They hoped to exist outside of the public school system, as they had in Weimar Germany, and naively assumed joining the NSLB would fulfill their obligations to the new state and allow them to continue on with life as usual. In May 1933 when the Reich Commissioner of Coordination for the NSLB, Gottfried Kimpel, informed the schools that in order to complete their coordination they had to become members of the NSLB, therefore, they did not greet this news with dismay.⁷ Instead, they wholeheartedly supported joining the NSLB, assuming that this would be a straight-forward and painless act which would ensure their existence in the Third Reich.⁸

⁴ Letter of Hans Eberhard Schiller to Baumann, 11 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/037.

⁵ Letter of Boy to Waldorf schools, 16 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/015.

⁶ Elizabeth Klein, "An das Kollegium der Freien Waldorfschule Stuttgart," 31 March 1933, BFWSA, 3/6/052.

⁷ Letter of Kimpel to Waldorf School Stuttgart, 6 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/6/001.

⁸ Letter of Christoph Boy to the Waldorf Schools, 16 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/015; Letter of Boy to Schiele, 19 May 1933, BFWSA 4/2/021; Letter of Uebelacker to Boy, 27 May 1933,

The first step in this process was to send Boy to Berlin to express their “willingness to adapt to the new political conditions.”⁹ They even hoped to “negotiate a special position for the Waldorf schools within the German private school system under the leadership of the NSLB.”¹⁰ The schools had been informed that membership in the NSLB meant that Jews and Freemasons could not be employed at the schools.¹¹ This posed no problem for the Hamburg-Wandsbek school because, as they pointed out, they employed no Jews and the one possible Freemason was away on holiday and could be dealt with later. For that school, then, the immediate concern was to join the NSLB; any remaining difficulties could be worked out later.¹² In contrast to the Wandsbek school, the Stuttgart school employed four Jewish teachers. Boy naively remarked that he hoped the school would be allowed to keep two of their Jewish teachers and that he would appeal to Hans Schemm (head of the NSLB) or Christian Mergenthaler (Culture Minister for Württemberg) for this exception.¹³ Boy’s belief that he would be granted this request revealed his fundamental misunderstanding of both the totality of *Gleichschaltung* and the purpose behind the exclusion of Jews and Freemasons. Clearly, the schools did not understand that, as far as Jews and Freemasons were concerned, there was no room for negotiation.

The initial optimism expressed by the schools quickly began to evaporate. Suspicions

BFWSA, 4/2/023; Letter of Ege to Waldorf schools, 8 May 1933, BFWSA 4/2/008.

⁹ Letter of Ege to Waldorf schools, 8 May 1933, BFWSA 4/2/008.

¹⁰ Karl Ege to the Waldorf schools, 8 May 1933, BFWSA 4/2/008.

¹¹ Letter of Christoph Boy to the Waldorf Schools, 16 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/015.

¹² Letter of Uebelacker to Boy, 27 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/023.

¹³ Letter of Boy to Schiele, 19 May 1933, BFWSA 4/2/021.

that *Gleichschaltung* might not be so easily achieved began to surface at the end of May and continued into June. Though the creation of the Bund and its membership in the NSLB was meant to unify the schools and complete the process of coordination in one step, this process was not satisfactory to all NSLB branches. At the Hamburg-Wandsbek school, the NSLB branch there installed Schümann (who was already a member of the faculty) as the school's principal. For his part, Schümann expressed concerns to Boy that the Bund's membership in the NSLB might not be enough to satisfy the requirements of *Gleichschaltung*.¹⁴ Meanwhile, in Saxony, the local NSLB branch rejected the Dresden faculty's application for membership because they were not members of the NSDAP.¹⁵ Thus, even though Kimpel had indicated that the Bund's application to the NSLB was sufficient, some local NSLB leaders had other requirements.

Incidents such as these made the principal of the Berlin school, Herbert Schiele, nervous. He wrote to Boy with some urgency that the schools must decide on a course of action soon. He offered the example of a school in Magdeburg, whose teachers had also entered the NSLB collectively but simultaneously applied for individual membership, and suggested that the Waldorf schools should consider this as well. Perhaps doing so would help convince Nazi authorities of their desire to facilitate *Gleichschaltung* and would serve to overcome the difficulties some of the schools were experiencing. It was clear to Schiele that whatever course of action they decided upon, time was of the essence.¹⁶ Schiele's advice was taken to heart and

¹⁴ Letter of Schümann to Boy, 27 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/025.

¹⁵ Letter of Rudolf Steiner School Dresden to Boy, 31 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/030.

¹⁶ Letter of Herbert Schiele to Christoph Boy, 13 June 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/045.

individual teachers began to apply to the NSLB as a precaution.¹⁷

In the meantime, Boy wrote to Kimpel again, asking for confirmation that joining the NSLB would complete the *Gleichschaltung* of the Waldorf schools. He also asked whether the teachers were required to join the NSDAP to be eligible for membership in the NSLB.¹⁸ Kimpel's answer was reassuring, if somewhat vague. He replied that the BFWS should be accepted into the NSLB without any problems. As for the completion of *Gleichschaltung*, however, he instructed Boy to send an inquiry to the *Reichsverband deutscher freier (privater) Unterrichts- und Erziehungsanstalten* (Reich Association for Free (Private) Instruction and Education Schools).¹⁹ This positive reply, despite its qualifications, was a relief to Boy and the schools. Their relief, however, was short-lived. Only a week later, Kimpel rescinded his position. At the beginning of July he notified the Bund that its membership in the NSLB could not be approved because its principles did not conform with the NSLB's principles.²⁰ With this news, the campaign to apply for individual membership in the NSLB intensified. In July teachers from the Wandsbek, Stuttgart, and Kassel schools all submitted applications to the NSLB.²¹

¹⁷ Letter of Maikowski to Waldorf schools, 13 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/3/037; Letter of Boy to Kimpel, 23 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/6/005; Letter of Gottfried Kimpel to Christoph Boy, 26 June 1933, BFWSA, 4/6/007; Letter of Schiele to Schemm, 3 July 1933, BFWSA 4/2/063; Letter of Schümann to Boy, 27 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/025.

¹⁸ Letter of Boy to Kimpel, 23 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/6/005; Letter of Boy to Waldorf schools, 24 June 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/056.

¹⁹ Letter of Gottfried Kimpel to Christoph Boy, 26 June 1933, BFWSA, 4/6/007.

²⁰ Letter of Hans Schiele (Reichsverband der Waldorfschulen), "An das Bayrischen Kultminister Herrn Hans Schemm," 3 July 1933, BFWSA 4/2/063.

²¹ Letter of Gottfried Kimpel to Christoph Boy, 26 June 1933, BFWSA, 4/6/007; Letter of Baumann to Boy, 14 July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/092; Letter of Baumann to Boy, 12 July 1933,

At the same time, Schiele wrote to Schemm to dispute the notion that the Bund's principles were incompatible with the NSLB's.²² He pointed out that the schools should not be considered private schools in the strictest sense because they did not make a profit and did not charge tuition to parents who could not afford it.²³ Furthermore, he insisted that ideology had no place in the Waldorf school curriculum. To prove these claims, he invited Nazi authorities to inspect the schools and see for themselves.²⁴ In response, Schemm recommended that they submit an article to the NSLB's newspaper, to clarify what he characterized as

BFWSA, 4/2/087; "Angaben über die Freie Waldorfschulen," 12 July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/089. See Appendix D.

²² Letter of Hans Schiele (Reichsverband der Waldorfschulen), "An das Bayrischen Kultminister Herrn Hans Schemm," 3 July 1933, BFWSA 4/2/063.

²³ The Waldorf schools were private schools. They came under the jurisdiction of the department for private schools in the state administration and some schools even included the designation "private" in their letterhead. However, the point they were trying to make to the Nazi regime was that they should not be treated in the same manner as other private schools in Germany because they did not operate in the same manner. Rather than charging expensive tuition, excluding students who did not meet specific standards, and seeking to make a profit, Waldorf schools charged only as much tuition as was needed to operate the schools and pay their teachers. There were no religious, political, or financial reasons for which a student might be refused entry. The only criteria for acceptance was whether or not there was enough room in the school. Students who could not afford tuition were given subsidies. These subsidies were generated through the increased contributions of affluent parents. Moreover, the parents of a less-affluent student could contribute to the school's operations in other ways; including cooking, cleaning, or administrative work. For all of these reasons the schools felt that they should not be included in the same category as other private schools and should be given special consideration. When they argued that they were not "private" schools they were referring to the fact that they did not make a profit and did not exclude applicants based on financial, religious, or political standing, even though they were, by definition, private schools.

²⁴ Letter of Hans Schiele (Reichsverband der Waldorfschulen), "An das Bayrischen Kultminister Herrn Hans Schemm," 3 July 1933, BFWSA 4/2/063.

“misunderstandings.”²⁵ The resulting article, “Data on the Free Waldorf Schools,” highlighted the schools’ desire to cooperate with the new government. It argued that the schools were not ideological schools, as had been claimed, that Steiner was not a Jew, that their teachers were not Marxists, and that their Jewish students did not exceed the state-imposed limitations of 1.5 per cent of the student population. The article went on to point out that a “preference for the Jewish element” did not exist at the Waldorf schools.²⁶ Throughout this process, the schools exhibited their naivety. Initially, they took the Nazis at their word, believing that simply joining the NSLB would complete the process of *Gleichschaltung*. When difficulties arose, they took the advice of Kimpel and Schemm, eagerly trying to demonstrate their desire to cooperate. The lack of direction and clear policy on the part of Schemm and Kimpel helped foster this naivety by allowing the schools to interpret their actions in the most positive light.

Moreover, the strategy suggested by Schemm seemed to work. In an odd change of heart on the part of Nazi authorities, the Bund was informed on 23 August 1933 that the Waldorf schools now belonged to the Reich Association for Free (Private) Instruction and Education Schools, which was an arm of the NSLB.²⁷ Though this seemed like a positive step, the confusion over the past two months caused some to worry that membership in the NSLB would

²⁵ Letter of Baumann to Boy, 5 July 1933, BFWSA 4/2/072.

²⁶ “Angaben über die Freie Waldorfschulen,” 12 July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/089. See Appendix D.

²⁷ Günther Scholz, “Reichsverband deutscher freier (privater) Unterricht- und Erziehungsanstalten an den Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen,” 23 August 1933, BFWSA, 4/6/013.

not be the only compromise asked of them by the National Socialist government.²⁸ Furthermore, a pattern in the relationship between the schools and Nazi officialdom was established in these two months that continued throughout the years of the Third Reich. The inconsistencies in Nazi policy encouraged the schools to both cooperate with the regime and embark upon a campaign to educate the new government about the true nature and aims of the Waldorf schools, in the belief that this would preserve for them a permanent place in the Third Reich. The strategy of clarifying the “misconceptions” of the Nazi party to gain understanding in the Third Reich was one that was diligently pursued by the Waldorf schools until the end.

Gaining entry to the NSLB was only one of the Bund’s tasks. Its secondary purpose was to clarify the relationship between the schools and the Anthroposophy Society; a relationship that had not been defined.²⁹ When Steiner was alive, he acted as the liaison between the Society and the schools. After his death, however, this relationship became ambiguous. As mentioned earlier, Steiner had always maintained that the Waldorf schools were not Anthroposophy schools, stressing that the schools did not teach Anthroposophy to its students and that its teachers did not have to be Anthroposophes (although all were).³⁰ He considered this a key element of the Waldorf school movement as he wanted the schools to be open to all students and did not want parents or students put off by the mistaken notion that they were ideological schools. This

²⁸ Indeed, Herbert Schiele, of the Berlin school, came closest to a realization of the true nature of the Nazi *Gleichschaltung*. In a letter to the Dresden school, he remarked that although *Gleichschaltung* had been officially accomplished, it was a deed in words only; a deed that was yet to become reality. Letter of Schiele to Dresden, 24 August 1933, BFWWSA, 4/2/115.

²⁹ “Results of 6 May meeting,” 19 March 1933, BFWWSA, 3/2/064; Letter of Heuser to Maikowski, 3 June 1934, BFWWSA, 4/6/029.

³⁰ See Chapter Two, 42-44.

principle was strictly adhered to by all the Waldorf schools. With the Nazi seizure of power, it became even more important to separate the schools from the Anthroposophy Society. The Nazi government was suspicious of the Anthroposophy Society because they identified it with Freemasonry and so the Bund needed to reassure the Nazis that the schools were not unduly influenced by the Anthroposophy Society.

However, the Anthroposophy Society could not be excluded entirely from school life. Many of the students' parents were in fact members of the Anthroposophy Society. Many members of the Society made financial contributions to the schools even though their children were not Waldorf students. Indeed, much of the support for the schools, both financially and spiritually, came from the Anthroposophy Society. Moreover, the schools lacked a certain degree of spiritual guidance. While Steiner was alive, naturally he provided spiritual guidance. When questions of interpretation arose, he answered them. After his death, however, no one succeeded him in this role. The Anthroposophy Society believed that it should fill this role and many agreed, therefore a balance needed to be struck between guidance and influence.

The first step towards defining the relationship between the Waldorf schools and the Anthroposophy Society was to repair the strained relationship between the Stuttgart school and the Anthroposophy Society. This was important because the Stuttgart school was the flagship Waldorf school and had acted as a *de facto* headquarters before the Bund was established. As the only school founded by Steiner himself and the only one at which he taught, the Stuttgart school enjoyed special status among the Waldorf schools.³¹ The teacher training courses were held at

³¹ Letter of Waldorf School Kassel to Waldorf schools, 28 June 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/169; Letter of Maikowski to Reich Education Minister Rust, September 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/229.

Stuttgart because Steiner himself had held them there. In this way, the Stuttgart school served as a gathering place for all the schools. In fact, Steiner actually passed the leadership of the Waldorf school movement to Stuttgart but this was difficult to maintain after his death, and particularly so after 1933.³² Because the schools so valued their freedom of action they sometimes resented Stuttgart's attempts to mediate difficult situations, especially because the Stuttgart school also had the most internal problems to deal with, which undermined its position as "first among equals."³³ These internal problems stemmed from its own strained relationship with the Anthroposophy Society.

A marked divide existed within the Stuttgart school between those who wanted a close relationship with the Anthroposophy Society and those who wanted to remain more distant. In letters to the Bund, Paul Baumann, the principal of the Stuttgart school, alluded to the divisions within his school, without ever identifying which teachers belonged to which camp. It became clear, however, that Albert Steffen headed the faction that advocated a close relationship with the Anthroposophy Society. As a member of the Stuttgart teaching staff, and head of both the *Waldorfschulverein* and the Anthroposophy Society, Steffen argued that the connection between the schools and the Society indeed was found in his person.³⁴ As the divide deepened, insinuations that the relationship between the Society and the Stuttgart school were strained prompted Steffen to resign as head of the WSV. His resignation broke the connection between

³² Uwe Werner, *Anthroposophen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933-1945*, (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999), 96.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Letter of Albert Steffen to the *Lehrerkollegium* and Emil Molt, 23 July 1933, 4/2/100.

the schools and Society that Steffen himself argued was key to the relationship.³⁵

While Baumann acknowledged divisions within his school, he also claimed they had been exaggerated by “enemies” and exacerbated by outside interference.³⁶ He even went so far as to blame the divisions on other schools, namely Berlin.³⁷ Some people agreed with him. The divide in the Stuttgart school was symptomatic of the divide within the Waldorf schools in general and disagreements between the schools over the nature of the relationship between the Anthroposophy Society and the newly-formed Bund had begun to develop along the same lines as the internal conflict in Stuttgart.³⁸ One of the most vocal protagonists was Anni Heuser, principal of the Berlin school, who, along with Franz Brumberg of the Altona school, advocated a more distant relationship than many others did.³⁹ Heuser had stressed the need to define the

³⁵ Letter of Albert Steffen to the *Lehrerkollegium* and Emil Molt, 23 July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/100; Letter of Karl Ege, 26 July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/101; Letter of Ege to Dr. Poppelbaum, 3 November 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/206. Steffen agreed not to make his resignation public. The schools feared that this news would serve to further weaken their position *vis á vis* the Nazi government.

³⁶ Letter of Baumann to Schiller, 18 April 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/044; Letter of Baumann to Maikowski, 29 May 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/025; He made this point directly to Brumberg: Letter of Baumann to Brumberg, 3 July 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/051.

³⁷ Letter of Baumann to Maikowski, 9 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/036.

³⁸ “Results of 6 May meeting,” 19 March 1933, BFWSA, 3/2/064; Letter of Baumann to Maikowski, 29 May 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/025; Letter of Heuser to BFWS, 3 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/028; Letter of Heuser to Maikowski 3 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/029; Letter of Schiller to Baumann, 11 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/037; Letter of Baumann to Schiller, 18 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/044; Letter of Maikowski to Baumann, 11 September 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/055; Letter of Maikowski to Waldorf schools, 18 October 1934, 4/6/059; Letter of Klein to Bothmer, 6 January 1935, 4/3/113.

³⁹ Letter of Heuser to BFWS, 3 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/028; Letter of Heuser to Maikowski, 3 June 1934 BFWSA, 4/6/029.

relationship between the Bund and the Society, and was impatient with the Stuttgart school for not resolving its issues more quickly. This prompted accusations that she and Brumberg were interfering with the Bund's ability to cooperate with the Society.⁴⁰ These were the "outside influences" to which Baumann alluded.

In this complicated and increasingly tense situation, it seems the only thing the schools could agree upon was the need to develop a uniform attitude towards the Anthroposophy Society, so that they could, in turn, present a unified front to the Nazis.⁴¹ They reasoned that if they were to present a unified front to the Nazis by rallying behind the Stuttgart school, it had to be worthy of that support, which meant developing and defining its relationship with the Anthroposophy Society.⁴² Regardless of Baumann's claims to the contrary, it was clear to the rest of the Bund that the relationship between Stuttgart and the Anthroposophy Society was indeed strained and needed to be repaired before the Bund could move forward. Only once this had been achieved, could the Bund begin to define the schools' relationship with the new government.

The Bund was in constant contact with the Stuttgart school over this issue. As much as the Stuttgart school believed it deserved its priority status and fought to maintain that status, it came at the cost of its autonomy. Part of the Bund's mandate was to fight for the existence of the Stuttgart school before all the other schools. In order to do so, however, the Bund became involved in Stuttgart's internal affairs, particularly in matters that affected Stuttgart's relationship

⁴⁰ Letter of Schiller to Baumann, 11 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/037.

⁴¹ Letter of Heuser to Maikowski, 3 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/029; Letter of Maikowski to Baumann, 11 September 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/055.

⁴² Letter Maikowski to Baumann 11 September 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/055; Letter of Dresden to Stuttgart, 17 May 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/023.

with the Anthroposophy Society. The Stuttgart school, in turn, resented the increased involvement of the Bund, mostly because it did not trust the Bund's intentions. This distrust partly stemmed from a change of leadership very early in its existence. Christoph Boy, the first leader of the Bund, was a reassuring figure because he was a member of the Stuttgart staff. Unfortunately, however, Boy became quite ill in 1933 and was unable to continue his duties as head of the Bund. He eventually died in October 1934. Rene Maikowski, principal of the Hannover school, was chosen to replace Boy as the head of the Bund. While Maikowski was well-liked and therefore seemed a good choice to many, his appointment made the Stuttgart school nervous. With a non-Stuttgart member at the head of the Bund, the Stuttgart school became suspicious of its intentions. Baumann, the principal of the Stuttgart school, immediately voiced his concerns to Maikowski in a May 1934 letter, complaining that Boy's replacement had not been properly discussed.⁴³ Baumann ignored the fact that the rest of the Bund agreed upon this solution and instead focused on the fact that, as far as he was concerned, Stuttgart had been excluded from the decision.

When Elizabeth Klein, principal of the Dresden school, forwarded a letter from the Interior Ministry to Fritz Bothmer of the Stuttgart school, he questioned why it was not sent by Maikowski as head of the Bund. He went on to inform the Bund leader that he would take it upon himself to forward the letter to the rest of the schools.⁴⁴ By sending the letter to the other schools, Bothmer indicated that he did not trust Maikowski to take care of this matter, and in fact was suspicious of the reason why it was not sent in the first place. Rather than being satisfied

⁴³ Letter of Baumann to Maikowski, 29 May 1934; BFWSA, 4/6/025.

⁴⁴ Letter of Bothmer to Maikowski, 20 April 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/142.

that he did in fact receive the letter, he instead became suspicious of the fact that it was sent by Klein and not Maikowski.

Adding to these tensions was the fact that the Bund, with its eight members, was proving more and more cumbersome. Throughout 1934, Maikowski was finding it more and more difficult to arrange meetings that all eight members could attend. The schools' vacations and teacher training courses rarely coincided, making meetings difficult.⁴⁵ Meetings with the Anthroposophy Society also proved difficult to procure.⁴⁶ Maikowski ended up traveling all over Germany, visiting two or three schools at a time in an attempt to include everyone; a practice that was very time consuming and exhausting.⁴⁷ Maikowski's solution to this problem was to decrease the membership of the Bund to only five members who were all geographically closer to one another.⁴⁸ While this solution simplified Maikowski's job, it excluded the Stuttgart school, which only heightened his suspicions.

Further adding to Stuttgart's anxiety and sense of exclusion was Maikowski's increasing contact with Elizabeth Klein, principal of the Dresden school. Though Maikowski was quick to explain that his increasing involvement with Klein was due to her existing contacts in Berlin, this

⁴⁵ Letter of Baumann to Maikowski, 29 May 1934; BFWSA, 4/6/025; Letter of Meta Roller to Waldorf schools, 25 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/046; Letter of Baumann to Maikowski, 02 July 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/050.

⁴⁶ Letter of Maikowski to Waldorf schools, 31 May 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/027; Letter of Maikowski to Waldorf schools, 7 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/344.

⁴⁷ Letter of Maikowski to Baumann, 23 September 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/058.

⁴⁸ Letter of Maikowski to Waldorf schools, 4 March 1935, 4/3/016. These five members were: Hannover, Dresden, Hannover-Altona, Hannover-Wandsbek and Kassel.

explanation did not ease Stuttgart's suspicions.⁴⁹ Maikowski addressed these concerns in an October 1936 letter to all the Waldorf schools. In it he defended himself against the accusations that had arisen out of his negotiations with Klein in Berlin, and tried to calm Stuttgart's anxieties by agreeing to their demands that no negotiations be conducted without a Stuttgart representative present.⁵⁰ Robert Zimmer of the Hannover Waldorf school also defended Maikowski and Klein, praising their exhaustive efforts on behalf of the schools.⁵¹ The fact that Maikowski had been in Berlin conducting negotiations on behalf of the Bund was overlooked by Stuttgart because of their nervousness over Klein's growing influence. Her effectiveness, however, was not lost on others.

These problems all came to a head in the summer and fall of 1936; first with the introduction of experimental schools and then with the involvement of Anni Heuser, principal of the Berlin school. On 18 July 1936 the Education Ministry informed the Waldorf schools that they could apply to be experimental schools, meaning that they would not be subject to the same rules and restrictions as the rest of the school system, and option that the schools believed would guarantee their continued existence and freedom of action.⁵² Recognizing Stuttgart's status as

⁴⁹ Letter of Klein to Boy, 3 April 1934, BFWA, 4/2/318; Letter of Maikowski to Waldorf schools, 31 May 1934, BFWA, 4/6/027; Letter of Maikowski to Waldorf schools, 7 June 1934, BFWA, 4/2/344; Letter of Maikowski to Waldorf schools, 18 February 1936, BFWA, 4/3/122 .

⁵⁰ Letter of Maikowski to Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen, 6 October, 1936, BFWA, 4/3/235.

⁵¹ Letter of Robert Zimmer to Bothmer, 12 December 1936, BFWA, 4/3/307.

⁵² Maikowski to Reich Education Ministry, September 1936, BFWA, 4/3/229. For more on experimental schools, see Chapter Six, pp. 25-26 and Chapter Nine.

the flagship school, the Bund agreed to concentrate their efforts on getting it designated as an experimental school before the rest of the schools.⁵³ They reasoned that because all Waldorf schools grew out of the Stuttgart school, they each owed their existence to it. In short, since it was the symbol and foundation of the Waldorf movement, Stuttgart had to be protected before all others.

Though the Bund agreed on this strategy in September 1936, by October the plan began to fall apart when the Hannover school applied for experimental status on its own behalf. This was due in part to Stuttgart's still existing internal problems and in part to the amount of pressure being put on the schools by Nazi officials. The haphazard nature of Nazi education policy meant that each school had a different relationship with local Nazi authorities. It was an unfortunate coincidence that the flagship school was under more pressure than any of the other Waldorf schools. The Culture Minister in Württemberg, Christian Mergenthaler, was particularly attentive to the Stuttgart school's activities and applied Nazi education policy particularly stringently. The ill-effects of this negative attention were compounded by the fact that Stuttgart was unable to overcome the internal problems that gradually isolated it from the rest of the Waldorf schools.

These concerns were recognized by Maikowski. In a September letter to the Reich Education Ministry on behalf of the Bund, Maikowski touched on the issue of the pressure Stuttgart was under and the indispensability of the school which justified the Bund's support for Stuttgart:

⁵³ Letter of Waldorf School Kassel to Waldorf schools, 28 June 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/169; Maikowski to Reich Education Ministry, September 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/229.

No misunderstanding, no ignoring, and no opposition of local school administrative boards, present in Stuttgart, can fully destroy the Stuttgart school. Giving up the mother school in Stuttgart, from whose foundation and existence all other Rudolf Steiner schools in Germany grew, is to be considered incompatible with the intention of the Waldorf school pedagogy. In particular, all other schools are to a large extent dependent on the work of the Stuttgart school for the training and preparation of new instructors....⁵⁴

By November, however, Maikowski indicated to Minister Director Frank that Stuttgart was not working towards the same goals as the rest of the Bund, prompting it to question the soundness of the September decision to put all of its efforts behind Stuttgart.⁵⁵ And in another November letter to Bothmer, Maikowski argued that the Hannover school was also experiencing pressure from Nazi authorities and felt it could not hurt to submit their own petition. He added that in fact the behaviour of the Stuttgart school convinced him of the soundness of this decision.⁵⁶ Maikowski submitted his petition to be granted experimental status on 6 October 1936.⁵⁷

Once Maikowski applied for experimental status on behalf of his own school, the other schools quickly followed suit; first Hamburg-Wandsbek, then Dresden, and finally Kassel. Indeed it seems they made a collective decision to submit these applications.⁵⁸ Although Bothmer wrote letters of protest against these actions, it was too late, the petitions had already

⁵⁴ Maikowski to Reich Education Ministry, September 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/229.

⁵⁵ Letter of Maikowski to Minister Director Frank, 17 November 1936, *Bundesarchiv Lichterfelde* (hereafter BAL), R4901-2520.

⁵⁶ Letter of Maikowski to Bothmer, 2 November 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/262.

⁵⁷ Letter of Maikowski to Rust, 6 October 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/242.

⁵⁸ Letter of Maikowski to Bothmer, 2 November 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/262; Letter of Bothmer to Hildegard Meyer 10 December 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/306.

been submitted. Bothmer argued that this behaviour defeated the purpose of the Bund and severely weakened the position of the Stuttgart school.⁵⁹ While Bothmer's assessment may have been accurate, it is clear that the regionalism of the Nazis and the divisions within Stuttgart convinced the other members of the Bund that Stuttgart could not be saved and it was better to try to take their fate into their own hands. Since different schools were experiencing different pressures at the hands of local Nazi officials, it was difficult to make the Bund work effectively. Once the schools applied for experimental status on their own, the Bund's purpose was compromised, even though it continued to exist as long as the Hannover school did.

In fact, the Bund had been crumbling for some time. Its initial success with the NSLB had already been undermined by the demands of regional Nazi authorities and the initial rejection of the Bund's application. Furthermore, its relationship with the Anthroposophy Society was never resolved because Stuttgart was unable to overcome its problems, and ultimately the Anthroposophy Society was banned in November 1935. In addition, the structure of the Bund, with eight members, proved too cumbersome. Stuttgart's suspicions of Maikowski's intentions only grew when first he restructured the Bund and second, began to work increasingly closely with Klein. When the various other schools individually applied for experimental status in October 1936, Stuttgart believed its suspicions confirmed. At the same time, the principal of the Berlin school, Anni Heuser, launched an attack against Klein, the *de facto* second-in-command of the Bund.

The Stuttgart school was the most wary of the intentions of the Bund in general, but

⁵⁹ Letter of Bothmer to Heuser, 26 October 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/025; ABWS 4.3.260; Letter of "Bothmer to Free Goethe School Wandsbek, 30 October 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/259; Letter of Bothmer to Meyer, 10 December 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/306.

Elizabeth Klein's increasing involvement had raised the suspicions of others within the Waldorf school community, particularly Anni Heuser. Though it is unclear specifically why Heuser acted that way, Klein clearly felt that Heuser had a previously existing personal problem with her.⁶⁰ Whatever the reason, during the summer and autumn of 1936, Heuser made it clear that she believed Klein was not to be trusted and voiced her concerns in letters to Maikowski and some of the Stuttgart staff.⁶¹ In a June letter she argued that "each partial permission" Klein achieved only created confusion and weakened the position of the Bund.⁶² She threatened to withdraw Berlin's support from the Bund because she was convinced Klein was working for her own gains and not for the good of the Bund. Heuser made good on her threats and withdrew her support on 21 December 1936.⁶³ To be sure, much of the integrity of the Bund had already been destroyed by the individual applications for experimental status, but Heuser's withdrawal was the death knell.

By the end of 1936, the Bund was in disarray. Though the Bund had enjoyed a promising start, it had quickly unraveled. On the one hand, inconsistencies in Nazi policy undermined the Bund's efforts to cooperate with the new government. On the other hand, Stuttgart's inability to overcome its internal divisions and develop a working relationship with the Anthroposophy Society complicated the Bund's efforts to rally behind Stuttgart in the face of Nazi pressure.

⁶⁰ Letter of Klein to Bothmer, 22 June 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/167.

⁶¹ Letter of Bothmer to Heuser, 26 October 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/251; Letter of "Heuser to Bothmer, 28 October 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/252; Letter of Heuser to Bothmer, 29 October 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/254.

⁶² Letter of Anni Heuser to the Waldorf schools, 20 June 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/166.

⁶³ Letter of Heuser to Maikowski, 21 December 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/311.

In addition, the Anthroposophy Society was banned by the Nazis before the problem could be resolved. While this may seem to have eliminated a large problem for the Bund, it in fact left Nazi officials suspicious about how “Anthroposophic” the schools actually were, and the Bund was never able to persuade them otherwise.

Furthermore, suspicions and rivalries within the Waldorf school community undermined the unified attitude that the Bund was supposed to create. Stuttgart’s internal problems, the pressure they were under from Culture Minister Mergenthaler, and the change in the leadership of the Bund served to isolate Stuttgart from the Bund and increase the tensions between the schools. As accusations flew, the Bund’s unity began to crumble. Unwilling to ultimately put their faith in the ability of the Stuttgart school and provided with the possibility of becoming experimental schools, the rest of the Bund (except for Berlin) abandoned the principle of concentrating all their efforts on Stuttgart. Once the schools submitted individual petitions for experimental status to the Nazi government, the Bund was essentially rendered redundant. By coping individually with Nazi threats to their existence, the schools eliminated the Bund’s *raison d’etre*.

While some of the schools continued to turn to Rene Maikowski for advice and assistance to deal with the Nazi administration, what little power the Bund possessed disintegrated in 1936. When Maikowski’s Hannover school was closed in July 1937, the last remnants of the Bund disappeared. Even though the attempt to create a federal advisory body to guide policy, unify the schools, and facilitate relations with the Nazi government was a good one in theory, it could not be sustained in practice.

Nonetheless, in the early years of the Bund’s existence, it determined the nature of a

relationship with the Nazi government that endured as long as the schools did. The schools' underestimation of the scope and purpose of Nazi *Gleichschaltung* led them to believe that cooperation was the best policy. By showing their readiness to make compromises early on, the schools believed they were convincing the National Socialist government of the fact that the two could coexist. School officials patiently and repeatedly explained what they believed were Nazi misconceptions of Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophy, and Waldorf schools. The contradictions inherent in the Nazi administration encouraged this belief and led the schools to fundamentally misunderstand the nature of *Gleichschaltung*, and, by extension, Nazism in general. This pattern of contradiction and ambiguity on the part of the Nazis and cooperation and naivety on the part of the Waldorf schools, continued throughout their existence in the Third Reich and shaped the strategies the schools adopted while pursuing their illusory attempt at coexistence.

CHAPTER FIVE

A STRATEGY FOR COEXISTENCE: COOPERATION AND COMPATIBILITY

Though the *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen* (BFWS) faced several problems, its creation was part of a genuine effort by the Waldorf schools to find a way to coexist with the Nazi regime and to facilitate the process of *Gleichschaltung*. During the eight years from 1933 to 1941, the schools actively and in some cases aggressively pursued a policy of cooperation with the Nazis in order to ensure their survival, and most importantly, the survival of Rudolf Steiner's pedagogy. In addition to cooperation, the schools sought to inform Nazi officials about the nature of their schools, believing that their persecution was due to misconceptions about Waldorf teaching and philosophy which simply required clarification. They approached this task with reason and logic, pointing out to various Nazi authorities the ideals they both shared. They emphasized Steiner's anti-Marxism and anti-intellectualism and produced proof time and time again that he was not a Jew. They tried to clarify the fact that although the schools charged tuition, they were not private schools in the strictest sense because they did not make a profit or refuse entry to any qualified candidate, regardless of income. They were confident that Nazi officials would be swayed by the obvious good the schools were doing in educating the youth of Germany. Their task was complicated by the fact that the schools could not discern any coherent state policy towards them. Moreover, there was little to indicate whose jurisdiction they were under. Their only choice, therefore, was to cast a wide net with their education and cooperation strategy and hope that their message would get through. Believing that their message had not gotten through, the schools steadfastly pursued their campaign of cooperation and information. However, the real problem

was that the Nazis could not be swayed. No matter how logical and convincing the Waldorf schools' arguments were, the Nazis could not, ideologically speaking, let these schools claim a permanent place in the Third Reich. The failure to understand this fundamental fact was the Waldorf schools' undoing.

The first attempt to inform Nazi officials was articulated by Elizabeth Klein, principal of the Dresden school, in March 1933. In a letter to the Stuttgart school, which was later circulated to all the schools as a sort of "manifesto" she referred to "untrue rumours" that had led Nazi officials to judge the schools harshly. Klein proposed that the solution to this situation was to inform the new government about Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy so that the new government could "truly judge" the schools.¹ Klein was supported in this endeavour by Karl Rittersbacher of the Hannover school.² The arguments advanced by Klein and Rittersbacher laid out the rationale behind the strategy that the schools followed for the next eight years. They believed that their persecution was a result of misunderstandings that could be resolved through openness and explanations that appealed to common sense and would sway Nazi officials to see the value of Steiner pedagogy.

This belief was bolstered by Helmut Bojunga. In the earliest days of Nazi *Gleichschaltung*, when the schools were forming their initial impressions of the new regime, Günther Beindorff of the Hannover school wrote to his friend, *Ministerialdirektor* Bojunga of the

¹ Letter of Dr. E. Klein, "An das Kollegium der Freien Waldorfschulen in Stuttgart," 31 March 1933, *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen Archive* (hereafter BFWSA), 3/6/052.

² Letter of Karl Rittersbacher, "An das Kollegium der Freien Waldorfschule Stuttgart," 7 April 1933, BFWSA, 3/4/110.

Prussian Education Ministry, to ask him for advice and direction.³ He asked Bojunga to inquire amongst his colleagues about the fate of the schools and any changes they might be required to make. Indeed, he seemed quite concerned about what fate the schools might suffer as he referred to possible measures against the schools as “draconian.”⁴ Bojunga’s response was encouraging and seemed to allay Beindorff’s fears. Though he cautioned Beindorff that he could not give any definitive answers so early in the administration, he assured him that he could see no reason for alarm.⁵ If Bojunga, a ministerial official, was unaware of the possible dangers facing the Waldorf schools, it seems unlikely that the schools themselves would be any more aware.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the schools first pursued their cooperation and information strategy with the NSLB. What they assumed would be a straightforward process turned into a complicated and confusing one which did nothing to help the schools determine a course of action. What it did do, however, was suggest to the schools that the NSLB would be their point of contact with the Nazi state. Furthermore, it put them in close contact with Hans Schemm, head of the NSLB, who quickly became an important ally for the schools. In letters written by Paul Baumann of the Stuttgart school to both Christoph Boy, principal of the Stuttgart school, and the Waldorf schools in general, Baumann discussed how positive his experiences with Schemm had been. While he was careful to caution against becoming overly confident, he stressed Schemm’s positive attitude and his willingness to work with the schools on a personal

³ Beindorff referred his question to the Prussian Education Ministry because no Reich Education Ministry existed until May.

⁴ Letter of Günther Beindorff to Helmut Bojunga, 23 March 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/004.

⁵ Letter of Helmut Bojunga to Günther Beindorff, 27 March 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/005.

level.⁶ This sentiment was reinforced by Schemm's reaction to difficulties the Dresden school was having with local state authorities. The Saxon Culture Minister, Hartnacke, was attempting to prevent the school from free religious instruction. Schemm indicated that he believed religious instruction was protected by the Concordat and therefore the matter should be brought to a positive conclusion for the Dresden school.⁷

Schemm also intervened in a dispute between the Dresden branch of the NSLB and the Dresden Waldorf school. The Dresden NSLB owned the building that housed the Waldorf school. When it came time to renew their rental agreement, the NSLB was reluctant to do so. The Dresden school offered Schemm's personal support of the schools as incentive for their landlords to agree to a contract. However, the NSLB could not be convinced without written proof of Schemm's support. Moreover, they insisted that this proof had to show that Schemm offered his support to the schools as leader of the NSLB, not as a private citizen or even as Bavarian Culture Minister (a position Schemm also held). When Grohmann of the Dresden school asked Boy how to go about securing this proof, Boy suggested he approach Schemm directly.⁸ Boy's advice to Grohmann clearly indicates that he felt Schemm was someone the schools could turn to for help. Boy and the rest of the schools hoped to foster their relationship with Schemm and thereby create an ally within the Nazi administration. They followed his

⁶ Letter of Baumann to Boy, 5 July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/072; Letter of Baumann "An den Reichsverband der Waldorfschulen," 6 July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/075.

⁷ Boy, "Rundschreiben an alle deutschen Waldorfschulen," 3 October 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/186.

⁸ Letter of Dr. Grohmann to Boy, 20 September 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/183; Letter of Boy to Dr. Grohmann, 3 October 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/185.

advice, and tried to show how willing they were to work both with him and with the Nazi administration in general. Schemm's positive feedback in the Dresden case encouraged the schools to continue to be cooperative in the hopes of securing their future in a National Socialist Germany.

Schemm's apparent willingness to help prompted Boy to ask if he could effect some sort of Reich-wide decree regarding Waldorf schools, a decree that would take precedence over any regional or district ordinances. Boy hoped that a nation-wide decree would eliminate the confusion caused by the different local jurisdictions.⁹ Schemm replied that if Boy appealed to the Interior Ministry he would be passed on to the regional Education Ministries which would be a dead end. Instead, Schemm suggested that he, as the head of the NSLB, could issue directives that would be respected Reich-wide.¹⁰ While the schools chose to interpret Schemm's intervention in Dresden and offer to develop a Reich-wide policy as evidence of his understanding for their pedagogy, the motivation was likely more pragmatic than that. In the polycractic system of Nazi Germany, Schemm was trying to eke out a sphere of influence for himself and was using the Waldorf schools to do so. His insistence that he held the authority to provide Reich-wide policy and his suggestion that the Interior Ministry was a dead end points to the fact that Schemm had more to consider than his personal feelings regarding the Waldorf schools, whatever they might be.

The schools turned to the NSLB for guidance because all indications suggested that the

⁹ Boy, "Rundschreiben an alle deutschen Waldorfschulen," 3 October 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/186.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

NSLB would be the agency responsible for the schools. Since July, Schemm and his staff had been cooperative and encouraging and the schools were happy to follow his advice. They even sent him a letter tellingly entitled, “Remarks of Orientation Regarding the Waldorf schools,” which referred to a speech by Hitler in which he said the substance of the revolution was to educate the *Volk*. The schools argued that they were equipped to contribute to this education.¹¹ The letter also pointed out that the schools were created after the 1919 Versailles Treaty as a place to nurture and revive the German spirit. By referring to the Versailles Treaty and Hitler and using the word “*Volk*,” this letter drew on Nazi symbols while making a case for the compatibility of the schools and their willingness to work with Schemm.

That July, Baumann had invited Schemm to visit the Stuttgart school and see for himself how the schools operated, anticipating that a visit would only make Schemm more receptive to Steiner pedagogy.¹² Since then, the school had been anxiously awaiting Schemm’s visit and inspection which had been scheduled for 29 October 1933. As with all other inspections, the school was confident that his impression would be favourable and the visit would thereby cement their relationship with Schemm and his support for the schools.¹³

By the end of October 1933, however, their situation changed drastically. In the last week of that month, Gerbert Grohmann of the Dresden school received notice that their fate, along

¹¹ “Einige orientierende Bemerkungen über die Waldorfschulen,” the Waldorf schools of Germany to Culture Minister Schemm, July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/070. See Appendix G.

¹² Letter of Baumann to Boy, 5 July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/072.

¹³ Hans Schemm died in a plane crash in 1935, making it difficult to determine whether his involvement with the schools would have continued. This seems unlikely, however, because he did not involve himself with the schools in 1934.

with the fate of all private schools in Germany, would be decided by a new committee headed by *Ministerialdirektor* Buttman of the Reich Interior Ministry.¹⁴ At the same time that they received the devastating news that Schemm's highly-anticipated inspection of the Stuttgart school was cancelled. The news was devastating. Since July, the schools had been carefully fostering a relationship with Schemm only to find out that their fate was in fact in the hands of someone else in an entirely different arm of the Nazi administration. Thus, when Stuttgart was notified that there was no time in his schedule on the 29th and he had to cancel his visit, it was a severe blow.¹⁵

In light of this new situation, the schools quickly shifted focus from Schemm to *Ministerialdirektor* Buttman, with Grohmann insisting that the schools make their case to Buttman before his newly-formed committee met to decide the outline of the anticipated private school reform. Boy shared this view and requested that Waldorf school members in Berlin make an effort to get a meeting with Buttman before his committee met.¹⁶ This shift in focus showed the extent to which the schools' reactions were influenced by Nazi actions.

A month later, in December 1933, the focus of the schools again changed. Franz Brumberg of the Altona Waldorf school related his excitement over a meeting he had with one of Rust's representatives. The *Ministerialrat* had spent five hours at the school and Brumberg believed that he left with a good impression. Brumberg was careful to temper his assessment with some caution, stating that his impression could be a false one but overall he was encouraged

¹⁴ Letter of Grohmann to Boy, 25 October 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/195.

¹⁵ Letter of Boy to the German Waldorf schools, 2 November 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/205.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

by the visit and the *Minsterialrat's* attitude.¹⁷ This was the third time in as many months that the schools faced a new Nazi authority: Schemm; Buttman; and then the Reich Interior Ministry. With no clear regulations to follow, and no indication as to whose jurisdiction they were really under, the schools were unable to come up with a coherent strategy for coexistence. All they could do was try to appear as cooperative as possible to each agency as it appeared on their doorstep.

Even Waldorf parents took up the cause, trying to elicit some positive reaction. In a May 1933 letter to the Saxon Culture Minister Dr. Hartnacke, the Dresden parents' council sought to "counter the slanderous remarks by the public and some authorities here."¹⁸ This letter also articulated clearly what would become a prominent theme in the schools' self defence: the German spirit. Nazi education officials in particular continually cited the development of "German spirit" as the most important goal of education. Taking the government at its word, the council pointed out that the Waldorf schools were indeed highly committed to developing "German spirit." It went on to explain that, despite claims to the contrary, Waldorf schools did not use Anthroposophy to indoctrinate their students, nor were they private schools. In its letter the parents' council pointed out that ten per cent of their parents did not pay tuition and the faculty made large financial sacrifices in order to offer this option. They also pointed out that the education provided was "practical" (something Nazi education officials continually emphasized). The parents' council assumed that stereotypical opinions about the Waldorf schools could be

¹⁷ Letter of Dr. Franz Brumberg to Boy, 10 December 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/217.

¹⁸ Letter of the Parents' Council of the Rudolf Steiner School Dresden "An das Ministerium für Volksbildung z.H. des Herrn Ministers Dr. Hartnacke," 29 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/026.

cleared up with patient explanation.

Finally, the parents also addressed the “Jewish question” in their letter. From the beginning, Nazi officials accused Steiner of being a Jew, as well as a pacifist and Marxist. The parents’ council explained again that Steiner was not a Jew and provided documentary proof to this effect. They stated that none of their teachers were Marxists or “non-Aryans.” In addition, they stated that, of the 304 students attending the Dresden schools, only seven were “non-Aryans” and only three of those were Jewish. All of this was an attempt to prove that the schools were not “Jewish schools” as some had claimed. They concluded the letter by requesting that the ministry stop “attacks from irresponsible places.”¹⁹ The council wrote a similar letter to Minister President von Killinger, again, to “clear up misunderstandings.”²⁰ In it, they provided the same statistics regarding Jewish students and reiterated the fact that the Waldorf schools were not private schools seeking to make a profit, but rather were committed educators who needed to charge tuition to run the schools but who were willing to make financial sacrifices in order to include all students who wished to attend.²¹ This letter is indicative of the schools’ misplaced faith in the new government and the illusion that their difficulties could be resolved. Thus, the patterns was set for the next three years. The schools were as cooperative and accommodating as they could be while simultaneously trying to convince various Nazi officials of their compatibility. As the situation deteriorated, their reaction was simply to increase their

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ “Betrifft: Rudolf Steiner-Schule, Dresden.” Letter of the Parents’ Council of the Rudolf Steiner School, Dresden to Minister President von Killinger, 29 May 1933, BFWSA 4/2/027.

cooperation and information campaign.

The lessons the schools learned in 1933 were put into action in 1934 and 1935. Restrictions were imposed on the Stuttgart school by the Württemberg Education Minister, Christian Mergenthaler. In February 1934, he informed the Stuttgart school that as of Easter of that year, it would no longer be allowed to accept new students into the first year of classes. The prohibition was made on the grounds that it was an ideological school and was in direct conflict with National Socialism. This was a severe blow for the Stuttgart school and its leaders recognized that the implementation of this decree meant the eventual dismantling of the school.²² This was a clear condemnation of both the Waldorf schools and Rudolf Steiner. However, the schools' previous experiences had taught them that assistance could come from any number of unlikely sources. Thus, Maikowski wrote a letter of complaint to the Interior Ministry in which he argued the closure of Stuttgart's first class was based on a misjudgement of the facts. This approach initially seemed to be successful as the Bund procured a meeting with Mr. Dill of the Württemberg Interior Ministry during which he agreed that Mergenthaler's step was a hasty one and that Maikowski should consider asking Rudolf Hess for help in the matter.²³ Dill's suggestion that Maikowski contact Rudolf Hess, Deputy Führer, is interesting because Hess was neither part of Dill's Interior Ministry, the Württemberg government in general, nor even the Education Ministry, a reflection of the jurisdictional confusion of multi-agency involvement in

²² "Protocol" 12 February 1934, BFWA, 5/10/025.

²³ *Ibid.*

Nazi educational policy in general and Waldorf school affairs in particular.²⁴

Maikowski followed Dill's advice and wrote to Hess later that month in another effort to "clear up misunderstandings."²⁵ He advanced arguments that were by now becoming familiar:

[1.] The schools are not ideological schools. Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophic research has merely revealed new avenues in methodology which allows for a stronger development of physical and mental abilities.

[2.] Already in the autumn of last year I indicated in a letter of the Hannover school's willingness to cooperate with the aims and tasks of the National Socialist government's national and social reconstruction and to put our experience at its service.

[3.] Rudolf Steiner is Aryan and descends from an ancient Austrian peasant family [*Bauerngeschlecht*].

[4.] Throughout his whole life, and especially during the Great War, Rudolf Steiner was a crusader for the German spirit.... He pursued no pacifist or internationalist goals.²⁶

Even though, as he stated, Maikowski had already explained these points to Nazi officials, he was still eager to repeat his explanation, attributing Mergenthaler's actions against the Stuttgart

²⁴ Rudolf Hess was rather more like Bernhard Rust in his political acumen. Being one of Hitler's oldest party comrades (in fact he wrote down Hitler's dictation of *Mein Kampf* in jail), he was rewarded for his loyalty by being appointed as Deputy Führer. He gradually fell out of favour with Hitler but maintained his position as Deputy Führer, most likely because he was thought to be politically harmless. He increasingly came into conflict with Martin Bormann, Hitler's secretary, who was infinitely more politically adept than Hess. Finally, in May 1941 Hess flew to Scotland to try to negotiate a last-minute peace with Britain and avoid Germany's destruction. Bormann took over Hess' position and used it to wield considerable power as the Third Reich drew to a close. For Hess, see Dietrich Orlow, *The History of the Nazi Party, 1919-1933* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1969), particularly 150-151 and 287, as well as Orlow's second volume, (1933-1945), 328-329; Louis L. Snyder, *Encyclopedia of the Third Reich* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) 142-144; Robert Wistrich, *Who's Who in Nazi Germany* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc, 1982), 130-132.

²⁵ Maikowski "An die Reichsleitung der NSDAP zu. Hd. von Herrn Reichsminister Hess," 21 February 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/272.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

school to the fact that these misconceptions about Steiner still existed.

Hess was not the only high-level Nazi to whom Maikowski sent letters of appeal. In the same month, he wrote to both Goebbels and Hitler. In these two very similar letters, Maikowski protested the treatment of the schools and suggested that if they were allowed to coexist with the Nazi regime, they could continue their “culture work” which he believed was essential for the rebuilding of Germany. Maikowski further explained that if a true understanding of the nature and work of the schools and of Rudolf Steiner pedagogy were reached, the schools’ value to the Third Reich would be realized.²⁷ By insisting that the schools worked towards realization of National Socialist goals, Maikowski hoped to convince Nazi officials to allow the schools to remain open.

Dill’s suggestion of Hess as a possible avenue for protest brought the schools into contact with the Office of Deputy Führer; a relationship that proved beneficial over the years. One of their most useful contacts was *Reichsleiter* Phillip Bouhler, a well-placed Nazi official who was a member of Hess’ staff at the Brown House in Berlin.²⁸ After a visit from Elizabeth Klein in her capacity as a member of the Bund, he took it upon himself to write a long letter to Rust asking him to clarify his position regarding the Waldorf schools in Germany and to develop a uniform policy that would be followed Reich-wide. He reasoned that this would help curtail the destructive activities of Mergenthaler in Stuttgart. He even went so far as to say that he

²⁷ Maikowski to Goebbels, 14 February 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/247; Maikowski to Hitler, 15 February 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/248.

²⁸ The “Brown House” refers to the Nazi Party Headquarters in Munich where Hess, among others, had his office.

considered the Waldorf schools a “worthwhile educational instrument.”²⁹ By doing so, Bouhler directly challenged Mergenthaler’s authority to interfere with the Stuttgart school and drew Rust’s attention to his excesses.

While Bouhler and the Brown House appeared to offer a new lifeline to the schools, his intervention confused things even further. In early June Baumann received second-hand information that Bouhler had been able to get Mergenthaler’s prohibition removed.³⁰ By the 18th, however, his Stuttgart school had still not received written confirmation of this news.³¹ The Saxon Ministry, however, had.³² The fact that the latter had received written notice of the reopening of the Stuttgart school while the Württemberg ministry had not, led Klein to speculate that perhaps Mergenthaler had delayed the information somehow.³³ Klein’s believed Mergenthaler had the power to ignore directions from the party.

Further complicating matters was the involvement of yet another Nazi official, *Ministerialrat* Thies of the Reich Education Ministry. Maikowski remarked that Thies “showed understanding” for their work and he was assured by Thies that the Stuttgart school would soon receive an answer about the fate of the first class. This was reiterated by Schiller, whose Breslau Waldorf school had just been inspected by Thies. Schiller remarked that Thies seemed friendly

²⁹ Letter of Reichsleiter Bouhler to Klein, 16 May 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/331.

³⁰ Letter of Baumann to Klein, 1 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/340; Letter of Klein to Baumann 20 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/356.

³¹ Letter of Baumann to Schiller, 18 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/044.

³² Letter of Baumann to Klein, 22 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/357.

³³ Letter of Klein to Baumann, 25 June 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/358.

and that he was reassured by Thies' promise that the school's request for extension would be clarified by February at the latest.³⁴

Thies also informed Maikowski that as of 9 July 1934 the schools would come under the umbrella of the Reich Education Ministry.³⁵ This was good news for the schools as they had been seeking a uniform and Reich-wide policy for some time, first through Schemm, and then through Bouhler. In spite of the fact that Mergenthaler's prohibition was still in force, there seemed reason to be optimistic. There were still well-placed Nazi officials who were on their side and were willing to intervene on their behalf. Now that the Reich Education Ministry had taken over responsibility for all private schools, perhaps the uncertainty would be eliminated. Moreover, Thies, the new contact between the schools and Rust, seemed reasonable and positive about the work of the schools.

In March 1935, the schools finally received clarification of Mergenthaler's prohibition. To the schools' dismay, rather than lifting the ban, Reich Education Minister Rust extended it to encompass all private schools in Germany, including the Waldorf schools.³⁶ For a year the schools had been cooperative and accommodating, under the assumption that the prohibition against Stuttgart would be lifted, and now it seemed that their efforts had failed. They were relieved, therefore, when less than two weeks later they were again informed that the prohibition would not apply to the Waldorf schools. After a meeting with *Ministerialdirektor* Bojunga, Maikowski was convinced that Rust's decree was directed instead at the *Ordnungsschulen* as an

³⁴ Letter of Hans Eberhard Schiller to Baumann, 10 September 1934, BFWSA, 3/19/070.

³⁵ Maikowski "An die Waldorfschulen Deutschland," 20 August 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/367.

³⁶ Letter of Maikowski to Hess, 4 March 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/016.

attempt to curtail the strong Catholic influence. While Bojunga conceded that the appointed “school specialists” expressed doubts over whether the Waldorf schools met Nazi teaching goals, he assured Maikowski that nevertheless the ban would not apply to them. He also offered to personally submit Maikowski’s report on the schools to Rust and suggested that some intervention on the part of Hess might be helpful. Finally, he offered hope to Maikowski by agreeing that if the schools were allowed to exist, this would also include the retention of their first classes.³⁷ Although Bojunga did point out the difficulties the schools were likely to face, he gave Maikowski reason to be optimistic about the fate of the schools. If the school specialists were expressing concerns about the schools’ ability to meet National Socialist educational criteria, then the schools were more than willing to prove that they did in fact meet these.

Bolstered by Bojunga’s encouragement, Maikowski wrote to him and Thies in a letter which appealed to Nazi ideals. He began by explaining that the Waldorf schools were based on the ideals of Goethe, Schiller and Fichte, evidently hoping to appeal to the Nazis’ emphasis on all things German. He continued on, explaining precisely the ways in which the Waldorf schools educated their students for the “National Socialist way” in terms of:

- a) the basic attitude of all the educational work, [which]
- b) is particularly rooted in the spiritual and physical training inherent in Waldorf [pedagogy],
- c) the preservation of *völkisch* thought and the emphasis on the essence and tasks of the German spirit for instruction in German language and history,
- d) the development of physical education and the sporting events,
- e) the development of the social community...within the Waldorf schools through monthly celebrations of the artistic, athletic and other academic achievements of

³⁷ Letter of Maikowski “An die Waldorfschulen in Deutschland,” 13 March 1935, BFWA, 4/3/019; Letter of Maikowski to Baumann, 13 March 1935, BFWA, 4/3/018.

the students.³⁸

Since all of these activities were important aspects of Nazi educational ideals, Maikowski was trying to convince Bojunga and Thies that the schools were promoting these ideals and therefore were vital to the success of National Socialism. As had become typical by this point, Maikowski also sought to clear up some “misunderstandings” concerning the schools, the same “misunderstandings” various school officials had been trying to clarify since the Nazi seizure of power. He stated again that the schools did not serve or teach Anthroposophy, that they were not religious and leaned more towards Christianity than Judaism in any case, and that they had no internationalist tendencies.

To counter the Nazi accusation that the schools had Marxist leanings Maikowski pointed out, as had others before him, that Steiner in fact had written and spoken out against Marxism in his lifetime. He also rejected accusations that the schools were intellectual and individualistic. He argued that the schools in fact provided their students with practical skill by teaching handwork, art, and organization and that they emphasized community, not individualism. Finally, he highlighted, as the schools had done time and time again, that Steiner was not a Jew. Maikowski tried to put an end to this false accusation by providing documentation from a race expert. He also tried to counter claims that the schools were particularly sympathetic to the “Jewish element” by stating that only 1.5-2% of Jews attended Waldorf schools.³⁹ Maikowski

³⁸ “Die Waldorfschulen im neuen Deutschland” Maikowski to Bojunga and Thies, 13 March 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/020. Author and recipient contained in Uwe Werner’s book, *Nationalsozialismus*, 125.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

consciously used Nazi terminology such as “Marxist” and “Jewish element” in making his case. By adopting the language of the Third Reich, he demonstrated the schools’ allegiance to a common cause.

Bojunga’s earlier optimism and reassurance proved misplaced when the prohibition of the first classes did, in fact, go into effect as originally feared. Thies informed the schools that the Reich Education Ministry had the ultimate authority in this matter and because the decree was addressed to all private schools, the Waldorf schools had to comply. Because the decree was in fact a law, Thies explained, it was not possible to exclude the Waldorf schools from it.⁴⁰ Yet this was not quite true. In Stuttgart, Mergenthaler declared that the first class could continue to exist but the second class had to be closed. It seems that one school, at least, could be excluded from the decree.

Undeterred by Thies’ assessment, and perhaps because of the case of the Stuttgart school, Maikowski concluded that the schools would have to wait to see how far special considerations would apply to them. He urged the schools to cooperate with government officials, arguing that their cooperation would convince the Nazi authorities to remove the restrictions. He explained that Rust was aware of the nature of their pedagogy through the schools’ reports and Rust’s own investigations, and assumed that as a result he would be favourable towards the schools. Maikowski also stated that Thies was trying to find a way to exempt them from the prohibition.⁴¹ Until then, they would comply with the decree and lock the first classes.⁴² Maikowski’s letter

⁴⁰ Rene Maikowki to the German Waldorf schools, 13 May 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/037.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

shows his optimism that the campaign of information and cooperation was beginning to have a positive effect as well as his faith that this was the key to the Waldorf schools' survival. Despite the apparent setback of the prohibition, Thies still seemed reasonable and cooperative. Bojunga too, had been encouraging. Previous decrees had been given and then taken back once the schools had explained the situation; there was nothing to indicate that the same would not be true here. Thus, the schools would pursue their strategy of being cooperative and accommodating while at the same time working towards clarification of whatever caused the first class prohibition.

Once more, the schools' optimism was not rewarded. In late 1935 they were informed that as of Easter 1936 all Waldorf schools in Germany would be prohibited from opening any new classes and the Stuttgart school was prohibited from taking in students from other schools.⁴³ Rather than rescinding the original prohibition, Rust had extended it. Maikowski protested this decision, along with the general treatment of the schools, to Minister Director Sunkel. In his letter, he returned to familiar themes such as the issue of Steiner's "Jewishness," again referring to documentation provided by a "race expert" to support his point. Again, he emphasized that the Waldorf schools were inclusive of all students, regardless of beliefs or income level.⁴⁴

In protest, Maikowski wrote to Reich Education Minister Rust, attempting to appeal to the anti-Marxism of the Nazis by describing how difficult the schools found it to work in the "Marxist" Germany of the Weimar Republic, another instance of the schools incorporating Nazi language and ideas into their own arguments:

⁴³ Maikowski to Ministerialdirektor Sunkel, 4 November 1935, BFWSA 4/3/076.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

The free development of the pedagogic ideals of our schools was made extraordinarily difficult by the restrictive bureaucracy of Marxist Germany. I would like to express my hope and expectation that in the new Germany real life will finally be able to unfold and thus also the educational work of the Waldorf schools will find understanding and promotion.⁴⁵

He pointed out yet again that the schools were not private schools and that they sought to educate the youth for the new Germany. Maikowski argued that they needed to be left to follow Rudolf Steiner's pedagogy unhindered. At the same time that he was trying to convince the authorities to allow the schools to work freely, Maikowski also outlined the boundaries of the schools' cooperation. However much they were willing to cooperate and compromise in other matters, in the matter of pedagogy and freedom of instruction, the schools remained unwilling to budge.⁴⁶

At first glance, it seems the schools' fate had finally been sealed and the clarification and uniform policy the schools had been asking for had been provided, though not in the manner they hoped. Yet again there seemed to be room for manoeuvre. With this prohibition, Rust also reserved the right to make a final decision about the Waldorf schools' ultimate fate at a later date.⁴⁷ This left them with no choice but to be cooperative, observe the prohibition, and hope that their accommodation would sway the Education Minister in their favour. This is the same way they reacted when Rust made the first prohibition in February 1935.

The situation of the schools steadily deteriorated in 1935. They had been prohibited from

⁴⁵ "Abschrift" letter of Rene Maikowski to Reich Education Minister Rust, 9 September 1935, BFWA, 4/3/017.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Letter of Mergenthaler "An die Ministerialabteilung für die Volksschulen," 4 November 1935, BFWA, 4/3/077.

accepting students into their first classes and the Stuttgart school was additionally restricted from accepting new students to any class. By the end of 1935 the Altona school was facing imminent closure and the rest of the schools faced the possibility of a ban on new students at any level. In addition to Minister Director Sunkel, Maikowski also expressed his frustrations to the Gestapo, going over the same issues as he had from the beginning:

The Waldorf schools never had the task or were supposed to teach or represent the Anthroposophic world view.... The curriculum of the schools allows for a mental and physical education, through disciplined thinking and will power whereby every detail is brought in harmony.... The Waldorf school pedagogy is not an individualistic method of education. On the contrary, more so than public education, it emphasizes the integration of the individual into the community [*Volksgemeinschaft*] as well as community-mindedness; community service becomes an obligation felt internally.⁴⁸

Furthermore, he emphasized that these points had been articulated by the Waldorf school community since 1933, from which time they had also indicated their “readiness for cooperation to contribute to the cultural structure of the new Germany.”⁴⁹ This letter vocalized Maikowski’s frustration and bewilderment over the fact that he and many others had been making the same points over and over again, only to fall on deaf ears. It seemed obvious to him that Rudolf Steiner education was compatible with National Socialism and he did not understand why this was not obvious to Nazi authorities. Clearly they were not being realistic about Nazism.

Maikowski’s frustration turned once again to optimism at the end of November when he received news that Rust’s prohibition did not mark a final decision and Hess was willing to

⁴⁸ “Abschrift: Erklärung,” letter of Rene Maikowski to the Gestapo, 18 November 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/088.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

review their case. To this end, Maikowski instructed the schools to provide detailed statistics, including: how many students and how many parents were party members, members of the Women's Organization; the number of students who were members of the Hitler Youth, the League of German Girls, and their junior branches; how many parents with how many children were members of the Anthroposophy Society; how many students were Jewish (including full-, half-, and three quarters Jewish); how many were children of First World War veterans (*Vorkämpfer*), and the total number of students. All of these numbers were to be provided in real numbers as well as percentages and sent to the ministry.⁵⁰ These statistics were not to be altered in any way to try to make them more appealing; Maikowski was confident their merit would speak for itself. Once again the schools offered statistical proof of their compatibility with National Socialism. Once again, their strategy was one of cooperation and compliance.

In December, the schools seemed to receive their reprieve. Maikowski was informed by Hess' Adjutant, Alfred Leitgen that, after reviewing the detailed statistical reports provided by the schools, Hess had postponed making any decisions about the fate of the schools.⁵¹ Without Hess' approval, Maikowski was assured, Rust could not implement or enforce any measures against them. Elated at this news, Maikowski urged increased cooperation, emphasizing that it

⁵⁰ Letter of Maikowski, "An die Waldorfschulen im Reich!," 23 November 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/091.

⁵¹ The reports contained statistics concerning how many students and parents were at each school, how many were party members, members of the Women's Society, members of the Hitler Youth and League of German Girls, members of the Anthroposophy Society, and how many students were full and half Jews. Letter of Maikowski to the German Waldorf schools, 23 November 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/091.

was their “obligation to follow all arrangements and orders.”⁵² These results seemed to be direct proof that their campaign of information, in this instance the statistics provided to Hess, had led to some further understanding on Hess’ part, which in turn had increased the schools’ chances for survival.

The confusion faced by the Waldorf schools only increased in 1936. Until this point, Deputy Führer Hess and his office had been the schools’ strongest and most consistent ally, writing letters on their behalf and arguing their case in key matters. Reich Education Minister Rust, on the other hand, was the one who was imposing restrictions on the schools, limiting class numbers and prohibiting new students. In February 1936, however, the tables seemed to turn. When the Gestapo moved to lock the Dresden school as a result of house searches conducted there, it was prevented by a last-minute intervention by Rust.⁵³ Until this point, Rust had seemed to be the most eager of the Nazi officials to limit the activities of the Waldorf schools and yet his personal intervention in the incident with the Dresden school seemed to indicate that he saw some value in the schools. At least, that is how the schools interpreted his intervention. It is more than likely that this was a battle over jurisdiction between Rust and the Gestapo and that Rust had taken exception to the Gestapo’s infringement on a matter that was under his jurisdiction and chose to exert his authority to prove a point. Still, what mattered to the schools was that Rust seemed to have intervened on their behalf, which gave them reason to believe there was still a chance for survival.

⁵² Letter of Maikowski, “An die Waldorfschulen in Deutschland!,” 16 December 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/102.

⁵³ Letter of Maikowski to the Reich Minister of the Interior, 14 February 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/123.

Indeed, Rust's refusal to make a final decision about the fate of the Waldorf schools was also interpreted as intervention on their behalf because it included a declaration that the work of the schools was not to be obstructed until that decision was made. This meant that the actions of Mergenthaler, in particular, were restricted until that moment.⁵⁴ Again, while this was most likely a case of Rust exerting his authority over an aspect of policy that had increasingly moved beyond his control, his actions were interpreted by the Waldorf schools as an expression of understanding that had hitherto not been evident.

Given this interpretation, further initiatives by Rust on the 12th and 13th of March seemed contradictory. The schools received orders from Rust, in agreement with Hess, which allowed them to continue to work provisionally with their existing students, while at the same time prohibiting them from accepting any new students into any class.⁵⁵ Maikowski pointed out that this marked a deviation from the treatment of the other private schools in Germany that were only prohibited from accepting new students into their first classes.⁵⁶ This also contradicted Thies' explanation of 13 May 1935 that it was a difficult and complicated thing to exclude one group of private schools from a Rust decree. The implication of this new decree was not lost on Maikowski who protested to Rust that it marked the dismantling of the Waldorf schools.⁵⁷ Whereas Rust had seemed somewhat understanding in the affair with the Dresden school, as well

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Letter of Maikowski to Hess, 9 April 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/141; Thies to Ministerialdirigenten Dr. Frank, 1 March 1937, *Bundesarchiv Lichterfelde* (hereafter BAL) R/4901-2520.

⁵⁶ Letter of Maikowski to Hess, 9 April 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/141.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

as in his curtailment of Mergenthaler's activities in Stuttgart, it seemed he had reverted back to his uncompromising ways. Moreover, he was supported in this endeavour by Hess, the schools' traditional ally. Once again, the schools were left confused about their position in the Third Reich and to whom to turn for help.

The Waldorf schools were given one final opportunity for reprieve, in the form of one final, and perhaps greatest, contradiction. Not long after the ban on new students was instituted, the schools were informed by the Reich Interior Ministry that although the entrance barrier would remain in place, the schools were able to apply to be re-licenced as experimental schools.⁵⁸ This possibility rejuvenated them. They saw this as an opportunity to carve out a permanent place for the schools in the Third Reich while still maintaining the integrity of their pedagogy. This is another case of conflicting messages coming from various departments in the administration. On the one hand, both Rust and Hess came together to enforce the prohibition of new students, whereas on the other the Interior Ministry seemed to be offering the schools a way to circumvent the prohibition. In any case, the June 1936 prospect of experimental status gave the schools new reason to hope and new incentive to cooperate with Nazi demands.

This hope was short-lived. By November, Maikowski received notice that only two schools would be granted experimental status: Dresden and Hamburg-Wandsbek. Maikowski tried several times to speak to Ministerialdirigent Frank of the Interior Ministry to no avail, finally writing him, asking for an explanation. He also appealed to *Regierungsrat* Thies, who had always seemed to be cooperative and encouraging and who had even suggested to

⁵⁸ Maikowski to Reich Education Minister, September 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/229. Although the document is dated September, the meeting actually took place in June.

Maikowski that they meet personally to discuss issues concerning the Waldorf schools.

Maikowski's appeals remained unanswered; and it became clear that these two former allies had apparently deserted the schools.⁵⁹

By the end of 1936, the schools were left bewildered and directionless. This bewilderment was best articulated by Fritz von Bothmer of the Stuttgart school in an address to parents' council. In it, he expressed his disbelief that the school was facing so much persecution. In fact, he characterized it a "mystery," for if the schools' nature was truly understood, he argued they surely would be allowed to carry on as before. He continued:

It is always a mystery to me that this school is in danger, when today's education struggles to liberate itself from outmoded school practices and pedagogic concepts and restores the school again as a place which protects the spirit of the youth, the community, the character formation, and a stronghold of German language and art. Only the ignorant can want to destroy our schools....⁶⁰

To him, their value was self-evident:

The Waldorf schools were born in the same world-historical hour as the National Socialist movement. Rudolf Steiner rooted the schools in German soil, German language and German spirit, as the seedling for the education of the youth, through which Germany and thus the world will be healed.⁶¹

In all of these endeavours they were not private schools seeking to make a profit. In fact they all had made personal and financial sacrifices in order to ensure the preservation of their ideals.

Bothmer expressed the sentiment that undoubtedly drove all of the Waldorf schools, that the

⁵⁹ Letter of Maikowski to Ministerdirigent Frank, 26 November 1936, BAL R/4901-2520.

⁶⁰ Speech by Fritz Graf von Bothmer, 1936, BFWSA, 4/5/069. Author and approximate date provided by Götte, *Autonomie*, 517.

⁶¹ Speech by Fritz Graf von Bothmer, 1936, BFWSA, 4/5/069.

“teachings of the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner are so inviolable that they cannot be rejected by those that come to know them properly.”⁶² This statement explains the bewilderment of the Waldorf schools. They were unable to understand the true nature of Nazification because they were so convinced of the soundness of Steiner’s philosophy that they could not comprehend that the Nazis operated on principles alien to them and utterly divorced from the German humanistic culture associated with the Weimar of Goethe and Schiller.

In this situation, as more schools were forced to face the very real possibility of closure, the schools shifted their focus slightly. Rather than stressing what the schools could offer the “new Germany,” they tried to impress upon the Nazis the great asset they would be losing if the schools closed. In a letter to Rust, Fritz Kübler of the Hamburg-Wandsbek school emphasized the hard-working determination required to transform the school from a small school with only seven students in 1922 to a thriving school of 420 students in 1936. He argued that their significant contribution to the culture and education over the years would be a great loss to the “new Germany.”⁶³ Maikowski made similar points in a letter to *Ministerdirigent* Frank. He argued that allowing the Hannover school to be closed would be a tragedy not only for the school itself, but for the “new Germany” because the school would not be able to help build German culture and prevent the spread of Bolshevism.⁶⁴ Like Kübler, Maikowski tried to convince the authorities that closing the schools would be detrimental to the future of National Socialist

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Letter of Fritz Kübler “An den Herrn Reichs- und Preussischen Minister für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung,” 30 October 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/266.

⁶⁴ Maikowski to Ministerdirigent Frank, 26 November 1936, BAL R/4901-2520.

Germany.

This strategy was perhaps best employed in an eloquent letter written to Hess which was titled, “What is lost for Germany by the dismantling of the Waldorf schools.”⁶⁵ After addressing the familiar issue of German spirit and denying that they were private schools, the letter insisted that letting the schools close would be to the misfortune of the “new Germany” and insisted, “We do not fight for our eight schools in Germany, we fight for spirit property,” meaning the rejuvenation of the German spirit that the Nazis claimed to hold so dear.⁶⁶ By showing Nazi officials how much the Third Reich would lose if the schools were shut down, they hoped to finally bring them to the realization that the schools were an essential element of German life and needed to be preserved.

This letter to Rust was the last unified effort on the part of the schools to convince officials of their compatibility, cooperativeness, and usefulness, as 1936 signaled the end for many of the schools. Before being closed for good, the schools participated in *Umschulung* (retraining) for the students. Administered by the Nazis, *Umschulung* lasted about a year and was meant to prepare students in defunct schools (like the Waldorf schools) to enter state schools. For Waldorf students, this meant learning subjects like *Rassenkunde* that had been left out of the curriculum, or ensuring they had a workable knowledge of mathematics, since that subject was not taught in the lower grades of Waldorf schools. Though they agreed to participate in *Umschulung*, all refused to do so under Rudolf Steiner’s name. Maikowski argued that the *Umschulung* contradicted the high standards of “healthy education” (meaning education

⁶⁵ “Abschrift” Letter to Rudolf Hess, 1937, BFWSA, 7.1.020.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

according to Steiner's principles) and changed the Hannover school's name to "Retraining Course of the Former Hannover Waldorf School."⁶⁷ Maikowski further charged the Nazi state with responsibility for the "destruction of this German cultural asset," an uncharacteristically bold reproach on his part and undoubtedly an expression of his immense frustration.⁶⁸ The issue that seemed to raise his ire the most was the infringement upon the curriculum, which, as we have seen, was the one area where the schools proved unwilling to compromise.

By the end of 1937 it seemed to be clear that, aside from the special cases of the Dresden and Hamburg-Wandsbek schools, the Waldorf schools in Germany would be closed. While it is true that the schools' position indeed deteriorated from year to year, it is also true that at every stage of deterioration, Nazi actions seemed to offer opportunities to save the schools which motivated them to continue cooperating with the administration. Furthermore, school officials seemed to find allies in various Nazi officials, including Hans Schemm, Phillip Bouhler, Rudolf Hess, and *Regierungsrat* Thies. The involvement of each of these men at different stages in the schools' struggle increased their confidence that some compromise could be made which would secure for them a permanent place in the Third Reich.

With the closure of the Hannover school in 1937, Maikowski's involvement with the Bund diminished significantly.⁶⁹ He reappeared briefly in October 1938 to try to persuade Rust to allow the Hannover, Dresden and Hamburg-Wandsbek schools to continue their work

⁶⁷ Maikowski to the Stuttgart Waldorf school, 19 April 1937, BFWSA, 4/3/336.

⁶⁸ Letter of Maikowski, "An den Herrn Reichsminister für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung," 9 July 1937, BAL R/4901-2520.

⁶⁹ As we have seen, the Bund had been rendered virtually impotent by this point anyway.

nurturing the spirit of the German youth.⁷⁰ Even in this attempt to convince Rust to reopen the Hannover school and remove the admission barriers from the Dresden and Hamburg-Wandsbek schools, Maikowski made demands on behalf of the schools, arguing that they must be allowed to retain their pedagogy, including epoch instruction, Eurythmy, coeducation, handwork, and health education. Also key to the integrity of Rudolf Steiner pedagogy was the maintenance of the same teacher throughout the student's entire career, as well as the retention of their weekly intensive teacher conferences.⁷¹ It is curious that Maikowski felt he was in a position to make demands of Rust, however, the attitude he expressed in these two letters was in fact characteristic of the attitude he and the rest of the Waldorf schools adopted all along towards the Nazi government. Steiner's pedagogy had always been the one issue the schools were not willing to compromise on. The reason the schools changed their names for the *Umschulung* courses was because the *Umschulung* was a complete rejection of the Steiner curriculum and they refused to associate his name with principles that were not his. In addition, Maikowski remained hopeful in these letters, even after his school had been closed, that if only a true understanding of Waldorf pedagogy could be reached, the schools could find a permanent place in the Third Reich.

The strategy employed by the Waldorf schools was ultimately unsuccessful. Though their extensive efforts to educate and accommodate the Nazi administration seemed like a good approach, the schools were unable to survive in the Third Reich. They tried to rationally explain

⁷⁰ "Betr[eift] Waldorfschulen," letter of Rene Maikowski to Reich Education Minister Rust, 25 October 1938, *Institute für Zeitgeschichte* (hereafter IfZ) MA 610/58113-58114.

⁷¹ "Wesentliche Gesichtspunkte für die Weiterführung der Schulen in Dresden, Hamburg-Wandsbek und Hannover bei Wahrung ihres Charakters als Waldorfschulen," 25 October 1938, BAL NS/15-301.

how the continued existence of the schools would help the Nazis reach their educational goals, as well as their vision for a new Germany. Over the eight years from 1933 to 1941, the Waldorf schools proved their point time and time again. By being cooperative and open with the Nazi administration, the schools believed the Nazis would come to understand the nature of Waldorf education and allow them to coexist in the third Reich.

The schools clung to this belief, even in the face of increased pressure and contrary evidence. Frustrated by their lack of progress, they shifted emphasis, focusing on what would be lost by closing the schools, rather than what would be gained by keeping them open. This did not work either. The problem was that the schools fundamentally misunderstood the nature of the Nazi regime as well as its intent with regards to the Waldorf schools. In truth, no amount of explanation, clarification, or examples of compatibility would ever sway the Nazis to see the Waldorf schools as anything other than a threat. Their ideology was not based in rational thought and therefore was unreceptive to reasonable arguments. The coexistence that Maikowski and the rest of the schools worked so diligently towards, therefore, was never anything more than an illusion.

CHAPTER SIX

NAZI OFFICIALDOM AND WALDORF ILLUSIONS

The weakness of the Waldorf schools' position in the Third Reich should have been quite clear from the beginning and yet they were not able to comprehend the true nature of National Socialism and assess their chances for survival accordingly. The Waldorf schools' naivety in their assessment of National Socialist education policy, however, was not unfounded. The polycratic nature of the Nazi administration meant that the schools continually received mixed messages. Harsh measures were followed by concessions, restrictions were imposed and then removed, decisions made by one department often were overturned by another. Attempts to clarify their position often went unanswered, or alternatively, elicited conflicting answers. This chaos served to encourage rather than discourage the schools. It indicated to them that Nazi policy towards the schools was not yet set in stone and could be influenced. Even though most Nazi officials had already formed strong opinions about the schools and these were readily available to them, the schools persisted in their belief that they could positively influence Nazi opinions. This naive belief is why they pursued their campaign of information and cooperation so steadfastly.

From their first contact with the National Socialist regime, the schools were subjected to conflicting messages. The first indication of Nazi impressions of the schools was the NSLB's July 1933 refusal to accept the Bund on the grounds that their ideologies were incompatible, which was seemingly an unequivocal stance. The next month, however, they were granted admission to the NSLB despite that incompatibility. Later that year, the *Altenkirchen* department

of the Nazi Party asked the Stuttgart school if it could spare two woodworking instructors to help teach the skill to unemployed persons.¹ Their ideological incompatibility did not stop cooperation in either of these cases. In fact, the request for the woodworkers seemed to show interest in and even respect for the schools' abilities on the part of some Nazis.

In January 1934 the schools received a letter stating that Anthroposophists could not be good citizens in the new Reich. The Nazis believed that because of their Anthroposophic ideology and their internationalism, the schools could not possibly teach German youths to be good National Socialists.² These statements seemed to represent an unequivocal condemnation of the schools. While the first part of the letter seemed to indicate a hard line, however, the second part indicated that there was room for improvement, stating that a "substantial overhaul of the Waldorf school curriculum is needed in order for it to be able to work in the new Germany."³ This gave the schools a reason for optimism. Despite such a harsh assessment of the character of the schools, the Nazis were indicating modes for improvement and a willingness to work together. For their part, the schools were ready to compromise and be flexible in order to convince the new administration that they both shared common goals in regards to youth education.

However, a speech given by Party member Schönthal in February 1934 offered no such hope. The presentation was attended by members of the Waldorf school community and even

¹ Letter of R. Reutch, NSDAP Kreisleitung Altenkirchen, to Waldorf school Stuttgart, 16 October 1933, *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen Archiv* (hereafter BFWSA), 4/2/190.

² Letter of Schmidt to Boy, 5 January 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/223.

³ *Ibid.*

elicited a written defense on behalf of the schools. Schönthal accused Steiner of being Jewish, a Freemason, and of being responsible for General von Moltke's failure at the battle of the Marne in the First World War. He also equated Anthroposophism with Marxism as well as Freemasonry and Rudolf Steiner with Anni Besant, the leader of the Theosophy movement.⁴ In response, Dr. Emmert argued that not only was Schönthal's characterization untrue, it was in fact defamation. While Emmert conceded that there were dangerous secret societies in existence, he rejected Schönthal's claims that the Anthroposophy Society was one of them.⁵ Emmert's indignation in response to this Nazi characterization of Steiner and Anthroposophists, as well as his attempt to rectify what he assumed was a false impression, indicates Emmert's belief that these points were worth clarifying. Emmert believed, as did others within the Waldorf school community, that negative Nazi opinions of their movement could be changed.

While the schools were aware that these opinions existed, as we have seen, they believed that they were largely based on misconceptions that could easily be clarified. One of the best ways to do this was to bring Nazi officials to the schools to see Waldorf education for themselves. To that end, as previously mentioned, the schools enthusiastically encouraged inspections. Their enthusiasm reveals their own misconceptions about National Socialism. They believed that inspections would reveal to Nazi officials that, even though they did not teach *Rassenkunde* or hang a picture of Hitler in every classroom, they still did not pose a threat to Nazism because both systems worked towards the same goals. To put it another way, the schools

⁴ "Bericht über einen Vortrag von Herrn A. Schönthal," 17 February 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/259.

⁵ "Abschrift" letter of Dr. Emmert to Dr. Ernst Bindel, 19 February 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/258.

believed that even though the means were not the same, the similarity of the ends would be justification enough. This attitude in fact reveals two fundamental misconceptions; first, that their ultimate educational goals were the same, and second, that the Nazis were capable of allowing the schools to exist in the Third Reich as non-conformists.

Owing to Elizabeth Klein's connections to Phillip Bouhler at the Brown House, Paul Baumann of the Stuttgart school asked her to inquire as to whether Bouhler or anyone else at the Brown House could arrange an inspection of the Stuttgart school.⁶ As with other inspections, Baumann was hoping Nazi officials would see for themselves how well they reflected National Socialist educational values.⁷ In this case, they were encouraged by Bouhler's understanding and clear sympathy, and believed an inspection would convince him that the Stuttgart school posed no threat to Nazism and Württemberg Culture Minister Mergenthaler's actions against it were clearly unwarranted.

When they were successful in arranging inspections, they attempted to be as cooperative and informative as possible. In reference to an impending visit by Thies to the Stuttgart school, Maikowski reminded Baumann to have statistics ready for him concerning how many students had completed the *Abitur* as well as the professions of graduated students. Clearly the intent here was to show Thies, in quantitative terms, the success of Waldorf school education. Maikowski also suggested organizing an exhibition to clearly highlight the benefits of their health

⁶ Letter of Baumann to Klein, 18 May 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/332.

⁷ "Einige orientierende Bemerkungen über die Waldorfschulen," the Waldorf schools of Germany to Culture Minister Schemm, July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/070. See Appendix G.

education.⁸ Finally, he required that the Stuttgart school provide a detailed and clear explanation of the four temperaments, in order to ensure that Thies would really understand them.⁹ The goal here was not to falsify numbers or focus only on the aspects of Waldorf education that fit nicely with Nazi ideals, but to adequately and thoroughly explain and showcase all aspects of their pedagogy, using compelling examples and providing statistics to support their claims. Indeed, it seems they paid particular attention to those aspects that most confused and alarmed Nazi officials such as the four temperaments and health education. Moreover, they apparently looked forward to Thies' visit, as is consistent with other letters which invited Nazi inspections of various schools. They welcomed Thies' visit as an opportunity to rectify the false impressions of previous school specialists who charged that their epoch instruction, in particular, was problematic, causing the children to "learn not enough and forget too much."¹⁰ Rather than trying to downplay epoch instruction or changing it to make it more palatable to Nazi inspectors, Maikowski and Baumann instead invited Thies to see for himself the benefits of this type of instruction. As eager as they were to prove their compatibility with Nazism, they did not try to alter the content of their curriculum or doctor their statistics because they still genuinely believed that the merits and compatibility of Waldorf education would speak for itself.

Nazi officials, however, had already formed strong opinions about the schools. A lengthy Gestapo report on the Waldorf schools, dated June 1936, left little doubt about how the Nazis

⁸ Rene Maikowski to Paul Baumann, 13 March 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/018. In this letter, Maikowski's term "Medizinisch-Pädagogische" likely refers to "heilpädagogische," which was Steiner's theory of the way the human body works.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

perceived the schools. The report claimed that the Anthroposophists themselves indicated that Hitler and Steiner were incompatible. The Gestapo characterized Anthroposophism as being anti-volk, anti-national, supra-national, pacifist, and having a strong Jewish influence. It pointed out that Steiner had tutored a Jewish family and that Anthroposophism was generally positive toward Jewish writers. While the report conceded that the Anthroposophists also believed in the importance of youth education, it went on to point out that they believed and taught that race development and soul development were fundamentally different; in other words, that a person's race did not influence the nature or character of his soul. Finally, the report claimed that the Waldorf schools rejected the state because Anthroposophists were against the "right-wing extremism" of the Nazi state and they characterized Nazis as "Aryan blood fanatics" who indulge in a "swastika-decorated artificial cult of blood and race."¹¹ The schools received a copy of this report which seemed to clearly indicate their precarious position in the Third Reich. Given the greatly varying opinions that they had hitherto faced, however, this report may not have been as devastating to the schools as it appears. Moreover, Rust's intervention in the affair with the Dresden school demonstrated his authority over the Gestapo in matters concerning the Waldorf schools. It was Rust's opinion that really mattered.

In 1937 the two schools that were designated as experimental schools, the Dresden and the Hamburg-Wandsbek schools, underwent inspections which the schools enthusiastically supported. The reports generated by these inspections all reached similar conclusions, which were not as flattering as the schools imagined. While they all conceded that the relationship

¹¹ "SD - Monatsbericht - Die Anthroposophie" June 1936, BFWSA 7/1/010. See Appendix I.

between the teachers and the students was excellent, they also concluded that the schools did not meet the requirements for National Socialist education. Even in reaching this conclusion, however, the inspectors commented upon some of the positive aspects they saw in Waldorf pedagogy. The first report by Biernow of the NSLB *Gauverwaltung* Schleswig-Holstein was the most critical, remarking that at the Hamburg-Wandsbek school there was no systematic use of German script, the students spent too much time playing, drawing and studying music, and they showed little understanding of early German history. Furthermore, there was no curriculum, their knowledge of mathematics was unsatisfactory, there was no attention paid to ministry guidelines on prehistory or *Rassenkunde*, and the students did not know any “combat songs.”¹² In contrast, however, he noted that discipline seemed to come naturally, that there was a pleasing bond of trust between student and teacher, and their geographic knowledge was satisfactory. In addition, while Biernow judged their overall instruction to be below average, he conceded that their workspace, school kitchen and gymnasium was above average. He did not find many pictures of Hitler although every room had a picture of a Madonna and Rudolf Steiner. Any pictures of Hitler that did exist were always smaller than those of Steiner. Biernow concluded his report by remarking that the school was untouched by the National Socialist spirit.¹³

A second inspection of the Hamburg-Wandsbek school yielded similar results. Again, the teachers were praised for their educational ability and for the exemplary school atmosphere while the students were praised for their concentration and discipline as well as their exceptional

¹² Presumably this refers to marching tunes or songs that referred to the glory of Germany, the glory of war, or national heroes, much like the *Horst Wessel* song.

¹³ NSLB, Gauverwaltung Schleswig-Holstein to the Waldorf school in Wandsbek, 8 January 1937, *Bundesarchiv Lichterfelde* (hereafter BAL) NS/15 301.

musical and artistic abilities. However, the inspector was not persuaded that “Theosophy” was not taught there and was uneasy about the fact that the teachers determined their own curriculum. She found no evidence of the National Socialist world view there and was critical of the fact that “large boys sat knitting or crocheting.” While the first inspector concluded with a negative impression of the school, this inspector remarked that National Socialism could succeed at the Wandsbek school.¹⁴

Fräulein Pahl’s report of her inspection of the Dresden school made many of the same points as the inspectors of the Wandsbek school. She also remarked on the discipline of the students and the quality of the teachers. She also remarked that she was told all the students were in the Hitler Youth or League of German Girls. Pahl was impressed at the artistry of the students, especially the booklets they had designed. She was critical of the fact that the teachers used the “*Grüss Gott*” greeting rather than the Hitler greeting, and noted that independent thinking came too easily to the students. In addition, though she did not think she had enough time to adequately judge the quantity of National Socialist instruction, she did concede that the lesson that she witnessed on Dürer was “German-conscious” and that close attention was paid to language. In her final judgement Pahl was critical of the boys for partaking in too many “feminine” activities and she was highly suspicious of Eurythmy as an expression of mysticism. Ultimately, she concluded, she had a negative impression of the Dresden school.¹⁵

¹⁴ Marie Niemax, *Gaureferentin* for feminine upbringing, “Report on Waldorf school Wandsbek,” 9 March 1937, BAL NS/15 301.

¹⁵ Annemarie Pahl, “Report on Dresden Waldorf school,” 20 January 1937, BAL NS/15 301. These themes were reflected in two other inspection reports which are undated. The report by *Abteilungsleiterin* Stamm on the Hannover school was critical of the lack of photos of Hitler and lack of instruction of *Rassenkunde*. She was also critical of their belief in individuality and

As these inspection reports show, the schools were misguided and perhaps naive in their belief that inspections would convince Nazi officials to reconsider their opinions about Waldorf schools. To be more precise, the schools were not entirely wrong in this assumption, as the inspectors did in fact concede that there were worthy elements in the schools. However, their mistake was to assume that there was room in the Nazi mindset to accommodate those elements. In short, they did not understand that, no matter how much value Nazi officials saw in the schools, they could not admit to it because it contradicted National Socialism.

The reports reveal how the inspectors struggled with this situation to varying degrees. They all agreed that the discipline of the students and the ability of the teachers could not be questioned. However, whilst condemning the lack of Nazi values in the schools they also

intellectualism. Though the principal assured her that they were adapting the children to the Volk way of life, she claimed to see little evidence of this. She also felt that socialism existed there. She did, however, point out that the Hitler Youth and League of German Girls had a presence in the school and she was impressed with Eurythmy. Finally, she indicated that the students had the advantage of experiencing their lessons. Ultimately, she believed the schools and the education could be used for National Socialist purposes. *Abteilungsleiterin* Stamm, "Report on Hannover Waldorf school," Undated, BAL NS/15 301.

The report on the Dresden school, like all the others, remarked on the high quality of the instructors, but was more critical than the report on the Hannover school. Though the students spoke "German" German they were unaware of its relationship to nationality and although their artistic schools were impressive, the inspector was unsure how relevant this skill was to National Socialism. She expressed doubts over the principle of co-education and thought the children would become "mavericks". She also remarked on the fact that the parents contributed to the schools beyond financial contributions, such as by cleaning and cooking. Interestingly, she pointed out that the *Amtsleiterin* of the National Socialist Women's Association was on the parents' council and that her son attended the school. Naturally, she was fighting for the preservation of the school. Finally, she was unable to make any recommendation either way. She remarked that she did not know enough about Rudolf Steiner education to determine whether or not it could be compatible with Nazism. She was also unable to assess whether the students would be easily integrated into another school. Lotte Ruhlemann, "Report on Dresden Waldorf school," Undated, BAL NS/15 301.

pointed out some common bonds between Nazi and Steiner education. Biernow noted that, while the students' knowledge of early German history was lacking, their knowledge of history in general was impressive. In addition, he remarked on the facilities of the school, including the gymnasium. The exceptional quality of the Waldorf school's gymnasium is an indicator of the importance placed on physical activity, another superficial similarity between the two systems of education. This, along with the discipline of the students and the sense of community fostered in Waldorf schools, were all values to which the Nazis also claimed to adhere. Pahl commented on the students' membership in the Hitler Youth and the League of German Girls, as well as the particular attention paid to the German language. While each report noted certain benefits of Waldorf education, all but one concluded in the end that it was not compatible with National Socialism. The deviant report noted that National Socialism could be built at the Hamburg-Wandsbek school but it did not yet exist there. Thus the inspectors struggled to strike a balance between noting the obvious achievements of Steiner pedagogy without suggesting that it was anything other than a danger to National Socialism.

These reports prompted Hess to reconsider his lenient stance on the Waldorf schools. He became convinced that the schools were based on Anthroposophy and did not work towards National Socialism. Like all the other inspection reports, Hess was also favourably impressed by the relationship between teacher and student, the artistry of the students, and their overall intellectual ability. He also recognized that the schools had been successful educational institutions prior to the Nazi administration. However, he reluctantly conceded that the schools did not foster a National Socialist spirit, although he maintained that they upheld valuable educational principles. Hess hoped that these educational principles could be preserved while

still building National Socialism within the schools. He hoped that the experimental schools would be made to do this and suggested that the teachers in these schools should be paired with party comrades to ensure that the Nazi curriculum was being taught.¹⁶ In this way, perhaps, the experimental schools could combine the best aspects of the Waldorf schools with the best of National Socialist education. In this way, Hess was trying to reconcile the schools' ideological incompatibility with National Socialism with the value of their educational principles, which Hess could not deny. On a personal level, he was struggling to reconcile his own devotion to National Socialism with his undeniable attraction to the schools.

Essentially, the "hybrid" schools that Hess envisioned were what members of the schools themselves hoped for. The two camps - Nazis and Waldorfists - simply disagreed on what aspects were essential to the nature of Waldorf pedagogy. After vacillating between helping and hindering the Waldorf schools, Hess ultimately decided that some aspects of the schools should be preserved, which was achieved by granting the Dresden and Hamburg-Wandsbek schools experimental status. If Hess was hopeful that these experimental schools could find a permanent place in the Third Reich, and if Nazi school inspectors could not wholeheartedly denounce the schools, it was not absurd that the schools themselves would cling to this hope, even in the face of seemingly obvious doom.

Indeed, Hess' sentiments were echoed by Thies, ironically in a report which sealed the schools' fate. While explaining that all applicable authorities agreed that the schools had no place in a National Socialist state, he conceded that there was still some value in their educational principles. For this reason, he remarked, the Waldorf school in Hamburg-Wandsbek

¹⁶ Letter of Hess to Rust, 14 January 1938, BAL R/4901-2520.

was granted experimental status.¹⁷ Thus Thies, like Hess, saw both the value and the threat contained in the Waldorf schools and both condemned and praised them at the same time.

This same confusion and conflict was expressed in a report which recommended the dissolution of the Stuttgart Waldorf school.¹⁸ For the author, the failure of eight out of its ten graduating students to pass the *Abitur* in 1937 was critical. The report attributed the failure of the eight students to their lack of national political knowledge, which he believed was a result of the lackadaisical training provided by their instructors. The Waldorf method of teaching was characterized as international, individualistic, and Jewish, and he claimed that one-third of the teachers were full or half Jews. The instructors' focus on music and aesthetics meant that they neglected the character and will formation demanded by a National Socialist school. In addition, there were no pictures of Hitler displayed at the school. This situation, coupled with the passive resistance of the teachers, convinced Mergenthaler that it was necessary to prohibit new students as of Easter 1934 and recommend to Rust that he dissolve the school. According to this report, Mergenthaler's Easter 1934 prohibition prompted the schools to appoint Rene Maikowski, the brother of deceased *Sturmbanführer* Maikowski, to preserve the Stuttgart school.¹⁹ He conceded that Maikowski was partially successful, getting students admitted again at Easter 1935 as a result of his negotiations in Berlin. The report claimed that this reversal of policy weakened the position of the Nazi administration in Württemberg. Furthermore, it claimed that parents and friends of the Waldorf school formed a circle of 6000-7000 people amongst which were

¹⁷ Thies, report on Waldorf schools, 17 March 1938, BAL R/4901-2520.

¹⁸ Frommann, "An die Reichswaltung des NSLB," 29 May 1937, BAL NS/15 301.

¹⁹ See Chapter Two, footnote 30.

camouflaged opponents of National Socialism. Mergenthaler believed the only solution was to dissolve the Stuttgart school, a decision that was supported by this report. However, in order to do so, the leader of the NSLB and Hess both had to agree to it. Once this permission was given, the necessary steps would be taken.²⁰

Despite this clear support for Mergenthaler and his desire to dissolve the Stuttgart school, the author of the report, Frommann, did not pass the same judgement on the Hannover and Dresden schools, because he had not visited them. He remarked that Maikowski was putting all his strength behind the preservation of the Hannover school and Klein did the same for Dresden. He conceded that it was not impossible that they were “healthier” than the Stuttgart school.²¹ Like the inspection reports, this report would not have been seen by any of the Waldorf schools. What it reveals, however, is that while they had long ago decided the schools were a dangerous element, even in 1937 the Nazis had not yet developed any uniform policy regarding them nor determined their ultimate fate. In addition, it was still not clear what branch of the administration had ultimate authority over the schools. Ostensibly, the Reich Education Ministry had ultimate jurisdiction over schools, including the Waldorf schools. However, Frommann’s report implies that, if both the NSLB and Hess agreed on a particular action, Rust’s involvement was not needed, as he did not mention the need to obtain Rust’s permission. The ambiguity of Nazi administration practices is what encouraged Maikowski and the rest of the schools to keep up their fight to save the schools through cooperation with and education of Nazi state and party officials. Nazi actions quickly taught them that a decision made by one department could easily

²⁰ Frommann, “An die Reichswaltung des NSLB,” 29 May 1937, BAL NS/15 301.

²¹ *Ibid.*

be overturned by another, as long as the right person got involved on their behalf.

These reports by Nazi officials do not suggest that they deliberately misled the Waldorf schools about their position in the Third Reich. On the contrary, Nazi officials were quite open about their disdain for Waldorf education and the danger they believed it posed to the National Socialist state. While Waldorf teachers and administrators were often aware of these opinions, as we have seen, they did not take them as seriously as they should have. This mistake was partly due to their unfounded belief that the value of Steiner pedagogy would speak for itself, but it was also in part due to the nature of the Nazi state. As previously noted, the conflict inherent in the Nazi system of rule prevented the development of a coherent policy towards the Waldorf schools. When Nazi officials tried to articulate their position regarding the schools, therefore, those opinions often contained contradictions, as was the case with inspection reports. Likewise, seemingly unequivocal condemnations of the schools were usually followed by suggestions as to how to improve that impression. Every warning also contained a seed of hope that common ground could be found. It was this hope, rather than the negative opinions, on which the schools chose to focus. This choice led the schools to misinterpret Nazi actions which fostered their illusion of coexistence.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE BEGINNING OF THE END: SCHOOL CLOSURES

None of the eight Waldorf schools in Germany were closed at the same time. Of the eight, only the Stuttgart and Dresden schools were forced to close by Nazi officials. The remaining six determined their own closing dates in the face of escalating Nazi actions and measures which undermined their ability to operate according to Waldorf educational philosophy and pedagogy. Although the schools had tried to unite under the *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen* (BFWS) to present themselves as one institution in dealing with Nazi officialdom, confusion and infighting prevented this from being successful. The intent had always been to cooperate with the authorities as long as they did not compromise Rudolf Steiner's ideals. However, the strong tradition of individualism among the Waldorf schools meant that each had a different definition of what constituted a compromise of Waldorf educational principles and as a result did not react to Nazi policies in a uniform fashion. When the faculty of a particular school felt it had reached the limits of compromise, the decision was made to close the school. Further hindering the schools' ability to respond in unison to Nazi measures was the fact that Nazi policy toward Waldorf schools varied from state to state. While no school was left unaffected by local policies, some schools were left in relative peace while others had to face constant pressure from local officials. Increased pressure on a particular school did not necessarily guarantee its closure before another school, for a school's closure could be postponed somewhat by greater compromises. What it did mean, however, was that the school was forced into a decision: extend the limits of compromise or close. Most chose to

close.

Certainly, Reich-wide laws and decrees affected the Waldorf schools as a whole, beginning with the Civil Service Law of 7 April 1933 which provided the legal basis for the forced removal of Jewish teachers from the schools.¹ In the same month, the Law for the Overcrowding of German Schools and Universities of 25 April 1933, limited the admission of Jews to Universities and schools to 1.5% of the student population. The prohibition of the Anthroposophy Society, along with Freemasons and pacifists in November 1935 severely limited the activities of the Waldorf schools and provided another pretext for zealous local officials to put further constraints on schools in their jurisdiction. Finally, Rust's March 1936 prohibition on new admissions to Waldorf schools meant, for most, that their days were numbered.

This last measure had the most profound effect on the schools. By eliminating new admissions, Rust also eliminated any new tuition generated. Until this point, the schools had only been dealing with infringements on their pedagogy and curriculum, such as submitting to inspections of their schools, justifying their pedagogy to Nazi inspectors and ministerial officials alike, and frantically trying to acquire membership in the NSLB. Even establishing the BFWS as a vehicle by which they could communicate with Nazi officials infringed on their autonomy, an essential element of the schools. While their pedagogy and autonomy was indeed their main priority, financial concerns could not be ignored, further complicating the relationship between the schools and the Nazi administration. If financial constraints were the determining factor, however, the schools would have suffered their demise at the same time, but this was not the

¹ Strictly speaking, the Civil Service Law did not apply to the Waldorf teachers because they were not state employees, and therefore, were not civil servants. However, the NSLB required that the schools comply with the law in order to be eligible for membership.

case. The past behaviour of the Nazi administration meant it was not unreasonable to expect that Rust's measure, like so many others, would be overturned or at least altered in some way to allow for the continued existence of the schools. For various reasons, some schools held on to this belief longer than others and remained open long after the admission barrier was imposed. From the outset, each school faced a unique set of circumstances and responded accordingly to those circumstances. Aside from the Altona school, each school's life span was determined by its reaction to the 1936 admission barrier. Whether because of financial or ideological considerations, the 1936 barrier forced each school to make a decision about their future - a decision that was based upon their understanding of the National Socialists' Third Reich.

The Rudolf Steiner School in Hamburg-Altona was the last to open and the first to close. It existed for only five years, from 1931 to 6 April 1936. Under the direction of Principal Hans Brumberg, the Altona school opened with five teachers, five classes, and 107 students. These numbers had increased to twelve or more teachers, ten classes and 360 students by the time it ceased to be a Waldorf school in 1936.² Though it no longer taught Rudolf Steiner's pedagogy, the school remained open until 1938, administering the *Umschulung* (re-training) courses to the students so that they could be integrated into state schools. Indeed, each Waldorf school went through this period of *Umschulung* after it closed, a period which usually lasted from one to two years.

Like the other Waldorf schools, the Altona school was initially eager to demonstrate to the new administration that it was willing to cooperate with Nazi regulations. Even before the

² Uwe Werner, *Anthroposophen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933-1945* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999), *Anlage 4*, 374-375.

Bund's bid to join the NSLB was initially rejected, eight of its teachers - including Principal Brumberg - applied to join the NSLB as individuals, thus indicating their willingness to cooperate with the new regime.³ These eight teachers represented a majority of the teaching staff at Altona.⁴ Altona was also initially enthusiastic about the establishment of the Bund, despite tensions which quickly arose between the Bund and the Altona school over financial matters. In June 1933 the Bund had agreed that each school would pay 10 *pfenning* per student into a fund to be administered by the Bund in order to cover travel costs associated with it.⁵ A year later, however, the Altona school had still not paid their share of these dues and owed a considerable amount of money to the Bund.⁶ In order to solve the problem, Maikowski decided that all financial matters would go through him. Each school should pay the amount they owed without question, and when he was finally able to resolve the confusing financial situation, any extra money would be refunded to the schools. This measure was directed at the Altona school in particular.⁷

Despite these tensions with the Bund, Brumberg and his colleagues liked the idea of the

³ These eight teachers were: Brumberg, Stoewer, Dieterich, Jasper, Werth, Wortmann, Becker, Spitta. "Anmeldung für den NSLB," 18 May 1933, *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen Archive* (hereafter BFWSA), 4/2/019.

⁴ The statistics are spotty for all of the schools. In 1934 the school had twelve teachers on staff. Eight joined the NSLB in 1933 so we can assume that the number of teachers at the school in 1933 was between eight and twelve.

⁵ Letter of Paul Baumann to the *Reichsverband der Waldorfschulen* (later BFWS), 24 June 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/057.

⁶ Letter of Ernst Bindel to Rene Maikowski, 27 July 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/053.

⁷ Letter of Maikowski (BFWS) to the Waldorf schools in Germany, 18 August 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/367. Maikowski made a point of singling out Altona "despite their objections."

Bund and were happy to let it do their negotiating for them. In fact, the Altona school was little affected by the Bund's later problems because it was already preparing to close by the time divisions within the Bund escalated. In practice, there was little required of the Bund on behalf of the Altona school. Inspections were carried out by a representative for Rust in December 1933 but the school had few difficulties with the Nazi administration until 1935.⁸ In October, Brumberg received notice from *Kreisschulrat* Stegemann that both he and *Regierungsdirektor* Petersen (Schleswig) were in agreement that the school did not meet the educational requirements of the state.⁹ Rather than approaching the Schleswig ministry directly, Brumberg turned to the Bund for assistance. Klein suggested he approach Count von Wollroth who might be able to get him a meeting with *Ministerialrat* Rantsam.¹⁰ Maikowski also protested this matter to *Ministerialdirektor* Sunkel of the Reich Education Ministry on behalf of Altona, arguing that this notice contradicted Rust's 9 July 1934 decree which allowed the Waldorf schools to operate as usual until he notified them otherwise.¹¹ This situation highlighted for Brumberg as well as the rest of the Bund that the attitude of local authorities towards the schools greatly impacted an individual school's fate. In the case of Altona, the Schleswig Ministry of Culture felt it had the authority to close the school without waiting for a decision from Rust, even

⁸ Letter Franz Brumberg to Christoph Boy (BFWS), 10 December 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/217; see also Wenzel Götte, "Erfahrung mit Schulautonomie: das Beispiel der Freien Waldorfschulen." PhD diss. (University of Bielefeld, 2000), 497-498.

⁹ "Abschrift," Kreisschulrat Stegemann to Brumberg, 5 May 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/139.

¹⁰ Letter of Klein to Bothmer, 15 October 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/073.

¹¹ Letter of Maikowski to Herr Reichsminister and Mr. Ministerialdirektor Sunkel, 4 November 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/076.

going so far as to blatantly ignore Rust's July 1934 decree.

Although Maikowski was confident that Rust's final decision would be favourable to the schools, and therefore tried to buy time until that decision was made, his faith in Rust turned out to be poorly placed. In March 1936 Rust's much-anticipated final decision was to prohibit all Waldorf schools from accepting new students. This news came as a blow to many of the schools and especially to Maikowski. For Brumberg, however, this only confirmed what he had already decided. The prohibition of the Anthroposophy Society in November 1935, on the heels of the Schleswig Culture Ministry's threat of closure, signaled to Brumberg that the schools were doomed and he began making preparations to ready the school for *Umschulung*.¹² Thus the Altona school closed its doors on 4 April 1936, only ten days after it received notice of Rust's decision.¹³

Addressing the parents of the school's students, Brumberg explained that when they were constituted the schools were guaranteed freedom of action in matters of curriculum, instruction, and choice of teachers. With the Nazi seizure of power these freedoms had been gradually restricted. Initially, he had hoped that they could find a way to cooperate with the Nazi government but the prohibition of the Anthroposophy Society convinced him that this could never be because the judgement it passed on the schools meant that the schools' pedagogy and National Socialist education had nothing in common. Thus, Brumberg understood that no

¹² Franz Brumberg, "Niederschrift der Ansprache Brumberg an die Elternschaft der Rudolf Steiner Schule Altona," 6 April 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/138. Werner remarks that the ban of the Anthroposophy Society gave Rust the excuse to impose his March 1936 admission barrier; a decision he had already made, (Werner), 129.

¹³ The Altona school received this decree through *Kriesschulrat* Stegemann, 23 March 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/139.

amount of compromise or cooperation could save the schools and therefore it was best to close the Altona school as quickly as possible.¹⁴

Brumberg's uncompromising attitude did not waver even when offered a second chance. When the schools were given the opportunity to apply for experimental status in June 1936, the Bund asked the Altona school to apply as well, believing this would lend weight to the other applications. Brumberg, however, replied that he could not grant this request because he did not agree with the direction the Bund was taking. They had made too many concessions to the Nazis already and Brumberg was not prepared to help them make any more.¹⁵ No other school closed as swiftly nor was less compliant with Nazi regulations than the Altona school, despite its early eagerness to join the NSLB.¹⁶

The Free Waldorf school Hannover was the second Waldorf school in Germany to close its doors, despite the fact that its principal, Rene Maikowski, was the head of the Bund. In 1926 Hannover was the third Waldorf school to open in Germany, behind Stuttgart and Hamburg-Wandsbek. It began with only one class, two teachers, and 52 students. By the time it closed on 9 July 1937, it had nine classes, approximately fourteen teachers and 238 students. At its peak, in 1934, it had ten classes, fifteen teachers and 329 students.¹⁷ Of the fourteen teachers who

¹⁴ Franz Brumberg, "Niederschrift der Ansprache Brumberg an die Elternschaft der Rudolf Steiner Schule Altona," 6 April 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/138.

¹⁵ Letter of Brumberg to the German Waldorf schools, 3 July 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/174.

¹⁶ Both Götte and Leschinsky also express this sentiment. Leschinsky also believes that Berlin and Altona shared a similar attitude. Achim Leschinsky, "Waldorfschulen im Nationalsozialismus," *Neue Sammlung*. (May/June 1983): 265; Götte, 498.

¹⁷ Werner, *Anlage 4*, 374-375. At the end of the 1936-1937 school year the Hannover school employed fourteen teachers but there are no concrete numbers to indicate how many

taught at the school in 1933, only four were confirmed members of the NSLB, despite Maikowski's eagerness to work with the Nazi administration.¹⁸

The Hannover school's initial contact with the new government was on the local level. Maikowski received notice from both *Regierungspräsident* Dr. Stapenhorst of the Department for Churches and Schools (*Abteilung für Kirchen und Schulen*) and Rothstein of the Prussian Education Ministry that his school did not meet National Socialist standards and could not be allowed to continue in its present form.¹⁹ After an inspection by Nazi authorities, the Hannover school was found lacking in several areas, including geography, epoch instruction (which refers to the Waldorf schools' method of teaching one subject at a time), and Eurythmy (a dance-like form of movement).²⁰ He was asked to provide detailed plans outlining how his school would meet the new requirements.

The Hannover school was eager to comply, but had been given no clear indication of what "Nazi educational goals" were. A letter to the local Nazi school advisor Könnecke, requesting clarification of Nazi educational principles, went unanswered. Members of the Hannover faculty then wrote to both Christoph Boy as head of the Bund, and Dr. Bojunga of the Prussian Education Ministry, for advice. The letter to Dr. Bojunga expressed the confusion

teachers were on staff three months later.

¹⁸ These four teachers were Maikowski, Hoyer, Zimmer, and Ilse. "*Anmeldung für den NSLB*" 18 May 1933, BFWSA 4/2/019.

¹⁹ "*Abschrift*," Rothstein for the Prussian Education Ministry and *Regierungspräsident* Stapenhorst of the Department for Churches and Schools to Maikowski, 10 October 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/009.

²⁰ Letter of W. Lamerdin to Christoph Boy, 7 June 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/037. Eurythmy and epoch-instruction are discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

surrounding both Nazi educational goals and the process of *Gleichschaltung* and inquired whether acceptance into the NSLB was considered “following Nazi education.”²¹ Although Bojunga’s response is missing, we know that in July 1933 the schools were informed that the Bund would not be accepted into the NSLB, which indicated that *Gleichschaltung* was not going to be as simple as originally hoped. Likewise, whether or not they received an answer from Könnecke, in September 1933 the Hannover school did submit a detailed organizational plan for reaching the goals of Nazi education. The plan included a curriculum, a timetable, a short history of the Hannover school, and detailed statistics which addressed the vocational training of the teachers, the vocations of the students’ parents, the education of the school association, and the number of students attending the school.²² The amount of information included in this report was detailed and extensive, and would have required a substantial amount of time to gather, indicating the Hannover school’s willingness to accommodate Nazi demands even in the face of obstacles created by the administration’s lack of direction. The motivating factor was Könnecke’s implication that the school could eliminate the threat of extinction by outlining how it would meet Nazi educational goals.

Looking back in 1937, Maikowski referred to the “heavy obstruction” his school had suffered since 1933. However, there is little evidence to support his claim. After the matter of the curriculum was settled, there was little contact between Nazi authorities and Maikowski on

²¹ Dr. Günther Beindorff to Dr. Helmut Bojunga, 10 June 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/038. Beindorff and Bojunga were friends and Beindorff occasionally turned to him for advice or interpretation of Nazi policy.

²² Letter of Rene Maikowski and Matilde Hoyer, “An die Staatliche Schulaufsicht über das Privatschulwesen der Stadt Hannover,” 26 September 1933, BFWSA 4/2/177. See Appendix J.

behalf of the Hannover school. This might be explained by the fact that, as head of the Bund, Maikowski himself carried out negotiations in person that left no paper trail.²³ Evidence of Maikowski's negotiations on behalf of the Hannover school does not appear again until 1936.

Perhaps more than any other school, Rust's 1936 prohibition was a shock for Hannover. Maikowski's personal involvement in negotiations with Hess, Rust, and members of their staffs had led him to put his faith in promises made by these men; among them, a promise that Rust's final decision would not be detrimental to the schools. The admission barrier, then, was unexpected to say the least. Maikowski's hopes were again buoyed, however, by the option of experimental status. Divisions and severe problems within the Bund prompted Maikowski to apply for experimental status for his own school, rather than supporting Stuttgart's petition as originally planned. The rest of the schools followed suit.²⁴ Maikowski's high hopes were dashed in November of that year when he was informed by the local school authority on behalf of central authorities that Hannover's petition for experimental status was denied because of "past conditions."²⁵ To add insult to injury, Maikowski was also refused permission to make his case to Thies, Rust's representative. Thus Maikowski and his colleagues decided that, barring some

²³ Letter of Maikowski to Rust, 9 July 1937, *Bundesarchiv Lichterfelde* (hereafter BAL) R/4901-2520.

²⁴ "Abschrift," Kunisch, for the Reich Education Ministry, to Hannover, 12 March 1936, BFWA, 4/3/127; Letter of Maikowski to Rust, 6 October 1936, BFWA, 4/3/242; Letter of Bothmer to Free Goethe School Wandsbek, 30 October 1936, BFWA, 4/3/260; Letter of Maikowski to *Ministerialdirigent* Frank, Reich Education Ministry, 17 November 1936, BAL R/4901-2520.

²⁵ Letter of Maikowski to *Ministerialdirigent* Frank, Reich Education Ministry, 26 November 1936, BAL, R/4901-2520. Maikowski arranged for most of his students to be taken in by a neighbouring school. Rene Maikowski, *Schicksalswege auf der Suche nach dem lebendigen Geist* (Freiburg: Verlag Die Kommenden, 1980), 161.

unforeseen and unexpected change in circumstances, the Hannover school would close at Easter 1938 to prepare for *Umschulung*.²⁶

Clearly disillusioned by broken promises on the part of certain officials, Maikowski still left himself room to reverse his decision to close the school if circumstances changed. The “circumstances” he was referring to was the admission barrier. Maikowski was still hoping that, as promised, Hess would intervene to remove the admission barrier and his rather distant closing date of Easter 1938 was intended to give Hess the time to honour his promise. In July 1937, however, Maikowski was informed that Rust was not going to lift the barrier for the Hannover school, forcing Maikowski to face reality. On hearing the news that the Hannover school would be closed, Maikowski wrote a letter to Rust in which he expressed his frustration and disappointment over this decision:

In repeated inquiries to the Reich Education Minister as well as in verbal consultation with the various government and party officials, in particular also with the staff of the deputy Führer, I had the opportunity to report on the nature and meaning of Rudolf Steiner’s pedagogy, as well as the necessity for the preservation of the Rudolf Steiner Schools.

In clear ways I continued to express that this pedagogy represents a substantial and irreplaceable element of the German spiritual life, which also received much attention in foreign countries. Many agencies expressed a warm and genuine understanding and willingness to preserve these schools. Serious damage to our work was prevented by repeated interferences by higher officials.

Nevertheless I did not succeed until today, to gain a clear answer from a competent authority - i.e. the Reich Education Ministry - as to whether this pedagogy will be allowed to exist in Germany. Despite many various verbal

²⁶ Letter of Maikowski to Dr. Erich Gabert, 19 April 1937, BFWSA, 4/3/335.

promises the admission barrier was not waived.²⁷

He immediately informed Rust that he was changing the name of the school to the “Retraining Course of the Former Waldorf School Hannover” in order to avoid tarnishing Steiner’s name and misrepresenting his high educational ideals.²⁸

As frustrated as he was, Maikowski’s hopes were again raised by a letter written by Hess to Rust in January 1938. In it, he admitted that he had judged the Waldorf schools too leniently in the past and was in the process of revising his opinion. He still insisted, however, that there were some valuable educational principles at work in the schools and perhaps a few should be preserved to be made over in National Socialist fashion. He singled out the Dresden, Hamburg-Wandsbek, and Hannover schools for preservation, unaware that Hamburg-Wandsbek and Dresden had already been granted experimental status and Hannover had begun *Umschulung*. Maikowski mistakenly took this as Hess’ endorsement of the Hannover school and reapplied for experimental status.²⁹ The application was denied.

Despite Maikowski’s position as head of the Bund, and despite his proximity to highly-placed Nazi officials as a result of this position, he was not successful in finding a place for the Hannover school in the Third Reich. While he proved willing to compromise and cooperate with Nazi officials, both as head of the Bund and as principal of the Hannover school, he too had a

²⁷ Letter of Maikowski to Rust, 9 July 1937, BAL R/4901-2520.

²⁸ *Ibid.* The Hannover school continued to retrain students under the direction of Maria Ilse until 1939. Werner, 227.

²⁹ See Chapter Four for a more detailed account of the contents of this letter. Letter of Hess to Rust, 14 January 1938 BAL R/4901-2520. Maikowski, “*Wesentliche Gesichtspunkte für die Weiterführung der Schulen in Dresden, Hamburg-Wandsbek und Hannover,*” 25 October 1938, BAL NS/15-301.

limit. He believed the verbal promises he was given by Rust and others and tried to give them enough time to fulfill those promises. When it became clear to him that they were false promises, he recognized the futility of further compromise and closed the school.

The Rudolf Steiner School Berlin closed its doors in August of 1937, approximately six weeks after Hannover. Despite its seemingly advantageous location at the heart of the Nazi government, the Berlin school did not become heavily involved in the negotiations between the schools and the administration because it distrusted the Bund and Elizabeth Klein in particular. The Berlin school had opened its doors in 1928 with two classes, three teachers, and 56 students. At its peak in 1935, it had ten classes, seventeen teachers, and 397 students. By the time it closed on 26 August 1937, the number of students had fallen to 335.³⁰

In May of 1933 *Oberpräsident* Hassenstein (Brandenburg) sent *Schulräte* to inspect all the private schools in his area and report back to him by 1 August 1933. Each report had to contain the name of the school, its address, and the name of its principal. He also insisted that inspectors make sure that the person listed as the principal was actually acting as the principal and that each teacher working at the schools was licenced.³¹ While the rest of the schools were inspected by Rust's representative Thies, the Brandenburg government arranged its own inspections.

Aside from its difficulties with the Bund, Berlin also had difficulties with other Waldorf schools which did not make its dealings with Nazi officials any easier. By August 1933, the

³⁰ Werner, *Anlage* 4, 374-375.

³¹ Letter of Hassenstein, *Oberpräsident* for Brandenburg, to *Schulräte*, 8 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/6/003. Incomplete Document. He also pointed out that any applications on the behalf of non-Aryans for extension of their licences were useless.

Berlin school had already begun to disagree with the methods of some of the other schools; in August the issue at hand concerned religious instruction in the schools. Evidently the Dresden school, among others, wanted to fight to protect religious instruction. Berlin, however, was not prepared to join this fight. In a letter to the Dresden school, the Berlin principal Herbert Schiele explained that because religious instruction was not an essential part of the curriculum, and in fact parents decided whether their children participated in it or not, the issue was not important enough to fight for. As he and his colleagues saw it, it was better to save their energy for the really important issues which affected the fundamental nature of the curriculum. Fighting for too many causes would only weaken whatever influence they might have on the administration.³² Above all, the integrity of Steiner's pedagogy must not be compromised.

The Berlin school also differentiated itself from the rest of the schools in its response to NSLB membership. While teachers from other schools applied for individual membership in the NSLB both before and after they were notified that the Bund would not be accepted, Berlin asked Boy and the Bund not to submit their individual applications unless it was "absolutely necessary."³³ Schiele cautioned Dresden not to put too much faith in the word *Gleichschaltung*, reasoning that even if they did achieve it, their acceptance by the state was still not guaranteed. Thus, they should put their energy into defending the essential nature of Rudolf Steiner's work

³² "Abschrift: Teilweise Abschrift des Briefes der Berliner Schule an die Dresdener Schule vom 24. August 1933," letter of Herbert Schiele, 24 August 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/115.

³³ Letter of Boy to Schiele, 19 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/021. This was an odd request for Schiele to make as he had been the one to suggest that they apply for individual membership in the NSLB while they were waiting for a decision to be made about the Bund's application.

rather than into achieving *Gleichschaltung*.³⁴ The Berlin school refused to join the Dresden and other schools either in their fight against Nazi regulations, or in their attempt to facilitate *Gleichschaltung* out of a conviction that these causes were not important enough to merit the energy spent on them.

Berlin's isolation from the other schools was evident when it came time to replace the Stuttgart teacher, Caroline von Heydebrand. In July 1935, Fritz Bothmer of the Stuttgart school informed the Berlin principal, Anni Heuser, who in the meantime had replaced Schiele, that von Heydebrand was being replaced by Lotte Bröge of the Berlin school. Bothmer apologized for the short notice and for not discussing the matter with the Berlin faculty before making the decision. He acknowledged that meetings to discuss the matter should have been held earlier in the year but did not explain why they were not.³⁵ Berlin's isolation from the rest of the schools is highlighted by the fact that it had one of its teachers removed from its staff without a word of consultation.

As we have seen, by the end of 1936 Berlin withdrew its support from the Bund because it did not like the direction it was taking.³⁶ Certainly, Berlin was feeling isolated from the negotiations undertaken by the Bund and had not improved its chances by refusing to cooperate with other schools, which strained relations and led to the decision to close the Berlin school in August 1937. In contrast to the other schools, who cited financial difficulties as one of the reasons for closing, Berlin pointed out that their decision was not based on financial

³⁴ Letter of Schiele to Rudolf Steiner School Dresden, 24 August 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/115.

³⁵ Letter of Bothmer to Anni Heuser, 19 July 1935, BFWSA, 3/5/162.

³⁶ Letter of Anni Heuser to Maikowski, 21 December 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/311.

considerations but on “internal reasons.”³⁷ Berlin’s reluctance to cooperate with many of the activities of the other Waldorf schools indicates that they had defined for themselves a clear set of principles to follow, principles that isolated them from the rest of the Waldorf schools and led to their decision to close in 1937.

The Free Waldorf School Stuttgart had always enjoyed a special status as the first Waldorf school in existence, and the only one at which Steiner taught. Opened in 1919 under the direction of Steiner himself, in its first year the school had eight classes, twelve teachers, and 256 students. At its peak in 1931 it had 28 classes, 60 teachers and 1061 students. When it was closed in April 1938, it had 17 students, 43 teachers, and 555 students.³⁸ Not only was Stuttgart the original Waldorf school - the “mother” school - and the only one at which Steiner taught, it was also the longest-lasting and biggest Waldorf school in Germany. In addition to its unique position as mother school, it also had to face a hostile Ministry of Culture headed by Christian Mergenthaler. Of all the Culture Ministries and *Land* governments, Mergenthaler’s was most eager to enforce Nazi regulations in the schools and Stuttgart suffered most as a result.

One of the conditions that had to be met in order for the Bund to be admitted into the NSLB in 1933 was to remove Jews, Freemasons and political “unreliables” from the teaching staff as per the Civil Service Law.³⁹ In order to comply, the Stuttgart school swiftly removed Dr.

³⁷ Letter of Dr. Spieger to Bothmer, 26 August 1937, BFWSA, 4/3/474. Letter of Ernst Weissert to Bothmer, 21 September 1938, BFWSA, 3/5/170. *Umschulung* continued until 1939 under the direction of Lotte Ahr, Maria Schröfel, Erich Wiessmann, Ernst Poenisch and Ernst Weissert and concluded on 1 April 1939, (Werner, 227).

³⁸ Werner, *Anlage 4*, 374-375.

³⁹ Christoph Boy, “*Rundschreiben an die deutschen Waldorfschulen*,” 16 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/015.

Schubert, Dr. Hiebel, Dr. Lehrs and Mr. Strakosch, the four non-Aryan teachers on staff.⁴⁰

Mergenthaler later demanded that Mrs. von Baravalle, who was not Jewish, also be removed.

Though he offered no reason for his demand, it was quickly carried out.⁴¹

In February 1934, Mergenthaler informed the Stuttgart school that it had to close its first grade to new students. At a time when other schools were either still trying to sort out their individual memberships in the NSLB, or were enjoying a few months of reprieve in which to adjust to the new rules, Stuttgart already had to deal with major restrictions on its operations. In protest, Maikowski complained to Hess.⁴² When the prohibition went into effect that Easter anyway, Maikowski used Rust's 9 July 1934 decree to argue that the prohibition should be lifted for Stuttgart.

Mergenthaler relented in January 1935 by allowing the Stuttgart school to reopen its

⁴⁰ In February 1934 Baumann wrote to Mergenthaler to inform him that the school had met the conditions of the *Arierparagraph*. Letter of Baumann to Mergenthaler, 13 February 1934, BFWSA 4/2/046. The teachers are named in Stockmeyer, "*Rundbrief an die Ortsgruppen des Waldorfschulvereins*," 11 March 1934, BFWSA, 5.9.086. There is no evidence to indicate the fate of particular Jewish teachers at other schools, whether this is because no other Waldorf schools had Jewish teachers on staff in 1933 or not is unclear. The Wandsbek school assured Boy that there were no Jews on staff there. Letter of Senta Uebelacker to Boy, 27 May 1933, BFWSA 4/2/023. The Dresden school made similar promises to Minister Hartnacke, assuring him that no "non-Aryans" or "Marxists" worked there. The same letter also provided the number of Jewish students attending the Dresden school. Letter of the Parents of the Dresden school to Minister Dr. Hartnacke, 29 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/026. In 1937, the teacher Hans Ruts was removed from the Stuttgart Waldorf school because Mergenthaler believed he was a Jew. Culture Ministry to Stuttgart, 14 May 1937, BFWSA, 4/3/347.

⁴¹ The teachers Ernst Uehli and von Eck were temporarily given permission to continue to teach there. This notice was delivered by Hilburger of the *Ministerialabteilung für die Volksschulen* to Kimmich at the *Bezirksschulamt* Stuttgart who notified the school, 27 July 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/362.

⁴² Letter of Maikowski to Hess, 21 February 1934, BFWSA 4/2/272.

first class but he limited enrollment to 40 students.⁴³ The Stuttgart teachers cleverly used a loophole in this decree to their advantage. Although the decree limited the new first class to 40 students, it did not say anything about a new second class. At Easter 1935, when the existing second class graduated to the third class, the Stuttgart school would no longer have a second class because Mergenthaler had forbidden it from accepting students into the first class at Easter 1934. Thus, there were no students to graduate from the first to the second class. Because Mergenthaler's January decree did not explicitly forbid it, the Stuttgart faculty took the opportunity to accept new students into the second class as well as the first, thereby making up the gap that had been created by Mergenthaler's 1934 prohibition.⁴⁴ In reaction to this duplicity, Mergenthaler prohibited the Stuttgart school from accepting any new students into any class, anticipating Rust's March 1936 decree by a year.⁴⁵ In the meantime, Mergenthaler set about convincing Rust that the schools were dangerous to the Third Reich. To this end, he enlisted the help of an expert, the Tübingen professor Hauer, who confirmed Mergenthaler's belief that the schools were detrimental to German upbringing.⁴⁶ Schulte-Strathaus of Hess' Office of the Deputy Führer then informed the minister that Hess was of the opinion that the schools did in

⁴³ "Abschrift" Kimmich (*Bezirksschulamt* Stuttgart) to the Leader of the Waldorf school, 23 January 1935, BFWSA 4/3/009.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Mergenthaler (Culture Minister Württemberg), Reinöhl (*Ministerialabteilung für die Volksschulen*), and Bauser (*Bezirksschulamt* Stuttgart) to Stuttgart Waldorf school, 30 April 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/032; Letter of Maikowski to *Ministerialdirektor* Sunkel, 4 November 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/076; Mergenthaler (Culture Minister Württemberg), Reinöhl (*Ministerialabteilung für die Volksschulen*) to Stuttgart Waldorf school, 4 November 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/077, "Grundung und Geschichtes der Waldorfschule" October 1937, BFWSA, 4/3/378.

⁴⁶ Werner, 122.

fact work in the spirit of National Socialism. In an attempt to clarify the situation, Rust sent Thies to inspect the Stuttgart school on 30 April and 2 May 1935.⁴⁷ Thies' assessment was closer to Mergenthaler's opinion than Hess'. Thus Mergenthaler's restrictions were kept in place and Hess' intervention had little effect.⁴⁸

Not only did Mergenthaler's decree impact the number of students Stuttgart could accept, it also caused financial constraints for the school. Bothmer estimated that for the first year, the missing first class would cost the school 600 Reichsmarks a month, a cost that would only increase over time as Stuttgart's student enrollment gradually deteriorated year by year. Moreover, because the surplus teachers created by this measure could not be let go immediately, the cost would be even greater than it at first appeared. In addition, a loan the school had received from the city of Stuttgart in 1927 for a new school building had been interest free because the school educated so many students that would otherwise have been the city's responsibility. In April 1935, however, the city required that the school start paying interest on this loan. Furthermore, annual subsidies they had formerly received were no longer offered, and even their taxes increased. All of this meant that the restrictions imposed by the new administration were having a profound impact on the well-being of the Stuttgart school.⁴⁹

The end of the year 1935 did not bring any better news for the Stuttgart school. The

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 123.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 124.

⁴⁹ Bothmer, "Die erfolgten Eingriffe in die Waldorfschule und der auf sie ausgeübte wirtschaftliche Druck," 22 July 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/056; Letter of Maikowski to Ministerialdirektor Sunkel, 4 November 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/076; Letter of Emil Kühn to Dr. Drück (Württemberg Culture Ministry), 8 April 1938, BFWSA, 4/4/025.

Reich-wide prohibition of the Anthroposophy Society in November meant that there were now legal grounds to close the Waldorf schools by arguing they were proponents of Anthroposophy. Rust's 1936 prohibition was rather anti-climactic in a way because Mergenthaler had proven he was willing and capable of restricting the activities of the Stuttgart school. The prohibition simply lent Rust's official support to measures Mergenthaler had already implemented.

In April 1937, the Stuttgart school became subordinated to the Ministerial Division for Higher Schools in Württemberg (*Ministerialabteilung für die höheren Schulen in Württemberg*).⁵⁰ This meant that Rust had essentially turned over the governance of Stuttgart to Mergenthaler and his staff. Rust's prohibition of the Stuttgart *Waldorfschulverein* (WSV) in August of that year, however, showed that he had not completely relinquished control.⁵¹ Over the course of 1935 and 1936 Rust and Mergenthaler actually cooperated to work against the Stuttgart school. It seems the only thing keeping it open was Hess' protection.

In December 1935 Maikowski informed the Waldorf schools that Hess' Adjutant, Alfred Leitgen, had assured him that Rust could not take any measures against them without Hess' agreement.⁵² This did not mean that Hess was actively preventing the schools from being closed, but that by not agreeing to their closures he could help ensure their survival. Moreover, his "protection" applied to all of the Waldorf schools, not just Stuttgart. However, in his 1938 reassessment of the schools' value for National Socialism, Hess seems to have inadvertently

⁵⁰ Letter of Bothmer to Maikowski, 7 April 1937, BFWSA, 4/3/334.

⁵¹ Werner, 237.

⁵² Letter of Maikowski, "An die Waldorfschulen in Deutschland!," 16 December 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/102.

sealed Stuttgart's fate. In it, he mentioned Dresden, Hamburg-Wandsbek, and Hannover as possible candidates for experimental status. Taking this as an endorsement of these schools and a condemnation of Stuttgart, Rust and Mergenthaler again came together and took this opportunity to close the school. On March 11, Mergenthaler decided the school would be closed 1 April 1938.⁵³

The Stuttgart school was the only school not granted experimental status that was forcibly closed. Its closure came about as a result of Mergenthaler's unceasing effort to restrict the school's activities. At first, Stuttgart's willingness to cooperate and Rust's indecision about the schools helped Stuttgart stay alive. Mergenthaler, however, proved to be tenacious in his pursuit of the schools and convinced Rust that it was an institution incompatible with National Socialism. Even with Hess' support the Stuttgart school could not resist Mergenthaler's determination indefinitely. Unwilling to give in, the Stuttgart school continued to make concessions to the Nazi regime until it was finally forcibly closed in April 1938.⁵⁴ Stuttgart never had to test its limits of cooperation because Mergenthaler succeeded in closing it down before their limits were reached.

Very little is known about the last two schools not granted experimental status. The two youngest schools, Kassel and Breslau, both opened in 1930 and closed within five months of each other, with Kassel closing in October 1938 and Breslau closing in March 1939. The Kassel

⁵³ Werner argues that a new worker in Hess' office, Fischer, gave his consent to Rust and Mergenthaler to dismantle the Stuttgart school. Fischer may have formed this opinion on the basis of Hess' letter to Rust where he named Dresden, Hamburg-Wandsbek and Hannover as contenders for experimental status and did not include Stuttgart. Werner, 223-224.

⁵⁴ The *Umschulung* lasted until 1939 at Stuttgart.

school opened with five teachers, 116 students, and an unknown number of classes. It reached a peak of 320 students and 20 teachers in 1936, at which time its student intake was cut off by Rust's general admission barrier.⁵⁵ The only sense we have of its relationship with Nazi authorities is from indirect accounts of Kassel's activities and attitudes. In 1933, thirteen of its fourteen teachers submitted individual applications to the NSLB. According to accounts by Maikowski and Klein, the Kassel school was quite involved with the Bund and its negotiations with Nazi authorities and indeed it was named as one of four schools the Bund want to preserve through experimental status.⁵⁶ Like most of the other schools, Kassel was denied experimental status. The 1936 admission barrier caused considerable financial difficulties and the Kassel school was able to remain open until 1938 only because of the financial support of its parents. The school made sacrifices to stay open because its leadership was continually told not to close and were led to believe that a "favourable solution" to their situation would be found.⁵⁷ The financial burdens of the school finally proved too great for it to remain open any longer in the hopes that some agreement could be reached between it and the Nazi authorities.⁵⁸

Like Kassel, very little is known about the Breslau school and its experiences with local Nazi authorities. It opened in 1930 with only three classes but grew to eight classes, eleven

⁵⁵ Werner, *Anlage* 4, 374-375.

⁵⁶ Letter of Maikowski to Rust and Frank, 1 November 1936, BAL R/4901-2520; Letter of Maikowski to *Ministerialdirigent* Frank, Reich Education Ministry, 17 November 1936, BAL R/4901-2520.

⁵⁷ Letter of Marie Kruse to Rust, 27 June 1938, BFWSA, 4/3/441.

⁵⁸ They continued *Umschulung* until Easter 1939.

teachers and 240 students at its peak in 1934.⁵⁹ In March 1939 it was the last of the schools denied experimental status to close. Like the rest of the schools, it was inspected by *Ministerialrat* Thies and its principal was confident that Thies was impressed by the school.⁶⁰ He was told to expect Thies to make a decision about the fate of the school by February 1935.⁶¹ While this decision remained outstanding, the school was prohibited from creating a new ninth year class in May 1935 because of “poor performance” (*schlechten Leistungen*).⁶² In March 1936, presumably after they were notified of Rust’s admission barrier, they were also informed by the state police that they were no longer allowed to teach Eurythmy.⁶³

Despite earlier financial problems, the Breslau school was able to remain open until March 1939.⁶⁴ Unlike the Kassel school, the Breslau school was not in particularly good standing with the Bund but this did not seem to effect its longevity. Though it was accused of “poor performance” by Nazi officials, the local administration did not seem to pay undue attention to it, which may be the reason it was able to remain open until 1939. A former teacher from the school speculated that perhaps the school simply had more hope than the others, recalling:

⁵⁹ Werner, *Anlage* 4, 374-375.

⁶⁰ Letter of Hans Eberhard Schiller to Baumann, 19 September 1934, BFWSA, 3/19/70.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Letter of Maikowski to the German Waldorf schools, 13 May 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/037.

⁶³ Letter of Hans Richter to the German Waldorf schools, 23 March 1936, BFWSA, 3/19/71.

⁶⁴ Letter of Bothmer to Klein, 12 November 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/086. The Breslau school asked for financial support from the Bund in November 1935.

So we could hold on until Easter 1939 and then we had to close the Free Waldorf School Breslau in a painful ceremony, when it was no longer possible to continue working We parted with strong hope that there would still be a resurrection for the Waldorf schools.⁶⁵

The ultimate goal for all of the Waldorf schools was to carry on the work of Rudolf Steiner and the Breslau school seems to have held out hope longer than the others that the Nazi regime would allow them to do so.

In a little over a year, from July 1937 to October 1938, four of the eight Waldorf schools had closed and a fifth followed only five months later. The turning point for the schools was Rust's 1936 prohibition on new admissions. Not only did it limit student numbers, it also put severe financial constraints on the schools by eliminating an important source of income. However damaging Rust's prohibition was, the schools did not all believe it meant certain closure. If they had, all of the remaining seven schools would have closed at the same time. In contrast, each school closed at different times, indicating that other factors influenced their decisions.

For Altona, the decision to close had already been made before the 1936 admission barrier because Brumberg saw the prohibition of the Anthroposophy Society as the real harbinger of doom. Hannover's disillusionment with Nazi promises prompted its hasty closure in 1937. Like Altona, Berlin was not willing to make the same compromises as most of the other schools and was forced, not by financial constraints, but by philosophical ones, to close. The Kassel and Breslau schools remain somewhat of a mystery, as little correspondence between them and the

⁶⁵ As quoted in Werner, 227.

Nazi administration survived. However, they seem to have simply held on to the illusion of coexistence longer than the other schools, following Nazi rules and hoping to stay open long enough to come to some agreement with the administration. Each school did this until it could no longer survive financially.

Stuttgart was unique among the schools refused experimental status as the only one that was forcibly closed. Faced with a zealous administrator in the person of Christian Mergenthaler, the Stuttgart school was forced into a position of compromise much earlier than the other schools. Mergenthaler aggressively pursued the Stuttgart school, imposing admission barriers on them much earlier than any other school. Sometimes, in fact, his policies were too harsh and he was forced to rescind them, as was the case with his original 1934 admission barrier. However, when his policies were restricted he simply waited a short while and reinstated them or introduced a new measure that was equally limiting for the Stuttgart school. As the flagship school, Stuttgart was determined not to let Mergenthaler succeed in closing them down so that they could remain the symbol of the Waldorf school movement. Despite their best efforts, in the end Mergenthaler and Rust eventually worked together to force the school's closure.

The strong individualistic tradition of the Waldorf schools meant that when they tried to unite under the guidance of the Bund, tensions arose which crippled its effectiveness. This individualism meant that each school had its own culture, and each faculty had its own beliefs as to how best to guard Rudolf Steiner's lessons against Nazi incursions. These beliefs motivated each school's reaction to Nazi measures. Furthermore, Nazi measures were not always uniform, making a united front less effective. While Bernhard Rust had ultimate authority over Waldorf school policy, his involvement was intermittent and usually in reaction to someone else's actions.

A confused and ill-defined policy towards the Waldorf schools, combined with an administration defined by its power struggles, left a considerable amount of room for local authorities to put their stamp on Waldorf school policy. Rust's 1936 prohibition was indeed an important turning point for the schools but each school's reaction to it was based upon a particular set of beliefs and was influenced by their previous experiences with their local officials. While Nazi restrictions forced the schools into closing, the timing of each school's closure was based on a unique set of circumstances and beliefs.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISILLUSION: CLOSURE OF THE LAST TWO WALDORF SCHOOLS

The experience of the Hamburg-Wandsbek and Dresden schools in Hitler's "new Germany" was initially similar to that of the other Waldorf schools. They underwent inspections by Nazi education authorities in 1933, their teachers applied for individual membership in the *Nationalsozialistische Lehrerbund* (NSLB), and they developed a relationship with the Bund. Their paths diverged, however, in 1936. While Reich Education Minister Rust's March 1936 prohibition of new admissions was the turning point for most of the other schools, *Ministerialdirigent* Frank's June 1936 speech announcing the opportunity to apply for experimental status proved to be the turning point for Wandsbek and Dresden, even if they did not yet know it.

Although these two schools shared similar fates because of their experimental status, they each had very different approaches to survival in the Third Reich. Klein stressed that despite the difficulties they faced, it was the duty of the Dresden and Wandsbek schools to continue the work of Steiner by continuing to educate the German youth.¹ She became heavily involved in the activities of the Bund and negotiations with Nazi officials, a strategy that seems to have reaped rewards as her school enjoyed particular attention from and protection by Hess' office. The Wandsbek principal, Kübler, on the other hand, seems to have enjoyed many of the same advantages as Klein, without becoming too heavily involved with Nazi officials or the Bund. While he responded to certain Nazi actions, he did not go out of his way to form relationships

¹ "Ansprache von Frau Dr. Klein," 16 July 1939, *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen Archive* (hereafter BFWSA), 3/6/107.

with Nazi officials like Klein did. Despite these differences, both approaches won the schools experimental status and allowed the Dresden and Hamburg-Wandsbek schools to stay open longer than their non-experimental counterparts.

The Hamburg-Wandsbek school opened in 1922 and closed in March 1940, making it the second-longest lasting Waldorf school after Stuttgart. It reached its peak in 1934 with 421 students, nineteen teachers and thirteen classes. By 1940, the number of students attending the Wandsbek school had fallen to less than 100.² As was the case in most of the Waldorf schools, many Wandsbek teachers applied to join the NSLB as individuals.³ As part of their bid to facilitate entrance into the NSLB, the Wandsbek school also confirmed that none of their coworkers were Jewish.⁴ Though there is no evidence to suggest that the Wandsbek school was particularly involved with the activities with the Bund, a close relationship developed between the Hannover, Dresden, Kassel and Hamburg-Wandsbek schools. As the Bund deteriorated, they seemed to draw closer together. When applying for experimental status, these four schools were always mentioned together, to the exclusion even of Stuttgart, which was the school everyone was supposed to rally behind.

Except for indirect references in correspondence, very little was heard from the

² Uwe Werner, *Anthroposophen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933-1945* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999), *Anlage 4*, 374-375.

³ Seven of the twelve to thirteen teachers on staff at Wandsbek applied for membership. Because of incomplete statistics, it is impossible to say for certain if there were twelve or thirteen teachers on staff at Wandsbek in 1933. The seven teachers who applied were: Robert Sobeczko, Martha Somann, Dietrich Steinmann, Otto Altemüller, Herman Schüler, Hildegard Meyer, and Hildegard Barg.

⁴ Letter of Uebelacker to Christoph Boy, 27 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/023. The statement about Jewish coworkers was given to Boy to pass on to Schemm.

Wandsbek school until 1936. In October 1936 Franz Kübler wrote to the Reich Education Minister to apply for experimental status. He related to Rust the sacrifices and hardships the school had endured both before and after the Nazi seizure of power and attributed the school's success to the dedication and sacrifices of its parents and students. This dedication, he felt, made his school a good candidate for experimental status and felt that reports submitted to and generated by the *Stadtschulrat* in Wandsbek, the *Regierungsrat* and *Schulrat* in Schleswig, *Oberschulrat* Dr. Erichsen in Kiel, and *Regierungsrat* Thies would confirm Wandsbek's suitability in this regard.⁵

As mentioned earlier, the Wandsbek school underwent at least two inspections by school authorities in 1937 to determine its receptiveness to Nazism and its suitability for experimental status. The results of these inspections varied, with one inspector finding no evidence that National Socialism would thrive at the school and the other concluding that while the school did not yet exhibit a National Socialist spirit, one could be fostered there. Despite their differing opinions, both inspectors agreed that valuable educational principles could be found at the school.⁶ According to Thies, these "valuable educational principles" were the primary reason the Wandsbek school was kept open.⁷ Furthermore, the city of Wandsbek provided an annual

⁵ Though he made reference to sacrifices made by "teachers, parents and friends," he did not explicitly refer to any financial difficulties. Letter of Franz Kübler to Rust, 30 October 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/266.

⁶ "NSLB Gauverwaltung Schleswig-Holstein: Bericht über die Waldorfschulen in Wandsbek," 8 January 1937, *Bundesarchiv Lichterfelde*, (hereafter BAL) NS/15-301; "Bericht über den Besuch der Waldorfschule in Wandsbek" 9 March 1937, BAL NS/15-301. See Chapter Seven for a more detailed account of these inspection reports.

⁷ Thies, "Waldorfschulen (RSS)," 17 March 1938, BAL R/4901-2520.

subsidy to the school which may have influenced Nazi decision-makers. Although Thies did not explicitly say that this influenced their decision, he did make reference to the financial difficulties the Waldorf schools generally experienced as a result of the 1936 admission barrier. A school with a possible outside source of income, therefore, might have proven more attractive than one without.

Aside from the city's subsidies (which the school did in fact receive until 1938), Wandsbek, along with Dresden, received supplemental income from the *Waldorfschulverein* (WSV). Once the Stuttgart school was shut down, the (WSV) took the money it was no longer using to support the Stuttgart school and divided it between the two experimental schools. Though it had never complained of financial difficulties, the Wandsbek school still received 1000 Reichsmarks (RM) a month from the WSV while Dresden received 2000 RM a month. This money came from the contributions of members of the Anthroposophy Society, as well as parents whose children had once been students at one of the Waldorf schools.⁸

Though the Wandsbek school was fortunate not to have the financial difficulties of the Dresden school, it did have difficulties with the local administration. The schools initially assumed experimental status would restore their freedom of action. However, as it turned out, both had to adhere to the 1936 admission barrier. In April 1939 the Wandsbek school received the good news that the admission barrier had been removed because of its status as an experimental school. While this was greeted with great enthusiasm, it was in fact a year late.

⁸ Killian, Bothmer, to Members of the *Waldorfschulverein*, April 1939, BFWSA, 5/12/383; "*Waldorfschulverein Stuttgart an die Ortsgruppen und Einzelmitglieder des Waldorfschulverein*," 20 February 1940, BFWSA, 3/6/156; Letter of Klein to Preuss, 24 February 1940, BFWSA, 3/6/158; Letter of E. A. Karl Stockmeyer to Bäumler, 25 February 1940, BFWSA, 4/4/156.

The decision to remove the admission barrier for the experimental schools was made in early 1938 and the Dresden school was informed right away. For some reason still unknown, the Wandsbek school did not receive notice until 1939, causing the school considerable difficulties.⁹ For an entire year Wandsbek had to refuse students and psychologically prepare themselves for closure while the Dresden school kept accepting new students and believed in its future. While Wandsbek's student numbers dropped from 420 in 1937 to 200 in 1940, Dresden's numbers increased from 220 to 447 in the same time period.¹⁰ By the time the mistake was rectified, it was too late for the Wandsbek school to take full advantage of it. Moreover, while Klein was proactive in seeking out this information for her own school, Kübler's passivity in this regard did not help bring the mistake to light any earlier.

Further exacerbating the negative impact of this mistake was the fact that only a few months later in September 1939, the school was notified by the Community School Administration (*Schulverwaltung der Gemeinderverwaltung*) that it would have to close. Though Kübler was able to get this order rescinded on the basis of the school's experimental status, the damage had already been done. In the time it took Kübler to get the order taken back, the Wandsbek teachers had been conscripted by Heinrich Himmler, *Reichsführer SS*, into

⁹ Werner speculates that the *Schulverwaltung* in Hamburg, supported by the *Reichstatthalter*, wanted the school to be closed so that it could use its facilities. Therefore, the *Reichstatthalter* refused to forward the notice to the school. When responsibility transferred to *Ministerialdirektor* Holfelder in the Reich Education Ministry, he made sure the school was notified that the barrier was lifted. Werner, 228-229.

¹⁰ Werner, *Anlage 4*, 374-375.

emergency service with the *Ernährungsamt*.¹¹ With its teachers otherwise occupied and its students already placed in public schools, Wandsbek could not reopen even though it had been granted permission to do so. Even after the teachers were released from emergency service on 24 November, the school administration thought it best not to reopen. They argued that the ambiguity that surrounded their status, as well as their strained financial situation, prevented the school from reopening.¹² Only the sacrifices and donations of parents and students had kept the school open and the leadership felt it was irresponsible to continue asking these sacrifices without assurances that the school would be allowed to continue on unhindered.¹³ Thus the official decision to close the school was made in March of 1940, although in practice it had been closed since September 1939. This decision was made with a heavy heart and with a great sense of gratitude and debt to the parents whose sacrifices and contributions had allowed the school to exist for as long as it did. Like the rest of the Waldorf schools, Wandsbek also participated in *Umschulung* (retraining) to help integrate its students into state schools. For a school not accustomed to playing politics and without any powerful allies to turn to, the obstacles it faced in the fall of 1939 proved to be too great to overcome.

¹¹ Office for Nourishment or Health. This likely had to do with bio-dynamic farming, a type of organic farming that Steiner developed and was very effective. Himmler, along with Hess, was very interested in Steiner's farming methods and sought to appropriate them to feed his SS.

¹² Even though the Wandsbek school had remained in relatively good financial shape compared to the other schools, by the end of 1939 the effects of the admission prohibition could no longer be absorbed and Wandsbek, too, experienced financial difficulties.

¹³ Freie Goethe Schule Wandsbek to Rust, "*Bericht*," 8 March 1940, BFWSA, 3/1/234; Freie Goethe Schule Wandsbek to Mitgleider des Vereins Freie Goethe Schule, March 1940, BFWSA, 3/1/233.

The Dresden school followed a very different path than the Wandsbek school and is perhaps the most interesting of all. Its relationship with local Nazi authorities was at first precarious and strained. Indeed, it even expressed solidarity with the Stuttgart school as the most persecuted school. And yet, it was able to remain open longer than any other Waldorf school in Germany. This was by virtue of the fact that its principal, Elizabeth Klein, became heavily involved with the Bund and was able to develop personal relationships with many highly-placed Nazi authorities; relationships which were key in keeping her school open. Among the officials she befriended were Rudolf Hess, Alfred Leitgen, and Alfred Bäumler. Leitgen, Chief Adjutant for Hess, met Klein in 1934 and immediately proved to be a valuable ally. It was mostly through Leitgen that Klein communicated with Hess' office and was thereby able to enjoy the protection of that office in spite of Hess' personal ties to both the Altona and Hannover schools.¹⁴ Klein did not meet Bäumler, Director of the Office of Science and Representative of the Führer for the Supervision of the NSDAP's Spiritual Schooling and Education,¹⁵ until 1936 and began corresponding with him in 1937. He proved to be her most consistent confidant from 1937 until the school was closed in 1941. For those four years, Klein nurtured her relationship with Bäumler, hoping to convince him of both the harmlessness and pedagogic value of Waldorf education and its importance to Nazi Germany. Despite a shaky start, Klein was able, through these personal relationships, to secure a relatively strong position for her school in the Third

¹⁴ A cousin of Hess' spent some time at the Altona school in and a cousin of his wife's was a member of the Hannover parents' council. Letter of Ernst Bindel to Maikowski, 27 July 1934, BFWSA, 4/6/053; Werner, 231.

¹⁵ *Amtsleiter des Amtes Wissenschaft des Beauftragten des Führers für die Überwachung der geistigen Schulung und Erziehung der NSDAP*

Reich.

In 1933 the Dresden school found itself in the unique position of having to rent its school building from the NSLB. Before 1933, the landlord had been the Dresden teachers' association but when the NSLB took over that association, it also took over ownership of the building. Rather than simply renegotiate the rental agreement on the same terms as the previous one, the NSLB insisted on negotiating a new contract which would include far stricter controls on the school. The NSLB's belligerence caused the faculty to worry that they would not be able to negotiate a satisfactory rental agreement, which would mean financial ruin and an early demise for the school.¹⁶ In January of the next year, the situation still remained to be solved. Despite the NSLB leader's ostensible support for the Dresden school, the local NSLB demanded written proof of this support before they would proceed.¹⁷ Perhaps because of these difficulties, only three of the Dresden faculty members applied for individual membership in the NSLB, and Klein was not one of them.¹⁸

The Dresden school also encountered difficulties with the Saxon Education Ministry over matters concerning its staff. In May 1933, the school was informed by Dr. Woelker of the Saxon

¹⁶ Leupold, "An den Verwaltungsrat der Freie Waldorfschule Stuttgart," 18 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/020.

¹⁷ Letter of Grohmann to Boy, 25 January 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/183.

¹⁸ Letter of Boy to Director Gottfried Kimpel, 23 June 1933, BFWSA, 4.6.005; NSLB Gau Gross Berlin to Boy, 26 June 1933, BFWSA, 4/6/007. The entire teaching staff would have numbered between nine and seventeen. The statistics are incomplete. The teachers who applied were: Salzmann, Jacobi, Leupold. Aside from these problems with the NSLB, the school also had to address attacks from within. Dörfel, a father of a former student, began making accusations against the school in an attempt to get it shut down. Letter of Rudolf Steiner School Dresden to Christoph Boy, 31 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/030; Christoph Boy, "Rundschreiben an die deutschen Waldorfschulen," 24 June 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/056.

Education Ministry that only teachers who took their exams in Saxony would be permitted to work at the school.¹⁹ There is no evidence to suggest that this was required of any other teaching staff.²⁰ In June, the school was told that one of their teachers, Mr. Salzmann, was not allowed to teach anything but French and English because he was not qualified to teach at higher schools.²¹ Later that year, the school was forced to let another teacher go. The Commission for Higher Private Training Institutions (*Kommission für die höheren Privatlehranstalten*) determined that Mrs. Hanna Helene Merian did not have the right qualifications to teach in Saxony and had to be let go immediately. The *Kommission* was unsympathetic to the school's request that she be allowed to stay until after Easter 1934, stipulating that she had to be gone by 16 October 1933 and a new teacher must be found to replace her, regardless of whether or not they were trained in Steiner pedagogy.²² The *Kommission* also prohibited religious instruction at the school the same

¹⁹ "Behördenvorschriften für den Rudolf Steiner Schule Dresden," 6 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/144. Dr. Woelker was replaced as Saxon Education Minister by Wilhelm Hartnacke, some time in 1933.

²⁰ In 1934 the Stuttgart Waldorf school provided Württemberg Culture Minister Christian Mergenthaler with a list of their teachers and the dates that they received their teaching licences. This list did not include the state in which they received these licenses, nor did Mergenthaler ask for this information. "Liste der an der Waldorfschule tätigen Lehrkräfte," 10 January 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/225.

²¹ "Behördenvorschriften für den Rudolf Steiner Schule Dresden," 19 June 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/152. Despite these restrictions on his teaching activities, Salzmann in fact taught at the school until 1940/41 when he was called into military service. Klein tried to prevent him from leaving the school for military service and tried to enlist the help of Bäumler to do so.

²² Dr. Redder, Prof. Wehner, Gaebler, for the *Kommission für die höheren Privatlehranstalten*, 22 September 1933, BFWSA, 4.2.158.

year.²³

Numerous attempts by the teacher Gerbert Grohmann to clear up these misunderstandings both through the Bund and with Nazi officials directly, were not particularly successful.²⁴ In August he urged a meeting with Stuttgart and the other schools to discuss the Dresden school's situation and hopefully find a way relieve some of the pressure it was experiencing.²⁵ In September, at Grohmann's request, Boy asked Hans Schemm, head of the NSLB, to discuss Dresden's difficult situation with Hartnacke, the Saxon Education Minister. This very indirect approach was not successful either, as pressure on the school continued to mount.²⁶ In November, Grohmann hoped to take the opportunity posed by *Ministerialdirektor* Buttman's (of the Reich Interior Ministry) impending visit to convince him that the school was being unfairly persecuted.²⁷ Despite Grohmann's valiant attempts to relieve the pressure on the Dresden school, its situation did not turn around until Elizabeth Klein became involved.

Klein had been involved with the Bund as Dresden's representative from the beginning

²³ "Dresdener Behörden an die Rudolf Steiner Schule Dresden," 29 July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/107. This caused difficulties with the Berlin school because Dresden wanted to protest this decision but Berlin did not consider it a fundamental aspect of the Waldorf curriculum and therefore decided it was not worth defending. See Chapter Five, also, Chapter Two for a detailed discussion of religious instruction at Waldorf schools.

²⁴ Presumably, the school's principal, Elizabeth Klein, was too busy with the Bund in its first year to direct the school and so these duties were taken over by Grohmann.

²⁵ Letter of Dr. Gerbert Grohmann to Dr. Eugen Kolisko, 26 August, 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/119.

²⁶ Letter of Christoph Boy to Minister of Culture Schemm, 28 September 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/181.

²⁷ Christoph to the Waldorf schools, 2 November 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/205.

but did not emerge as a leader until 1934. She preferred to discuss the schools' affairs with Nazi officials directly, rather than through letters and phone calls. To this end, she spent a great deal of time traveling back and forth between Berlin and Dresden. By April 1934, her favoured method of negotiation had begun to produce results: *Ministerialdirektor* Buttman had been able to convince the Saxon Minister Hartnacke to cooperate with the Bund, and Klein had been able to arrange a meeting with Deputy Führer Rudolf Hess. In fact, she was so successful in her negotiations that some of her colleagues accused her of being opportunistic. These accusations, coupled with other jealousies and divisions, served to weaken the Bund over time. Klein defended herself against accusations of opportunism by arguing that her actions had not only benefitted her school but the entire Bund; a claim that could not be refuted.²⁸

By meeting with Nazi officials in person, Klein was able to develop personal relationships with them and humanize the plight of the Waldorf schools. She was assisted in this endeavour by the fact that she had already developed contacts in the municipal and regional administrations when she opened the Dresden school in 1929. Moreover, a chance meeting in 1934 with Alfred Leitgen, Hess' Chief Adjutant, was a decisive stroke of luck. By Klein's own admission, Leitgen's sympathy to Anthroposophy and the Waldorf schools helped her to develop a circle of contacts that was invaluable in helping her manoeuvre her way through the Nazi bureaucracy. Leitgen apparently had a particular knack for finding the right person in the right department to address Klein's needs.²⁹ Though she was adamant she would not compromise

²⁸ Letter of Elizabeth Klein to Christoph Boy, 3 April 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/318.

²⁹ Klein explains in her memoir that Hess had an interest in Steiner's bio-dynamic farming methods and her contact with Leitgen was as a result of this interest. In typical Elizabeth Klein fashion, she exploited this seemingly minor incident for her own use. Elizabeth Klein,

Steiner's pedagogical ideals to win understanding with Nazi officials, she was willing to cultivate and exploit personal relationships with these officials to extend the life of the Waldorf schools.

Leitgen was not the only one who was impressed with Klein. She was also able to arrange a meeting with *Reichsleiter* Phillip Bouhler of Hitler's Chancellery, who took it upon himself to try to get Rust to clarify his position regarding the schools. He also assured Klein that the NSDAP, Mergenthaler, and the NSLB did not have the authority to work against the schools before a final decision was made by Rust.³⁰ He even gave Klein permission to use his letter with the NSLB to prevent their further interference.³¹ Presumably this finally convinced the Dresden NSLB to renegotiate a rental contract for the school's building, a problem that plagued Gerbert Grohmann in 1933. While many of her colleagues were suspicious of Klein's intentions, they could not deny the effectiveness of her methods and were not above asking her to make requests on their behalf.³² As a result of her visits to the Brown House, Nazi party headquarters in Munich, she was able to secure the Bund a meeting with Rust and even seemed to successfully get Stuttgart's first class reopened.³³

Begegnungen, Mitteilenswertes aus meinem Leben (Freiberg: Verlag Die Kommenden, 1978), 80-86.

³⁰ Letter of *Reichsleiter* Bouhler to Klein, 16 May 1934, BFWWSA, 4/2/331.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Letter of Baumann to Klein, 18 May 1934, BFWWSA, 4/2/332.

³³ Rene Maikowski to the German Waldorf Schools, 7 June 1934, BFWWSA, 4/2/344. Klein informed Baumann that her sources in Berlin assured her that the first class would be reopened almost immediately. Letter of Klein to Baumann, 20 June 1934, BFWWSA, 4/2/356. However, Baumann never received official word of this and the first class was not reopened until January 1935. See Chapter Five. Letter of Baumann to Klein, 22 June, 1934, BFWWSA, 4/2/357.

Likely as a result of the personal relationships Klein had fostered, the Dresden school was granted experimental status. Like Wandsbek, it underwent an inspection in January 1937 in order to determine its receptiveness to National Socialism. The inspection report was mostly critical of the school, particularly of what the inspector believed were elements of “mystification.” Like the other inspection reports, this one also conceded there was some value in the school’s pedagogy.³⁴ As a result of this inspection, the Saxon government presented the Dresden school with a series of conditions that had to be met for the school to remain open. While she insisted to the school’s parents that “instruction will take place in the spirit of Rudolf Steiner’s pedagogy,” she also agreed to comply with the state curriculum at 4, 8, and 12 years.³⁵ These were critical years in the German education system because at the completion of each of these classes, the students entered a new phase in their schooling which sometimes meant changing schools. The ministry presumably required this concession from Klein so that Waldorf students would be ready to enter the state school system at any of these years. By agreeing to meet these requirements, Klein was compromising Steiner’s pedagogy. For example, Waldorf students were not taught to read in the early years of their education. If Klein followed that philosophy, her students at the Dresden school would not meet state reading requirements in the fourth year. On 27 April 1938 Rust’s 1936 admission barrier was waived for the Dresden

³⁴ “Abschrift: Fräulein Stud. Ass. Pahl über die Waldorfschule Dresden,” 20 January 1937, BAL NS/15-301. For a more detailed discussion of the inspection report, see Chapter Seven.

³⁵ Letter of Elizabeth Klein to the parents and friends of the Rudolf Steiner School, Dresden, 27 April 1938, BFWA 3/6/062.

school.³⁶ It was able to immediately begin accepting new students and indeed was the only Waldorf school whose numbers increased rather than decreased after 1936.³⁷ Clearly, Klein's victory, however, did not come without a cost.

The influx of new students also meant a new source of much-needed income for the Dresden school as did the closure of the Stuttgart school. Several Stuttgart teachers transferred to the Dresden school and in December 1938 the WSV agreed to pay the salaries of those teachers as well as a monthly contribution of 2000 RM towards Dresden's operating costs. The WSV reasoned that since it was no longer responsible for the financial well-being of the Stuttgart school, it should support the two remaining Waldorf schools.³⁸ When the Hamburg school also shut down, Dresden began receiving its monthly allotment of 1000 RM in addition to its own 2000 RM a month.³⁹ This was an important lifeline because the Dresden school rented both its

³⁶ Letter of Elizabeth Klein to Unknown, 23 May 1938, BFWSA, 3/6/063. This may have had something to do with Klein's visit to Phillip Bouhler in April. After her visit, Bouhler remarked to Bäumler how impressed he was with her. Letter of Phillip Bouhler to Bäumler, 22 April 1938, *Institut für Zeitgeschichte*, (hereafter IfZ), 58120-58121.

³⁷ Werner, *Anlage 4*, 374-375.

³⁸ "Vereinbarung zwischen dem WSV Stuttgart, dem WSV Dresden, und dem Kollegium der Rudolf Steiner Schule Dresden," 7 December 1938, BFWSA, 3/6/066; Killian, Bothmer, "An den Mitglieder des WSV," April 1939, BFWSA, 5/12/383; "Waldorfschulverein Stuttgart an die Ortsgruppen und Einzelmitglieder des Waldorfschulverein," 20 February 1940, BFWSA, 3/6/156; Letter of E. A. Karl Stockmeyer to Bäumler, 25 February 1940, BFWSA, 4/4/156. It is also interesting to note, however, that this financial assistance did not come without strings. When the Dresden school needed to hire a new teacher in 1939, the WSV recommended Mr. Hartmann for the job. Dresden hired Mr. Beck instead, arousing the indignation of the WSV who felt that the amount of money the WSV spent on the Dresden school entitled it to a say in the school's hiring practices. Letter of Kühn to Martin Tittmann, 8 February 1939, BFWSA, 3/6/078.

³⁹ Letter of Klein to Preuss, 24 February 1940, BFWSA 3/6/158.

gymnasium and athletic field from two different institutes and was finding it difficult to make the payments.⁴⁰ Furthermore, even with this assistance from the WSV, Dresden appealed to its parents for a one-time donation to cover unexpected costs such as building repairs and science equipment.⁴¹ The financial constraints that had been caused by the imposition of Rust's admission barrier from 1936 to 1938 were not easily overcome by the Dresden school and lasted long after the barrier was lifted.

While Klein was willing to compromise Steiner's pedagogy in ways that other schools were not, there were also limits to that compromise. The month after the admission barrier was waived, Governor of Saxony confronted Klein with new conditions. The first condition that Klein objected to was to appoint an "old fighter" (*alter Kämpfer*) as principal of the Dresden school. She pointed out that first of all she not know anyone who met this condition. Secondly, she argued that in her struggle to keep the school open, she had developed important working relationships with Nazi officials, including Hess - relationships that would be lost if she were no longer principal. The second condition that Klein objected to was the elimination of coeducation. Klein would not even entertain the idea of eliminating coeducation because she saw it as a fundamental element of Waldorf education. The third condition she objected to was the division of the school into either an elementary school (years 1 to 10) or a highschool (years 5 to 12). As it stood, the Dresden Waldorf school was both an elementary and highschool and should be allowed to remain that way because it was an experimental school. Furthermore, she pointed out that such a substantial reorganization would cause severe administrative difficulties.

⁴⁰ Rudolf Steiner School Dresden to Robert Killian, 28 January, 1939, BFWSA, 3/6/073.

⁴¹ Pruess to the Parents, 20 October 1939, BFWSA, 3/6/119.

The only condition that Klein did not object to was to “situate the school more strongly in the state,” which presumably meant including more National Socialist elements in school life.⁴²

Whereas Klein seemed willing to make adjustments to the curriculum that other schools were not willing to make, even she was not willing to accommodate Nazi demands wholesale.

In the midst of the inspections, the lifting of the admission barrier, and the financial difficulties being experienced by the Dresden school, Klein met Alfred Bäumler.⁴³ Because of his position, it was up to Bäumler to determine the acceptability Steiner’s many publications. Klein became his resource for Steiner’s writings, as well as a knowledgeable interpreter of his ideas which allowed them to develop a close relationship.⁴⁴ After their first correspondence, Klein wasted no time requesting to meet with Bäumler in person.⁴⁵ In 1938 Bäumler offered her the chance to make another good impression on Philip Bouhler. Klein delivered to him a bibliography of Steiner’s publications that Bäumler had requested. In describing this meeting to Bäumler, Bouhler remarked that Klein made a good impression on him, yet he did not see fit to mention Maikowski, who also attended the meeting.⁴⁶

By 1939 Klein and Bäumler had developed a strong enough relationship that she turned to him for help in drafting a new constitution for the Dresden school. In March of 1939, Klein submitted to Bäumler a Constitution for the Dresden school. It contained many of the same

⁴² Elizabeth Klein, “*Verhandlungsbericht*,” May 1938, BFWSA, 4/3/438.

⁴³ They met in 1936. Klein, 85-86.

⁴⁴ Letter of Klein to Professor Bäumler, 8 December 1937, IfZ MA 610/58129-30.

⁴⁵ Letter of Klein to Professor Bäumler, 18 December 1937, IfZ MA 610/58127-28.

⁴⁶ Letter of Bouhler to Bäumler, 22 April, 1938, IfZ MA 610/58120-21.

themes that had informed the relationship between the schools and the Nazi administration since 1933. Again, however, it shows the limits of the concessions that Klein was willing to make to National Socialist education. First, she committed herself to appointing only politically reliable personalities while at the same time setting the knowledge of Rudolf Steiner pedagogy as a condition for being allowed to teach at the school. With a promise to submit a new version of the curriculum by Easter 1940, Klein also insisted that this curriculum had to be based upon Steiner pedagogy. She still refused to compromise on the principal of coeducation and continued to insist that the school retain all twelve grades rather than being made into either an elementary or highschool. Again, she pointed out that it was not a private school because it did not turn a profit, and indeed requested subsidies from public means to help finance the school. Klein also requested that the school be given the official recognition “Experimental School with National Recognition” so children of officials could attend (which they had been prohibited from doing since 1934) and particular taxes could be removed. Finally, Klein suggested that final exams should be administered by a national commissioner in the school in order to increase its prestige.⁴⁷ In addition to the proposed constitution, Klein also sent *Ministerialdirektor* Holfelder’s assessment of the constitution to Bäumler in order to get his opinion and, presumably, his support, before it was sent to the Reich Education Minister.⁴⁸ Klein clearly had limits to her capacity for compromise and she outlined them plainly to government officials. Moreover, by enlisting Bäumler’s help with the Constitution, associated him with it. This was a

⁴⁷ “Entwurf einer Konstitution der Rudolf Steiner-Schule Dresden (gleichzeitig als Entwurf für andere Waldorfschulen),” letter of Elizabeth Klein to Professor Alfred Bäumler, 13 March 1939, BAL NS/15-301.

⁴⁸ Letter of Klein to Professor Bäumler, 12 April, 1939, IfZ MA 610/58091.

politically astute move on Klein's part, as Bäumler's name would lend weight to her arguments and made it more likely that her demands would be met.

Despite Klein's obvious political skill and careful development of her relationship with Bäumler, his understanding for the Waldorf schools may not have been due solely to Klein's efforts. He seems to have had an interest in Anthroposophy which predated his acquaintance with Klein. Indeed he studied Rudolf Steiner's writings for years and provided an assessment of them in a 1938 *Gutachten* (testimonial). In it, Bäumler extolled the virtues of Steiner, particularly in relation to his work on Goethe, although he was careful to stress that all that was good in Steiner's work originated with Goethe. In particular, he praised Steiner's introduction to four volumes of Goethe's which were published in Kürschner's "German National Literature." Bäumler even went so far as to suggest that in relation to his work on Goethe, Steiner was one of the foremost philosophers of the Nineteenth Century.⁴⁹ This was high praise from the Nazi party's self-professed education expert.

Despite Bäumler's seeming understanding for Steiner's Anthroposophy, and apparent willingness to assist Klein's Dresden school, he could not bring himself to a wholesale endorsement of the Waldorf schools. In a second *Gutachten* written in 1939, we can see Bäumler struggling with the same ambiguity and contradictions as the school inspectors and as Hess did in 1937 and 1938. In this *Gutachten*, he was critical of Steiner, highlighting a fundamental and unsurmountable difference between Anthroposophy and National Socialism: while Steiner believed that the essential element of humanity was the spirit, Nazism insisted that

⁴⁹ Alfred Bäumler, "Gutachten: Rudolf Steiner und die Philosophie," 22 October 1938, *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen Archive* (Hereafter BFWSA), 7/1/002. See Appendix K.

humanity's essential element was blood, and blood was tied to race. While Anthroposophy and Waldorf schools did indeed foster a sense of community, it was a community of spirit, not of race. *Waldorfism* as an ideology stressed the essential commonality and equality of the spirit of humankind, whereas Nazism sought to foster a community of blood which emphasized the essential differences among humankind, and was based in the inequality of the races.⁵⁰

Bäumler was willing to concede that the schools did not teach Anthroposophy, a point that the schools themselves made again and again. He was also willing to acknowledge that the schools emphasized German mythology and German heroes in history, ostensibly in compliance with Nazi ideals. Again, however, Bäumler insisted that there existed a fundamental difference between the two systems of education. The Waldorf schools taught German mythology to emphasize a spiritual connection, rather than an historical one. In short, Waldorf schools taught German mythology as mythology, whereas state schools taught mythology as history, using German mythology and heroism to emphasize Germany's historical right to glory and dominance over all races. Finally, apart from interpretations of pedagogy and curriculum, Bäumler made the standard observations that the schools were individualistic and intellectual, they displayed an artistic spirit. With a curriculum so flawed, Bäumler argued, the schools could not be allowed to exist.⁵¹ Thus he was able to reconcile his obvious admiration for Steiner's philosophies with the fact that his pedagogy was dangerous to Nazism.

It is curious, then, that even with his mind seemingly made up, Bäumler still provided

⁵⁰ Alfred Bäumler, "Gutachten über die Freien Waldorfschulen," 1939, BAL NS/15-303. See Appendix L.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

assistance to Klein. A letter from Bahr, a Nazi official, to Bäumlér in 1940 can perhaps shed some light on this contradiction. Bahr suggested to Bäumlér that he dissolve the *Waldorfschulverein* (WSV). The reason for this was that by 1940 the WSV provided almost the entire operating budget for the Dresden school. By dissolving the WSV, therefore, Bäumlér could eliminate their last financial resource and the school would be forced to close.⁵² This indicates that Bäumlér was searching for a pretense on which to close the Dresden school, which contradicts his helpful attitude towards Klein. More interesting than the suggestion to dissolve the WSV, however, is Bahr's offer to keep Bäumlér's name out of it. He remarked that, if Bäumlér wished, his name would be kept off of the dissolution order so that Klein would not be aware of his involvement.⁵³ This begs the question: Why would Bäumlér care if Klein knew he was behind the closure of her school?

There are several possible answers to this question. The first possibility is that perhaps Bäumlér did not in fact care if Klein found out he was behind the Dresden school's closing and Bahr's assumption that he would care was false. If this was the case, however, it still suggests that there was some reason for Bahr to make that assumption in the first place, however wrong it may have been. The second possibility is that perhaps Bäumlér really did not want the Dresden school closed and was trying to stall its closure by insisting that the party find legal grounds to do so. When Bahr unexpectedly came up with the dissolution of the WSV as a legal pretext for closing the school, Bäumlér's hesitancy was interpreted by Bahr as reluctance to admit his

⁵² Letter of Bahr to Bäumlér, 19 February 1940, *Institut für Zeitgeschichte* (hereafter IfZ), MA 610-57975.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

involvement to Klein. The third, and most likely possibility, is that Bäuml er was of two minds and really did want to close the school but also felt bound by genuine friendship with Klein, therefore he instructed Bahr to try to find a way to close the school that would allow him to conceal his participation. In this way, he could reconcile his Nazi duty to close a “dangerous” school with his genuine affection for Elizabeth Klein. In any case, the letter proves the close association between Klein and Bäuml er, and indicates that the Dresden school was nearing its demise in 1940, a situation that Elizabeth Klein was ignorant of.

Unaware of the inevitability of the Dresden school’s fate, Klein continued to pursue every avenue available to her. Over the next two years she kept in constant contact with Bäuml er, informing him about everything from the military service of one of her teachers, to the whereabouts of some curriculum booklets she had lent him.⁵⁴ At the same time, she also tried to find new sources of support for the plight of her school and was sure to keep Bäuml er informed about her activities. Klein and Leitgen continued to keep in touch too, as he proved quite receptive to Steiner’s methods. Through Leitgen, Klein had indirect access to Hess, whom she provided with various materials and information in a bid to convince him of the indispensability of the Waldorf schools.⁵⁵ Klein also included *Ministerialdirektor* Holfelder on this mailing list,

⁵⁴ Letter of Klein to Killian, 2 July 1939, BFWSA, 3/6/103. Klein cancelled a meeting with Killian because she had a meeting with Bäuml er instead. Letter of Klein to Professor Bäuml er, 4 October 1940, IfZ MA 610/57887-88; Letter of Klein to Professor Bäuml er, 22 November 1940, IfZ MA 610/57898-99; Letter of Klein to Professor Bäuml er, 1 February, 1941, BAL NS/15-302; Letter of Klein to Professor Bäuml er, 8 February 1941, BAL NS/15-302; Letter of Klein to Professor Bäuml er, 14 March 1941, IfZ MA 610/57727; Letter of Klein to Professor Bäuml er, 6 May 1941, BFWSA, 7/2/075.

⁵⁵ Letter of Klein to Professor Bäuml er, 4 October 1940, IfZ MA 610/57887-88; Letter of Klein to Professor Bäuml er, 26 October 1940, BAL NS/15-302.

as she believed he was sympathetic to Nazism.⁵⁶

As part of the same tactic, Klein began writing to Professor Kroh, a child psychologist at the University of Munich, in order to garner his endorsement of Steiner's child-epoch stages. Kroh had identified the same age groups and phases as Steiner, which Klein though was promising. In his October 1940 response to Klein, Kroh was careful to point out that he knew nothing of Steiner's pedagogy but was happy to confirm his own belief in developmental stages and age groups.⁵⁷ Clearly, Klein was hoping that Kroh's support might lend credibility to Steiner's ideas, and if she could convince Bäumlner, she could enlist his help convincing others. By the end of 1940, things seemed to be improving for Klein's school and she reflected this in an October letter to Bäumlner, writing that she felt she could finally work with real hope and joy.⁵⁸

At the beginning of 1941, in the face of more inspections, Klein began inviting prominent Nazis to visit her school. In March she was able to convince the highly decorated Captain Hans Erdmenger, a recipient of the Knight's Cross, to visit the school and recount his naval adventures to her students.⁵⁹ She was also able to get Dr. Schauer and Professor Kroh to visit her school, although she lamented to Bäumlner that Kroh's visit was too short to develop an informed opinion about the school.⁶⁰ She also asked Bäumlner to arrange a visit by Holfelder, which Klein felt

⁵⁶ Letter of Klein to Professor Bäumlner, 26 October 1940, BAL NS/15-302.; Letter of Klein to Professor Bäumlner, 22 November 1940, IfZ MA 610/57898-99.

⁵⁷ Letter of O. Kroh to Dr. Elizabeth Klein, 9 October 1940, BAL NS/15-302.

⁵⁸ Elizabeth Klein to Professor Alfred Bäumlner, 26 October 1940, BAL NS/15-302.

⁵⁹ Letter of Klein to Professor Bäumlner, 14 March 1941, IfZ MA 610/57727.

⁶⁰ Letter of Klein to Professor Bäumlner, 6 May 1941, BFWSA, 7/2/075.

would go a long way towards preserving her school.⁶¹ She also informed Bäumler of a meeting she had with the manager of Siemens-Schuckert who expressed an interest in apprenticing some of Dresden's students whom he thought showed much more promise than his current staff.⁶² Finally, Klein informed Bäumler that after the latest inspections, the *Prüfungskommissar* (examination commissioner) indicated to her that he had a good impression of her school and students.⁶³ By proving the practical usefulness of her school and inviting Nazi officials to see the school for themselves, Klein seemed confident that the Nazi authorities would reach the same conclusion as the Siemens-Schuckert manager.

Unfortunately, nothing could save the Dresden school once Hess flew to England on 10 May 1941. With Hess out of the way, Bormann took his place as Deputy Führer and was able to wield the full power of the position. He quickly dispatched the last remaining Waldorf school with an order dated 24 May 1941.⁶⁴ Although Hess seemed rather invisible in the last few years of the Waldorf schools' existence, Bormann's letter in fact remarked that the only reason the Dresden school was still open was because Hess "found it useful."⁶⁵

Clearly, Klein had worked hard to develop personal relationships with various highly-placed Nazi officials, hoping that it would extend the life of the Waldorf schools in general, and

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Elizabeth Klein to Professor Alfred Bäumler, 1 February 1941, BAL NS/15-302.

⁶³ Letter of Klein to Baeumler, 14 March 1941, IfZ 57727.

⁶⁴ *Reichsleiter* Bormann to Mr. *Reichsminister* and Chief of the Reich Chancellory, Dr. Lammers, 24 May, 1941, BAL R/4901-2520.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

her school in particular. Klein sought to bypass the Reich Education Ministry altogether, confident that the ministry's authority over the schools was not total. Instead, she successfully cultivated useful relationships with Leitgen and Bäumlner and tried to use those relationships to influence the opinions of even more powerful Nazi officials, to varying degrees of success. She was the only Waldorf school leader to employ this tactic, and had a certain degree of success at it. Only Klein's personality and use of personal relationships can account for the relative success of the Dresden school. Before Klein became heavily involved in negotiations, the Dresden school was "tormented" by the Saxon Ministry of Culture and was rapidly heading toward closure.⁶⁶ Her chance meetings with Leitgen in 1934 and Bäumlner in 1936 afforded her two important allies in her struggle to keep the schools alive. Without their influence, it is unlikely that Hess would have singled out Dresden for protection, as he had personal ties with both the Altona and Hannover schools. To be clear, Hess did not go out of his way unnecessarily to protect the Dresden school, however, the swiftness with which the last school was closed after he fled to England, and the remarks made by Bormann in his letter ordering Dresden's dissolution both indicate that Hess had offered some degree of protection to the school.

In stark contrast to Klein's very personal involvement with Nazi officials was Kübler's passive acceptance of his school's fate. While the Bund was still effective, he was content to let it handle negotiations on behalf of the Wandsbek school. The Wandsbek's school's designation as an experimental school did not come as a result of any exceptional efforts on Kübler's part but seemed, rather, to come by default. By the time the schools applied for experimental status, the

⁶⁶ Klein indeed claims that the Dresden school was slated to be closed in 1934 and only Leitgen's intervention prevented this from happening. Werner disagrees but concedes that the school was "tormented" by local Nazi authorities. Klein, 83; Werner, 111.

Altona school had already closed, the Berlin school was isolated from the others, the Stuttgart school was under heavy pressure from the Württemberg Ministry of Culture, and the Breslau school was in poor standing both with the Nazi administration and the Bund. The Dresden school was also granted experimental status, so the Wandsbek school was left with only Hannover and Kassel as competition. All three were willing to cooperate with Nazi officials but the Wandsbek school seemed to have the fewest problems. It had solid (if not overly energetic) leadership, a good teaching staff, and the best financial situation of the three.

While the passive attitude of Kübler and the Wandsbek school in general did not seem to hurt them at first, in the long run, it did. While Klein was able to turn the fortunes of her school around, the Wandsbek school seems to have survived the 1936 admission barrier by default. Klein's constant contact with various Nazi officials meant that she was aware that the admission barrier was supposed to be lifted. Had it not been, she would have suspected something was wrong and made the appropriate inquiries. Kübler, however, was unaware that the barrier was supposed to be lifted and did not realize anything was wrong. As a result, he patiently waited an extra year for the barrier to be removed from the Wandsbek school. When his school was suddenly shut down and his teachers conscripted into emergency service, Kübler did not have the necessary contacts to get the problem resolved quickly. While he was successful in getting his school reopened and getting his teachers back from emergency service, he was not able to do so quickly enough for it to make a difference and the school was forced to close a year earlier than the Dresden school. Although Klein had to work much harder than Kübler to secure experimental status and the survival of her school, ultimately, she was more successful in keeping it open. The year by which Dresden outlasted Wandsbek may not seem worth Klein's

efforts, but it meant that Rudolf Steiner's lessons were taught for one more year. For Klein, that was all that mattered.

CONCLUSION

ACCOMMODATION AND THE IRRECONCILABILITY OF *WALDORFISM* AND NAZISM

It is unclear what became of Elizabeth Klein after the Dresden school was closed. A gap exists between the Dresden school's closing in 1941 and 1951 when she reappeared to teach at the Hannover Waldorf school.¹ Klein did not address this period at all in her memoir, *Begegnungen*, published in 1978. In it, she claims that she received hundreds of letters from former students and parents after the war, thanking her for her dedication to keeping the school open for so long.² Unfortunately, her memoir does not delve into great detail regarding the Nazi period and her actions on behalf of the school. She makes brief mention of her chance meeting with Alfred Leitgen, Rudolf Hess' Adjutant, commenting that it was a stroke of luck which proved invaluable in the end. Leitgen, she insists, was very interested in Anthroposophy and impressed by its philosophy. For this reason, claims Klein, Leitgen assisted her in her endeavors. She also took time in her memoir to make the point that Hess' own interest in Anthroposophy was restricted to Rudolf Steiner's bio-dynamic farming methods. Otherwise, Anthroposophy and the schools did not elicit any particular sympathy from him.³

This omission is striking. It seems that in the twelve years that her memoir covers - from 1929 to 1941 - she did not see fit to devote any number of pages to what presumably defined

¹ Uwe Werner, *Anthroposophen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933-1945* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999), *Anlage* 24, 450.

² Elizabeth Klein, *Begegnungen, Mitteilenswertes aus meinem Leben* (Freiberg: Verlag Die Kommenden, 1978), 129.

³ *Ibid.*, 81-85.

those years: the Nazi *Gleichschaltung*. Moreover, although the Dresden school reopened in October 1945, Klein did not reappear in Waldorf school circles until 1951.⁴ Even then, she began teaching at the Hannover school rather than at the Dresden school; the school that she founded and ran for twelve years.⁵ Whatever the reason for these curiosities, Elizabeth Klein remains the most dominant and interesting, if not enigmatic figure in the story of the Waldorf schools under National Socialism.

Klein's success in building relationships with important Nazi officials was a key factor in the ability of the Dresden school to remain open until 1941. The reason for her success with Nazi officials is not perfectly clear. Perhaps she had a keen understanding of human nature and was able to appeal to their humanity. Indeed, Maikowski attributed her success to her skillful negotiations, remarking that she was able to appeal to Nazi officials on a personal level, thereby humanizing the plight of the schools. For instance, with Alfred Leitgen, she spoke to him as a wife and mother, relating to him as a parent.⁶ This personal connection may account for Klein's success enlisting the help of Nazi officials.

The personal relationships Klein fostered did not sit well with some of her colleagues.

⁴ It was refounded as the "*Städtische Schule - Einheitliche Grund und Oberschule.*" The schools in general started up quite quickly after the war. The Hamburg-Wandsbek school reopened on 8 May 1946 and the Kassel school reopened 27 February 1946. Rene Maikowski taught in France for a while during the war and then made his way to Hannover in July 1945. With a handful of parents and some teachers, including Dr. Rudolf and Dr. Beindorff, the Hannover school was reopened on 1 October 1945. Rene Maikowski, *Schicksalswege auf der Suche nach dem lebendigen Geist* (Freiburg: Verlag Die Kommenden, 1980), 175-177.

⁵ The explanation may lie in the fact that Dresden was located in the German Democratic Republic.

⁶ Maikowski, 145.

She was heavily criticized by Anni Heuser of the Berlin school for her tactics. Indeed, Klein's actions contributed significantly to Heuser's decision to withdraw the Berlin school's support for the *Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen* (BFWS) in December 1936. Though the Bund had already been severely weakened by internal divisions, Heuser's withdrawal was the death knell. The problems that the Bund experienced were largely due to the individualism of the schools. They had all agreed on the principle of cooperation with the Nazi government, and yet, they had different definitions of what "cooperation" meant. For Klein, cooperation included developing personal friendships with Nazi officials. For Heuser, Klein's friendships extended beyond her definition of cooperation and therefore were unacceptable. It is possible that criticisms of Klein stemmed from personal jealousies, either pre-existing, or arising out of her apparent favour with Nazi officials. Whatever the cause, it is clear that the Bund was hampered by internal divisions from its inception and not all of these divisions can be blamed on Klein.

Divisions of a very different nature arose in the WSV. Leo Toelke, a member of the Stuttgart parents' council who was one of the council's representatives in the general body of the WSV, consistently advocated that the school adopt a more cooperative attitude towards the new government. As Christian Mergenthaler increased the pressure on the Stuttgart school, Toelke increased his insistence that the school's uncooperative attitude was endangering its existence. Finally, in 1936, Toelke resigned from the WSV in protest, arguing that the government would not allow the school to exist in its current situation and that the "unreasonableness" of "the teachers and some parents" made the Nazi government believe the Waldorf schools were

incompatible with Nazism.⁷ For Toelke, the boundaries of cooperation were too narrow and needed to be relaxed in order to ensure the school's continued existence.

A similar situation arose in connection with another member of the parents' council, Hermann Mahle. Mahle was the parents' council's representative on the executive of the WSV and was chosen as such because he was also a member of the NSDAP. His membership was meant to fulfill Mergenthaler's requirements for the *Gleichschaltung* of the WSV. Mergenthaler, however, insisted that Mahle had not been a member of the party long enough to satisfy the requirements of *Gleichschaltung*. In March 1934, therefore, Mahle relinquished his position to Mr. and Mrs. Link, who were longstanding members of both the NSDAP and the Anthroposophy Society, and claimed acquaintance with both Rudolf Hess and Rudolf Steiner.⁸ Removed from the executive of the WSV, Mahle nonetheless remained as a representative in the general body of the WSV.

In his former role, Mahle had developed a few contacts and conducted some negotiations with Nazi officials, and he continued this activity even after he was replaced by the Links. Like Toelke, he advocated increasing cooperation with the administration, to no avail. In 1936 he protested the school's refusal to cooperate with the Nazi regime by resigning from the WSV. He argued that Klein and Maikowski refused to allow the participation of National Socialist parents in the negotiations with Nazi officials. He also criticized the school's effort to build a closer

⁷ "Protokoll Vorstandssitzung WSV," 5 March 1934, BFWSA, 5/10/030; Letter of Leo Toelke an Emil Molt, 5 February 1936, BFWSA 4/5/015.

⁸ "Bericht an die Ortsgruppen," 11 June 1935, BFWSA, 5/1/022; E. A. K. Stockmeyer, "Bericht," 26 March 1934, BFWSA, 5/10/033; Hermann Mahle, "Bericht," 4 January 1934, BFWSA 4/3/022.

relationship with the Anthroposophy Society because it prevented it from becoming a “true German” (Nazi) school. He ended the letter by informing the school that along with his resignation he was removing his considerable financial support from the school and would use that money to found his own “truly German” school based on Rudolf Steiner’s pedagogy.⁹ These examples provided by Stuttgart parents highlight both the splintering effect that Mergenthaler’s pressure had on the school as well as the school’s refusal to compromise its principles, even in the face of increasing pressure not only from Mergenthaler, but from a faction of its own parents.

Despite the willingness of certain Stuttgart parents to meet Nazi requirements, it is important to keep in mind that, by and large, Waldorf school parents were a special breed. In many cases they helped found the schools that their children attended. They formed an important part of the administration of the schools and, through their parents’ councils, wielded a high degree of influence on the day to day activities of the schools. Their commitment to the schools also extended beyond their membership in the parents’ council. As pressure on the schools mounted, the parents increased their support of the schools, both administratively and financially. They volunteered to help complete administrative tasks that piled up as a result of reduced staffs, and offered whatever assistance and skills they possessed in order to help the schools survive. As state funding was gradually reduced, affluent parents increased their financial contributions to the schools. Their contributions, often made as a result of great sacrifice, were invaluable to the continued survival of the schools.

The schools’ attitude toward the Nazi regime changed over time. Initially, the schools

⁹ Hermann Mahle, “Erklärung,” 20 May 1936, BFWSA, 4/5/066. He was not successful in this endeavour.

believed that *Gleichschaltung* would be a simple process, accomplished by joining the NSLB as a united whole under the umbrella of the Bund. As it became apparent that this one act of cooperation would not be enough to accomplish *Gleichschaltung*, the contradictions of the Nazi administration also became apparent. The conflicting policies and departments only convinced the schools that there was room for manoeuvre in the Third Reich. Moreover, they were also convinced that the Nazi attitude toward the Waldorf schools was as a result of “misunderstandings” which could easily be resolved. This first impression was critical. It established the pattern of the relationship between the schools and the Nazi regime that continued more or less unchanged for the next three years.

In 1936, with Education Minister Rust’s prohibition of new students, the Waldorf schools were forced to re-evaluate their own assumptions about the nature of Nazism. One by one, it became clear that the type of coexistence they so desired was not a viable option. It took some schools longer than others to recognize this fact, but almost all of them did. As each school made this realization, they refused to participate in the erosion of Steiner’s pedagogy and decided instead to close their schools. The one exception was the Stuttgart school, which faced very different pressures at the hands of Culture Minister Mergenthaler than the rest of the schools did. Though the Stuttgart school also came to recognize the futility of cooperation, it never had the opportunity to decide its own fate because it was forcibly closed by Mergenthaler in April 1938.

The naivety of the Waldorf schools was a result of many factors coming together to both blind them to the true nature of the Nazi regime on the one hand, and to hamper their ability to challenge Nazi dominance on the other. The reactions of the schools were heavily influenced by their strong tradition of individualism. Each school was free to make its own decisions about

how to respond to Nazi demands. Above all else, the schools sought to protect the integrity of their curriculum. However, each had a different definition of the essential elements of Steiner education. For instance, while most of the schools sought to protect their right to free religious instruction, the Berlin school did not consider it an essential element of Steiner education and therefore was not willing to fight for its retention. Therefore, as with so many other policies, the schools responded individually rather than as a group, which weakened the impact of that response. As the true nature of the Nazi regime slowly revealed itself by crossing the boundaries each school had set for itself, each school's illusion of coexistence was shattered at different times, preventing a concerted reaction to it.

Seeing the potential danger in their lack of coordination, the schools established the BFWS to help them present a unified front to the new regime and impose some unity on the schools. The Bund, however, was not strong enough to overcome the long tradition of autonomy that was, in fact, an essential element of Waldorf education. Instead, it disintegrated into rival factions and competing jealousies which hampered its effectiveness. By the time the schools started to become aware of the true implications of National Socialism, the Bund was beyond repair. Not only did the schools adhere to different limits of compromise, the failure of the Bund also prevented a coordinated response to Nazi incursions and served to further weaken the position of the Waldorf schools in the Third Reich.

The polycratic nature of the Nazi regime further disoriented the schools. The conflicting policies, the relative freedom of local officials to rule the schools how they saw fit, and the involvement of various departments and agencies all meant that each school had a very different experience under Nazi rule. This inconsistency served to atomize the schools, taking away the

bond of common experience and further preventing them from adopting a common response to Nazi incursions.¹⁰ This was especially the case with Christian Mergenthaler, the Württemberg Culture Minister. His persecution of the Stuttgart school was out of proportion to the Culture ministers of other *Länder* but was in line with his attitude towards the schools in Württemberg in general. Beginning in 1933, he zealously pursued the deconfessionalisation of the state elementary schools. In August 1935 he introduced the “community schools” which were meant to combine the former Catholic and Protestant schools into one non-denominational school. Whereas in other *Länder* the community schools were implemented with uneven success, by 1937 Mergenthaler had succeeded in eliminating all confessional schools in Württemberg. He even managed to eradicate the rural confessional schools, which were notoriously difficult to bring into line in other *Länder*.¹¹ Mergenthaler’s actions against the confessional schools, while aggressive, were in line with Reich policy.

In regards to the Stuttgart Waldorf school, however, Mergenthaler did not fall in line with Reich policy. He took it upon himself to implement restrictions on the Stuttgart school as he saw fit, even to the point of ignoring instructions issued by Reich Education Minister Rust. This was the case with Rust’s 9 July 1934 decree which restricted the activities of state culture ministers until Rust was able to make a final decision about the fate of the Waldorf schools. As Mergenthaler had already prohibited new enrollment in Stuttgart’s first class, Rust’s 9 July

¹⁰ This was the effect of Nazi policy as a whole, as William Sheridan Allen describes in his *The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town, 1930-1935* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965), 213-225.

¹¹ Jill Stephenson, *Hitler’s Home Front: Württemberg under the Nazis* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006), 248-249.

decree should have meant the lifting of this prohibition but it did not. Even after the Stuttgart school complained to Rust's representative Thies, Mergenthaler did not lift the ban.¹² It remained in effect until Rust's Reich wide policies against the schools caught up to Mergenthaler's and the ban was expanded rather than rescinded. Mergenthaler was allowed this freedom of action because of the polycratic nature of the Nazi state. While he was technically subordinate to Rust, in most instances he was free to implement policy in Württemberg as he saw fit. Thus, the schools were not all on an even playing field. Some experienced harsher conditions than others and this affected their ability to form a unified response to Nazi incursions beyond their very vague cooperation and information campaign.

Each school defined for itself where its limits of compromise lay; once those boundaries were crossed, their compromise ended. Certainly we cannot characterize the schools' response as resistance aimed to "overthrow the government from within," which, according to Peter Hoffmann is the proper definition of the term.¹³ According to Jill Stephenson, they should be considered collaborators because they "facilitated control by the occupier."¹⁴ By cooperating, the Waldorf schools facilitated the Nazis' control of their schools. Robert Paxton would also consider the schools collaborators, by virtue of their "apathy, public lethargy, [and] general

¹² "Bericht," 10 September 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/370.

¹³ Peter Hoffmann, "The Question of Western Allied Co-operation with the German Anti-Nazi Conspiracy, 1938-1944," *The Historical Journal* 32, no. 2 (1991): 437.

¹⁴ Jill Stephenson, "Review Article: Resistance in the Third Reich," *Journal of Contemporary History* 36 no. 3 (July 2001): 508.

acquiescence.”¹⁵ While Waldorf teachers and parents could not be accused of apathy, for they certainly cared about the integrity of their schools, they also never spoke out against the Nazi regime, except to “clarify misunderstandings” about Waldorf pedagogy, which could be considered public lethargy. Finally, we could agree that the schools were guilty of general acquiescence in their relationship with the regime. As we have seen, they were content to coexist under the regime as long as they were left to teach Steiner’s lessons. It is fair to assume that if no infringements had been made on the curriculum, the schools would not have expressed any sentiment of dissatisfaction.

Can this statement be extended to argue that the schools were indeed complicit in National Socialism, rather than simply being guilty of public lethargy? There are certainly those who would argue this point. The longevity of the schools in the Third Reich, as well as Steiner’s theories on race relations have caused detractors to argue that Steiner’s “blatantly racist doctrine...anticipated important elements of the Nazi world view by several decades,” and accounts for the relative security of Anthroposophy and Waldorf schools in the Third Reich.¹⁶ Is there merit to this argument? The schools themselves repeatedly tried to make the case that there were indeed elements of kinship between *Waldorfism* and Nazism. And while the schools cannot be accused of exhibiting “blatantly racist” behaviour in the Third Reich, their response to the removal of Jewish teachers was less than admirable. School leaders barely batted an eye when

¹⁵ John F. Sweets, “Hold That Pendulum! Redefining Fascism, Collaboration and Resistance in France,” *French Historical Studies* 15, no. 4 (Autumn, 1988): 750.

¹⁶ Peter Staudenmaier, “Anthroposophy and Ecofascism,” *Communalism* 13 (December 2007), <<http://www.communalism.org/Archive/13/ae.php>>.

they were required, under the Civil Service Law, to dismiss their Jewish teachers. While the Stuttgart principal Christopher Boy expressed disappointment that four valuable teachers would be lost, his disappointment was the only instance of any action remotely resembling protest against the teachers' removal. Rather, the Waldorf schools quickly dismissed their four Jewish teachers in an effort to expedite the process of *Gleichschaltung*. For a school system based upon values of community and the moral correctness of humankind, the choice to remove their Jewish colleagues was too easily taken, not to mention subsequently forgotten.

While the decision to remove Jewish teachers in fact represented the schools' largest moral failure in the later context of the Holocaust, in April 1933 when the decision was initially made, it seemed a rather minor concession. The schools were guided by the belief that coexistence with National Socialism was possible, if they were willing to make some small compromises. Removing the four Jewish teachers did not affect the ability of the schools to continue teaching the lessons of Rudolf Steiner, which was their ultimate purpose. Moreover, while the dismissal of the four teachers was not fair, it did not cause them severe hardships. They were not abandoned by the Waldorf and Anthroposophic community at large. They were provided with teaching opportunities in Waldorf schools outside of Germany, and were eligible for financial assistance from the WSV should they not be able to find a suitable position. Believing the dismissal of these four teachers would ensure the schools' survival in the Third Reich, and knowing that they would not suffer financially, their removal appeared to be justified. This seemingly small act of cooperation has indeed taken on a much greater moral and historical significance in the light of the Holocaust. However, what the Waldorf schools serve to illustrate is the way in which seemingly small decisions and acts of cooperation and adaptation, taken in

one context, contributed to the gradual and almost complete destruction of an entire people.

Interestingly, the schools did not follow up the removal of Jewish teachers with the removal of Jewish students. Had they been actively collaborating with the Nazis, or had they showed a true affinity with National Socialism, as many contemporary detractors claim, the next logical step would have been to remove or even restrict their Jewish students. While the schools certainly made an effort to show that their Jewish student population was in accordance with the Nazis' numerous clauses, they did so only when required to by National Socialist state officials. In short, there is no indication that they prevented Jewish students from attending the school or encouraged those students to leave. A school based upon "proto-Nazi" ideals would surely have made a concerted effort to remove their Jewish student population.

If we accept Michael Geyer's suggestion that Nazism should be seen as a system of occupation, even within Germany, then we can assess the Waldorf schools' reactions as against an occupier. Further, we can seek to situate the schools somewhere amongst the "shifting ground" described by Geyer: cooperation, affirmation, self-defense, rebelliousness, outright resistance.¹⁷ A problem arises, however, with Geyer's inclusion of "affirmation," a stage that the schools never experienced. Moreover, their attitude of cooperation was actually an expression of self-defense; the two were not exclusive of one another. Any rebelliousness was not necessarily intended by the schools as such, but was rather as a result of the ideals they adhered to. Their unwavering belief in Anthroposophic principles was in itself an act of rebellion.

If however, we accept Geyer's characterization of Nazism as a system of occupation and

¹⁷ Michael Geyer, "Resistance as an Ongoing Project: Visions of Order, Obligations to Strangers, Struggles for Civil Society," *Journal of Modern History* 64. Supplement: Resistance Against the Third Reich (December 1992): 221-223.

then apply Philippe Burrin's accommodation and collaboration continuum, we come closer to the experiences and responses of the Waldorf schools.¹⁸ Burrin contends that in the context of occupation, outright resistance meant leaving the country. Since very few took this option, some form of accommodation was necessary in order to survive under occupation. Even those that resisted, argues Burrin, had to also compromise in some way in order to provide the pretense of cooperation. For the Waldorf schools in Nazi Germany, outright resistance meant ceasing to exist, therefore they were forced into a process of choosing the "least of all evils," as Burrin puts it.¹⁹ The schools participated in minimal accommodation, cooperating just enough to prove they were not a threat to Nazism and therefore ensure their survival, but not seeking to go beyond what was explicitly required of them. Unfortunately, the Nazis continually upped the ante. As the regime evolved, the demands upon the schools increased and so too did their level of accommodation. They did not, however, collaborate. In the context of the Waldorf schools, collaboration would have entailed a rejection of Rudolf Steiner's principles and a conversion to Nazi education. Rather than collaborate in this way, many of the schools instead chose to close. In this way, they indeed chose the ultimate form of resistance: the loss of their schools, as well as the extinction of Rudolf Steiner's principles. This resistance, however, did not come at an early stage and was not borne out of a sense of civil duty but was rather came at a time when the schools had run out of options. When their illusion of coexistence was shattered and it became clear that Steiner's values would not be allowed to be taught in Nazi Germany, the schools were

¹⁸ Philippe Burrin, *France Under the Germans: Collaboration and Compromise* (New York: The New Press, 1995).

¹⁹ *Ibid*, particularly pp.1-4; 459-467.

forced into their acts of resistance by the removal of any hope for survival. In a world where they were constantly redefining the least of all evils, the schools resisted only when they had no lesser evil to choose.

According to Broszat, the intent of an act should not matter, the act itself should matter. In an asymmetrical system of rule like that of the Nazis, the behaviour, not the morality motivating the behaviour, is the key, and “every form of active or passive resistance which allows recognition of the rejection of the National Socialist regime or a partial area of National Socialist ideology and was bound up with certain risks.”²⁰ For the Waldorf schools, anything less than complete conversion to National Socialist norms of education meant their eventual extinction. Therefore, according to Broszat’s definition, they were indeed resisters, even if they did not intend to be.

Ultimately, if we take Kershaw’s suggestion that any act which prevented the National Socialists from penetrating all aspects of society should be seen as an act of resistance, it does not matter whether or not the Waldorf schools hampered the Nazis in their implementation of education policy, what matters is that, by not introducing Nazi education methods and symbols into Waldorf schools, they prevented the Nazis from completely penetrating society. For a regime that sought to win over the hearts and minds of its subjects and rule absolutely, he argues, the failure to capture even one mind marks the failure of their entire regime.²¹ In this sense, we can certainly suggest that the Waldorf schools should be considered resisters because it is

²⁰ Martin Broszat, as quoted in Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* 4th ed. (London: Arnold Publishing, 2000), 191-192.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 206.

obvious that they were not seduced by Nazi propaganda or swayed by Nazi pressure and they remained unwavering in their commitment to their own philosophy and pedagogy.

Thus, while it is unfair to suggest, as many today do, that the schools were guilty of collaboration with the Nazi regime, it is fair to point out their failure to address their role in Nazi Germany, for it was surely not without its morally questionable moments. While the controversy over the role of the Waldorf schools in Nazi Germany has become polemical and is full of distortions and historical inaccuracies, it has served a useful purpose. It has forced the Waldorf schools to face their past. Traditionally, the Waldorf schools have been reluctant to engage in *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* instead glossing over the Nazi period in one or two vague sentences about their persecution and eventual closure at the hands of the Nazis. This reaction is exemplified by Elizabeth Klein in her memoir. Only with the emergence of PLANS and its accusations against the Waldorf schools have they been forced to confront their ambiguous past. Though these attempts have been somewhat flawed and are indeed adversely affected by the very controversy that has prompted them in the first place, some honest attempts have been made in the pages of *Flensburger Hefte*, an Anthroposophic periodical, to explore all of the choices, good and bad, made by the Waldorf schools under National Socialism. As this process continues, members of the Anthroposophic community are slowly coming to the realization that, in their overarching attempt to preserve Rudolf Steiner's pedagogical principles, the Waldorf schools may well have failed to take a more determined stand against National Socialism. While there is still much more room for investigation, this study has provided an outsider's attempt to help in this process of assessing the schools' history under National Socialism and facilitate their confrontation with the past.

The history of the Waldorf schools under National Socialism provides a certain paradox. It seems that, given its philosophical and pedagogical orientation, this institution should have been subject to the particularly close attention of the Nazis, especially given the latter's professed belief in the power of education to mold the minds of youth. For the Waldorf schools' part, they too, might be expected to be particularly opposed to the National Socialists. If any group of educators had the tools and intellectual background to recognize the danger of National Socialism, and the moral fortitude to stand up to it, it would seem to be the Waldorf school teachers. Yet both of these systems coexisted in the early years of the Third Reich, a situation that encouraged the Waldorf schools to be optimistic about their future, and led them to believe that they would be able to find a permanent place in the Third Reich.

This belief brought with it cooperation and accommodation - not because the schools were particularly enamoured with Nazism, and not because they lacked the moral fibre to stand up against the Nazis, but because they misunderstood National Socialism's true nature and did not realize until it was too late that they *should* stand up to it. Instead, they compromised, because they did not recognize that *Waldorfism* and Nazism were mutually exclusive ideologies. They did not understand or did not want to understand that the National Socialist emphasis on German culture was meant to foster a sense of superiority in German students; that national community meant the exclusion of all other communities; or that education was not emphasized to nurture a love of learning but because it was meant to indoctrinate a new generation of Nazis and thereby ensure the survival of the Thousand-Year Reich. Waldorf education coexisting alongside a Nazified public system was really never an option in the "new Germany." In fact, ideologically and politically, the schools were doomed in the Third Reich as there was no room

for independent thinking, spiritualism, or expression of individuality. The failure of the schools to understand this fundamental and insurmountable difference, was their undoing. Their idealism and their belief that the virtue of Rudolf Steiner's pedagogy could not be denied indefinitely blinded the schools to the true nature of National Socialism and fostered an illusion of coexistence.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archival Sources:

Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen Archiv, Stuttgart

3/1/188 - 3/1/240

3/2/064 - 3/2/070

3/3/399

3/4/110 - 3/4/112

3/5/159 - 3/5/170

3/6/052 - 3/6/166

4/2/002 - 4/2/376

4/3/002 - 4/3/474

4/4/003 - 4/4/173

5/1/008 - 5/1/141

5/2/283 - 5/2/324

5/9/080 - 5/9/117

5/10/009 - 5/10/180

5/12/245 - 5/12/455

6/1/108 - 6/1/118

7/1/002 - 7/1/093

7/2/075

Bundesarchiv Lichterfelde:

NS/15 301

NS/15 302

NS/15 303

R4901-2520

Institut für Zeitgeschichte:

MA 610

Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg:

350 I ES/A

Published Primary Sources:

Brecht, Arnold. *The Art and Technique of Administration in German Ministries*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1940.

Ebenstein, William. *The Nazi State*. New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc. 1943.

“Education in Germany by two English Investigators,” (Kulturkampf Association, 1938)

Kandel, I. L. *The Making of Nazis*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1935.

Klein, Elizabeth. *Begegnungen, Mitteilenswertes aus meinem Leben*. Freiberg: Verlag Die Kommenden, 1978.

Kneller, George. *The Educational Philosophy of National Socialism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941.

Lindgren, Alina M. “Education in Germany” *United States Department of the Interior, Office of Education Bulletin, No. 15*. Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1938.

Maikowski, Rene. *Schicksalswege auf der Suche nach dem lebendigen Geist*. Freiburg: Verlag Die Kommenden, 1980.

Mann, Erika. *School for Barbarians*. New York: Modern Age Books, 1938.

The Nazi Primer. trans. Harwood L. Childs. New York: Harper and Bros., 1938.

Steiner, Rudolf. *Cosmic Memory: Prehistory of Earth and Man*, trans. Karl E. Zimmer. New York: Harper and Row, 1959.;

_____. *Curative Education*, trans. Mary Adams. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1972.

_____. *Deeper Insights in Education: A Waldorf Approach*, trans. Rene Querio. New York: Anthroposophic Press, Inc., 1983.

_____. *Education as a Social Problem*, trans. Lisa D. Monges and Doris M. Bugbey. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1969.

_____. *The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy*, trans. George and Mary Adams. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1972.

- _____. *The Essentials of Education*, trans. A.C. H. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1968.
- _____. *The Four Temperaments*, trans. Francis E. Dawson. New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1968.
- _____. *Human Values in Education*, trans. V. Compton-Burnett. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1971.
- _____. *Introduction to Eurythmy: Talks Given Before Sixteen Eurythmy Performances*, trans. Gladys Hahn. New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1984.
- _____. *The Kingdom of Childhood*, trans. Helen Fox. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1974.
- _____. *Occult Science: An Outline*, trans. Mary Adams. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1979.
- _____. *Practical Advice to Teachers*, trans. Johanna Collis. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1976.
- _____. *Soul Economy and Waldorf Education*, trans. Roland Everett. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1986.
- _____. *The Story of My Life*. London: Anthroposophical Publishing Co., 1928.
- _____. *Study of Man*, trans. A. C. Harwood. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1966.
- _____. *The Threefold Social Order*, trans. Frederick C. Heckel. New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1972.
- _____. *The Wisdom of Man, of the Soul, and of the Spirit*. New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1971.
- Taylor, John W. *Youth Welfare in Germany*. Nashville, Tennessee: The Baird-Ward Company, 1936.

Secondary Sources:

Books:

- Allen, William Sheridan. *The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town, 1930-1935*. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965.
- Ayçoberry, Pierre. *The Social History of the Third Reich: 1933-1945*, trans. Janet Lloyd. New York: The New Press, 1999.
- Barnes, Henry. *A Life for the Spirit: Rudolf Steiner in the Crosscurrents of our Time*. Hudson, New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1997.
- Bessel, Richard. Ed. *Life in the Third Reich*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Bierl, Peter. *Wurzelrassen, Erzengel und Volksgeister: Die Anthroposophie Rudolfs Steiners und die Waldorfpädagogik*. Hamburg: Konkret-Lit Verlag, 1999.
- Blackburn, Gilmer W. *Education in the Third Reich: Race and History in Nazi Textbooks*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1985.
- Bracher, Karl-Dietrich. *The German Dictatorship: The Origins, Nature and Effects of National Socialism*, trans. Jean Steinberg. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970.
- Brozsat, Martin. *The Hitler State: The Foundation and Development of the Third Reich*, trans. John Hiden. London: Longman, 1981.
- Burleigh, Michael, and Wolfgang Wippermann. *The Racial State: Germany 1933-1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Burleigh, Michael. *The Third Reich: A New History*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2000.
- Burrin, Philippe. *France Under the Germans: Collaboration and Compromise*, trans. Janet Lloyd. New York: The New Press, 1996.
- Caplan, Jane. *Government Without Administration*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.
- Colodner, Solomon. *Jewish Education in Germany Under the Nazis*. New York: Jewish Education Committee, 1964.
- Damberg, Wilhelm. *Der Kampf um die Schulen in Westfalen: 1933-1945*. Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald, 1986.

- John Davy. Ed. *Work Arising: Articles Published to Mark the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Death of Rudolf Steiner*. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1975.
- Diehle-Thiele, Peter. *Partei und Staat im Dritten Reich: Untersuchungen zum Verhältnis von NSDAP und allgemeiner innerer Staatsverwaltung 1933-1945*. Munich: München Beck, 1969.
- Easton, Freda. "The Waldorf Impulse in Education: Schools as Communities that Educate the Whole Child by Integrating Academic and Artistic Work." Ed.D diss., Columbia University Teachers College, 1995.
- Eilers, Rolf. *Die nationalsozialistische Schulpolitik: Eine Studie zur Funktion der Erziehung im totalitären Staat*. Opladen: Westdeutschen Verlag, 1963.
- Evans, Richard J. *The Third Reich in Power: 1933-1939*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2005.
- Feidel-Merz, Hildegard. Ed. *Schulen im Exil: Die verdrängte Pädagogik nach 1933*. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1983.
- Flessau, Kurt-Ingo. *Schule der Diktatur: Lehrpläne und Schulbücher des Nationalsozialismus*. Munich: Ehrenwirth, 1977.
- Freeman, Michael. *Atlas of Nazi Germany*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1987.
- Frei, Norbert. *National Socialist Rule in Germany: The Führer State, 1933-1945*, trans. Simon B. Steyne. Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993.
- Gamm, Hans-Jurgen. *Führung und Verführung*. Frankfurt: Kampus, 1964.
- Götte, Wenzel. "Erfahrung mit Schulautonomie: das Beispiel der Freien Waldorfschulen." PhD diss., University of Bielefeld, 2000.
- Grandt, Michael and Guido. *Schwarzbuch Anthroposophie: Rudolf Steiners Okkult-Rassistische Weltanschauung*. Vienna: Uberreuter, 1997.
- Grandt, Michael. *Cosmic Connection: Rudolf Steiner und die Anthroposophen*. Aschaffenburg: Alibri, 1999.
- Hahn, H. J. *Education and Society in Germany*. New York: Berg, 1998.
- Heinemann, Manfred. Et.al. Ed. *Erziehung und Schulung im Dritten Reich*. 2 vols. Stuttgart, Klett-Cart: 1980.

- Hilberg, Raul. *The Destruction of the European Jews*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1973.
- Hildebrand, Klaus. *The Third Reich*, trans. P. S. Falla. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984.
- Hochmuth, Ursel, and Hans-Peter de Lorent. Eds. *Hamburg: Schule unterm Hakenkreuz*. Hamburg: Hamburger Lehrerzeitung, 1985.
- Holzer, Willi. *Jüdische Schulen in Berlin: am Beispiel der privaten Volksschule der jüdischen Gemeinde Rykestrasse*. Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1992.
- Hüttenberger, Peter. *Die Gauleiter: Studie zum Wandel des Machtgefüges in der NSDAP*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1969.
- Jäckel, Eberhard. *Hitler's Weltanschauung: Blueprint for Power*, trans. Herbert Arnold. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1972.
- Jacob, Herbert. *German Administration Since Bismarck*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1963.
- Kater, Michael. *Hitler Youth*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- _____. *The Nazi Party*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983.
- Keim, Wolfgang. Ed. *Pädagogen und Pädagogik im Nationalsozialismus*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang Verlag, 1988.
- Kershaw, Ian. *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.
- _____. *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*, 4th ed. London: Arnold Publishing, 2000.
- _____. *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich: Bavaria, 1933-1945*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983.
- Kiersch, Johannes. *A History of the School of Spiritual Science: The First Class*. Forrest Row, Sussex: Temple Lodge Publishing, 2006.
- Köhler, Manfred. *Die Volksschule Harsum im Dritten Reich*. Hildesheim: August Lax, 1985.
- Kugler, Walter. *Rudolf Steiner und die Anthroposophie: Weg zu ein Neuen Menschenbild*. Cologne: DuMont, 1978.

- Langer, Kai. *Die Gleichschaltung der Schulen in Mecklenburg: 1932 bis 1934*. Weimar and Rostock: Edition M, 1997.
- Lindenberg, Christoph. *Rudolf Steiner*. Hamburg, Rowohlt: 1992.
- Lingelbach, Karl-Christoph. *Erziehung und Erziehungstheorien im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland*. Weinheim: Beltz, 1969.
- McDermott, Robert A. Ed. *The Essential Steiner: Basic Writings of Rudolf Steiner*. San Francisco, Harper and Row: 1984.
- Merkel, Peter H. *The Making of a Stormtrooper*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980.
- Möller, Horst. Et. al. Eds. *Nationalsozialismus in der Region: Beiträge zur regionalen und lokalen Forschung und zum internationalen Vergleich*. Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1996.
- Mommsen, Hans. *Beamtenum im Dritten Reich: Mit ausgewählten Quellen zur nationalsozialistischen Beamtenpolitik*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1966.
- Noakes, J. and G Pridham. Eds. *Nazism 1919-1945 Vol. 2: State, Economy and Society 1933-39*. Exeter: University of Exeter Publishing, 1984
- Orlow, Dietrich. *The History of the Nazi Party, 1919-1933*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1969.
- Overy, Richard. *The Penguin Historical Atlas of the Third Reich*. New York: Penguin Books, 1996.
- Peterson, Edward N. *The Limits of Hitler's Power*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969.
- Petrash, Jack. *Understanding Waldorf Education: Teaching From the Inside Out*. Beltsville, Maryland: Gryphon House, 2002.
- Peukert, Detlev. *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition and Racism in Everyday Life*. London: Penguin Books, 1989.
- Pine, Lisa. *Hitler's 'National Community': Society and Culture in Nazi Germany*. London: Hodder Arnold, 2007.
- Prokofieff, Sergei O. *Relating to Rudolf Steiner: And the Mystery of the Laying of the Foundation Stone*. Forrest Row, Sussex: Temple Lodge Publishing, 2008.

- Ravagli, Lorenzo. *Unter Hammer und Hakenkreuz: Der voelkisch-nationalsozialistische Kampf gegen die Anthroposophie*. Stuttgart: Verlag Freies Geistesleben, 2004.
- Rempel, Gerhard. *Hitler's Children: The Hitler Youth and the SS*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989.
- Röcher, Ruth. *Jüdische Schule im Nationalsozialistischen Deutschland: 1933-1945*. Frankfurt am Main: DIPA Verlag, 1992.
- Scholz, Harald. *Erziehung und Unterricht unterm Hakenkreuz*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1985.
- Shirley, Denis. *The Politics of Progressive Education: The Odenwaldschule in Nazi Germany*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992.
- Snyder, Louis L. *Encyclopedia of the Third Reich*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976.
- Stachura, Peter D. *The German Youth Movement, 1900-1945: An Interpretive and Documentary History*. London: MacMillan, 1981.
- _____, *Nazi Youth in the Weimar Republic*. Santa Barbara, California: Clio Books, 1975.
- Stackelberg, Roderick. *The Routledge Companion to Nazi Germany*. New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Stephenson, Jill. *Hitler's Home Front: Württemberg under the Nazis*. London: Humbeldon Continuum, 2006.
- Tautz, Johannes. *W. J. Stein: A Biography*. Translated by John M. Wood. Forrest Row. Sussex: Temple Lodge, 1990.
- van Ort, Henk. *Anthroposophy: A Concise Introduction to Steiner's Spiritual Philosophy*. Forrest Row, Sussex: Temple Lodge Publishing, 2008.
- Wagner, Arfst. Ed. *Dokumente und Briefe zur Geschichte der Anthroposophischen Bewegung und Gesellschaft in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus*. 5 Volumes.
- Walk, Joseph. *Jüdische Schule und Erziehung im Dritten Reich*. Frankfurt am Main: Meisenheim, 1991.
- Wegner, Gregory Paul. *Anti-Semitism and Schooling Under the Third Reich*. New York: Routledge Falmer, 2002.

Werner, Uwe. *Anthroposophen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933-1945*. Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999.

Wilson, Colin. *Rudolf Steiner: The Man and His Vision*. Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: Antiquarian Press, 1985.

Wistrich, Robert. *Who's Who in Nazi Germany*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc, 1982.

Zander, Helmut. *Anthroposophie in Deutschland: Theosophische Weltanschauung und gesellschaftliche Praxis, 1884-1945*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2007.

Articles:

Deuchert, Norbert. "Zur Geschichte der Waldorfschule im Nationalsozialismus." *Flensburger Hefte* (Sonderhefte 8, 1991): 95-108.

_____. "Der Kampf um die Waldorfschule im Nationalsozialismus." *Flensburger Hefte* (Sonderhefte 8, 1991): 109-130.

Edlund, Bente. "Anthroposophical Curative Education in the Third Reich: The Advantages of an Outsider," *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research* 7. no. 3&4 (September 2005): 176-193.

Geyer, Michael. "Resistance as an Ongoing Project: Visions of Order, Obligations to Strangers, Struggles for Civil Society." *Journal of Modern History* 64. Supplement: Resistance Against the Third Reich (December 1992): 217-241.

Hardorp, Detlef. "Die Deutsche "Waldorfschulbewegung in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus." *Basiswissen Pädagogik: Reformpädagogische Schulkonzepte* 6 ("Waldorf-Pädagogik": 2002): 132-141.

Hoffmann, Peter. "The Question of Western Allied Co-operation with the German Anti-Nazi Conspiracy, 1938-1944." *The Historical Journal* 32, no. 2 (1991): 437-464.

Kelly, Reece C. "German Professoriate Under Nazism: A Failure in Totalitarian Aspirations." *History of Education Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (Autumn, 1985): 261-280.

Leschinsky, Achim. "Waldorfschulen im Nationalsozialismus" *Neue Sammlung*. (May/June 1983): 256-278.

Schiedeck, Jurgen. and Martin Stahlmann. "Totalizing of Experience: Educational Camps," in Heinz Sunker and Hans-Uwe Otto, eds., *Education and Fascism: Political and Social Education in Nazi Germany*. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Stephenson, Jill. "Review Article: Resistance in the Third Reich." *Journal of Contemporary History* 36 no. 3 (July 2001): 506-517.

Sweets, John F. "Hold That Pendulum! Redefining Fascism, Collaboration and Resistance in France." *French Historical Studies* 15, no. 4 (Autumn, 1988): 731-758.

Uhrmacher, P. B. "Uncommon Schooling: A Historical Look at Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophy and Waldorf Education," *Curriculum Inquiry* 25, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 381-406.

Wagner, Arfst. "Anthroposophen und Nationalsozialismus." *Flensburger Hefte* (Sonderhefte 8): 6-78.

_____. "Anthroposophen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus." *Flensburger Hefte* (Sonderhefte 8): 50-94.

Electronic Sources:

"Anthroposophy and the Question of Race." Press Version (abbreviated). English translation.
<www.info3.de/ycms/artikel_190.shtml>

"Californian School District Files for Dismissal of PLANS Legal Action." 23 January 2008.
<<http://www.nna-news.org/news/en/index.cgi>>

Info3 Frankfurt: Info3-Verlag. 1986-2009. <www.info3.de>

"Press Release: 11 February 1998."
<<http://www.waldorfcritics.org/active/pressreleases/PR19980211.html>>.

"Press Release: 4 December 2007."
<<http://www.waldorfcritics.org/active/pressreleases/PR20071214.html>>.

Staudenmaier, Peter. "Anthroposophy and Ecofascism" *Communalism* 13 (December 2007),
<<http://www.communalism.org/Archive/13/ae.php>>.

LIST OF APPENDICES

- APPENDIX A "An der Waldorfschule in Stuttgart angestellte Lehrer u[nd] Lehrerinnen, 11 June 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/163.
- APPENDIX B "Statistik," 11 June 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/162.
- APPENDIX C "Liste der an der Waldorfschule tätigen Lehrkräfte," 10 January 1934, BFWSA, 4/2/225.
- APPENDIX D "Angaben Über die Freie Waldorfschulen," 12 July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/089.
- APPENDIX E "Waldorfschule," Stuttgart, November 1935, BFWSA, 4/3/093.
- APPENDIX F "Waldorfschule: Jüdische Schüler," October 1936, BFWSA, 4/3/238.
- APPENDIX G "Einige orientierende Bemerkungen über die Waldorfschulen," July 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/070.
- APPENDIX H "Eltern der Rudolf Steiner Schule Dresden an Minister Dr. Hartnacke," 29 May 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/026.
- APPENDIX I "Die Anthroposophie: SD Monatsbericht XIII," June 1936, BFWSA, 7/1/010.
- APPENDIX J "Unterzeichnet von Rene Maikowski und Matilde Hoyer," 26 September 1933, BFWSA, 4/2/177.
- APPENDIX K Alfred Bäumler, "Gutachten," 22 October 1938, BFWSA, 7/1/002.
- APPENDIX L Alfred Bäumler, "Gutachten," 1939, BAL NS/15-303.
- APPENDIX M Photo of Rudolf Steiner.
- APPENDIX N Photo of Rene Maikowski.
- APPENDIX O Photo of Elizabeth Klein.

Statistik 11.06.1936

An der Waldorfschule in Stuttgart angestellte Lehrer u. Lehrerinnen.

Bund der Freien
Waldorfschulen
Archiv

43 162

Name:

Unterrichtsgebiet:

Prüfung:

Lehrer für höheres Lehramt:

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Dr. Hermann v. Baravalle, | Lehrer f. Mathematik u. Physik. | Staatsexamen für Mathema- tik u. Physik. (Oesterr.) |
| Ernst Bindel, | Lehrer f. Mathematik u. Physik | Staatsprüfung f. d. höh. Lehramt, Mathematik, Physik Phil. Prop. - Oberstufe, Che- mie u. Mineral. - Mittelstufe (Preussen) |
| Dr. Ernst Blümel, | Lehrer f. Mathematik, Physik, Naturwissensch. | Staatsprüfung: Mathematik, Maschinenbau (Philosophie Pädagogik, Physik) (Oester- reich) |
| Jan van Eck (als Austausch- lehrer für Dr. H. Hahn) | Lehrer für Französisch. | Lehrerdiplom f. französ. Sprache u. Literatur (Holl.) (Diplom Frankreich) |
| Erich Gabert, | Lehrer f. Deutsch und Geschichte | Staatsexamen f. Deutsch, Geschichte, Englisch (Preus- sen) |
| Robert Killian, | Klassenlehrer für eine Volksschulklasse | Oberlehrerexamen in Strassburg. Mathematik, Physik, Erdkunde. (Dtch. Elsa- ß) |
| Hans Rutz, | Klassenlehrer in einer Volksschulklasse | Staatsexamen f. d. höhere Lehramt. Deutsch, Geschich- te, Englisch. (Bayern) |
| Dr. Konrad Sandkühler, | Lehrer für die neueren Sprachen | Staatsexamen für die neu- eren Sprachen (Bayern) |
| Dr. Erich Schwebsch, | Lehrer für Kunstunter- richt u. Literatur. | Staatsexamen. Deutsch, Phi- losophie, Neuere Sprachen. (Preussen) |
| Karl Stockmeyer, | Lehrer für Mathematik, Physik, Chemie. | Staatsexamen f. Mathematik Physik, Chemie (Baden) |
| Martin Tittmann, | Klassenlehrer an einer Volksschulklasse u. alte Sprachen. | Prüfung für das höhere Lehramt. Deutsch, Geschich- te, Französ. (Sachsen) |
| Dr. Rudolf Treichler, | Klassenlehrer an einer Volksschulklasse, neuere Sprachen. | Studium-Germanistik, Roma- nistik; Doktor-Examen. (Oesterr.) |
| Gerhard Ott, | Klassenlehrer an einer Volksschule. | Staatsexamen für Mathema- tik, Naturwissenschaften. (Württ.) |

Lehrerinnen für das höhere Lehramt:

| | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Verene Gildemeister, | Lehrerin für alte Sprachen. | Staatsexamen f. d. höhere Lehramt. Klassische Philo- logie (Preussen) |
| Dr. Martha Haebler, | Klassenlehrerin in einer Volksschulklasse. | Staatsexamen f. Deutsch, Französ., Geschichte (Bay.) |
| Bettina Mellinger, | Klassenlehrerin an einer Volksschulklasse | Prüfung f. d. höhere Lehr- amt. Deutsch, Franz., Englisch |

(Fortsetzung : Lehrerinnen f.d.höhere Lehramt)

| | | |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Sophie Porselt, | Klassenlehrerin an einer Volksschulklasse u. engl. Sprache. | Staatsexamen f.d.höhere Lehrfach. Deutsch, Englisch Geschichte. (Bayern.) |
| Dr. Felicia Schwebsch, | Lehrerin für Deutsch, Geschichte, Latein. | Prüfung f.d.höh. Lehramt Deutsch, Geschichte, Latein (Preussen). |

Lehrer mit Ausbildung im Lehrerseminar:

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Karl Ege, | Klassenlehrer an einer Volksschulklasse | Lehrerseminar (Württ.) |
| Georg Hartmann, | " " | " " |
| Peter Prömm, | Turnlehrer | Dtsch. Lehrerseminar in Hermannstadt, Siebenbürgen, und Hochschule f. Leibesübungen Berlin. |
| Friedrich Wickenhauser, | Musiklehrer | Lehrerseminar in Oesterr. u. Hochschule f. Musik in Stuttgart. |

Lehrerinnen mit Ausbildung im Lehrerinnenseminar:

| | | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Gertrud Bernhardt, | Klassenlehrerin an einer Volksschulklasse. | Lehrerinnenseminar (Sachsen) |
| Dagmar Tilliss, | " " | " " " |
| Elisabeth Busch, | Klassenlehrerin an einer Volksschulklasse. | Lehrerinnenseminar, Abschlussprüfung m. Lehrbefähigung an höh. Mädchensch. (Baden) |

Bund der Freien
Waldorfschulen
Archiv

Genehmigte Lehrkräfte für die besonderen Bedürfnisse der Waldorfschule:Lehrer:

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Paul Baumann, | Gesanglehrer, Nebenfach: Französisch. | Staatsexamen: Hauptfach: Kompositionslehre-Akademie der Tonkunst, München. Einige Semester Neuphilol. Gesch. Studium Univers. Freiburg; Sorbonne, Paris. |
| Dr. Gisbert Husemann, | Schularzt u. Lehrer für Menschenkunde, Naturwiss. | Staatsexamen -Medizin. |
| Fritz Graf Bothmer, | Gymnastik-u. Turnlehrer, | früher aktiver Offizier. |
| Hans Strauss, | Lehrer für Zeichnen u. Gartenbau. | Kunstgewerbeschule Nürnberg Akademie München. Nach Rückkehr aus d. Kriege - Siedler Schriftsteller, (Kunstwissenschaft; germanische Mythologie). |
| Ernst Uehli, | Lehrer f. Kunstunterricht auf d. Oberstufe | Zeichen-u. Malschule, Akademiebesuch: München, Karlsruhe |
| Max Wolffhügel, | Lehrer f. Handwerksunterricht, | Staatsexamen f. Stenographielehrer. |
| Paul Schofer, | Lehrer f. Stenographie. | |

43 102

Name:

Unterrichtsgebiet:

Ausbildung:

Genehmigte Lehrkräfte für die besondern Bedürfnisse
der Waldorfschule:

Lehrerinnen:

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Frau Eriosa v. Baravalle, | Lehrerin für Englisch (geborene Engländerin) | Lehrerinnenexamen in England. |
| Margarete Boerner, | Handarbeitslehrerin, | Examen als Gewerbelehrer: |
| Elisabeth Christern, | " | Kunstgewerbeschule Mün- chen. |
| Helene Rommel, | " | Kunstgewerbeschule Stutt- gart. |
| Hedwig Hauck, | " | Malerin. Mitglied d. staat Prüfungskommission f. d. staatl. Zeichenlehrer u- lehrerinnen-Examen, Berlin |
| Erika Zoeppritz, | Handwerklehrerin, | Münchner Lehrwerkstätten Akademie d. bildenden Kün- ste. |
| Olga Leinhas, | Lehrerin f. Buchbinden. | Kunstgewerbeschule Stutt- gart. |
| Gertrud Michels, | Lehrerin f. Gartenbau, | Examen - Obst- u. Gartenbau- schule Marienfelde. |
| Eugenie Haueisen, | Musiklehrerin, Geige, Flöte. | Hochschule f. Musik; früher Lehrerin f. Violine am Konservat. f. Musik. |
| Julie Lämmert, | Lehrerin f. Rezitation. | Ausbildung in Rezitation und Gesang. |
| Elisabeth Baumann, | Eurythmielehrerin, | Ausbildung in Eurythmie. |
| Elise Schulz, | " | " " |
| Irmela Vogel, | " | " " |
| Margarete Dähnhardt, | " | " " und englisches Sprachexamen. |
| Adelheid Tschakalow, | Lehrerin für Französ. und Englisch. | Schweizer. Lehrerinnen- Examen. |

Herbert Schiele,

Klassenlehrer an
einer Volksschulklasse

Lehrerseminar (Preussen)
Turnlehrerexamen.
(früher Lehrer an der
Berliner Waldorfschule,
z. Zt. vertretungsweise an
d. Stuttgarter Schule.)

Statistik

11.06.1936

43 163

*Dem. Sch.
und Aufstellung f.
Pau.*

Waldorfschule, Stuttgart: 19 Klassen mit

335 Knaben

349 Mädchen

684 Schülern insgesamt.

| Klasse | Schülerzahl zus. | Knaben: | Mädchen: |
|--------|------------------|------------|------------|
| I | -- | -- | -- |
| II | 43 | 21 | 22 |
| III | -- | -- | -- |
| IV a | 28 | 14 | 14 |
| IV b | 32 | 12 | 20 |
| V a | 33 | 20 | 13 |
| V b | 31 | 17 | 14 |
| VI a | 40 | 18 | 22 |
| VI b | 37 | 16 | 21 |
| VI c | 13 | 8 | 5 |
| VII a | 34 | 19 | 15 |
| VII b | 41 | 19 | 22 |
| VII c | 33 | 15 | 18 |
| VIII a | 51 | 21 | 30 |
| VIII b | 53 | 24 | 29 |
| IX a | 36 | 22 | 14 |
| IX b | 38 | 18 | 20 |
| X a | 27 | 12 | 15 |
| X b | 34 | 18 | 16 |
| XI | 40 | 22 | 18 |
| XII | 40 | 19 | 21 |
| | <u>684</u> | <u>335</u> | <u>349</u> |

Zugehörigkeit zu J.V., J.M., H.J., B.d.M., Kl.V-XII.

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-------|------------------------------------|--------|
| Kl.V-VIII | im J.V. | - 131 | von 159 Staatsjugendtagpflichtigen | -82,3 |
| Kl.IX-XII | in H.J. | - 87 | von 104 | -83,65 |
| Kl.V-VIII | in J.M. | - 125 | von 172 Staatsjugendtagpflichtigen | -72,67 |
| Kl.IX-XII | in B.d.M. | - 69 | von 96 | -71,88 |

10-01-1934
 Bund der Freien
 Waldorfschulen
 Archiv

42 225

10.I.1934.

// Liste der an der Waldorfschule tätigen Lehrkräfte. //

I.

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Dr.Hermann von Baravalle | genehmigt durch Erlass Nr.22353,17.11.20 |
| Paul Baumann | " " " " 3706, 8. 3.20 |
| Frau Elisabeth Baumann | " " " " 3706, 8. 3.20 |
| Frl.Gertrud Bernhardt | " " " " 10299,30. 5.22 |
| Dr.Ernst Blümel | " " " " 18 46, 5. 2.29 |
| Fritz Graf Bothmer | " " " " 15521,12. 9.22 |
| Christoph Boy | " " " " 2054,10. 2.21 |
| Frau Elisabeth Busch-Hofmann | " " " " 11273, 1. 7.24 |
| Karl Ege | " " " " 5339,31. 3.25 |
| Dr.Erich Gabert | " " " " 11273, 1. 7.24 |
| Pastor Joh.Geyer | " " " " 3706, 8. 3.20 |
| Frl.Dr.Martha Haebler, | " " " " 17788,18.10.23 |
| Frl.Hedwig Hauck | " " " " 22353,17.11.20 |
| Frl.Eugenie Hauelsen | " " " " 1846, 5. 2.29 |
| Frl.Dr.Caroline v.Heydebrand | " " " " 3706, 8. 3.20 |
| Robert Killian | " " " " 22353,17.11.20 |
| Dr.Eugen Kolisko | " " " " 5769, 8. 4.20 |
| Frl.Julie Lämmert | " " " " 22353,17.11.20 |
| Frl.Bettina Mellinger | " " " " 10299,30. 5.22 |
| Karl-Erdmann v.Metzradt | " " " " 3627, 5. 4.33 |
| Frl.Clara Michels | " " " " 9166,11. 5.23 |
| Frl.Sophie Porzelt | " " " " 1846, 5. 2.29 |
| Frl.Dr.Maria Röschl | " " " " 12885,21. 7.21 |
| Frl.Helene Rommel | " " " " 3706, 8. 3.20 |
| Hans Rutz | " " " " 12885,21. 7.21 |
| Dr.Karl Schubert | " " " " 7846, 3. 5.20 |
| Dr.Erich Schwebsch | " " " " 12373,12. 7.21 |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Karl Stockmeyer | genehmigt durch Erlass Nr. 3706, 8. 3.20 |
| Alexander Strakosch | " " " " 22353,17.11.20 |
| Frl.Dagmar Tilliss | " " " " 9166,11.5. 23 |
| Martin Tittmann | " " " " 3957,19. 2.23 |
| Dr.Rudolf Treichler | " " " " 3706, 8. 3.20 |
| Max Wolffhügel | " " " " 22353,17.11.20 |
| Friedrich Wickenhauser | " " " " 11495, 3. 6.29 |
| Frl.Erika Zoeppritz | " " " " 1846, 5. 2.29 |

II.

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Frau Erica von Baravalle | genehmigt durch Erlass des Württ.Kult- ministeriums Nr. 6357 v. 11.V.1926 |
| Ernst Bindel | " |
| Frl.Margarete Boerner | " |
| Frl.Elisabeth Christern | " |
| Frau Margarete Dähnhardt | " |
| Frl.Verene Gildemeister | " |
| Dr.Ernst Lehra | " |
| Frau Olga Leinhas | " |
| Frl.Gertrud Michels | " |
| Dr.Konrad Sandkühler | " |
| Frau Dr.Felicia Schwebsch | " |
| Hans Strauss | " |
| Ernst Uehli | " |
| Frl.Elly Wilke | " |

III.

Jan van Eek
Frl.Hilde Gebhard
Georg Hartmann
Dr.Friedrich Hiebel
Frl Gerda Hillmann

42 225

Bund der Freien
Waldorfschulen
Archiv

Frau Gertrud Meyer-Binder

Frau Els Moll

Paul Schofer

Frl. Elise Schulz

Frau Adelheid Tschakalow-Wettstein

Frl. Irmela Vogel .

IV.

Frl. Elisabeth von Grunelius ist Leiterin des Kindergartens.

Egl

12.07.1933

4 2 89

Bund der Freien
Waldorfschulen
Archiv

Angaben über die Freie Waldorfschule.

Sie ist keine Weltanschauungsschule, zwingt weder dem Schüler noch dem Lehrer ein Dogma auf. Sie ist aber christlich und deutsch.

Der Bolschewismus wurde von Steiner bekämpft, ebenso die materialistische Geschichtsauffassung.

Pacifismus wurde nie vertreten.

Die Pädagogik wendet sich ab vom Intellektualismus, pflegt vor allem Gemüts- und Willenskräfte.

Die Schule nimmt alle Schüler auf ohne Rücksicht auf die Höhe des Schulgeldbeitrages, soweit Platz ist.

Sie betont ihren Charakter als einheitliche Volks- und höhere Schule und wendet sich an alle Volkskreise.

Sie trieb nie Opposition gegen den Staat, sondern trat nur ein für die Freiheit der Lehrmethode.

Marxistische Lehrer fanden hier nie Platz.

Die Lehrerschaft setzt sich zusammen aus Volksschullehrern, Akademikern, technisch und künstlerisch vorgebildeten Lehrkräften. Die Gehälter werden vor allem nach sozialen Gesichtspunkten festgesetzt.

Die Behauptung Rudolf Steiner sei jüdischer Abkunft ist längst dokumentarisch widerlegt.

Eine Bevorzugung des jüdischen Elementes ist in der Waldorfschule nicht vorhanden. Im Sinn der Verordnung gegen Ueberfremdung der höheren Schulen wird der zugelassene Prozentsatz nicht-arischer Kinder von 1,5 nicht erreicht. Unter 964 Schülern sind 14 Nicht-Arier; für die Klassen der "höheren Schule" 5.-Vorbereitungs-klassen sind unter 635 Schülern 8 nicht arisch.

Von Unter den Lehrern, die als Nicht-Arier gelten, ist ^{der eine} einer jüdischer Abkunft von der Mutter her, der andere war als österreichischer Offizier zwar nicht an der Kampffront, aber in leitender Stellung im Eisenbahnwesen während des Krieges. - Ein Zustrom jüdischer Kinder hat auch jetzt nicht stattgefunden; es fand nur eine Anmeldung statt, die wieder zurückgezogen wurde, da das Kind auf seiner Schule bleiben konnte.

Zur Frage der Gleichschaltung:

Am 6. Mai erhielten wir aus Berlin den folgenden Brief von Herrn Direktor G. Kimpel:

Vom Bevollmächtigten des Reichsleiters des NS-Lehrerbundes bin ich zum Kommissar für Gleichschaltung der Privatschulverbände in Deutschland ernannt und beauftragt, die Ueberführung der Verbände in den NSLB vorzunehmen. Diese Ueberführung hat in kürzester Frist zu geschehen. Es liegt mir daran, möglichst alle Verbände zu erfassen. Nach Mitteilung von Herrn Direktor Scholz-Berlin befindet sich die Leitung Ihrer Schulen bei Ihnen in Stuttgart. Daher bitte ich Sie, mir umgehend mitzuteilen, ob an Ihren Schulen mit der Gleichschaltung schon begonnen ist, und mir die Persönlichkeit zu nennen, die sich damit beschäftigt hat. Diese müsste sich sogleich mit mir in Verbindung setzen und mir über ihre Arbeit

berichten. Die Gleichschaltung soll zunächst im Einvernehmen und mit Hilfe Ihrer Organisation geschehen. Evtl. Drahtnachricht.

Heil Hitler!

gez. G. Kimpel.
Kommissar für Gleichschaltung.

Unser Kollege, Herr Boy, wurde mit der Behandlung dieser Frage be-
traut für alle 8 Waldorfschulen in Deutschland. Er fuhr nach Berlin
und besprach mit Herrn Direktor Kimpel die Angelegenheit. Diese
schien in Ordnung bis wir dann am 26. Juni die Mitteilung erhiel-
ten, dass zuerst ein Antrag um die Aufnahme in den Reichsverband
deutscher freier Unterrichts- und Erziehungsanstalten zu stellen
sei. Diese Aufnahme aber machte Schwierigkeiten angeblich des-
wegen, weil wir 1.) Weltanschauungsschule seien und
2.) nicht schon früher in diesen Reichsverband
eingetreten waren.

Diese Frage wurde von der Entscheidung des Leiters des NSLB,
des Kultministers Schemm, in München abhängig gemacht.
Wir hatten durch eine private Beziehung schon Verbindung mit dem
Herrn Minister und konnten auch eine Besprechung in München er-
reichen am 4. Juli. Als Vertreter reisten die Herren Baumann,
von Metzradt aus Stuttgart, Herr Schiele von der Schule in Berlin.
(Herr Christoph Boy ist erkrankt.)
Herr Staatsminister Schemm zeigte sehr entgegenkommendes Verständ-
nis für die Pädagogik der Waldorfschule und machte uns darauf
aufmerksam, dass zahlreiche Vorurteile noch dagegen beständen.
Er bot uns selbst die Möglichkeit an, in der "Nationalsozialistisch
Lehrerzeitung" aufklärend gegen solche Einwände zu wirken.

Gegen die Gleichschaltung hatte er nichts einzuwenden und nach
einer Besprechung, die er tags darauf in Berlin darüber hatte,
erhielten wir die Mitteilung, dass die Schwierigkeiten jetzt be-
hoben seien. Wir dürfen annehmen nach den bisherigen Verhandlun-
gen, dass eine Einschaltung in die entsprechenden Landesverbände
von Berlin aus erfolgt.

Ausser Herrn Boy sind noch einige Lehrer der Stuttgarter Waldorf-
schule sowie eine grössere Anzahl an unseren anderen Schulen
dem NSLB persönlich beigetreten.

Nov 1935

"Waldorfschule"

4 3 93

Stuttgart.

(November 1935)

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|----------|
| Insgesamt Schüler und Schülerinnen: | <u>800</u> | |
| Jungvolk: (Kl.V-VIII) | 97 | - 49,5 % |
| H.J. : (Kl.IX-XIII) | 66 | - 66,7 % |
| Jungmädchen: (Kl.V-VIII) | 89 | - 40,5 % |
| B.d.M. : (Kl.IX-XIII) | 47 | - 48 % |

(Nov.35)

| | | | |
|--------------------------|----|----------|-------------|
| Volljuden-Kinder: | 15 | - 1,88 % | |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ Juden- " | 1 | - 0,12 % | |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ Juden- " | 10 | - 1,25 % | |
| zus.: | 26 | - 3,25 % | |
| davon Frontkämpferkinder | 16 | - 2,00 % | |
| | 10 | - 1,25 % | Judenkinder |

(Nov.35)

| | | |
|--|-------------|----------|
| Elternzahl (Vater u.Mutter einzeln gezählt) | 1060 | |
| Lehrer-u.Angestellteneltern: | <u>24</u> | |
| | 1084 | |
| davon Anthroposophen: (Elternteile einzeln) | 256 | - 23,6 % |
| mit | 284 Kindern | -35,5 % |

Angaben vom März 1934:

Eltern, die der NSDAP angehören: 67

der Freien
-mutter

Statistik
October 1936

222 11

Schuljahr 1934/35.

| Klasse: | Volljuden: | 1 Elternteil, drei Gross- elternteile jüd.: | 1 Elternteil, zwei Gross- elternteile jüd.: | davon Vater Front- kämpfer: |
|----------|------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| II a | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| II b | 2 | - | 1 | 2 |
| III a | 1 | - | 1 | 2 |
| III b | - | - | - | - |
| IV a | - | - | 1 | - |
| IV b | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| V a | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| V b | 2 | - | 1 | 1 |
| V c | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| VI a | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| VI b | 2 | - | - | 2 |
| VII a | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| VII b | 2 | - | - | 2 |
| VIII a | 1 | - | 1 | 1 |
| VIII b | 1 | - | 1 | 2 |
| IX a | 1 | - | 1 | 1 |
| IX b | 1 | - | - | - |
| X a | - | - | - | - |
| X b | - | - | 2 | 1 |
| XI | - | - | - | - |
| XII a | 2 | - | 1 | 2 |
| XII b | 1 | - | - | - |
| Vorb.Kl. | - | - | - | - |
| Zus.: | 22 | - | 12 | 22 |

im ganzen also Nichtarier soweit nicht Frontkämpfer: - 12von 870 Schülern = 1,37%.

| Klasse: | Volljuden: | 1 Elternteil, drei Gröss- elternteile jüd.: | 1 Elternteil, zwei Gross- elternteile jüd.: | davon Vater Front- kämpfer |
|----------|------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| I | 2 | - | 3 | 2 |
| III a | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| III b | 2 | - | 1 | 2 |
| IV a | 1 | - | 1 | 2 |
| IV b | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| V a | - | - | 1 | - |
| V b | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| V c | - | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| VI a | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| VI b | 2 | - | 1 | 1 |
| VI c | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| VII a | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| VII b | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| VIII a | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| VIII b | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| IX a | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| IX b | 1 | - | 1 | 2 |
| X a | 1 | - | 1 | 1 |
| X b | - | - | - | - |
| XI a | - | - | - | - |
| XI b | - | - | 2 | 1 |
| XII | - | - | - | - |
| Vorb.Kl. | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Zus.: | 17 | 1 | 17 | 23 |

im ganzen also Nichterier soweit nicht Frontkämpfer: 12

von 822 Schülern = 1,45%

Bund der Freien
Waldorfschulen
Archiv 11

See 4.2.064

July 1933

4 2 70

Einige orientierende Bemerkungen über die Waldorfschulen
beigelegt der Bitte um eine Aussprache
mit Herrn Kultusminister Schemm über die Waldorfschulpädagogik. 11

- 1.) Die Waldorfschulen wurden 1919 gleich nach dem Abschluss des Versailler Vertrages ganz bewusst als eine Pflegestätte deutschen Geistes gegründet, in einer Zeit verhängnisvollster Geistlosigkeit.
- 2.) 14 Jahre lang arbeiten diese Schulen in Erziehung und Unterricht ganz bewusst daran, durch gesunde Schulung der Gemüts- und Willenskräfte die Jugend zum Erkennen und Erleben der deutschen Volkseele zu führen, sie zum Dienst am deutschen Volkstum zu begeistern.
- 3.) 14 Jahre lang standen die Waldorfschulen - insbesondere die Stuttgarter erste, völlig ausgebaute Schule - an hervorragender Stelle im deutschen Erziehungs- und Unterrichtsleben und haben durch ihre Arbeit, durch Vortragstätigkeit (Tagungen und Studienwochen) und durch vielseitige Schriften öffentlich Zeugnis abgelegt von der geistigen Grundlage und der begeisternden Wirkung ihrer Arbeit.
- 4.) Die Waldorfschulen sehen in der gegenwärtigen Volkserhebung den Willen des deutschen Geistes zu seiner Wiederbelebung im deutschen Volke.
- 5.) Am 1. Juli sprach Adolf Hitler aus, dass das Wesentliche einer Revolution nicht die Machtübernahme, sondern die Erziehung des Menschen ist.
Die Waldorfschulen können zu dieser Erziehung des deutschen Menschen Wesentliches beitragen und stellen ihre Arbeit, die sie in diesem Sinne schon seit ihrer Gründung leisten, der nationalen Erhebung zur Verfügung, gleichsam als Musterschulen.
- 6.) Wir sprechen Ihnen, Herr Kultminister, der Sie die Schaffung der deutschen Erziehungseinheit durchführen, dies aus mit der Bitte, das Wollen und das Wirken der Waldorfschulpädagogik durch eine Aussprache oder durch eine Besichtigung der Waldorfschule in Stuttgart eingehend zu prüfen.

Eltern der RSS Dresden an Minister Dr. Hartnacke

29.05.1933

4 2 26

Dresden, den 29. Mai 1933.

An das

Ministerium für Volksbildung

z.H. des Herrn Ministers Dr. Hartnacke,

D r e s d e n - N.

Die unterzeichnete Elternschaft der Rudolf Steiner-Schule hält sich angesichts der immer wieder erfolgenden Verdächtigungen und Verleumdungen, die gegen die Schule in der Öffentlichkeit und besonders bei den zuständigen Behörden erhoben werden, für verpflichtet, folgendes festzustellen:

1. Es ist urkundlich einwandfrei erwiesen, dass Rudolf Steiner kein Jude und auch nicht jüdischer Abstammung war.
2. Von 304 Kindern sind nur 7 nichtarischer Abstammung im Sinne des Gesetzes zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums. Von diesen 7 Kindern sind nur 3 jüdischer Religion. Zwei der in Frage kommenden Väter sind Kriegsteilnehmer.
3. Im Lehrerkollegium befinden sich keine marxistischen Lehrer oder solche nichtarischer Abstammung. Eine Veränderung im Kollegium infolge der nationalen Erhebung war daher nicht notwendig.
4. Auf Grund der Erfahrungen, die wir mit unseren Kindern gemacht haben und die wir in ständigem Gedankenaustausch mit der Lehrerschaft gewonnen haben, erklären wir, dass der Schule jede pazifistische Einstellung fernliegt.
5. Der Geist der Schule ist christlich. Der Unterricht wurde vom Tage der Schulgründung an mit Gebet begonnen.
6. Von Bestrebungen, die Kinder gegen den Willen der Eltern der Christengemeinschaft oder der anthroposophischen Weltanschauung zuzuführen, ist nichts zu bemerken.

7. Eine bessere Pflege deutschen Geistes und heldischer Gesinnung wie sie an der Rudolf Steiner-Schule bereits von ihrer Gründung an geübt wurde, können wir uns nicht denken. Das schnelle Anwachsen der Schule vornehmlich aus Kreisen streng national gesinnter Eltern erklärt sich hieraus.

8. Der soziologische Aufbau der Elternschaft - 10% zahlt z.Zt. kein Schülrgeld, viele nur einen Teil - erfordert sehr viele freiwillige Opfer, die von allen Eltern, die irgend dazu in der Lage sind, in reichem Masse gebracht werden in der Erkenntnis, dass die Schule das Ideal einer wahren Volksgemeinschaft im Kleinen verkörpert.

9. Das Kollegium setzt sich zusammen aus für ihren Beruf aufs höchste begeisterten Lehrern, die auch grosse finanzielle Opfer bringen. Die Leistungen eines solchen Kollegiums können nicht anders als gut sein.

10. Wenn auch zugegeben werden muss, dass die reinen Wissensleistungen der einzelnen Stufen nicht durchgängig denen der betreffenden Klassen der Volks- und höheren Schulen entsprechen, so steht dem gegenüber eine geistige Beweglichkeit, grosse Frische und hohe Lebensbildung, die wertvoller ist, als angelesenes Wissen.

All diese Gründe bewegen die Eltern, der Schule und ihrer Lehrerschaft vollstes Vertrauen entgegenzubringen und ihr ihren Dank für die Erziehung und Bildung ihrer Kinder auszusprechen. Sie bittet das Ministerium, allen Angriffen unverantwortlicher Stellen entgegenzutreten und die ruhige Fortentwicklung der Schule zu sichern.

(g e z e i c h n e t) :

Dr. Preuß, Dresden A. Rosenbergstr. 19

Paul Kayser, Kaufmann, Dresden N. Bautznerstr. 116

Dr. Rudolf Leonhardi, Zahnarzt, Dresden N. Kaiser-Wilhelmpl. 4

Dr. Gertraut Leonhardi, Zahnärztin " " " " "

Dr. Walter Chrambach, Hellerau b/Dresden, Hoher Weg 11

Frau Kamma Kayser, Bautznerstr. 116

Frau Elfriede Wagenknecht - v. Seel, Radeberg.

June 1936

1 576

Titel 12/10

SD - Monatsbericht XIII (Juni 1936)

"Die Anthroposophie"

R 58/

Zentralabteilung : Presse und Bibliothek.

Hauptabteilung : Presse und Schrifttum.

II. Textteil: Schrifttum.

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1.) Die Antroposophie. | Seite A1 - A2o |
| 2.) Der Kampf der katholischen Kirche um die Bekenntnisschule im Spiegel von Presse und Schrifttum. | Seite B1 - B23 |
| 3.) Die Ariosophie. | Seite C1 - C1o |

III. Listen:

- Nachtrag 12/13 zum Karteikatalog für kulturpolitisches Schrifttum.
- Nachtrag 12/13 zum Karteikatalog für konfessionelles Schrifttum.
- Nachtrag 12/13 zum Karteikatalog für staats- und welt-politisches Schrifttum.
- Nachtrag 12/13 zum Karteikatalog für wirtschafts- und sozialpolitisches Schrifttum.
- Nachtrag 12/13 (18.5.1936.) zur Liste der in Deutschland seit der Machtübernahme verbotenen Druckschriften.

Die Anthroposophie

Der nachstehende Bericht soll einen Überblick über das frühere Wirken der jetzt verbotenen "Anthroposophen-Gesellschaft" vermitteln. Er ist ein Auszug aus einer umfangreichen Materialzusammenstellung.

Grundlagen, Wesen und Ziele der Anthroposophie.

Der Anthroposoph A. R i e h l schrieb in seiner 1933 erschienenen Schrift: "Die Hitlerbewegung und die Dreigliederung des sozialen Organismus".

"Will man eine materialistische Führung durch Adolf Hitler, so wird man auf eine geistige Führung durch Rudolf Steiner verzichten müssen, denn beide Führungen sind nicht miteinander vereinbar".

In diesem Wort kommt jene alte Denkart zum Ausdruck, die sich einem neuen ganzheitlichen Denken entgegenstellt. Für die Träger dieses Denkens spaltet sich das Leben und der Mensch auf in eine Körper- und Geisthälfte, in Natur und Übernatur, in Leib und Geist. Die Rasse wird lediglich in den Bereich der Biologie und Naturwissenschaft verwiesen und erfährt eine Abwertung zugunsten eines für autonom gehaltenen Geistes.

Durch das Festhalten der anthroposophischen "Geisteswissenschaften" an diesem alten Geistbegriff gehört die Anthroposophie der Epoche abendländischen Denkens zu, die einem neuen rassistisch-völkischen gegenüber um ihren Fortbestand ringt. Auch die Anthroposophie löst den Geist aus seiner Verbindung mit der Rasse und dem Volk und verdammt das Rassistische und Völkische in eine niedere Sphäre der Primitivität, des Instinktes, des durch den Geist zu überwindenden Triebes, der Vorzeitlichkeit. Sie erweist damit ihre Verflechtung mit den Hauptströmungen der bisherigen europäischen Geistesgeschichte, vor allem der Aufklärung, dem deutschen Idealismus und dem Liberalismus des vergangenen Jahrhunderts. In ihr ist die Geisteshaltung der fran-

zösischen Revolution, das Humanitätsideal der Freimaurerei, aus der die Theosophie als die Mutterorganisation der Anthroposophie entstand, lebendig geblieben, vermischt wie die Freimaurerei und die Theosophie mit orientalischer Mystik, Okkultismus und Spiritismus, die in breiter Front, etwa in der Form der Geheimlehren der Kabbala über Europa hereinbrachen. Es darf auf das bündige Urteil des jetzigen Professors für Germanistik an der Universität Wien, N a d l e r, in seiner "Literaturgeschichte der deutschen Schweiz" verwiesen werden.

"Die Anthroposophie ist ein Absud aus der Weisheit des Abendlandes und des Morgenlandes" (S. 377).

Diese weltanschaulichen Grundlagen bewirkten, dass die Anthroposophie in verhängnisvoller Weise allen anti-völkischen und anti-nationalen, überstaatlichen, pazifistischen und insbesondere jüdischen Einflüssen offen gestanden hat. Sie entschied zugleich ihre Stellungnahme zum Marxismus und während der November-Revolution 1918, als die Anthroposophie die Zeit zur Verwirklichung ihres Zieles, der Schaffung der Dreigliederung des sozialen Organismus für gekommen hielt. Gemäss der Theorie von der Dreigliederung des sozialen Organismus sollte das Leben der Nation aufgespalten werden in:

1. Das Wirtschaftsleben,
2. das Staatlich-Politisch-Regulative, wozu das öffentliche Recht und das Sicherungswesen gehören,
3. das geistige Leben, also Schule, Religionsgemeinschaft und Jurisdiktion im Straf- und Privatrecht.
(Polzer-Hoditz: "Politische Betrachtungen auf der Grundlage der Dreigliederung des sozialen Organismus", Stuttgart: "Der kommende Tag" 1920, S. 25).

Die Anthroposophie brachte selbst die der Aufteilung des Menschen in "Geist, Seele, Leib" entsprechend geplante Spaltung des sozialen Lebens in enge Beziehung zu dem Ideal der "Freiheit, Gleichheit, Brüderlichkeit" der französischen Revolution.

Die Lostrennung des geistigen Lebens vom lediglich als Apparat betrachteten Staat in der Dreigliederung des so-

- A 3 -

zialen Organismus sollte international durchgeführt werden:

"Die soziale Dreigliederungsidee führt zu einer Lösung der sozialen Frage und unendlich vieler Probleme der Gegenwart durch eine völlig andere, neue Struktur des sozialen Organismus: die Ver- selbständigung des Geisteslebens und der Wirt- schaft gegenüber dem eigentlichen Rechtsstaat".

(Karl Hoyer: "Reichsidee und Gegenwart" in "Die Drei", Stuttgart: "Der kommende Tag" 9.Jg., 1930, S.192).

Entsprechend der Bewertung des Staatlichen und Politischen als unterwertig wurde die für das deutsche Volk gefährliche These aufgestellt, dass seine Aufgabe nicht im Politischen, sondern im Kulturellen läge:

"Deutschland muss seine Politik auf kulturell- geistiger Grundlage aufrichten, wenn es sich in der Zukunft als Nation behaupten will".

(Ernst Uehli: "Welttatsachen und Welt- tendenzen" in: "Die Drei", Jg.1, 1921 S.316).

Die Ablehnung aller völkischen und nationalen Bestrebungen, die der international gerichteten Dreigliederung des sozia- len Organismus entgegenstehen, wird mit aller Schärfe Ausdruck gegeben:

"Wenn also der Deutsche Politik betreibt, sich in diese hineinziehen lässt, so steigt er will- kürlich oder unwillkürlich, bewusst oder unbe- wusst, herab in eine niedrigere geistige Sphäre, als wie die ihm ureigentlich zugemessene. Das tut er insbesondere auch, wenn er sich national gebär- det, denn der Nationalismus oder auch der Patrio- tismus ist die hervorragendste, die spezifischste Domäne einer jeglichen Politik. Das sollte man wohl auch bedenken, denn Nationalismus ist eine fixe Idee, ist Eigenwahn und sich als besser dünken als wie andere sind, worin man dann eine besondere Ehre erblickt, die aber überall in der Welt, wo sie kultiviert wird, nur eine Hohlheit, eine Il- lusion und Lüge, eine traditionell großgezogene und dementsprechend erhaltene Lüge ist".

(Richt: "Hitlerbewegung und Dreiglie- derung", S.12).

An die Stelle der völkischen Politik, die auf der "fixen Idee", der "traditionell großgezogenen Lüge" Nationalismus beruht, will die Anthroposophie "eine andere Weltanschauung" setzen, "die der Träger einer neuen Menschheitsordnung sein

wird.

"Ihre Bekenner werden die drei Worte: Freiheit, Gleichheit und Brüderlichkeit nicht als Widersprüche empfinden, nicht als Utopie belächeln, sondern werden schöpferisch, praktische Einrichtungen treffen können, um sie zu verwirklichen".
(Polzer-Hoditz: "Politische Betrachtungen" S.35).

Der neue Menschheitsbau der Anthroposophie muss notwendig auf eine Zerstörung des Nationalismus, die Auflösung volklicher Bindungen und auf Rassenvermischung hinauslaufen. Diese "Völkerhamonisierung" als anthroposophisches Ziel sahen maßgebende Anthroposophen bereits in Wien zu einem großen Teil verwirklicht.

"Ich kam so wie heute auch damals aus dem Zentrum Europas, aus dem auch unser großer Meister stammt, wo, wie er so oft hervorhob, dreizehn verschiedene Völkerschaften zu einem Ganzen für eine Aufgabe vereint waren; dieses Zentrum Europas war auch immer gastfreundlich für die Angehörigen aller anderen großen Nationen, die sich auch gerne ständig dort niederließen. So ergaben sich naturgemäss vielfach auf das mannigfaltigste zusammengesetzte Blutsverbindungen, nirgends wie dort war man so wenig national. Und geistig standen vielfach da die Menschen unter den Wirkungen einer geistigen Wesenheit, einer Art Volksgeist, der eine Völkerharmonisierungsaufgabe hatte. Rudolf Steiner, hat auf Erden sich angeschickt, diese geistigen Aufgaben zu übernehmen".

(Polzer-Hoditz: "Ansprache bei der Eröffnung der Rudolf-Steiner-Hall in London", in Zs."Anthroposophie" Jg.8, S.93, 1926, Hrsg.: "Anthroposophische Gesellschaft, Stuttgart).

Anthroposophie und Freimaurerei.

Die Anthroposophie ist mit der Freimaurerei sowohl in weltanschaulicher wie in personeller Hinsicht auf das engste verbunden. Rudolf Steiner selbst gab offen zu, dass er Freimaurer war und seine freimaurerische Tätigkeit in besonderem Auftrag ausübte. Von anthroposophischer Seite wird zugegeben, dass in einem bestimmten Geheimkult gearbeitet wurde, der dem Memphis- und Mizraim-Ritus des

zur Genüge bekannten Hochgradfreimaurers Theodor Reuss und dem O.T.O. (Ordo Templi Orientis) entnommen war. Die Versuche der Anthroposophen diese Bindungen zur Freimaurerei zu verharmlosen, da man sich bewusst ist, welche Angriffspunkte hieraus der Anthroposophie erwachsen, sind wenig glücklich:

"Ich nahm das D plom der angedeuteten Gesellschaft, die in der von Yarker (Gro meister d. Gro -Loge von Griechenland, Gro meister d. Swedenborg-Rituale, Bekannter der Blavatsky, der Begr nderin der Theosophischen Gesellschaft) vertretenen Str mung lag. Sie hatte die freimaurerische Form der sogenannten Hochgrade.

Dass die Anthroposophie an die Freimaurerei ankn pfte und diese nur in teilweise gewandelten Formen weiterf hrte, best tigt insbesondere die Gattin Rudolf Steiners, Marie Steiner, geb. v. Sivers, die auch die Zugeh rigkeit Steiners zum Memphis und Mizrain-Ritus sowie der O.T.O. ausdr cklich bemerkt ("Anthroposophie, Jg. 16, 1933/34, S. 283, Anmerkung). Sie sagt:

"Das, was sich als Wahrheit in diesen Jahrtausende alten Bestrebungen (Freimaurerei) erhalten hatte, ihr geistiger Gehalt, der ja nicht tot zu machen war, konnte und musste in umgewandelter Form der Wiedererneuerung der Menschheit weiter dienen. Das war die Aufgabe, vor die sich Rudolf Steiner sich gestellt sah, als aus jenen Kreisen der Vorschlag ihm gemacht wurde, durch historisch legal dokumentierte Ankn pfung eine selbst ndige Organisation zu begr nden.

Diese Angaben werden gest tzt durch Auslassungen von offizieller freimaurerischer Seite. Im "Internationalen Freimaurerlexikon", dem ma gebenden Nachschlagewerk der Weltfreimaurerei, hei t es:

"Steiner kaufte dem Abenteurer Reuss eines seiner freimaurerischen Systeme und einen Teil seiner Vollmachten um RM 1500.- ab, insbesondere die, die ihn zur Einsetzung eines Gro rates 'Mystica Aeterna' erm chtigten".

Ferner brachte die Zeitschrift "Pansophia", das Organ der okkulten freimaurerischen Organisationen, O.T.O. und Fraternitas Saturni, beim Tode Steiners einen Nachruf, der beweist, dass die okkulte Freimaurerei in Steiner einen ihrer geistigen F hrer sah.

Weitere Zusammenhänge zwischen der Anthroposophie und der Freimaurerei ergaben sich dadurch, dass zahlreiche Anthroposophen noch anderen Freimaurerlogen angehörten. Bei der Überprüfung der Mitglieder anthroposophischer Ortsgruppen ergab sich, dass 30 Anthroposophen gleichzeitig Mitglieder von anderen Freimaurerlogen waren. 11 davon waren Hochgradfreimaurer. Dabei sind die Dornach direkt unterstehenden Mitglieder noch nicht mit erfasst. S t e i n e r und sein Vertrauter, der "Bischof der Christengemeinschaft", R i t t e l m e y e r verkehrten häufig in Berliner Freimaurerlogen. Rittelmeyer schreibt darüber:

"Wenige Tage darauf hielt ich im großen Saal einer Berliner Loge und hernach auf einem Berliner Friedhof die Trauerfeier. Unter den Leidtragenden war Dr. S t e i n e r. Es war merkwürdig, ihn so bescheiden unter den anderen sitzen zu sehen, die keine Ahnung hatten, wer er ist".
(Rittelmeyer: "Meine Lebensbegegnung mit Dr. Steiner", S. 119).

Bei dieser Trauerfeier handelt es sich um den verstorbenen Ordens-Oberarchitekten und I. Abg. Landes-Großmeister Br. Hermann Joachim (Oberstleutnant z.D. und Chef der Kathographischen Abteilung im stellvertretenden Generalstab). Die "Cirkelcorrespondenz", das Organ der Grossen Landesloge der Freimaurer von Deutschland, erklärt dazu:

"Von den Zeremonienmeistern wurden die Angehörigen des Verstorbenen, die Witwe, die beiden Töchter, der Sohn, der Bruder und die Schwester, in den durch Blattgewächs stimmungsvoll ausgestatteten Tempel geleitet. Eine besonders hohe Auszeichnung wurde dem Dahingeschiedenen und seiner Familie dadurch zuteil, dass zur Trauerfeier der W-Ordensmeister Br. Friedrich Leopold P r i n z von P r e u s s e n und seine hohe Gemahlin erschienen waren. Aus der großen Zahl der Teilnehmer heben wir hervor: die Generale von W i n t e r f e l d und von S c h u m a n n, den stellvertretenden Chef des Generalstabes Frhrn. v. F r e y t a g - L o r i n g - h o v e n, der von sämtlichen dienstfreien höheren Offizieren und Beamten des Generalstabes und des Kriegsministeriums begleitet war; aus

den Kreisen der Hochfinanz: F r a n z v. M e n - d e l s o h n und Dr. S a m e s S i m o n neben vielen anderen hervorragenden Persönlichkeiten der Berliner Gesellschaft; aus musikalischen und künstlerischen Kreisen: Bronislaw H u b e r - m a n n und Heinrich G r ü n f e l d; aus der Zahl der Freunde des Hauses: Frau Exzellenz v. M o l t k e, die Witwe des verstorbenen Generalstabschefs, ferner die Herren Dr. J a t h o und Dr. R u d o l f S t e i n e r".

(Br. E. Neumann und Br. W. Wald
"Cirkelcorrespondenz" S.409).

In den anthroposophischen Zeitschriften erfährt die freimaurerische Literatur eine eingehende Würdigung und umgekehrt. Zu diesen weitgehenden persönlichen und ideellen Bindungen zwischen Anthroposophie und Freimaurerei tritt eine in die Augen fallende Übereinstimmung in der Symbolik und im Wortgebrauch. In dem anthroposophischen Schrifttum heisst es z.B.:

"Die Suche nach dem verloren gegangenen Worte - Das wahre Wort, das einst wie von aussen aus den Dingen klang, ist uns verloren gegangen".

(Richard Dürich: "Vom Kult des freien Menschen", in "Die Drei", Jg.5,H.7).

"Die Grundsteine, die Ecksteine des erhabenen Leibestempels des jüdischen Volkes, der in seiner Vollendung der Gralstempel des Jesusleibes geworden ist, und dessen kosmische Gesetzmäßigkeit Salomo in der Mitte der Bauzeit kultisch-symbolisch in den äusseren Tempel hineingeheimnist hat, sind darum in das Jungfraubild des Tierkreises und in die drei mit der Jungfrau im sogenannten beweglichen Kreuz .. zu einem Quadrat verbundenen Sternbilder .. einbegründet worden".

(Hans Heinrich Frei: "Die vier makrokosmischen Grundsteine im Tempelbau des Abrahamismus", in "Die Drei", Jg. 9, S.211).

"Heut steht die Welt in Hierams Riesenschatten.. Der neue Hieramstempel sank in Staub und steht doch unzerstörbar in den Sternen; wie seinem Schicksal entriss er den Staub des ehernen Meeres, steht wie im Frühlingslaub sein Christenwerk und greift in Weltenfernen".

(Pieper; "Hieram und Balkis", in "Die Drei", Jg.8,H.9).

"Hierams Wiederkehr nach der Eröffnung des neuen Goetheanums".

(Anthroposophie, Jg.8, Nr.43).

gestellt im Bundesarchiv - Vorzugabe unser Aufnahme nicht gestattet. Reproduktion nur mit schriftl. Genehmigung des Bundesarchivs

Die Mysterienspiele Steiners sind offensichtlich Darstellungen des Wirkens der Freimaurerei. Es wird von der "Prüfung der Seele", der "Pforte der Einweihung", dem "Hüter der Schwelle", der "Seelen Erwachen" gesprochen. Die Spieler der Stücke sind: "Hierophanten" von Sonnentempeln, Großmeister, Oberhäupter einer mystischen Bruderschaft usw. Ein Jude Simon tritt als Märtyrer, als verfolgter Helfer der Menschheit auf und findet Schutz im Orden. Die Schauplätze dieser Stücke sind wiederum: Sonnentempel, verborgene Mysterienstätten der Hierophanten usw. Der Orden wird dargestellt als "strebend nach hohen Zielen der Menschheit", wobei gleichzeitig auf die Angriffe gegen den Orden hingewiesen wird. Auch die Dramen des anthroposophischen Dichters Steffen bringen freimaurerische Symbolik; er spricht von Hierams Winkelmaß, von Hierams Tempelbau, von Kains goldenem Hammer usw. In einer Besprechung des Spieles "Hieram und Salomo" heisst es:

"Die ganze Dichtung Steffens ist wie aus einem einheitlichen Leuterlebnis geformt. Der Mittelpunkt ist Wesen Jahwes. Wie aus einem Zentrum aller Lautstimmungen tönen die Laute des Namens Jehovah".

(Friedr. Hiebel über "Hieram und Salomo" von Albert Steffen, in "Die Drei" Jg.5, S.51off.).

Anthroposophie und Judentum.

Ihrer ganzen Haltung nach konnte die Anthroposophie nicht zu einer Ablehnung des Judentums kommen. Sie nahm vielmehr die genau gegenteilige Stellung ein. S t e i n e r selbst, der am Anfang seines Wirkens längere Zeit Erzieher einer jüdischen Familie war, wo er engen Familienanschluß hatte und mit den bekanntesten Juden Österreichs in Berührung kam (Steiner: "Mein Lebensgang", Dornach, Philosophisch-anthroposophischer Verlag, 1925, S.132/133), war mit dem jüdischen Dichter Ludwig J a c o b o w s k i eng befreundet (Anthroposophie, Jg.12, S.379). Die Behauptung, dass S t e i n e r selbst auch Jude war, ist nicht erwiesen, das von ihm Viel zitierte Wort: "Es ist doch einer-

lei, ob jemand Jude oder Germane ist; finde ich ihn nett, so mag ich ihn; ist er ekelhaft, so meide ich ihn" ist wegen der schwierigen Beschaffung der angegebenen Quelle ("Magazin für Literatur des In- und Auslands" hgg.von Steiner) schwer nachzuprüfen. Jude aber war der Nachfolger Steiners: U n g e r .

Die das Judentum positiv wertenden Äusserungen in der anthroposophischen Literatur sind ausserordentlich zahlreich. In einem Aufsatz über Moses sagt Steiner beispielsweise:

"Bei alledem, was sich an den Namen des Moses knüpft, fühlen wir, dass Unendliches davon noch unmittelbar fortlebt in dem, was Bestandteil, geistiger Inhalt unserer eigenen Seele ist. Wir fühlen gleichsam in unseren Gliedern noch immer nachwirken die Impulse, die von Moses ausgegangen sind. Wir fühlen, wie er noch hereinlebt in unsere Gedanken und Empfindungen, und wie wir gewissermaßen, wenn wir uns mit ihm auseinandersetzen, mit einem Stück unserer eigenen Seele uns auseinandersetzen.

(Steiner: "Moses", in:"Die Drei", Jg.6 S.3).

Viel Liebe wird auch der jüdischen Mystik entgegengebracht. In welcher Weise die Stellung zum Judentum von der liberalen Grundhaltung der Anthroposophie her bestimmt wird, wird offensichtlich auch dadurch erwiesen, wie S t e i n e r das Eintreten Zolas für D r e y f u B begrüßte:

"Zolas Persönlichkeit scheint mit jedem Tage vor uns zu wachsen. Es ist, als lernten wir ihn erst jetzt ganz verstehen. Der fanatische Wahrheitssinn, der ihm eigen ist, hat uns in seinen Kunstschöpfungen doch oft gestört. Jetzt, wo ihn dieser Wahrheitsfanatismus in einer rein menschlichen Sache zu kühnen heldenmäßigen Handeln führt, können wir nur Gefühle rückhaltloser Zustimmung, Verehrung haben. Was er seit Jahrzehnten als Künstler angestrebt hat, die reine nackte Wahrheit zum Siege zu bringen: das stellt er sich jetzt in einer Angelegenheit zur Aufgabe".

(Zs."Phänome und Symptome", Jg.1, 1926, S.6, Basel; Steiner:"Freiheit und Liberalismus").

Anthroposophie und Marxismus.

Die Anthroposophie hat mehrfach versucht, ihre Dreigliederung des Sozialismus in die Wirklichkeit umzusetzen. Dieses Bestreben veranlasste sie zu einem weitgehenden Anschluss an den Marxismus. Die intensive Beschäftigung mit dem Marxismus setzte vor 1918 ein. Steiner selbst war Lehrer für Geschichte und Naturwissenschaften an der von Wilhelm Liebknecht gegründeten Berliner Arbeiterbildungsschule, in der vorwiegend die Sekretäre und Redakteure der Arbeiterbewegung ihre Ausbildung erhielten, gewesen (Roman Boss: "Steiner und die Politik", S. 239). Der "positiven Auseinandersetzung" mit "Proletarierproblemen" war in dem anthroposophischen Schrifttum ein breiter Raum gewidmet. Man sprach von "Proletarierfäusten", "imperialistischem Krieg", "Diktatur des Proletarismus", "Faschistenbündlern", "Gewalttaten des Militärs" usw. In den anthroposophischen Zeitschriften werden Aufsätze aus der "Aktion" und den "Sozialistischen Monatsheften" abgedruckt (Walther Oehme, Rafael Seligmann). Man spricht von den "mutigen und einsichtsvollen Reden des Volksbeauftragten Barth", dem "tief in die Kulturprobleme unserer Zeit eingedrungenen Denker Rathenau". Über Marx und Lasalle erscheinen zahlreiche Aufsätze. Rathenau selbst schreibt 1919 in den Waldorf-Nachrichten:

Die Anthroposophie bekannte sich dabei nicht restlos zum Marxismus und Bolschewismus. Sie beabsichtigte, sich seiner zu bedienen, wobei ihr vorschwebte, dass der Marxismus und Bolschewismus durch sie in gewisser Weise veredelt werde.

Konkrete Bemühungen um die Verwirklichung der Dreigliederung des Sozialismus setzten 1918 damit ein, dass Rudolf Steiner als Minister in die württembergische Regierung gebracht werden sollte. Wilhelm Bloos, der damalige sozialdemokratische württembergische Staatsminister schreibt darüber:

"Um noch ein recht merkwürdiges an mich gerichtetes Ansinnen zu erwähnen, sei verzeichnet, dass eines Tages zwei Abgesandte aus dem engeren Freundeskreise des Herrn Dr. Rudolf Steiner bei mir erschienen und verlangten, dass ich diesen in die Regierung aufnehmen sollte. Sie sagten, er sei der bedeutendste Mann Europas und kenne die Geheimnisse aller Regierungen. Sein Mitarbeiten in der Regierung sei ein unabwägbares Bedürfnis für das Wohl des Landes... Ich antwortete den Abgesandten Steiners, es sei mir nicht bekannt, dass Steiner der bedeutendste Mann Europas sei, und was die Geheimnisse der Regierungen beträfe, so stünden mir ja in Württemberg alle Archive zur Verfügung. Sie sagten darauf, ich solle Herrn Steiner nur einmal selbst anhören, dann würde ich bald sehen, welche Akquisition für die württembergische Regierung er bilden würde."

(Wilhelm Boos: "Von der Monarchie zum Volksstaat", Stuttgart 1923, S. 72).

Über die gleichen Vorgänge berichtet Eduard Stadtler folgendes:

"In Stuttgart war damals der berühmte Theosoph Rudolf Steiner der Volksheld. Seine mystische religions- und staatsformerische Dreigliederungslehre hatte im Schwabenland besonders unter den Intellektuellen und den proletarischen Massen der Großstadt eine "Steinerbewegung" entstehen lassen, die zeitweilig im Winter 1918/19 auch nahe an die politische Diktatur herangekommen war".

(Ed. Stadtler: Als Antibolschewist 1918/19, Düsseldorf Neuer Zeitverl. 1935, S. 170).

Die Beziehungen zu marxistischen Kreisen halten bis in die neueste Zeit an. Es wird auf die Verhaftungen von Anthroposophen, die sich als Anarcho-Syndikalisten betätigt hatten, in Kassel verwiesen. Ein weiterer Versuch, die Dreigliederung des sozialen Sozialismus zunächst im Kleinen zu verwirklichen, wurde 1921 gemacht. Der damalige Plan anthroposophischer Kreise, bei der Abstimmung in Oberschlesien ein unabhängiges Oberschlesien zu erzielen, grenzt an Hoch- und Landesverrat. Zum Beleg wird folgendes angeführt:

"In diesen Wochen so entscheidender Werbearbeit hat es ein Klüngel von mehr als absonderlichen Ideologen fertig gebracht, gegen die

Erhaltung Oberschlesiens bei Deutschland zu arbeiten. Es sind die Anthroposophen... Wir erfahren über die Tätigkeit dieser Sonderlinge folgendes... Sie fordern folgende Lösung: Oberschlesien soll nicht für Deutschland und nicht für Polen stimmen, sondern ein selbständiger Staat werden. Und warum? Um dann die berühmte Dreigliederung des sozialen Sozialismus bei sich durchzuführen... Am 24.2. fand in Göttingen eine Protestversammlung gegen die Anthroposophen statt... Lehrer Munderloh von der Göttinger Ortsgruppe der Verbände heimattreuer Oberschlesier verlas eine EntschlieÙung, in der das Auswärtige Amt von der Angelegenheit und der Stellungnahme der Versammlung in Kenntnis gesetzt wird. Unterschriften von Prof. Göppert, Major Ritgen (Dtntl.), Syndikus Closterhalfen (Ztr.), Prof. Hoppe (Dtntl.), Parteisekretär Lehmann (SPD), Prof. Hippel (DVP), Pfof. Schulz (Dem.).
(Deutsche Zeitung, Berlin, 19.5.21).

Bestätigt wird diese in zahlreichen Zeitungen gebrachte Meldung durch folgende Feststellung von anthroposophischer Seite:

"Durch einen Aufruf und eine grosse Reihe von Vorträgen suchten die schlesischen Freunde der Dreigliederung während mehrerer Monate in Oberschlesien Verständnis dafür zu verbreiten, dass eine wirkliche Lösung der ober-schlesischen Frage nicht durch irgendwelche Abstimmungen, sondern lediglich auf dem Boden der Dreigliederung möglich ist".

(Heyer, Bericht über die anthroposophische Bewegung im letzten halben Jahr, in: "Die Drei", Jg. 1, S. 181).

Zu diesen Versuchen, in den marxistischen Wirren der Nachkriegszeit ihr Ziel zu verwirklichen, traten die mannigfachen Bemühungen, mit Hilfe der glänzenden personellen Beziehungen führende Staatsmänner zu beeinflussen und für das anthroposophische Ideal der Dreigliederung des sozialen Sozialismus zu gewinnen. Darüber schreibt Polzer-Hoditz, dessen Bruder enger Mitarbeiter Steiners war, in "Politische Betrachtungen", S. 11:

"Mein Bruder war damals Kabinettsdirektor des Kaisers Karl, genoss sein Vertrauen und viele maßgebende Persönlichkeiten hörten auf ihn. Der Weg war mir dadurch gegeben. Auch dem damaligen Ministerpräsidenten Ritter v. Seidler übergab ich diesen ersten Entwurf der Dreigliederung,

wie ihn Dr. Steiner verfasst hatte, und besprach wiederholt diese Ideen mit ihm".

Ein weiteres Zeugnis dieser Art enthält die: "Anthroposophie", Jg. 16:

"Ausdrücklich sei hier bemerkt, dass damals keineswegs nur die Hofgesellschaft und ähnliche Kreise sich mit okkulten Phänomenen und einschlägigen Fragen beschäftigten, sondern dass diese Probleme - seit Reichenbachs "Od"-Lehre bis zu den Spiritisten Carl du Prel, Flammarion, Aksakow, u.a. - weite Kreise bewegten".
(S.293, Anmerkung).

An die engen Beziehungen, die Steiner zu Moltke hatte, haben sich die verschiedensten Vermutungen über die deutsche Kriegsführung im Weltkrieg verhängnisvolle Einflüsse geknüpft. Fest steht, dass Steiner bereits während des Krieges im Besitz der aus englischen Freimaurerkreisen stammenden Karte war, die bereits im wesentlichen die deutschen Nachkriegsgrenzen angab:

"Mit der Sorgfalt, mit der er solche Dinge zu tun pflegte, zeichnete er eine Karte aufs Papier. Belgien und die nordfranzösische Küste waren schraffiert als englische Einflusssphäre. Ebenso war das östliche Mittelmeer und der Bosphorus als englische Einflusssphäre gekennzeichnet. "Sie kämpfen jetzt zwar für Russland, sagen sie. Aber das ist ja Maja". Deutschland war verkleinert im Osten und um Elsass-Lothringen im Westen. Es war etwa die Karte, wie sie nach dem Weltkrieg wirklich geworden ist. Nur dass Deutschland und Deutsch-Osterreich vereinigt waren. "Diese Karte kann ich in England nachweisen bis in den Anfang der neunziger Jahre zurück. Vielleicht ist sie noch älter. Das habe ich noch nicht untersucht. So soll es kommen, wenn es nach dem Willen der Gegner Deutschlands geht".

(Rittelmeyer, Meine Lebensbegegnung mit Steiner, S.77/8).

Zuverlässig ist von Rittelmeyer auch der Ausspruch Steiners aus dem Jahre 1917 übermittelt, dass es nicht im Interesse Deutschlands liege, Generale wie Hindenburg und Ludendorff zu haben:

"Tief in meine Erinnerung eingegraben steht ein Gespräch, das ich noch in der ersten Jahreshälfte 1917 auf seinem Zimmer mit Dr. Steiner

hatte. Der berühmte Hindenburg-Rückzug war geschehen. Alle Welt in Deutschland war voll Freude über die strategische Sicherheit der neuen Führer. Was denkt eigentlich Dr. Steiner über die Lage? "Es ist doch ein rechtes Glück", begann ich, "dass wir jetzt Hindenburg und Ludendorff haben!" Ich schaute in ein unbewegtes Gesicht. "Nun ja", begann er langsam, "Hindenburg ist ein alter Herr, dem die Sache da oben - er meinte an den masurischen Seen - gelungen ist. Sie wissen ja, die Hauptsache macht der Generalstabschef". Ich wusste das damals allerdings nicht, aber fragte weiter: "So ist also Ludendorff jetzt das Glück für Deutschland?" Ich war schon unsicher. Nachdenklich und ernst sah mich Steiner an. "Es liegt nicht im Interesse Deutschlands, solche Generale zu haben!" kam es von seinen Lippen. "Wie meinen Sie das?" fragte ich überrascht. "Nun ja, die Beiden haben ja jetzt diesen Rückzug gemacht, mit den Verwüstungen. Wer abschätzen kann, was das für die Zukunft Deutschlands bedeutet, der kann nur sagen: Es liegt nicht im Interesse Deutschlands, solche Generale zu haben",

(Rittelmeyer: "Meine Lebensbegegnung mit Rudolf Steiner".)

Die Ausrichtung der Anthroposophie auf die Menschheit und auf die Freiheit des Geistes brachten es mit sich, dass die Anthroposophie für pazifistische, antimilitaristische und Völkerverbrüderungsideen eintrat. An die Seite eines Eisner und F.W. Förster stellt sich würdig der Anthroposoph Thylmann in seinen Briefen:

"Täglich 12 Stunden nagender dumpfer Schwere. Um neun Uhr schlafe ich öfters eine halbe Stunde lang am Schreibtisch ein. Es wird mir alles einerlei - nur immer wieder Haß, Wut, Empörung. Mein Inneres ist wie eine große Wunde, in der herumgestocheert wird. Friede um jeden Preis! Es gibt nur eine Menschheit, was Preussen oder Briten! Nach dem Frieden und wenn er auch siegreich sind wir ja doch ruiniert. Und der deutsche Geist ist nicht zu töten. Friede um jeden Preis! Ich bin kein Soldat. Wenn im Fahneid gemeint ist, dass ich das Menschentum ablegen soll, schwöre ich inbrünstig bewusst einen Meineid".

(Karl Thylmann: "Briefe", S.154).

Insbesondere wird alle soldatische Zucht als "militaristischer Zwang", der der geistigen Entwicklung Gewalt antut, angesehen:

"Es gibt unter allen Lebenserscheinungen keine, die mir fremder, feindlicher wäre, als der Militarismus. Und dieser von unsern Gegnern so viel genannte Militarismus, er ist so, wie er verschriemt wird. Wir hätten sich ohne ihn nicht erreicht, was erreicht worden ist. Das ist aber keine moralische Entschuldigung. Er ist das ahrimanischste, was man sich denken kann - eine wahrhaft teuflische seelenmörderische Erfindung".

(Karl Thylemann: "Briefe", S.145).

In z.T. unerhörtscharfer Weise wird gegen die Wehrpflicht und den Krieg Stellung genommen:

"Da haben wir z.B. ^{den} staatlicherseits zu einer besonderen Ehre erhobenen und zur patriotischen Pflicht gemachten Militarismus. Kein wirklicher Christ kann sich dem staatlichen Erfordernis der Militärdienstpflicht unterwerfen. Es sei denn, dass er das Grundprinzip des Christentums mißverstehet oder mißachtet oder aber auch ein Christentum heuchelt."

(Riehl: "Hitlerbewegung und Dreigliederung" S.16).

"Heinrich Mann bringt in unseres Erachtens richtiger Weise die Tötungsideologie der führenden Stände gegenüber dem Einzelmörder in Verbindung mit der Ideologie, die im Kriege zum Massenmord führt".

(Walter Liebmann über E.M. Manganast: "Der Mörder u.d. Staat" in "Anthroposophie" Jg.10, S.271).

Anthroposophie und Jugenderziehung.

Das Feld, auf dem die Anthroposophische Gesellschaft den stärksten praktisch-wirkenden Einfluss ausübt und wo sie ihr zersetzendes Gedankengut am unbemerktesten aber wirksamsten verbreiten kann, ist die Pädagogik. Die Wichtigkeit der Jugenderziehung in ihrem Geiste wurde von den Anthroposophen bald erkannt und sie wurde seit jeher eifrig gepflegt. Ein ausserordentlich umfangreiches Schrifttum von Steiner und anderen Anthroposophen liegt hierüber vor. Ihre Bemühungen wurden in die Tat umgesetzt durch die Gründung von "Waldorf-Schulen".

Höchstes Ziel für die Anthroposophen ist die Bildung zum "Menschen" ohne irgendwelche Bindungen.

"Es gibt nur ein Ziel der Erziehung und das ist die wahre Menschenbildung"

(Willi Aeppli, Aus der Unterrichtspraxis an einer Rudolf-Steiner-Schule, 1934, S.23).

"Einziges Ziel jeder Schulanstalt kann nur sein, Menschenbildungsschulen zu werden".

(Aeppli, a.d.Unterrichtspr. S.24).

"Wir kommen wieder zurück zum Bild der wahren Erziehung. Es ist identisch mit dem Gedanken der Menschheitsbildung."

(Aeppli: Unterrichtspr., S.9).

Keine Autorität und Bindung wird für diese "Menschheitsbildung" anerkannt, weder Rasse, noch Volk, noch Staat, noch sonst was.

"Die Waldorfschule will eine freie Schule sein, d.h. sie will gänzlich frei vom Staate sein und unterwirft sich nur, so weit es die Gesetze nicht anders zulassen, der Aufsicht der staatlichen Schulbehörden. Nur als freie Schule kann die Schule das Vertrauensverhältnis zu den Eltern ihrer Schüler gewinnen, das nötig ist".

(Die Freie Waldorf-Schule, Prospekt 1921).

Wie können soziale Menschen erzogen werden? Indem man versucht, das innerste Wesen der Kinder, ihr Selbst, zu bewahren und zu pflegen. Dieses wahrhaft individuell-menschliche, das nicht identisch ist mit allen möglichen und unmöglichen Egoismen, findet den Weg zum andern Individuum, denn alle Menschen, obwohl ungleichen Standes, ungleichen Berufes, ungleicher Nationalität und Rasse, sind doch, wenn wir nämlich bis auf das Allerletzte gehen, gleichen Geistes."

(Aeppli: Unterrichtspraxis, S.16)

Es ist oft bemerkt worden, dass der anthroposophische Unterricht auf die Jugend verweichlichend wirken muss. Z.B. erhalten Tertianer und Sekundaner Unterricht im Häkeln von Kaffeewärmern und Strümpfestricken (Caroline v. Heydebrand: "Vom Lehrplan der freien Waldorf-Schule", Stuttgart, Waldorfschule 1932).

Besonders ausgeprägt liegen die anthroposophischen Lehren dem Geschichtsunterricht zugrunde. Jegliche rassistisch-völkische Geschichtsbetrachtung fehlt. "Geschichte ist

der Ausdruck der Wandlung des menschlichen Bewusstseins".
Eine Einwirkung auf den Menschen finde vom Raum und vom
Milieu her statt:

"Zum Ausgangspunkt der Geschichts^{ch}betrachtung nimmt man die Abhängigkeit der Völker von der Erde, von den Klimaten der heißen oder gemäßigten Zone usw. Man bespricht z.B., wie ein Volk sich verändert, wenn es vom Gebirge ins Tal herabsteigt, doch ist dies alles historisch, nicht geographisch" (Heydebrand: "Vom Lehrplan der Waldorfschule", S.36,37).

Es wird nur Menschheitsgeschichte, nicht Volksgeschichte getrieben. Man stellt die Frage:

"Soll der erste Geschichtsunterricht engere Vaterlandskunde sein oder weite Weltgeschichte? Wohl in den meisten Ländern ist den Lehrern vorgeschrieben, mit der eigentlichen Vaterlandskunde den Anfang zu machen. Es folgt aus solchen Maßnahmen eine ganz besondere Einstellung zu Sinn und Zweck der Erziehung, der darin bestehen soll, den werdenden Menschen zum guten Staatsbürger heranzubilden".

(Aeppli: "Unterrichtspraxis", S.148).

Selbst gegen diesen Primat einer verwaschenen Vaterlandskunde wendet man sich mit dem Pestalozzi-Zitat:

"Der Mensch ist eher Mensch als Bürger und die Bildung des Menschen muss ihren Zweck in sich selbst haben".

Daraus wird dann die Folgerung für den Geschichtsunterricht in den anthroposophischen Schulen gezogen:

"Der Geschichtsunterricht sollte eine Geschichte der Menschheit sein, ein Gang durch alle Kulturepochen bis zur Gegenwart; Weltgeschichte, in der die Geschichte des Volkes, in das man selbst hineingeboren, in legitimer Weise enthalten ist."

(Aeppli: "Unterrichtspr.S.149).

Mensch und Menschheit ohne völkische Bindungen bilden die Mitte der anthroposophischen Erziehung.

Anthroposophie und die nationalsozialistische Rasseidee.

Die Anthroposophie hat weder vor noch nach der Machtübernahme den Nationalsozialismus auch nur erwähnt. Sie hat jedoch in unmißverständlicher Weise ihre Stellung zum Na-

- A 18 -

tionalsozialismus indirekt damit bekundet, dass sie von ihrem alten Geistbegriff ausgehend gegen den "innerlich unwahren Kult von Blut und Rasse" immer wieder angegangen ist. Sie wertet die Rasse nur körperlich. Wohl hätten die Rassen früher einmal Bedeutung für das politische und soziale Leben gehabt. Im 19. Jahrhundert jedoch sei der Geist an die Macht gekommen und was jetzt noch an Rassenunterschieden vorhanden sei, müsse geistig überwunden werden.

"Im alten Orient waren Blutzusammenhänge Träger eines produktiven Geisteslebens, heute, wo das Geistige aus dem Individuellen fließt, bedeutet das Stehenbleiben auf Blutzusammenhängen Atavismus".

(Unger: Die großen Fragen der Gegenwart und die Dreigliederung des sozialen Sozialismus, in "Die Drei" Jg.1, S.139).

Auch der Lehre von der Seelenwanderung stehen die Anthroposophen nicht ablehnend gegenüber. In sämtlichen Völkern und Rassen müsse sich die menschliche Seele reinkarnieren, um zum Göttlichen zu gelangen.

"Wir müssen, wenn wir es richtig verstehen wollen, genau unterscheiden, zwischen der Rassenentwicklung und der Seelenentwicklung. Diese beiden dürfen durchaus nicht miteinander verwechselt werden. Eine Menschheitsseele kann sich so entwickeln, dass sie in einer Inkarnation in einer bestimmten Rasse sich verkörpert. Wenn sie sich da bestimmte Eigenschaften erwirbt, so kann sie sich in einer späteren Inkarnation in einer ganz anderen Rasse wieder verkörpern, sodass wir durchaus erleben können, dass heute innerhalb der europäischen Bevölkerung solche Seelen verkörpert sind, die in ihrer früheren Inkarnation in Indien, Japan oder China verkörpert waren. Die Seelen bleiben durchaus nicht bei den Rassen. Die Seelenentwicklung ist etwas ganz anderes als die Rassenentwicklung".

(Rudolf Steiner: Theosophische Moral).

Diese Anschauungen ergeben sich ganz zwangsläufig aus der Trennung Leib - Seele - Geist durch die Anthroposophen und ebenso zwangsläufig mussten sie sich also gegen den Rassenkult wenden und ihn als Suggestion verwerfen.

"Auch im Fremdstämmigen müssen wir den Menschen und Bruder erkennen, von Muttererde geboren".

(Kübler: Diktatur oder Freiheit, in Waldorf-Nachrichten, Jg.2., S.527).

- A 19 -

"Vor allem aber lästern den deutschen Geist jene Kreise, die mit ihrem innerlich unwahren Kult von Blut und Rasse auf die überlebtesten Kräfte und Instinkte zurückgreifen, auf Instinkte, die in germanischen Urzeiten durchaus ihre tiefe Berechtigung und ihre große Bedeutung für die Kulturentwicklung der Völker hatten, die aber in der Gegenwart zu galvanisieren ein ebenso absurd unhistorisches, kulturschädliches Unterfangen bedeutet".

(Heyer: Die Gegner der Dreigliederung, in "Die Drei", Jg.1.S.383).

Mit dieser Ablehnung des Nationalismus ist zweifellos der Nationalsozialismus gemeint. Man geht in zahlreichen Angriffen gegen "rechtsradikale Volksverführer", "arische Blutfanatiker" und ihre "hakenkreuzgeschmückten Anhänger" vor. Alles irgendwie Nationale ist für die Anthroposophen eben "Einengung der Freiheit des menschlichen Geistes".

"Nach aussen hin tritt seit vielen Monaten besonders laut diejenige Gegnerschaft der Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft gegenüber, die in der Pflege gewisser überlebter Lebenszusammenhänge, in einem künstlichen Kult von Blut und Rasse ihre Grundlage hat, eine Strömung, deren geschichtliche Wurzeln weit zurückreichen in viel ältere Zeiten, in denen aus ihnen in Vollsaftigkeit das gesunde Leben des sozialen Organismus entsprang. Es ist dies die deutsch-völkische, deutschnationale, nationalistisch-alldeutsche, "arisch"-antisemitische Strömung. Diese kennt nur aus Blutzusammenhängen beruhende Machtgruppen, sie hasst das Ich und alles, was dieses Ich frei und zum kraftvollen Träger der sozialen Kräfte machen will."

(Heyer: "Von den Gegnern der Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft" in "Die Drei", Jg.1, S.952).

"Auch in der Art, wie heute versucht wird, auf die nationalen Quellen unserer Kultur zurückzugehen, kann Curtius kein Heil sehen. "Manche hoffen auf eine Erneuerung unserer Bildung aus dem nationalen Gedanken heraus, aber sie vergessen, dass dieser Gedanke beschlagnahmt ist von radikalisierten Massen, deren nationale Gesinnung auf die primitive Formel des Judenhasses und des Rassenmythos gebracht werden kann".

In Deutschland versuchten die Anthroposophen bald durch geschickte Manöver, ohne Preisgabe der eigenen Ideologie, in die Partei zu kommen. Und nur selten äusserte

man sich im Inland offen gegen den Nationalsozialismus. Im Ausland dagegen sprach man die wahre Meinung anthroposophischer Kreise über den Nationalsozialismus aus:

"Mit vorliegender Schrift ist es mir insbesondere darum zu tun, lügnerischen Tendenzen entgegenzutreten, die daraus bestehen, dass man den Volkskanzler Hitler zu einem National-Helden und kleinen Herrgott macht, und in ihm einen Retter aus Not und Schmach erblickt, auf den man nur so gewartet. Als ob nicht vorher, bevor an Hitler und seinen Nationalsozialismus zu denken war, ganz andere Retter und Helfer, weil befähigtere und kompetentere, dagewesen wären, als wie Herr Hitler jemals zu sein vermag. Retter und Helfer als wahrhaftige Menschenfreunde und Menschenkenner, Menschheitsführer aus geistigen Urgründen heraus, die man aber in dückelhaftester Weise mißverstanden, mißachtet, beschimpft und verleumdet hat, und so über die Grenze geekelt, wo sie dann glücklicherweise in der gastlichen Schweiz einen notdürftigen Rückhalt gefunden und wo sie sich eine Heimstätte erbauen durften, die ursprünglich in Süd-Deutschland, in München erbaut werden sollte: das Goetheanum, die Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft".

(August Riehl: "Die Hitlerbewegung und die Dreigliederung des sozialen Sozialismus", Rio de Janeiro, 1933, S.4).

"Die Hitlerbewegung tritt charakteristischer Weise durch den Nationalsozialismus, den sie als neue Weltanschauung propagiert, als Zwangsvorstellung an, der gegenüber man sich zur Wehr setzen muss".

(Riehl: "Hitlerbewegung und die Dreigliederung, S.3).

"Um es genauer auszudrücken: Man übersieht, vom National-Partei-Patrioten- oder auch Rassenwahn besessen, geflissentlich, dass das Leben als machtvoller Faktor das Volk zwingt - insofern es gedankenlos nicht nach Erkenntnis strebt - die das Volk schädigende nationalistische Idee aufzugeben, um sich so zu einem höheren Bewusstsein aufzuschwingen, Denn nur dieses Bewusstsein, nicht die nationale fixe Idee, ermöglicht eine so äusserst dringend notwendig gewordene Verständigung mit andern Völkern und ein Fortschreiten in der Kultur, mithin ein Sprengen der gerade durch den Nationalsozialismus verursachten Isolation des deutschen Volkes, was natürlich auf die fixe Idee anderer Nationalitäten nicht ohne Einwirkung bleiben kann. Aber es ist in Wahrheit und Wirklichkeit das Leben unser Führer und nicht der nationale oder Rassenwahn eines dückelhaften Menschen".

(Riehl: Hitlerbewegung und Dreigliederung S.19).

René Maikowski + Mathilde Hoyer [i. V. S. Hannover] an Staatliche
Schulaufsicht Hannover

26.09.1933

771 SA

42 177

Bund der Freien
Waldorfschulen
Archiv

FREIE WALDORFSCHULE
HANNOVER

Hannover, den 26. Septemb. 1933
Jägerstrasse 12 A

An die

Staatliche Schulaufsicht über das
Privatschulwesen der Stadt Hannover,

H a n n o v e r .

In Beantwortung des Schreibens vom 2. Juni d. J.
und der Verfügung des Herrn Ministers für Wissenschaft, Kunst
und Volksbildung vom 10. Mai d. J. (Nr. 5688), betreffend einen
Organisationsplan zur Erreichung der Ziele nationalpolitischer
Erziehung, überreichen wir beiliegend eine Darlegung des
Aufbaues und der Arbeitsweise der Freien Waldorfschule in
Hannover. Wir reichen ausserdem eine Darstellung der von
uns durchgeführten und in Angriff genommenen Massnahmen
und Einrichtungen ein, die eine Arbeit im Sinne national-
politischer Erziehung gewährleisten und Mängel, wie sie sich
aus den Schwierigkeiten beim Aufbau der Schule ergaben,
beheben sollen.

In der Anlage fügen wir bei:

- 1.) den Lehrplan der Freien Waldorfschule,
- 2.) einen Stundenverteilungsplan der Freien Waldorfschule
Hannover,
- 3.) eine kurze Darstellung der Entstehung und Entwicklung
der Waldorfschule in Hannover,
- 4.) statistische Angaben über a) Entwicklung der Schule (Kinder-
zahl), b) berufliche Vorbildung der Lehrerschaft, c) beruf-
liche Gliederung der Elternschaft, d) wirtschaftliche Basis
des Schulvereins,
- 5.) die bereits überreichte Denkschrift der Freien Waldorfschule
in Stuttgart, abgedruckt in Nr. 2, Jahrgang VII der Zeit-
schrift "Erziehungskunst",
- 6.) Bericht von Herrn Oberschulrat Hartlieb, Stuttgart, im
Sonderdruck!

FREIE WALDORFSCHULE HANNOVER.

Die Schulleitung:

gez. R. Maikowski gez. M. Hoyer

58409

11 Rudolf Steiner und die 111
Philosophie

1. Lebensgang

Bilder aus verschiedenen Lebensaltern enthält das Buch: Dr. Rudolf Steiner, Mein Lebensgang. 1925. Ein wichtiges Bild ist dem Buche: Geisteswissenschaft und Medizin (1937) vorgeheftet.

Steiner ist am 27. Februar 1861 in Kraljevec geboren. Sein Vater war zu dieser Zeit als Telegraphist an der Station Kraljevec (ungarisch-kroatische Grenze) angestellt. Der Geburtsort des Vaters war Geras in Niederösterreich, die Mutter, eine geborene Blie, stammte aus Horn in derselben Gegend (Waldviertel).

Von seinem zweiten bis zu seinem achten Jahr lebte Steiner in Pottschach (einer kleinen Südbahnstation in Niederösterreich nahe der steirischen Grenze). Von 1872 - 1879 besuchte er die Realschule in Wiener-Neustadt. Dann bezog er die Technische Hochschule in Wien. Zugleich hörte er philosophische Vorlesungen an der Wiener Universität bei Robert Zimmermann und Franz Brentano. Bestimmenden Einfluss übte auf ihn der Professor für deutsche Literatur an der TH., Karl Julius Schröer, durch den ihm eine nachhaltige Begeisterung für Goethe eingepflanzt wurde. In Wien wuchs Steiner in einen ausgebreiteten geselligen Verkehr hinein. Zu seinen Bekannten gehörten auch Juden.

1890 ging Steiner nach Weimar, um als ständiger Mitarbeiter des Goethe- und Schillerarchivs das gesamte Gebiet der Morphologie

für die Grossherzogin Sophie - Ausgabe von G o e t h e s Werken zu bearbeiten. Auch zum N i e t z s c h e - Archiv trat Steiner in Beziehung. Seine gesellige und vielseitig aufnehmende Natur brachte ihn auch in Weimar mit zahlreichen Geistern in nähere Berührung.

1897 siedelte Steiner nach Berlin über, um die Herausgeberschaft des "Magazins für Literatur" zu erwerben, das ein Organ der "Freien literarischen Gesellschaft" war. Als Redakteur, Schriftsteller und Vortragsredner lernte Steiner die geistige Atmosphäre der Hauptstadt gründlich kennen. Er lebte zunächst in dem Kreise jener Männer, die eine "Neue Ethik" auf naturwissenschaftlicher (monistischer) Grundlage in enger Verbindung mit dem jüdisch-marxistischen "Sozialismus" anstrebten: B r u n o W i l l e und W i l h e l m B ö l s c h e , den Begründern der "Freien Hochschule" und des "Giordano-Bruno-Bundes". Eine Zeitlang hielt er Vorträge über Geschichte und Redekunst an der Berliner Arbeiterbildungsschule.

Eine besonders hohe Schätzung brachte Steiner dem Juden L u d w i g J a c o b o w s k i entgegen, dem Herausgeber der Monatsschrift "Die Gesellschaft" und Begründer des Kreises der "Kommenden". Jacobowski leitete auch den Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus. Aufgrund der von ihm veröffentlichten Bücher ist es durchaus glaubhaft, dass Steiner in wesentlichen Punkten mit diesem Kreise nicht übereinstimmte.

Der Übergang zur Theosophie, den Steiner um 1900 vollzog, kann nur als eine radikale Wendung betrachtet werden. Leider enthält der "Lebensgang" darüber nichts - ein kennzeichnendes Beispiel für die verschleierte Art, die Steiner in seiner Selbstdarstellung

liebt. Zusammenfassend sagt die Selbstbiographie zu dieser Epoche: "Ich habe gründlich kennengelernt, wo die vom Geiste wegstrebenden Kultur - auflösenden, Kultur - zerstörenden Kräfte der Zeit liegen. Und aus dieser Erkenntnis hat sich mir vieles zu der Kraft hinzugesetzt, die ich weiterhin brauchte, um aus dem Geiste heraus zu wirken." (Lebensgang S.283)

Um die Jahrhundertwende trat Steiner zu der von H. P. Blawatzky gegründeten "Theosophischen Gesellschaft" in Beziehung und entfaltete bald innerhalb derselben eine ausgebreitete Vortragstätigkeit. Als in Berlin in Beisein von Annie Besant die "Deutsche Sektion der Theosophischen Gesellschaft" gegründet wurde, wurde er zu deren Generalsekretär gewählt. Gleichzeitig lernte er seine spätere Frau, Marie von Sivers kennen. Mit Frau von Sivers nahm er im Jahre 1902 an dem Theosophischen Kongress in London teil.

Später trennte sich Steiner zusammen mit Marie von Sivers von der Theosophischen Gesellschaft und machte sich durch Gründung der Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft (1912) selbständig. Es ist wiederum durchaus glaubhaft, dass die Richtung zur Selbständigkeit schon in seiner theosophischen Epoche in ihm lag. (Über die Blawatzky und Annie Besant kussert sich Steiner in den Vorträgen: Das Karma des Berufs des Menschen. 1933 S.201 ff.)

Am 27. August 1914 hat Steiner, der gelegentlich im Hause des Generals von Moltke zu Gast gewesen war, den General in Koblenz gesprochen. Da behauptet wurde, dass der "okkulte" Einfluss Steiners den General unsicher gemacht habe, und Steiner indirekt so die Katastrophe an der Marne verursacht

habe, gab Steiner dem Journalisten Jules Sauerwein ein Interview. Das Interview ist abgedruckt in dem Buche: "Rudolf Steiner während des Weltkrieges." Herausgegeben und eingeleitet von Roman Boos.

Im Herbst 1919 wurde in Stuttgart die Freie Waldorfschule gegründet, die nach Gedanken von Rudolf Steiner aufgebaut wurde.

Die Heimstätte der Anthroposophie sollte in München errichtet werden, wo sich ein einflussreicher Kreis um Helene von Schewitsch (die Freundin Lassalles) gebildet hatte. Da dort Einwendungen gegen die Bauformen erhoben wurden, wurde 1913 der Grundstein auf dem Dornacher Hügel in der Nähe von Basel gelegt. Der Bau erhielt den Namen: "Goetheanum. Freie Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft". Als der Bau nach zehn Jahren vollendet war, brannte er am Sylvesterabend des Jahres 1922 nieder. (Über das Goetheanum hat sich Steiner in einem Aufsatz geäußert, der in dem Buche "Gothestudien und Goetheanische Denkmethode. 1932. zu finden ist.)

Am 30. März 1925 ist Rudolf Steiner gestorben.

2. Geistige Einflüsse

Es sind drei untereinander sehr verschiedene Strömungen, die für das Leben und das Werk Rudolf Steiners von schicksalhafter Bedeutung wurden. Steiner ging aus von der Naturphilosophie Goethes und schritt von da weiter zum Monismus Haeckels. Gleichzeitig nahm er den Idealismus Fichtes

und den Spiritualismus H e g e l s in sich auf. Diese in sich schon sehr disparaten Elemente wurden zuletzt durch seine plötzliche Wendung zur T h e o s o p h i e umgruppiert: der Monismus mit seiner Diesseitigkeit schied aus, das idealistisch-spiritualistische Motiv wurde ins Schwärmerische übersteigert, Fichte und Hegel mussten dazu dienen, dem neuen ("anthroposophischen") Spiritualismus einen philosophischen Hintergrund zu geben.

Es ist für das Verständnis der schwer fassbaren Persönlichkeit Steiners und seines nach vielen Seiten hin sich auflösenden Werkes von entscheidender Wichtigkeit, dass man die Bedeutung G o e t h e s für das Denken dieses Mannes richtig einschätzt. Ohne Übertreibung kann gesagt werden, dass alles was fruchtbar ist an Steiners Werk auf Goethe zurückgeht. Nicht so, als ob einzelne Gedanken Goethes von Steiner ausgeführt worden wären, vielmehr in dem tieferen Sinne, dass ein Späterer sich so in Goethes Denkweise zu versetzen vermocht hat, dass er selber schliesslich original-goethisch dachte. Wo Steiner an Goethe anknüpft, ist er positiv, wo er Goethe verlässt, wird er zum Phantasten. Die Anregungen, die Steiner durch G o e t h e empfangen hat, und was er später im Anschluss an die T h e o s o p h i e ausbildete, stehen unvermittelt nebeneinander. Aus dem Bruch in Steiners geistiger Entwicklung erklärt sich der Widerspruch in seiner Persönlichkeit und seinem Werk, der sich in der widersprüchlichen Beurteilung, die diese gefunden haben, widerspiegelt. In der Naturphilosophie und in der Menschenkunde Steiners wirken Goethesche Gedanken weiter - daher finden wir in der Vorstellung von der biologisch-dynamischen Wirtschaftsweise und in der Waldorfschulpädagogik echt Goethesches

Gedankengut wieder.

Auf diesem Verhältnis zu Goethe beruht die Bedeutung Steiners für das deutsche Geistesleben. Weder vor ihm noch nach ihm hat jemand mit solcher Energie das Philosophische in Goethes Werk erkannt. Durch die Herausgabe der morphologischen Schriften und die ausgezeichneten Erläuterungen dazu hat Steiner sich ein unvergängliches wissenschaftliches Verdienst erworben.

Neben Goethe hat vor allem H e g e l auf Steiner gewirkt. Gegen K a n t hat er sich von Anfang an ablehnend verhalten, in H e g e l erblickte er den grössten Denker der neuen Zeit. (Lebensgang S.258 f.) Was ihn zu Hegel zog, war der k o n - k r e t e Idealismus, die Philosophie der geistigen W e l t , also der Spiritualismus in Verbindung mit dem Objektivismus. Gegen den erkenntnistheoretischen Subjektivismus, der ihm vor allem in E d u a r d v o n H a r t m a n n und V o l k e l t entgegentrat, stand Steiner in Opposition. Philosophiegeschichtlich bedeutet seine Vereinigung von Goethe und Hegel eine Parallele zu der in die Phänomenologie H u s s e r l s übergehenden Linie B o l z a n o - B r e n t a n o .

In geringerem Masse als Hegel haben F i c h t e und S c h i l l e r (Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen) auf Steiner eingewirkt.

In diesen Beziehungen betrachtet stellt die Philosophie Steiners einen Höhepunkt der Einwirkung des deutschen Idealismus auf Österreich dar.

Für N i e t z s c h e fehlte ihm das Organ. (Vgl. Lebensgang S.127, 175 ff.) Es ist ein Irrtum, wenn er 1895 schreibt: "Als ich vor sechs Jahren die Werke Nietzsches kennen lernte, waren

ih mir bereits Ideen ausgebildet, die den seinigen ähnlich sind." Von dem Buche "Friedrich Nietzsche. Ein Kämpfer gegen seine Zeit" (1895) ist nur der Titel gut - er bezeichnnet das, was Steiner zu Nietzsche hingezogen hat.

In seinem philosophischen Hauptwerk ("Philosophie der Freiheit") wollte Steiner den philosophischen Abschluss des Gebäudes geben, das Darwin und Haeckel für die Naturwissenschaft errichtet haben. In der Schrift "Haeckel und seine Gegner", die 1900 erschien, nennt Steiner Haeckels "Welträtsel" nicht nur eines der bedeutendsten Manifeste vom Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts, sondern fügt auch noch hinzu: "Es enthält in reifer Form eine vollständige Auseinandersetzung der modernen Naturwissenschaft mit dem philosophischen Denken aus dem Geiste des genialsten, weitblickendsten Naturforschers unserer Zeit heraus." (S.52) In seinem Buche: "Die Mystik im Aufgange des neuzeitlichen Geisteslebens und ihr Verhältnis zur modernen Weltanschauung" (1901) feiert Steiner am Schluss Lamarck, Darwin und Haeckel neben Goethe, Fichte und Hegel. Zwischen den Mystikern Eckart, Tauler, Suso, Nicolaus von Cues, Paracelsus, Weigel, Böhme, Bruno, Angelus Silesius und der modernen Entwicklungslehre ist für Steiner kein Gegensatz: "Man braucht nicht den Geist zu verlieren, wenn man in der Natur nur Natürliches findet ... Ich empfinde ein Höheres, Herrlicheres, wenn ich die Offenbarungen der "natürlichen Schöpfungsgeschichte"

auf mich wirken lasse, als wenn die übernatürlichen Wundergeschichten der Glaubensbekenntnisse auf mich eindringen." (Die Mystik im Aufgange. S.119 f.) Steiner ist also noch 1900 energisch für eine nicht-positivistische, aber der Naturwissenschaft eng verbundene realistische Philosophie eingetreten, die im Zusammenhang mit der deutschen Mystik, Goethe und Hegel stand. Das erste Zeugnis der Abdrängung von dieser Linie ist das Buch: "Das Christentum als mystische Tatsache und die Mysterien des Altertums" (1910).

Im Vorwort zur 2.Auflage dieses Buches (1910) weist Steiner mit besonderem Nachdruck auf Edouard Schuré hin, dessen Buch über die Mysterien unter dem Titel "Die grossen Eingeweihten" von Frau Marie Steiner übersetzt worden ist. Mit dem Begriff der Mysterien und der Einweihung tritt etwas völlig Neues in Steiners Denken auf. Eben noch wurde Plato wegen seines Dualismus abgelehnt - nun wird er als Mystiker gefeiert. Der Orient, das Judentum, Plato, Philo, Buddha, Jesus - alles wird zu einer Synthese vereinigt. Die Kirchenväter Augustin und Thomas treten auf. Der Schüler Haeckels deutet die Erweckung des Lazarus als Initiationsvorgang!

Es ist nun aber nicht so, dass diese "Mystik" von nun an Steiners Denken ausschliesslich beherrscht hätte. Vielmehr wirken die alten Motive weiter. In der "Theosophie" z.B. ist sehr stark Hegel spürbar; in den Gedanken über Mensch und Natur bleibt Goethe und die Naturphilosophie der Romantiker, der Steiner sehr viel verdankt, ohne es zu sagen, vorherrschend.

3. Arbeitsweise

Das Werk Steiners ist ausserordentlich umfangreich. Zu unterscheiden sind:

- a. Bücher, die von ihm selbst verfasst sind,
- b. Vorträge, die er selbst zum Druck gebracht hat,
- c. Vorträge, die von andern herausgegeben wurden und den Vermerk tragen: "Nach einer vom Vortragenden nicht durchgesehenen Nachschrift".

Diese letzteren sind gewöhnlich in ängstlicher Anlehnung an das gesprochene Wort mit allen seinen Zufälligkeiten und Nachlässigkeiten wiedergegeben. Steiner pflegte dasselbe Thema in immer neuen Vortragszyklen zu behandeln. Statt einer geschlossenen Gesamtdarstellung der grossen Gebiete (Anthropologie, Medizin, Pädagogik, Eurhythmie, Kunst) liegen also nur skizzenhafte Behandlungen in der lässigen Form freier Rede vor. Es ist deutlich sichtbar, dass die unmittelbare Wirkung auf Menschen für Steiner wichtiger war als die wissenschaftliche Durcharbeitung seiner Gedanken. Bei dieser Sachlage berührt es peinlich, dass Steiner selbst beiden leichtsinnigsten Paraphrasen von Dingen, die er längst ausgesprochen hat, immer noch mit seiner Wissenschaftlichkeit prunkt und vor Inkompetenten Wissenschafts-"Kritik" treibt.

In den letzten Jahrzehnten hat Steiner kein Buch mehr selbst herausgegeben. Er hat lediglich noch, gestützt auf ein reiches Wissen, unter geschickter Verwendung immer neuer Einfälle, mit Hilfe seiner glänzenden Improvisationsbegabung Menschen fasziniert, die abseits der Wissenschaft nach Erkenntnis suchten.

Anders als mit diesen manchmal in geistreiche Plauderei ausartenden Vorträgen verhält es sich mit den Büchern und Vorträgen,

die Steiner selbst herausgegeben hat. Unter ihnen befinden sich mehrere bedeutende Werke, deren Studium sich verlohnt.

4. Hauptwerke

Werke über G o e t h e

In Kürschner's "Deutscher National-Literatur" gab 1886 Steiner eine Auswahl aus Goethes Naturwissenschaftlichen Schriften in vier Bänden heraus. Die ausführliche E i n l e i t u n g zu dieser Auswahl ist ein bahnbrechendes Werk, das in der Goetheliteratur an hervorragender Stelle steht. Goethes Naturforschung wird hier zum ersten Male als Zeugnis eines ursprünglichen Weltverhaltens, einer Welt-Anschauung verstanden. Durch Steiner ist Goethe als gleichsam neuer Paracelsus wieder entdeckt worden.

Seine Abhandlung stösst bis zu den philosophisch letzten Problemen, bis zur Erkenntnistheorie Goethes vor. In völliger Unabhängigkeit von den herrschenden Richtungen der Philosophie entwickelt Steiner das Erkenntnisprinzip der Anschauung im Goetheschen Sinne.

In Übereinstimmung mit dieser Einleitung befinden sich zwei weitere wertvolle Goetheschriften Steiners: " G r u n d - l i n i e n e i n e r E r k e n n t n i s t t h e o r i e d e r G o e t h e s c h e n W e l t a n s c h a u n g m i t b e s o n d e r e r R ü c k s i c h t a u f S c h i l l e r " (1886) und: " G o e t h e s W e l t a n s c h a u n g " (1887).

Philosophische Schriften

Die ersten selbständigen philosophischen Schriften Steiners sind: " W a h r h e i t u n d W i s s e n s c h a f t . V o r - s p i e l e i n e r P h i l o s o p h i e d e r F r e i h e i t " (1892) und: " D i e

Philosophie der Freiheit. Grundzüge einer modernen Weltanschauung". Steiner fasst das Problem der Erkenntnis an der Wurzel. Von der eigenen Stellung zur Welt ausgehend, die ihn zu Goethes Weltanschauung getrieben hatte, prüft er die an Kant anschliessende Theorie des Erkennens, die unübersteigliche "Grenzen" der Erkenntnis aufweisen zu können glaubte und dem Menschengenisse den Zugang zum Wesen der Welt versperrte. Steiner will die Behauptung erweisen, dass dem menschlichen Erkennen der Zugang zur wahren Wirklichkeit offen steht. Es ist bewundernswert, mit welcher Sicherheit und Entschiedenheit er sich gegen den damals herrschenden Subjektivismus und Phänomenalismus, Materialismus und Mechanismus zur Wehr setzt, und wie er von Anfang an den Positivismus in jeder Form, auch in der gefährlichsten des Psychologismus, vermeidet. Aber nicht nur das: es liegt bei ihm ein wirklich neuer Ansatz vor, mag dieser Ansatz auch im Zusammenhang mit Goethe und Hegel entwickelt sein.

Diese ersten philosophischen Schriften sichern, in Verbindung mit den ersten Goetheschritten, Rudolf Steiner einen Platz in der vordersten Reihe der Philosophen des 19. Jahrhunderts. Es unterliegt gar keinem Zweifel, dass diese Schriften weit origineller und bedeutender sind als die gesammelten Werke von Eduard von Hartmann, dem Steiner "Wahrheit und Wissenschaft" gewidmet hat.

In der Vorrede zur Neuauflage der "Grundlinien einer Erkenntnistheorie der Goetheschen Weltanschauung" von 1923 hat Steiner seine Stellung zu dem philosophischen Grundproblem, mit dem er begann, ausgezeichnet dargelegt. Der Grundgedanke ist: der Mensch

steht mit seinem Denken nicht einer ihm fremden ("wahrgenommenen") Welt gegenüber, sondern ist denkendes Glied einer geistigen Welt, in deren Mitte er steht. Das Denken ist ein realer Vorgang, d.h. der Mensch nimmt die Dinge nicht passiv hin, sondern ist ein geistiger Mitschöpfer der Welt. Das ist der Sinn der "Philosophie der Freiheit".

In der Verbindung des Erkenntnisproblems mit dem Freiheitsproblem erweist Steiner seine philosophische Tiefe. Die Gefahr dieser Verbindung, die schon in Hegel offenbar wurde, hat er nicht gesehen. Seine radikale Ablehnung Kants wurde ihm zum Verderben. Insofern ist die spätere Entwicklung Steiners zur "Mystik" schon in seinem Grundansatz enthalten.

Das Werk: "Die Rätsel der Philosophie in ihrer Geschichte als Umriss dargestellt" (1914) sind eine Umarbeitung des Buches: "Welt- und Lebensanschauungen im 19. Jahrhundert" (1901). Es ist eine Geschichte der Philosophie mit Betonung der neueren Zeit. Philosophisch wichtig ist der Schluss unter dem Titel: "Skizzenhaft dargestellter Ausblick auf eine Anthroposophie". In dieser Abhandlung stellt Steiner den Zusammenhang zwischen seinen erkenntnistheoretischen Arbeiten und der Anthroposophie her. Die verhängnisvolle Wendung, die er vollzogen hat, erhellt aus dem Satz: "Die hier gemeinte Seelenarbeit besteht in der unbegrenzten Steigerung von Seelenfähigkeiten, welche auch das gewöhnliche Bewusstsein kennt, die dieses aber in solcher Steigerung nicht anwendet." (Rätsel der Philosophie II S.236)

Ernsthafte Beachtung verdient die Schrift: "Von Seelenrätseln" (1917). Sie ist besonders wichtig für

Steiners Auffassung der Anthropologie und Psychologie. Steiner setzt sich hier mit seinem Kritiker Max Dessoir auseinander und präzisiert sein Verhältnis zu Franz Brentano.

Die Schrift: "Wie erlangt man Erkenntnisse höherer Welten" (1904) muss in Zusammenhang mit den philosophischen Arbeiten behandelt werden, obwohl es sich hier um eine praktische Anleitung zur "höheren" Erkenntnis handelt. Denn diese Anleitung ist durchaus klar und nüchtern geschrieben, sie steht im Zusammenhang mit wirklich tiefen Einsichten in das menschliche Seelenleben. Geschichtlich betrachtet gehört das Werk in die Literatur über die "Meditation". Der Ansatz ist gesund - das Schwärmerische liegt lediglich darin, dass jede Grenze verneint wird, und der Weg nicht nur zu dem freigelegt wird, was die positivistische Wissenschaft des 19. Jahrhunderts übersah, sondern die Tür aufgestossen wird zu jedem Unsinn und schliesslich zu der grundsätzlichen Verwandlung subjektiver Einfälle in eine Erkenntnis "geistiger Wesenheiten".

Auch die beiden abschliessenden Hauptschriften Steiners: "Theosophie. Einführung in übersinnliche Welterkenntnis und Menschenbestimmung" (1904) und "Die Geheimwissenschaft im Umriss" (1909) müssen von dem, der eine selbständige "Geisteswissenschaft" nicht anzuerkennen vermag, als philosophische Werke betrachtet werden. Diese Werke stehen da, wo in der alten Metaphysik die rationale Psychologie, Kosmologie und Theologie standen. Die Missachtung Kants hat sich gerächt: als ein moderner Swedenborg tritt Steiner der Philosophie und Wissenschaft mit ungemessenen Ansprüchen entgegen -

ohne doch nichts anderes zu sein als ein wiederkehrender Schatten der vorkantischen Metaphysik.

Die weltanschauliche Bedeutung der beiden Hauptwerke ist nicht in dem konsequenten Spiritualismus zu suchen, den sie mit den Systemen Fichtes und Hegels teilen. Da es noch auf lange hinaus eine der wichtigsten Aufgaben des deutschen Denkens sein wird, den Spiritualismus philosophisch zu widerlegen, so kann eine geistreiche Erneuerung des Spiritualismus an sich philosophisch nur belebend wirken. Wenn wir die beiden metaphysischen Hauptwerke Steiners ablehnen müssen, so geschieht es nicht aufgrund ihres Spiritualismus, sondern wegen ihres anthroposophischen Gehalts. Es handelt sich um die Lehre vom Karma des Menschen.

Die Karma-Lehre steht im Mittelpunkt der Steinerschen "Anthroposophie". Im Angesicht der Ergebnisse der modernen Naturwissenschaft und insbesondere der Vererbungswissenschaft trägt Steiner eine Lehre vom Menschen vor, die der wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnis von der Vererbung direkt widerspricht, und nichts anderes ist als eine metaphysische Übersteigerung der Theorie von der Vererbung erworbener Eigenschaften. Schon in der Schrift "Haeckel und seine Gegner" (1900) hat Steiner, um die monistische Entwicklungslehre, also ein Dogma, zu retten, für die Vererbung erworbener Eigenschaften Partei genommen und sich gegen Weismann und Galton gewandt. (S.41ff.) Auf S.70 f. der "Theosophie" lesen wir: "Tiere, die einmal als sehende in die Höhlen von Kentucky eingewandert sind, haben durch das Leben in denselben ihre Sehvermögen verloren. Der Aufenthalt im Finstern hat die Augen ausser Tätigkeit gesetzt. In diesen

Augen wird dadurch nicht mehr die physische und chemische Tätigkeit verrichtet, die während des Sehens vor sich geht. Der Strom der Nahrung, der für diese Tätigkeit früher verwendet worden ist, fließt nunmehr anderen Organen zu. Nun können diese Tiere nur in diesen Höhlen leben. Sie haben durch ihre Tat, durch die Einwanderung, die Bedingungen ihres späteren Lebens geschaffen. Die Einwanderung ist zu einem Teil ihres Schicksals geworden. Eine Wesenheit, die einmal tätig war, hat sich mit den Ergebnissen der Taten verknüpft. So ist es mit dem Menschengeste . . . Durch eine Tat, welche die Seele verrichtet hat, lebt in ihr die kräftefüllte Anlage, eine andere Tat zu verrichten, welche die Frucht dieser Tat ist . . . Mit seinen Taten hat der Menschengeist wirklich sein Schicksal bereitet. An das, was er in einem vorigen Leben getan hat, findet er sich in seinem neuen geknüpft."

"Der Leib unterliegt dem Gesetz der Vererbung; die Seele unterliegt dem selbstgeschaffenen Schicksal. Man nennt dieses von dem Menschen geschaffene Schicksal mit einem alten Ausdruck sein Karma. Und der Geist steht unter dem Gesetze der Wiederverkörperung, der wiederholten Erdenleben." (Theosophie S.74) Es gehört zu den bedenklichsten Vorurteilen, meint Steiner, wenn man die geistigen Eigenschaften eines Menschen durch Vererbung von Vater und Mutter oder anderen Vorfahren erklären will. (Theosophie S.60) Jeder Lebensleib ist eine Wiederholung seines Vorfahren. Wer aber unter Berücksichtigung der von Mendel gefundenen Vererbungsgrundsätze die individuellen Verschiedenheiten menschlicher Persönlichkeiten auf die Verschiedenheiten in der Beschaffenheit der stofflichen Keime zurückführt, der hat keine Einsicht in das wirkliche Verhältnis

des Menschen zu dessen Erdenleben. "Denn die sachgemäße Beobachtung ergibt, dass die küsseren Umstände auf verschiedene Personen in verschiedener Art durch etwas wirken, das gar nicht u n m i t t e l b a r mit der stofflichen Entwicklung in Wechselbeziehung tritt. Für den wirklich genauen Erforscher auf diesem Gebiete zeigt sich, dass, was aus den stofflichen Anlagen kommt, sich unterscheiden lässt von dem, was zwar durch Wechselwirkung des Menschen mit den Erlebnissen entsteht, aber nur dadurch sich gestalten kann, dass die S e e l e selbst diese Wechselwirkung eingeht. Die Seele steht da deutlich mit etwas innerhalb der Aussenwelt in Beziehung, das, s e i n e m W e s e n n a c h , keinen Bezug zu stofflichen Keimanlagen haben kann." (Theosophie S.54 f.)

In demselben Tone "wissenschaftlicher" Überlegenheit wird das Vererbungsproblem auch in der " G e h e i m w i s s e n s c h a f t " behandelt. Die Anthroposophie lehnt es ab, in Bezug auf die Anlagen, die Begabungen sich an das zu halten, was von Eltern, Voreltern und sonstigen Ahnen vererbt ist. Sie sucht die Ursachen in geistigen Vorgängen, "welche der Mensch selbst vor seiner Geburt - abseits von der Vererbungslinie seiner Ahnen - durchgemacht hat und durch die er sich seine Anlagen und Begabungen gestaltet hat." (Geheimwissenschaft S.89) "Eine Alpenblume wächst nicht in der Tiefebene. Ihre Natur hat etwas, was sie mit der Alpengegen zusammenbringt. Ebenso muss es in einem Menschen etwas geben, was ihn in eine bestimmte Gegend ^{ein} h i n g e b o r e n werden lässt." (ebda) In den Vorträgen über "Das Karma des Berufes des Menschen" findet sich dafür ein geschichtliches Beispiel. Friedrich Theodor Vischer hat im Tübinger Stift zwar Latein und Griechisch

gelernt, aber bis zu einem sehr späten Alter nicht gewusst, in welchen Hauptfluss der Neckar sich ergiesst. Das Erziehungssystem, in dem Vischer aufwuchs, wusste von einer Landkarte nichts. Wenn wir dies von einem grösseren Gesichtspunkt überschauen, so werden wir uns sagen: "Die Seele dieses Vischer stieg herunter aus den geistigen Welten und hat sich gerade d i e s e s Milieu ausgesucht, wollte gerade eine Erziehung haben, welche ihr ermöglichte, so und so lange bewahrt davor zu bleiben, eine Landkarte zu sehen, wollte gerade lange Zeit zwar den Neckar immer vor sich haben, das Heimatflüsschen, aber wollte nicht wissen, in welchen Hauptstrom der Neckar sich ergiesst." (Karma des Berufes. 1933 S.155 f.)

Die Vererbung hoher geistiger Anlagen, wie wir sie in den Gliedern der Familien Bach und Bernoulli finden, wird von Steiner ausdrücklich erwähnt. (Geheimwissenschaft S.89 f.) Aber dem Anthroposophen können diese Tatsachen nicht sein, was sie dem sind, der sich nur auf die Vorgänge in der Sinnenwelt bei seinen Erklärungen stützen will. Ein unklares Denken, meint Steiner, kann auf diesem Gebiet viel Verwirrung stiften. "Gewiss zeigt ein Mensch die Merkmale seiner Vorfahren, denn das Geistig-Seelische, welches durch die Geburt in das physische Dasein tritt, entnimmt seine Leiblichkeit dem, was ihm die Vererbung gibt. Damit ist aber noch nichts gesagt, als dass ein Wesen die Eigentümlichkeiten des Mittels trägt, in das es untergetaucht ist." (Die Geheimwissenschaft. S.91) Dass ein Menschenwesen sich in die Eigenschaften seiner Vorfahren eingehüllt zeigt, beweist für die Herkunft der persönlichen Eigenschaften dieses Wesens ebenso wenig, wie es für die innere Natur eines Menschen etwas beweist, wenn er nass ist, weil er ins Wasser gefallen ist. (ebda) "Wenn der bedeutendste

Name am Ende einer Blutgenossenschaft steht, so zeigt dies, dass der Träger dieses Namens jene Blutgenossenschaft brauchte, um sich den Leib zu gestalten, den er für die Entfaltung seiner Gesamtpersönlichkeit notwendig hatte. Es beweist aber gar nichts für die "Vererbung" des Persönlichen selbst: ja es beweist für eine gesunde Logik diese Tatsache gerade das Gegenteil. Wenn sich nämlich die persönlichen Gaben vererbten, so müssten sie am Anfang einer Blutgenossenschaft stehen und sich dann von hier ausgehend auf die Nachkommen vererben. Da sie aber am Ende stehen, so ist das gerade ein Zeugnis dafür, dass sie sich n i c h t vererben." (Die Geheimwissenschaft. S.91 f.)

In welcher Weise Steiner von seinen "geheimwissenschaftlichen" Erkenntnissen in seinen Vorträgen über bestimmte Spezialgebiete Gebrauch macht, kann ein Beispiel aus den Vorträgen über Heilpädagogik im Jahre 1924 zeigen. Der erste Vortrag dieses Kursus handelt auch von der Vererbung und schliesst mit folgendem Fall: Die Leber ist dasjenige Organ, das dem Menschen die Courage gibt, eine ausgedachte Tat in eine wirklich ausgeführte umzusetzen. Wenn eine Stockung des Willens auftritt, dann liegt immer ein feiner Leberdefekt vor. Einem jungen Mann passierte es manchmal, dass er schon in der Nähe eines Tramwagens stand, aber plötzlich stehen blieb und nicht einstieg. Er wusste selbst nicht, warum. Der Wille stockte. Was lag da vor? "Der Vater des Betreffenden war Philosoph, hat in merkwürdiger Weise die Seelenfähigkeiten eingeteilt in Vorstellen, Urteilen und in die Kräfte der Sympathie und Antipathie, und rechnete unter die Seelenkräfte nicht den Willen. Er zählte nie den Willen auf, wenn er die Seelenkräfte aufzählte. Er wollte aber ehrlich sein; er wollte nur das geben,

was sich im Bewusstsein darstellte. Nun hatte er es so weit gebracht, dass das ihm ganz Natur war, keine Vorstellung vom Willen zu haben. Da kriegte er in verhältnismässig spätem Alter einen Sohn. Er, der Vater, hatte durch ewiges Nichtdenken des Willens der Leber die Anlage eingepflanzt, die subjektiven Intentionen nicht umzusetzen in die Tat. Beim Sohne trat das als Erkrankung auf. Und da können Sie sehen, warum auch des Sohnes Individualität gerade diesen Vater gewählt hat: weil er nichts anzufangen wusste mit der inneren Organisation der Leber. Da hat diese Individualität sich eine Konstitution gewählt, bei der sie sich nicht bemühen musste um die Leber." (Zur Heilpädagogik S.202f.)

Es wäre falsch, den Karma-Gedanken wegen der Absurdität und unfreiwilligen Komik solcher Beispiele leicht zu nehmen. In diesen Beispielen steckt ein geistiges System. Sie entspringen nicht der Willkür, sondern einer bestimmten Methode.

Steiners Lehre vom Karma des Menschen liegt eine radikale Trennung zwischen dem Stofflichen und dem Geistigen zugrunde - es ist dieselbe Trennung, die Steiner auf Goethes Spuren oft so glücklich bekämpft hat. Das Stoffliche eines Wesens, so lehrt die "Geheimwissenschaft", vergeht mit dem körperlichen Tode. Nicht in der gleichen Art verschwinden die geistigen Kräfte, welche dieses Körperhafte aus sich heraus getrieben haben. "Sie lassen ihre Spuren, ihre genauen Abbilder in der geistigen Grundlage der Welt zurück. Und wer durch die sichtbare Welt hindurch die Wahrnehmung zu den Unsichtbaren zu erheben vermag, der gelangt endlich dazu, etwas vor sich zu haben, was man mit einem gewaltigen geistigen Panorama vergleichen könnte, in dem alle vergangenen Vorgänge der Welt verzeichnet sind. Man kann diese unvergänglichen Spuren

alles Geistigen, die "Akasha-Chronik" nennen, indem man als Akasha-Wesenheit das Geistig-Bleibende des Weltgeschehens in Gegensatz zu den vergänglichen Formen des Geschehens bezeichnet." (Geheimwissenschaft S.106 f.)

Das Prinzip, das Steiner befolgt, kann auf die Formel gebracht werden: nicht der Mensch hat den Gedanken, sondern der Gedanke hat den Menschen. Der Mensch als Lebewesen im Zusammenhang seiner Ahnen und Nachkommen wird dadurch aufgelöst. Das Denken wird unmittelbar "schöpferisch". Wenn auch die Voraussetzungen für dieses Vorhergehen des Geistigen vor dem Leiblichen im philosophischen Idealismus zu finden sind, muss Steiners Philosophie des Geistes doch als etwas neues beurteilt werden. Zwischen Hegel und Steiner liegt die moderne Naturwissenschaft. Steiner ist nicht nur ein Epigone der idealistischen Freiheitsphilosophie, sondern er bildet die Philosophie des Geistes in einer bestimmten Weise weiter. Die Verkehrung entsteht dadurch, dass er an die Stelle der Vererbungslehre eine positive andere Lehre setzt, die im Spiritualismus konsequent bis zum Absurden ist.

Steiner übersieht die biologische Wirklichkeit nicht nur, sondern er verkehrt sie bewusst in ihr Gegenteil. Die Anthroposophie ist eines der konsequentesten anti-biologischen Systeme, die es gibt. Wenn dieses System lediglich in Schriften enthalten wäre, die nur einem kleinen Kreise von Lesern zugänglich sind, so brauchte man sich nicht darum zu kümmern. Allein die Karma-Lehre wurde in der Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft als ein unumstössliches Dogma angesehen, eine grosse Zahl von Mitgliedern fühlte sich auf sie verpflichtet. Das mir vorliegende Exemplar

der "Theosophie" vom Jahre 1922 gehört der 22. Auflage an (34. - 38. Tausend); das Exemplar der "Geheimwissenschaft im Umriss" vom Jahre 1925 stammt aus der 16.-20. Auflage. Die Propaganda für eine Lehre, die so aller biologischen Erkenntnis Hohn spricht, kann nicht geduldet werden. Die Bücher, die diese Lehre enthalten oder anwenden, sind zu verbieten.

Medizin und Sozialwissenschaften

Es ergibt sich aus dem Vorstehenden, dass Steiners Vorträge über medizinische Fragen derselben Behandlung verfallen müssen wie das Kurpfuschertum. Das gleiche gilt für Steiners "Sozialwissenschaft". Der Gedanke von der "Dreigliederung des sozialen Organismus" ist eine geradezu ideale Formel für das soziale Kurpfuschertum.

Eurythmie

In der Steinerschen "Eurythmie" stecken trotz vieler Überspitzungen und Verzerrungen gute Gedanken und gesunde Ansätze, die insbesondere für die Pädagogik fruchtbar werden können. Für ein Verbot für Vorträge über Eurythmie liegt kein Anlass vor.

Pädagogik

Die Erziehungswissenschaft ist das Gebiet, auf dem Steiner nach den mir vorliegenden gedruckten Zeugnissen - die Vorträge über Landwirtschaft waren mir nicht zugänglich - am meisten mit Glück gearbeitet hat. Seine Vortragszyklen über die Fragen der Erziehung sind im Zusammenhang mit dem von seinen Anhängern unternommenen praktischen Versuch der Waldorfschule in Stuttgart entstanden. Die beiden grundlegenden Zyklen wurden vor Lehrern

und Lehrerinnen zwischen dem 24. August und dem 5. September 1919 in Stuttgart gehalten: "Allgemeine Menschenkunde als Grundlage der Pädagogik" und: "Erziehungskunst, Methodisch-Didaktisches". Den in diesen Vorträgen entwickelten Gedanken muss eine hohe Bedeutung für die pädagogische Theorie und eine ausserordentliche Fruchtbarkeit für die pädagogische Praxis nachgerühmt werden.

Die Waldorfschule sollte nach dem Willen Steiners nicht als Schule der Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft aufgebaut werden. Es sollte vielmehr ein neuer Schultyp geschaffen werden, so wie er sich aus der Menschenkunde ergab, wie sie Steiner im Laufe der Zeit ausgebildet hatte. Durch die Einklammerung des anthroposophischen Elements war es möglich, dass die älteren Goetheschen Gedankenmotive des Steinerschen Denkens hier stärker hervortraten. Das Eigentümliche und Revolutionäre der Steinerschen Pädagogik besteht denn auch darin, dass hier der Mensch und die Schule nicht von "oben" her, von den sogenannten Kulturwerten oder von der Kulturtradition aus gesehen werden, sondern in durchaus Goethescher Weise von der Natur her. Das Kind wird als lebendiges, wachsendes, sich entfaltendes Wesen genommen. Die pädagogischen Grundsätze und Techniken werden aufgrund einer konkreten Anschauung von diesem Wachstum gewonnen, nicht aus der Kulturtradition abgeleitet. Das Kind wird nicht als ein kleiner Erwachsener aufgefasst oder als ein höchst entwicklungsfähiges Verstandeswesen, sondern als eine lebendige Wirklichkeit mit eigenen Trieben und Tendenzen, die man kennen muss, wenn man als Erzieher fördernd eingreifen will.

Nun ist es klar, dass sich die anthroposophische Zielsetzung auch aus der Erziehungstheorie nicht gänzlich fernhalten lässt. Zwar lässt sich die Steinersche Menschenkunde bis zu einem gewissen Grade von seiner Anthroposophie loslösen; aber niemals kann das vollständig geschehen. Festzustellen ist, dass Steiner den Karma-Gedanken zur Begründung seiner Pädagogik nicht verwendet hat. Aus der anthroposophischen Systematik ist lediglich die Dreigliederung des Menschen in Nerven-Sinnessystem, Gliedmassen-Stoffwechselsystem und in Atmungssystem übernommen, doch macht sich dieses Stück spekulativer Naturphilosophie nicht allzu störend bemerkbar. In der Einteilung der Wachstumsperioden des Kindes wird zwar der Zahnwechsel in einer ungewöhnlichen Weise hervorgehoben, doch stimmt die Einteilung im grossen (Zahnwechsel - Geschlechtsreife) als Haupteinschnittspunkte) mit der überlieferten überein. Auch der Anschluss also an die "Dreigliederung" macht die Steinersche Pädagogik noch nicht zu einer spezifisch anthroposophischen Lehre. Vielmehr ist es durchaus möglich und angebracht, die Menschenkunde und die Erziehungslehre, die in diesen Vorträgen enthalten sind, als etwas in sich ruhendes aufzufassen - als den ersten, kühnen Versuch, von einer naturphilosophischen Begründung des Menschenwesens ausgehend zum Problem der Erziehung vorzudringen. Innerhalb der grossen pädagogischen Literatur hat Steiner hier nur Jean Paul und Fröbel als einsame Vorgänger.

Auch im pädagogischen Sperrgebiet muss die Anthroposophie natürlich an der Stelle zum Vorschein kommen, wo es sich darum handelt, die Zielsetzung des pädagogischen Tuns zu bestimmen. Einmal kann nach den Grundvoraussetzungen der Anthroposophie diese Zielsetzung nur eine menschheitliche, nicht eine

rassisch-völkische sein. Zum zweiten lässt sich die pädagogische Aufgabe ohne bestimmte Voraussetzungen geschichtsphilosophischer Art nicht genauer darstellen. Die geschichtsphilosophische Grundvoraussetzung ist der Punkt, an dem sich die Waldorfschulpädagogik als abhängig von der Anthroposophie erweist. Diese Abhängigkeit greift notwendig durch den Geschichtsunterricht hindurch auf den Lehrplan der Schule über. Erst nach Abdichtung dieser Stelle kann die Waldorfschul-Pädagogik von uns gewürdigt werden.

Die Menschheit stellt sich in verschiedenen Entwicklungs-epochen, die sie durchlebt, verschiedene Aufgaben. Nach der "Geheimwissenschaft" stehen wir heute in der "fünften nachatlantischen Entwicklungsepoche". Unsere pädagogische Aufgabe unterscheidet sich dementsprechend von den Aufgaben, die sich die Menschheit bisher gestellt hat. Bisher haben die Menschen, selbst wenn sie mit dem allerbesten Willen pädagogisch gearbeitet haben, noch im Sinne der alten Erziehung gearbeitet, also noch im Sinne der vierten nachatlantischen Entwicklungsepoche. Das neue Erziehungssystem Steiners ist bezogen auf einen neuen Menschen. (Allg. Menschenkunde als Grundl.d.Päd. S.2 ff.)

Es ist klar, dass diese allgemeine Zielsetzung der Waldorfschul-Pädagogik einen hohen Enthusiasmus einhauchen konnte. Es ist ebenso klar, dass jemand, der nicht Anthroposoph ist, sich mit nachatlantischen Entwicklungsepochen (die letzte hat nach Steiner im 15. Jahrhundert begonnen) nicht abzugeben vermag. Die Beschäftigung mit Steiners Pädagogik ist nur dann sinnvoll, wenn man ausschliesslich die naturphilosophisch-menschenkundliche Aufgabe und die allgemeinen pädagogischen Grundsätze ins Auge fasst.

Die Bedeutung der Waldorfschul-Pädagogik ist darin zu suchen, dass hier zum ersten Male in der Theorie und in der Praxis zugleich das überkommene Schulsystem der Aufklärung mit seinem Intellektualismus von einem neuen Grundansatz aus überwunden wird. Steiner entwirft den Plan einer Schule, der nicht vom Verstande und verstandesmäßiger Aufklärung her aufgebaut ist, sondern von Gefühl, Phantasie und Willen her. Die Schule der Aufklärung hat das Erlernen der Wissenschaften zum Vorbild; sie nimmt den Menschen daher im wesentlichen als ein intellektuell verstehendes und aufnehmendes Kopf-Subjekt. Die Waldorfschule dagegen ist nicht nach dem Prozess des wissenschaftlichen Lernens, sondern nach dem Vorgang des künstlerischen Gestaltens ausgerichtet. Steiner sieht richtig, dass die Jugendepoche des Menschen in ihren verschiedenen Phasen etwas unersetzliches ist, dass der Mensch in dieser Epoche Dinge vermag, die er später nicht mehr kann, und dass es für seine Haltung im Leben entscheidend ist, wie weit er die Möglichkeiten seines eigenen Kindseins erlebt und verwirklicht hat. Der Mensch muss als Kind wirklich Kind sein, damit er als Erwachsener ganz das werden kann, was er der Anlage nach ist. Als Kind aber ist der Mensch in einer Weise genial, d.h. schöpferisch, wie er es sich im späteren Leben in den meisten Fällen nicht mehr vorstellen kann. Auf diese Genialität des Kindes bezieht sich Steiner in seinem pädagogischen Entwurf überall mit der grössten Feinfühligkeit. Einzelne Sonderbarkeiten, wie das Stricken der Knaben und seine Begründung, ändern nichts daran, dass hier einmal von der Überwindung des Intellektualismus nicht bloss geredet wird.

Ausser den genannten Vortragszyklen sind die vierzehn Vorträge von Wichtigkeit, die Steiner in Ilkley 1923 gehalten hat. ("Gegenwärtiges Geistesleben und Erziehung" 1927) Hier wird als das Thema der neuen Pädagogik bezeichnet: unsere Gedanken müssen wiederum Gebärden werden. (S.57) Die einleitenden Vorträge geben einen Einblick in die teils herkömmlichen, teils sonderbaren Ansichten Steiners über den Orient, das Griechentum und das Mittelalter.

Die übrigen pädagogischen Veröffentlichungen sind, mit Ausnahme der zehn Vorträge in Arnheim (Holland) nicht von Bedeutung. Hervorzuheben ist das Referat über einen Lehrerkurs im Goetheamum 1921, das Albert Steffen erstattet hat. (Stuttgart 1922).

Gutachten über die Waldorfschulen.

(Die Ziffern in Klammern beziehen sich auf den Lehrplan der freien Waldorfschulen, bearbeitet von Caroline von Heydebrand. Dieser Lehrplan stammt von Rudolf Steiner selbst).

Einleitung.

Der Lehrplan und die Praxis der Waldorfschulen beruhen auf der Lehre von der Dreigliederung des Menschen in Leib, Seele und Geist. Das Ziel der Erziehung ist der Geistmensch, die "Verwirklichung des wahren Menschenbildes" (S.44). "In jeder Schule, die mit anthroposophischer Pädagogik arbeitet, waltet bestimmend das ewige Bild des wahren Menschenwesens, als Urbild wirksam, aber in den Einzelheiten der Ausformung, der Erziehungskunst sich wandelnd, je nachdem, ob diese Schule z.B. in Deutschland, Holland, England, der Schweiz usw. steht" (S.4).- "Die Waldorfschulpädagogik beruht auf einer geistmässigen Erkenntnis des Menschen, und sie wird Menschen in die Welt hinausschicken, die verstehen werden, was es heisst, wahrhaft Mensch zu sein und den heiligen Angelegenheiten der Menschen zu dienen" (S.44 f.).

Es steht nur scheinbar im Widerspruch zu dieser Zielsetzung, wenn es in der Denkschrift an den Stellvertreter des Führers heisst: "Ziel und Können der Waldorfschulen (Rudolf-Steiner-Schulen) ist: die Jugendkräfte im Kinde für das Leben zu erhalten". Zweifellos ist mit diesem Satze das nächste Ziel der Waldorfschulen richtig angegeben. Das unmittelbare Ziel dieser Schulen ist in der Tat, die Leibes-, Seelen- und Willenskräfte des Kindes so zu entwickeln, dass durch keine von aussen herangetragene Aufgabe eine Beschränkung oder Verkümmern der eigentümlichen kindlichen Genialität eintritt. Insbesondere soll einer zu frühen Entfaltung des Intellekts vorgebeugt werden, die den plastisch bildenden Kräften Schaden zufügt. Das Kind soll ganz Kind sein und soll dadurch in den Stand gesetzt werden, die Genialität der

Kindheit mit hinüberzunehmen in das spätere Leben.

Nach der Lehre von der Dreigliederung ist diese Erhaltung der Jugendkräfte die Voraussetzung dafür, dass auf einer bestimmten Stufe der Entwicklung der Mensch als Geistwesen geboren wird. Die Pädagogik der Waldorfschulen hat das Ziel, die Geburt des Geistmenschen vorzubereiten. Daher beruht sie auf einer "geistgemässen Erkenntnis des Menschen".

Wenn die Denkschrift jedoch ferner sagt: "Der weltanschauliche Inhalt der Anthroposophie soll in den Schulen in keiner Weise gelehrt werden. Sie sind keine Weltanschauungsschulen. Aber die Menschenkunde Rudolf Steiners ist eine Handhabe für die Praxis" - so ist dies nur zum Teil richtig. Der weltanschauliche Inhalt der Anthroposophie wird in den Schulen in der Tat nicht direkt gelehrt, wenn er auch die Gegenstände des Unterrichts an vielen Stellen tiefgehend beeinflusst. Wichtiger als diese Beeinflussung ist aber, dass die Menschenkunde Rudolf Steiners, die den Lehrplan der Schulen bestimmt, von der anthroposophischen Weltanschauung keineswegs losgelöst ist. Der Lehrplan ist so angelegt, dass er die Geburt des Geistmenschen vorbereitet; er ist daher von dem Ziel des Geistmenschen her weltanschaulich bestimmt. Es hiesse unsachgemäss verfahren, wenn wir die Menschenkunde der Waldorfschulen, losgelöst von ihrer Gipfelung im Begriff des Geistmenschen betrachten wollten. Unsere Aufgabe wird vielmehr sein, diesen Horizont im Lehrplan der Waldorfschulen selbst sichtbar zu machen, und so den weltanschaulichen Gegensatz zwischen der Menschenkunde Rudolf Steiners und der nationalsozialistischen Menschenkunde zu erweisen.

In der Menschenkunde, die der Methode der Waldorfschulen zugrunde liegt, sind tiefe und richtige Einsichten enthalten, die Rudolf Steiner zum grössten Teile seinem ausserst fruchtbaren Studium der naturwissenschaftlichen Schriften Goethes verdankt. Die nationalsozialistische Menschenkunde kann nur von der R a s s e her entworfen werden. Insofern Rasse eine N a t u r w i r k l i c h k e i t ist, scheint schon im Ansatzpunkt eine wesentliche Übereinstimmung zwischen der

Menschenkunde des Nationalsozialismus und der Rudolf Steiners vorzuliegen. Denn Steiner geht ja von den bildenden Kräften der wirkenden Natur aus und gründet die Schulerziehung auf die Entwicklung der natürlichen Kräfte. Insofern könnte man seine Pädagogik "biologisch" fundiert nennen. Würde man jedoch versuchen, den Begriff der Rasse in unserem Sinne in diese biologische Fundierung einzuführen, dann würde er die Menschenkunde Steiners zersprengen. Denn der Nationalsozialismus geht zwar von der Wirklichkeit des Blutes aus, aber zugleich auch von den U n t e r s c h i e d e n, die zwischen Menschengruppen verschiedenen Blutes bestehen. Diese Unterschiede erfassen wir nicht nur biologisch-anthropologisch, sondern vor allem auch g e s c h i c h t l i c h, indem wir uns dem zuwenden, was Menschen verschiedenen Blutursprungs geschaffen und gestaltet haben; den Staaten, Kunstwerken, Erfindungen, wissenschaftlichen Systemen usw. Zu diesem von der Erkenntnis der rassistischen Wirklichkeit geleiteten g e s c h i c h t l i c h e n D e n k e n gibt es von der Menschenkunde Steiners her keinen Zugang. Der Platz, den in unserem Weltbilde der von rassistischen Kräften bestimmte geschichtlich gestaltende Mensch einnimmt, ist in der Weltanschauung Rudolf Steiners besetzt durch den über aller Geschichte thronendem Geistmenschen. Das Denken Rudolf Steiners ist nicht biologisch-rassistisch, sondern b i o l o g i s c h - k o s m i s c h. Es ist wesentlich, nicht nur zufällig g e s c h i c h t s f e i n d l i c h. Noch bevor wir den Lehrplan der Waldorfschulen für den Geschichtsunterricht betrachten; müssen wir also feststellen, dass nach der Menschenkunde Steiners nur von einer allgemeinen Menschheitsentwicklung und einer allgemeinen "Kultur"geschichte die Rede sein kann. Die grossen geschichtlichen Wirklichkeiten, die wir V ö l k e r nennen, kommen in der Anthropologie Steiners nicht vor und können darin nicht vorkommen.

Die Erziehungstheorie Steiners kann daher den Begriff der völkischen Gemeinschaft nicht enthalten. Es nützt nichts, dass die tatsächlich bestehenden kulturellen Verschiedenheiten der Nationen im Unterricht berücksichtigt werden. Entscheidend ist, ob die Volkgemeinschaft Ausgangspunkt und Ziel der

Ersiehung ist. Eine derartige Zielsetzung kann jedoch von einem Erzieher im Sinne Rudolf Steiners aber immer nur als eine Einschränkung des wirklichen Ziels der Erziehung angesehen werden. Die Gemeinschaft im Sinne Rudolf Steiners ist eine Gemeinschaft der Geister. Daher tritt notwendig die Menschheit an die Stelle, wo nach der nationalsozialistischen Weltanschauung das Volk steht.

Das Volk ist eine geschichtliche Einheit. Mit der Feststellung des ungeschichtlichen Charakters der Steinerschen Menschenkunde ist daher die eigentliche Schwäche derselben gekennzeichnet. Es muss erwähnt werden, dass dieser schwächste Punkt des Steinerschen Denkens dem stärksten Punkte dieses Denkens genau gegenüberliegt. Überschbare Erfolge hat dieses Denken bisher nur auf jenem Gebiete gezeitigt, von dem Steiner als Schüler des Naturforschers Goethe ausgegangen ist (biologisch-dynamische Wirtschaftsweise). Wenn dieses Denken, das ausschliesslich an dem stillen Werden und Wachsen der Natur sich geschult hat, auf das Gebiet der geschichtlichen Gestaltung und Kämpfe übergreift, wie es bei einer Erziehungstheorie unvermeidlich ist, muss es in bestimmten Beziehungen notwendig scheitern.

I.

Der Lehrplan der Waldorfschulen für den Geschichtsunterricht gibt entsprechend der allgemeinen Zielsetzungen: der geschichtliche Unterricht habe zu zeigen, "wie Geist lebt in dem Leben der Geschichte" (S.6). Und zwar hat sich dieser Geist zuerst im Morgenlande offenbart. Die Geschichten des Alten Testaments geben daher den Stoff zum Erzählen und Nacherzählen im 3. Schuljahr und zugleich den allerersten Beginn der Welt- und Kulturgeschichte für das Kind (S.14). Die Sagen der germanischen Mythologie und Heldenzeit treten im 4. Schuljahr im deutschsprachlichen Unterricht auf, jedoch nur unter der Zielsetzung einer plastischen Empfindung und Gliederung der Muttersprache, also ausserhalb des geschichtlichen Zusammenhangs. Dagegen wird in der Heimatkunde auf das "historische Werden" (z.B. beim Obstbau und Weinbau) Wert gelegt.

Ein eigener Geschichtsunterricht tritt erst im 5. Schuljahr auf. Hier soll schon das Wesen der einzelnen Kulturepochen anschaulich und begreiflich gemacht werden. "Geschichte und Kultur der morgenländischen Völker und der Griechen geben Gelegenheit, das Kind mit den ersten wirklichen geschichtlichen Begriffen bekanntzumachen" (S.19). Die Eigentümlichkeit Steiners, entgegen jeder rabbinischen Erkenntnis die Geschichte des Morgenlandes und der Griechen zusammensubehandeln, ist in den Lehrplan der Waldorfschulen unverändert übergegangen. Das alte Schema: Babylon, Jerusalem, Rom schimmert klar erkennbar durch, im 6. Schuljahr wird die Geschichte der Römer behandelt, und zugleich sollen die Nachwirkungen der griechisch-römischen Kulturepoche bis zum Beginn des 15. Jahrhunderts verfolgt werden. Die germanischen Völker und der Norden kommen in geschichtlichem Zusammenhang nicht vor. Zwar treten im deutschsprachlichen Unterricht der 10. Klasse das Nibelungenlied und die Gudrundichtung zusammen mit der Edda auf, allein nur, um den Schüler ein "wichtiges Menschheitsproblem" erleben zu lassen. "Die Schüler erleben an diesen drei Dichtungen den Menschheitsübergang von der unindividuellen Blutsverwandtenliebe zur individuellen Liebe, von der Darstellung übermenschlicher Wesen zu der vom Erdmensch, vom Heidnischen zum Christlichen" (S.35). Es berührt eigenartig, dass für die Darstellung dieses Übergangs gerade Edda, Nibelungenlied und Gudrundichtung gewählt werden, und es kann nicht überzeugen, wenn in einem Zusammenhang, der die Sippe herabsetzt ("unindividuelle Blutsverwandtenliebe") von der Charakterisierung der Entwicklung des "eigenen Volkes" gesprochen wird. Was bedeutet "Entwicklung des eigenen Volkes", wenn als Folge der morgenländischen Orientierung Steiners die germanische Zeit nicht behandelt werden kann, sondern an die Literaturgeschichte angehängt werden muss ?

Auf die Darstellung der europäischen und der aussereuropäischen Verhältnisse vom Beginn des 15. bis zum Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts, des Zeitalters der Entdeckungen und Erfindungen und des naturwissenschaftlichen Aufschwunges, wird im 7. Schuljahr die grösste Sorgfalt verwendet. Das

Leben der neueren Menschheit zieht in dieser Zeit herauf. (S.25) Im 8. Schuljahr wird der Geschichtsunterricht bis zur Gegenwart fortgeführt. In der Darstellung der Geschichte der Neuzeit berücksichtigt man vor allem das Kulturgegeschichtliche, macht anschaulich, wie die Erfindung der Dampfmaschine, des mechanischen Webstuhls usw. die Erde umgestaltet haben. (S.28) Es kommt nicht darauf an, zu zeigen, wie weit das deutsche Volk oder die nordische Rasse an diesen Schöpfungen beteiligt gewesen ist, sondern das Ziel dieser "Kulturgegeschichte" ist von einer anderen Seite her weltanschaulich bestimmt. Im 9. Schuljahr löst sich der Geschichtsunterricht von der Darstellung des Tatsächlichen. "Er schildert die Bewußtseins-erweiterung der neueren Menschheit und die Erweiterung ihres Gesichtskreises durch Astronomie und Geographie. Der Schüler lernt das Lesen der Zeitepoche, in die er hineingeboren ist, verstehen." Insbesondere wird noch das "eigenartige Ineinanderfluten der Völker im 19. Jahrhundert" besprochen. (S.32) Diese etwas unbestimmt klingenden Andeutungen haben ihren guten Sinn, wie sich in der Anweisung für den Literatur- und Geschichtsunterricht im 11. Schuljahr zeigt. Das 19. Jahrhundert wird hier als die Zusammenfassung der vorhergehenden dargestellt, und es wird aufgewiesen, "wie altüberliefertes spirituelles am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts versickert und wie alle Traditionen in einen dünnen Faden auslaufen." (S.40) Das heißt also: das 19. Jahrhundert wird als ein Zeitalter des Verfalls in spiritueller Hinsicht dargestellt, damit die Erscheinungen Rudolf Steiners und seiner die Menschheit erlösenden Anthroposophie vom Schüler richtig gewürdigt werden kann.

Die aller rassistischen Betrachtung des geschichtlichen Werdens entgegengesetzte Denkweise Steiners wird aus den Bemerkungen über den Geschichtsunterricht im 12. Schuljahr noch einmal völlig deutlich. Hier wird die Theorie der Kulturkreislehre ("ein" Altertum, "ein" Mittelalter, "eine" Neuzeit) übernommen, und es wird gesagt, daß unser Altertum (germanische Mythologie) da liege, wo wir das sogenannte Mittelalter beginnen lassen. (S.46) Es widerspricht aller geschichtlichen Erkenntnis, das germanische Altertum irgendwie mit dem Mittelalter zusammenzuwerfen.

Wenn schließlich der Endpunkt des gesamten Geschichtsunterrichts mit den Worten charakterisiert wird: man bespricht

die ganze Geschichte vom Standpunkte der gegenwärtigen Entwicklung und gibt einen Ausblick auf die sich schon offenbarenden Lebensgestaltungen, so steht eines fest: diese "Zukunftsgestaltungen" haben mit der Zukunft des deutschen Volkes, wie sie der Führer sich vorstellt, nichts gemein.

X

Der Geschichtsunterricht steht zusammen mit dem Deutschunterricht unter den weltanschaulich bedeutsamen Fächern an erster Stelle. Ein Geschichtsunterricht, dessen zentraler Sittelpunkt nicht die deutsche Volkwerdung ist, macht jeden Lehrplan, er mag im übrigen sein, wie er wolle, für uns untragbar. Der Steinersche Geschichtslehrplan, der vom Werden der europäischen Nationalstaaten überhaupt nichts weiß, gehört restlos in jene Gedankenwelt, die vom Nationalsozialismus verachtet worden ist.

Der Charakter des Geschichtsunterrichts ist unheilvoll verbunden mit dem Charakter und der Haltung, die in einer Schule als Erziehungsziele aufgestellt werden. Einen Geschichtsunterricht, der alles politische Geschehen und staatliche Werden übergeht, der die weltgeschichtlichen Kämpfe der Rassen und Völker um die Behauptung ihrer Höchstwerte nicht kennen will, ist gar kein wirklicher Geschichtsunterricht, und die Haltung, die diesem Pseudo-Geschichtsunterricht entspricht, kann nur die eines gänzlich unpolitischen und unkämpferischen Menschen sein. In Schulen mit einem solchen Geschichtsunterricht kann ein kämpferisch-soldatischer Typus nicht herangezogen werden. Der Lehrer trägt hier vielmehr priesterliche Züge, und die Gemeinschaft hat etwas von einer Tempelgemeinschaft an sich. Wenn die Verteidiger der Waldorf-Schulen auf ihren "Sozialismus" hinweisen und von einer Überwindung des Individualismus sprechen, dann hätte auch eine Brüdergemeinde das Recht, ihren Sozialismus mit dem Sozialismus der Tat in unserem Sinne zu

vergleichen und ihre Überwindung des Individualismus mit der nationalsozialistischen in Parallele zu setzen.

II.

Ganz anders, als mit der Behauptung der Überwindung des Individualismus steht es mit der Behauptung des "Intellektualismus". In dieser Hinsicht stellen die Waldorfschulen einen eigenartigen und unserer Beachtung würdigen Versuch dar, der in dieser Weise in der gesamten neueren Schulgeschichte einzig ist. Durch den Nationalsozialismus ist der Intellektualismus ebenso gründlich überwunden worden wie der Individualismus. Allein es ist eine allgemein bekannte Tatsache, daß aller Bemühungen ungeachtet das Unterrichtssystem unserer Schulen im wesentlichen noch das alte bisher geblieben ist. Der Intellektualismus der Aufklärungsepoche, der unser Schulsystem geschaffen hat, kann durch die Einführung neuer Fächer wie Vorgeschichte und Rassenkunde nicht überwunden werden. Eine Reform unseres Unterrichtssystems von Grund auf ist noch von keiner Seite unternommen worden. Unter diesem Gesichtspunkt kommt dem Lehrplan und der Praxis der Waldorfschulen eine hohe Bedeutung zu. In m e t h o - d i s c h e r H i n s i c h t müssen wir in dem Steinerschen Lehrplan das erste durchgebildete, nicht-intellektualistische Unterrichtssystem anerkennen. Dieser Lehrplan bricht wirklich mit dem Prinzip der bloßen Schulung des Kopfes und der Beeinflussung des Willens auf dem Wege über den Intellekt. Es wird hier in das alte Unterrichtssystem nicht nur die Körpererziehung oder das "Musische" oder die künstlerische Bildung eingefügt, sondern es ist ein n e u e r A u s g a n g s p u n k t gewonnen. Lehrplan und Praxis der Waldorfschulen sind nicht im wissenschaftlichen, sondern im k ü n s t l e r i s c h e n Geiste entworfen und durchgeführt. Hier wird von einem Erleben ausgegangen, das zugleich leiblich und seelisch ist. Der Rhythmus der lebendigen Einheit, die jeder Mensch ist, wird nicht durch eine zu schnelle Entwicklung des Intellekts gestört, sondern durch Übungen entwickelt. Das Gefühls- und Phantasieleben des

Kindes findet reiche Gelegenheit zur Entfaltung. Man hat auf die Entwicklungsphasen, die der werdende Mensch durchläuft, sorgfältig acht und macht den Versuch, die Ausbildung des Willens nicht über den Kopf, sondern über die natürlich-künstlerische Entfaltung des Elementar-Menschlichen zu erreichen. Grundsatz ist, daß das Handeln und Anschauen stets dem Begreifen vorhergehen müsse.

Wir wollen nicht bei den Nachteilen eines ersten folgerichtig durchgeführten Versuchs verweilen. Daß bei einem solchen System im Rechnen und im Unterricht der fremden Sprachen leistungsmäßig nicht so viel erreicht werden kann wie in intellektualistischen System, ist begreiflich. Die Kritiker der Waldorfschulen sagen übereinstimmend aus, daß die Leistungen in dieser Hinsicht u n t e r dem Niveau unserer öffentlichen Schulen liegen. Dieser Fehler könnte bis zu einem gewissen Grade als Anfangsfehler angesehen werden und korrigierbar sein. Von einzelnen Mätzchen, z.B. im Rechenunterricht, (S.10) soll hier abgesehen werden. Es soll auch nur im Vorbeigehen darauf hingewiesen werden, daß der Unterricht im Englischen in der Volksschule von Marie Duve (die nicht aus der Waldorfpädagogik hervorgegangen ist) im Sinne des Erlebnisprinzips viel besser entwickelt wurde als von den Pädagogen der Waldorfschulen. Schlimmer ist es schon, daß der Physikunterricht dogmatisch auf die Naturwissenschaft Goethes festgelegt ist und die Physik Newtons weitgehend ignoriert, was insbesondere bei der Behandlung der Mechanik zum Vorschein kommt. Der einseitige Goetheanismus hat zur Folge, daß das Programm Steiners, die Waldorfschulen in die "volle Wirklichkeit des Lebens, so wie es heute ist", (S.7) hineinzustellen, nicht durchgeführt werden kann. Allein auch dieser Fehler wäre zu korrigieren. Es soll jetzt von den vermeidbaren Mängeln abgesehen und nur das Positive der allgemeinen Unterrichtsmethodik kurz angegeben werden.

Grundlegend in dieser Hinsicht ist die Pflege der sogenannten E u r h y t h i e . Zum Unterschiede von allem Turnen und aller Gymnastik geht die Eurhythmie aus von der elementaren Erscheinung der Sprache (in den Vokalen und Konsonanten). Sie löst das Wort von der einseitigen Verknüpfung mit dem Sinn

^{A. J.}
Gnā bindet den Laut an die einfache und ursprüngliche Gebärde. Mag die Durchführung manchmal etwas spielerisch sein - der Grundgedanke ist zweifellos groß und richtig und geeignet zu methodischer Durchführung. Durch die Wiedergewinnung der **S p r a c h e** von ihren elementaren Untergründen her wird der allzu schnellen Intellektualisierung am gründlichsten entgegengewirkt. Es ist von diesem Ansatz aus möglich, das Kind zu einem rhythmischen Verständnis auch der **P r o s a** zu bringen, die in der Schule der Aufklärung mit ihrer einseitigen Bevorzugung des "Gedichts" zum Schaden unserer Kultur so sehr vernachlässigt worden ist.

Das künstlerische Element, das in Eurhythmie-Unterricht steckt, wird durch die Waldorfpädagogik auf alle anderen Fächer übertragen. Es kann hier nicht untersucht werden, wie weit das in einzelnen gelungen ist. Eine gewisse Berechtigung kann diesen Versuch jedenfalls nicht abgesprochen werden. Der Lehrplan Rudolf Steiners gibt sich alle Mühe, auch dem intellektuellen Element (z. B. der Grammatik) gerecht zu werden. Sollte einmal das Prinzip der Waldorfschule frei von den Bindungen der Weltanschauung Rudolf Steiners neu durchgeführt werden, dann ließen sich wohl auch die Anforderungen in intellektualistischer Hinsicht steigern, ohne daß der künstlerische Grundzug des Unterrichts verloren ging.

■

In der vorliegenden Gestalt kann der Lehrplan der Waldorfschulen nicht in Geltung bleiben. Die schon verfügte Aufnahme-sperre muß daher aufrecht erhalten werden.

Mit Rücksicht auf die großen Vorzüge der Waldorfpädagogik ist zu erwägen, ob es möglich wäre, staatliche Versuchsschulen unter Zugrundelegung eines modifizierten Waldorf-Lehrplans aufzubauen.

Die Errichtung solcher Versuchsschulen, für die sich der Name **G o e t h e - S c h u l e n** empfehlen würde, könnte nur unter der Mitwirkung erprobter Lehrkräfte der alten Waldorfschulen erfolgen. Es ist anzunehmen, daß sich in

diesem Falle die Lehrer der Waldorfschulen in zwei Gruppen trennen würden. Die völlige Umgestaltung, die der Lehrplan in bezug auf den Unterricht in der Geschichte erfahren müßte, würde den Probiertesten abgeben. Verantwortlich würden diejenigen ehemaligen Lehrer der Waldorfschulen, die sich der nationalsozialistischen Geschichtsauffassung nicht anschließen können, eine Stelle an einer Rudolf-Steiner-Schule im Auslande suchen. Diejenigen Lehrer und Lehrerinnen jedoch, die sich mit ganzen Herzen zu der Geschichtsauffassung des Nationalsozialismus zu bekennen vermöchten, würden wir als Kämpfer für die Gestaltung einer neuen deutschen Schule in unseren Reihen begrüßen dürfen.

APPENDIX M



APPENDIX N



APPENDIX O

