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1 Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy -A Complex Relationship

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5 **Abstract**

6 Waldorf education (Steiner e ducation) is one of the most well-established and largest
7 alternative education approaches in the world. This educational approach was created out of
8 the Anthroposophical worldview founded by Rudolf Steiner and relies on the teachings of
9 Anthroposophy. However, the relationship between the educational practice in Waldorf
10 kindergartens and schools and the worldview behind it is complex and multi-faceted, both
11 from the internal point of view of those who work from within Waldorf education and from
12 the critical point of view of external researchers. Indeed, Waldorf education has been criticized
13 and attacked in many ways over the years, particularly for these reasons. In this article, I shall
14 attempt to throw l ight on this connection and explain it from different aspects. First, I shall
15 briefly present Rudolf Steiner’s life path and teachings, i.e. the anthroposophical worldview,
16 and then I shall show how Steiner, the founder of Waldorf education, viewed the connection
17 between Anthroposophy and Waldorf education. Subsequently, I shall explicate why and how
18 this connection has been subject to criticism from various sides. Finally, I shall present two
19 ways that try to elucidate this connection and justify it before its critics.

20

21 *Index terms*— waldorf education, rudolf steiner, anthroposophy, steiner education, ideology and education.22 **1 I. Introduction**

23 aldorf education ??Steiner education) is one of the most well-established and largest alternative education
24 approaches in the world. This educational approach was created out of the Anthroposophical worldview
25 founded by Rudolf Steiner and relies on the teachings of Anthroposophy. However, the relationship between
26 the educational practice in Waldorf kindergartens and schools and the worldview behind it is complex and multi-
27 faceted, both from the internal point of view of those who work from within Waldorf education and from the
28 critical point of view of external researchers. Indeed, Waldorf education has been criticized and attacked in many
29 ways over the years, particularly for these reasons.

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32 shall show how Steiner, the founder of Waldorf education, viewed the connection between Anthroposophy and
33 Waldorf education. Subsequently, I shall explicate why and how this connection has been subject to criticism
34 from various sides. Finally, I shall present two ways that try to elucidate this connection and justify it before its
35 critics. I shall also endeavor to demonstrate the dangers and challenges that stand before the Waldorf education
36 movement, with regard to the fact that it is based on the Anthroposophical worldview.

37 **2 II. Steiner -Anthroposophy -Waldorf Education**

38 Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), scientist, philosopher, author and mystic (Barnes, 1995; Hemleben, 1984; ??teiner,
39 1986) founded his teaching of "Anthroposophy" in the beginning of the 20 th Century (Steiner, 1971; 1972; Zander,
40 2007). After passing through the customary academic training in his time -a training in Natural Sciences and
41 a doctorate in Philosophy -and after working for several years in established cultural and academic settings
42 (as a journalist, lecturer, literary critic, and scientific editor), he joined the Theosophical movement in the
43 beginning of the 20 th century, and then, after a while, became the head of the German Theosophical Society.

4 III. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN WALDORF EDUCATION AND ANTHROPOSOPHY

44 In 1912, following disputes with the heads of the Theosophic Society, he decided to leave it and founded the
45 Anthroposophical movement (Hemleben, 1984; Steiner, 1986, chapter 31).

46 Over the years, until his death in 1925, Steiner wrote numerous books and articles and gave thousands of
47 lectures in many countries in Europe on various Anthroposophical topics (Hemleben, 1984). Spreading the
48 knowledge from a source he termed "the supersensible world" or "the spiritual world" (Steiner, 1971; Steiner, 1973)
49 became his mission in life. He devoted the last years of his life to what he saw as the imbuing of European
50 culture with various spiritual impulses out of Anthroposophy. Steiner created, through lectures, articles, and
51 working with people from a variety of fields the basis for creating art, medicine, agriculture, social movement,
52 science, special education, and education based on Anthroposophy (Zander, 2007; Lachman, 2007).

53 In his writings, Steiner claimed that only through spiritual development, and the creation of what he called
54 "organs of spiritual perception" (Steiner, 1947) is it possible to truly know the human being and the world.

55 According to him, the world that one's ordinary consciousness is aware of is only a minuscule part of a much
56 larger world, which harbors the answers to the deeper questions of human existence. Steiner did not see his
57 teaching as being contradictory to the scientific paradigm and therefore called it "Spiritual science" (German:
58 Geisteswissenschaft). Steiner believed that "Spiritual Science" continues the scientific paradigm that developed
59 in the West from the 15th-16th Centuries onward but expands to other areas of life (Steiner, 1972).

60 According to Steiner, Anthroposophy does not differ from conventional science in its methods of inquiry -only
61 in the objects of its inquiry: while natural science explores everything perceptible to our senses, Anthroposophical
62 research delves into that which is hidden from our eyes and the other external senses (ibid). Steiner's expansion
63 of natural scientific methods to the transcendental realm was not popular in his time and nowadays has many
64 critics as well (Ullrich, 2015; Zander, 2007). Later on, we shall see that in the field of education, too, this very
65 point occupies a central position in the dispute between Steiner and his followers and various researchers.

66 Waldorf Education is based mainly on Steiner's books, lectures, and research, over several years during which
67 he was director of the first Waldorf school (Steiner, 1975), as well as on the works of those who followed in his
68 tracks, who work in this field and research it to this very day. This educational path can be characterized by the
69 following principles:

70 Application of developmental thought: Waldorf education is based on developmental psychology that stems
71 from Steiner's spiritual research (Steiner, 1975b; 1980). At its foundations, we find the division of childhood into
72 three periods of six to seven years each (from birth to age 6-7, from age 6-7 to age 13-14, and from age 13-14 to
73 age [20][21]. In each of these periods, educational efforts are directed toward cultivating different qualities, such
74 as activity, the senses, play, and movement in the first one; art and aesthetics, stories, and working with soul
75 moods in the second; and in the third one abstract thinking, professional handwork in the workshops and various
76 crafts, and involvement in the community (Easton, 1997; Edmunds, 2004; Steiner, 1975b).

77 3 A holistic view of the child and educational processes:

78 In his educational writings, Steiner wrote again and again about educating and teaching from the totality of the
79 human being (Steiner, 1983). He is referring to a holistic multi-faceted view, of teaching processes, education, and
80 supporting children. This holistic view is expressed in many characteristics of Waldorf schools (Easton, 1997).
81 These characteristics include, amongst others, a balance between intellectual, artistic, and physical areas; the fact
82 that each pupil goes through all areas and subjects until the end of school, and is educated through many varied
83 fields of activity and learning, without choice or specialization (not even in high school); if possible, combining all
84 age groups within the same campus, from kindergarten till class 12; and including special education pupils in the
85 schools, as an essential part of the human educational landscape that every child should meet (Edmunds, 2004;
86 Steiner, 2017). The importance of artistic experience in every teaching and educational process: The term
87 "art of education" appears many times in Steiner's lectures and educational writings. He referred from various
88 angles to the crucial role of art and artistic processes in the school. Waldorf schools make use of art as one of
89 the most important tools in several ways -by positioning art as an important field of study in itself; by using
90 artistic means as a significant methodical tool in every field of study; and through an aesthetic approach to the
91 school's interior and its external environment (Steiner, 1975b; Edmunds, 2004). Joint management -a teachers'
92 republic: From its very beginning, the Waldorf movement placed at the center of its educational work the ideal
93 of "republican management" -a management method that is not hierarchical but collaborative, one that gives
94 every teacher autonomy and the ability to influence. Of course, this tendency is applied differently in different
95 countries, but it can be found today in almost every educational capacity inspired by Anthroposophy (Leber,
96 1991).

97 4 III. The Connection between Waldorf Education and Anthro- 98 posophy

99 Waldorf education was created, developed, and designed from the Anthroposophical worldview. Steiner wrote
100 and lectured about the possibility that Anthroposophy will inspire education already in the first years of the 20
101 th century, over a decade before the first Waldorf school was established, when he still taught and lectured as
102 part of the Theosophical Society:

103 An anthroposophical insight into the being of man must provide the most fruitful and the most practical means
104 for the solution of the urgent questions of modern life. In the following pages we shall endeavor to prove this for
105 one particular question -the question of Education. ??Steiner, 1965, p. 14).

106 The first school was founded in 1919 by his student, Emil Molt, who explicitly requested Steiner to
107 create an educational framework based on anthroposophical knowledge (Barnes, 1995;Richter, 2006). Steiner
108 himself, in many lectures and teachers' conferences, while he was director of the first school, emphasized the
109 Anthroposophical basis for the kind of educational practice he wanted to establish, and the importance of the
110 deeper study of Anthroposophy by teachers for their work (Steiner, 1975(Steiner, , 1980(Steiner, , 1983)).

111 The connection between the Anthroposophical worldview and Waldorf education manifests in Steiner's spiritual
112 conception of the child's being, and the recognition that in every girl and boy, there dwells an individual, original
113 and unique spiritual being. By continually begging educators to work from what he called the "Anthroposophical
114 knowledge of man" as a source of their educational work (Steiner, 1980; ??oldshmidt, 2017); to direct their
115 attention to the question of Karma and repeated lives, which is a significant component of Anthroposophical
116 knowledge ??Goldshmidt, 2017); in the holistic approach of Waldorf Education; in its developmental emphasis;
117 in placing artistic creation at the center of teaching processes; and in cultivating feelings of reverence among
118 pupils, until puberty (ibid).

119 Ullrich summarizes this deep connection in the following words:

120 The inevitable conclusion is that Anthroposophy provides the master key to understanding the whole structure
121 of Waldorf education, from the curriculum to educational practice in the actual classroom. To this day, the founder
122 of Anthroposophy, Rudolf ??teiner (1861 ??teiner (-1925)) remained the main figure for the students of this
123 approach (Ullrich, 2015, p. 91).

124 Equally, the deep affinity between Anthroposophy and Waldorf education manifests in the Waldorf-Education-
125 inspired teacher's training ??Goldshmidt, 2017a). In the course of this training, the students study R. Steiner's
126 basic books, delve deeply into his educational writings, practice the Anthroposophical meditative-spiritual path,
127 and engage in creative work in a wide variety of arts that grew out of Anthroposophy (ibid.; see also Gabert,
128 1961).

129 5 How did R. Steiner view the connection between the Anthro- 130 posophical worldview and Waldorf education?

131 Already in the opening speech he gave to the intended teachers, a few days before the opening of the first Waldorf
132 school in Stuttgart, Germany, in August 1919, Steiner emphasized the connection between the Anthroposophical
133 worldview and the education he founded: "The Waldorf school will be living proof of anthroposophy's great
134 potential? No worldview will be taught in the Waldorf school; it is not our aim to fill the children's heads with
135 anthroposophical teaching. Anthroposophy is not what is to be taught: We strive rather to apply anthroposophy
136 and what can be gained from it for education in general and for the method and practice of teaching in particular."
137 ??Steiner, 2020, p. 16, 17). A little later, he explained how he saw this connection:

138 By founding the Waldorf school, we do not want to found a school for a worldview, in which we shove
139 Anthroposophical dogmas down the children's throats. We do not want to teach any Anthroposophical dogmas,
140 Anthroposophy is not teaching material, but we strive to apply Anthroposophy in a practical way. We want to
141 apply that which we attained through Anthroposophy, in educational practice. Religious education will be given
142 within the different religious communities. We shall apply Anthroposophy only in our teaching methods (p. 206).

143 At the end of his life, after managing the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart for five years and founding several
144 more schools in Germany, as well as one in Holland and in England, Steiner returned to this topic during a
145 meeting with teachers' representatives from Switzerland. He recommended them to open Waldorf education in
146 Switzerland not as an independent school movement, but rather as a source of inspiration for all schools who
147 wish it, since: "Anthroposophical pedagogy emerged from a methodological development of learning. This is a
148 methodical school, not some kind of political trend, but a practical methodical school. This is not some kind
149 of religious belief, not Anthroposophy in the sense of religious faith, but a methodical school? I have said it a
150 long time ago: with goodwill, the educational method that we are talking about here can be applied everywhere
151 ??Steiner, 1994, p. 165, 166).

152 Anthroposophical philosophy, according to Steiner, should remain so to speak "behind", not influence the
153 pupils directly, and be a source of inspiration for the teachers only:

154 Steiner-Waldorf schools, of which there are now around 1000 across the world, are non-denominational,
155 coeducational schools founded on the above philosophy and the knowledge gained from 'spiritual science'.
156 Steiner's philosophy itself is explicitly not part of the curriculum but forms the epistemological and philosophical
157 underpinning to school organization, curriculum, and pedagogy ??Oberski, 2011, p 14).

158 Steiner wanted to see Waldorf Education as practical proof of the inspirational power of the Anthroposophical
159 worldview. During his last years, he invested most of his efforts in the attempt to inspire many diverse fields of
160 action and culture with anthroposophical knowledge (Hemleben, 1984;Zander, 2007). However, it was important
161 for Steiner to emphasize, that Waldorf education is not an education to a particular worldview, and certainly
162 not to Anthroposophy, but an education and cultivation of the whole human being, regardless of religion or any
163 kind of worldview (Richter, 2006;Steiner, 1975).

164 Thus, Steiner saw a separation or boundary between the tenets of Anthroposophical worldview and what is
165 done with the pupils in the classroom. What he wanted to see in classrooms was not Anthroposophical knowledge,
166 but teaching methods that are inspired by this knowledge. We shall expand on this point further below.
167 IV.

168 6 Criticism Regarding the Connection of Anthroposophy and 169 Waldorf Education

170 Waldorf education has been much criticized, mainly around its connection to Anthroposophy. For example,
171 Adir Cohen concludes the chapter about Waldorf education in his book "A Book called Man" (Cohen, 1983)
172 with the following words: Rudolf Steiner's educational teaching has much to interest us, both in terms of its
173 goal and ways. And even if we cannot accept its basic assumptions? (i.e., Anthroposophy, G.G.), his great
174 educational understanding and interesting educational methods make an important contribution to educational
175 thought (.176).

176 In the German-speaking realm, where Waldorf education has been working for over 100 years and is the
177 largest and most well-established form of alternative education, researchers' criticism is directed precisely at this
178 point (Schieren, 2015). Klaus Prange (Prange, 1985(Prange, , 2005)), Ehrenhard Skiera (Skiera, 2009), and
179 Heiner Ullrich (Ullrich, 1986(Ullrich, , 1988(Ullrich, , 2015)), who belong to the most vehement critics of Waldorf
180 education, note in their writings that Waldorf education's reliance on Anthroposophy is not scientific and colors
181 this education with a religious, mystical and belief-based hue. For example, this is how Ullrich concludes his
182 argument:

183 Waldorf education is entirely based on the Anthroposophical view of man and the world. This determines
184 not only their teaching methods, but in diverse and sometimes indirect ways, it also determines the content of
185 the curriculum and its topics of study. No other approach of the classical canon of progressive education has a
186 culture that entirely relies on a single worldview, like Waldorf education (Ullrich, 2015, p. 173). Schieren (2015)
187 summarizes the main points of criticism that arise from the writings of these researchers in the context of the
188 affinity between the Anthroposophical worldview and the educational act in Waldorf kindergartens and schools,
189 as follows:

190 ? Waldorf education relies on a spiritual-mystical influence -Anthroposophy -and hence lacks a scientific basis.
191 ? In Waldorf education, the educators act without supervision, and do not base their work on logical thinking,
192 but only on the writings of Steiner and his followers. ? At its basis, Anthroposophy is a kind of spiritual gospel,
193 which means that there is no differentiation between science and faith in Waldorf education. ? Anthroposophy
194 attempts to find a uniform totality of knowledge, including in the field of education, which is why it leaves the
195 scientific context and wanders off to spaces that are inaccessible to examination and logical inquiry.

196 ? In Waldorf education there is a tendency to create causal contexts based on Karma and repeated lives (p.
197 140). This criticism can be summarized as claiming that Waldorf education in essence relies on a system of
198 dogmas and beliefs, all of which originate in a spiritual path -Anthroposophy -that originates in the ideas of one
199 person -ideas whose origin is mystical and hazy, and in any case lacks any scientific basis. The foundations of
200 Waldorf education are therefore metaphysical and cannot be examined and investigated by theoretical scientific
201 inquiry. Hence, the foundations of Waldorf Education have no scientific validity.

202 Schieren summarizes the problem with the following question: "What then is the place of Anthroposophy in
203 Waldorf education? Is there an acceptable scientific way to manage this problem?" (ibid.)

204 Over the years, educationists and researchers from the field of Waldorf education and Anthroposophy tried to
205 handle the criticism according to which the Anthroposophical worldview does not conform to scientific standards,
206 and hence Waldorf education relies on an unstable, religious and mystical basis, in several ways, as follows: 1).
207 By expanding the fields of science and changing the prevailing paradigm to include esoteric knowledge as well
208 (Kiene, 1984;Majorek, 2015); 2) by conducting scientific and historical research while comparing Anthroposophy
209 to other spiritual streams ??Hanergraaf, 2012;Kiersch, 2008; ??011 ?? 2015;Ravagli, 2014); 3). By applying
210 scientific tools and methods to the Anthroposophical knowledge itself (Clement, 2020).

211 The conflict between the conventional foundations of science and the Anthroposophical worldview perhaps
212 created a deep and interesting philosophical discussion, which can be important for other spiritual worldviews as
213 well, but in the author's opinion, it is less relevant for responding to the criticism directed at Waldorf education.
214 I shall explain this in more detail below.

215 7 V. The Question of Inspiration Versus Method

216 As arises from what was said above, Steiner himself tried to solve the issue by separating the teachers' training and
217 their inspiration through Anthroposophical writings -and the teaching content in school, which, he emphasized,
218 should be "clear" of any Anthroposophical influence. Anthroposophy should only live in the methods of teaching:

219 And so, in the first place, the Waldorf School arose as a general school for the workers' children. It was only
220 'anthroposophical' in the sense that the man who started it happened to be an Anthroposophist. Here then,
221 we have an educational institution arising on a social basis, seeking to found the whole spirit and method of its
222 teaching upon Anthroposophy. It was not a question of founding an 'anthroposophical' school. On the contrary,
223 we hold that because Anthroposophy can at all times efface itself, it is able to institute a school on universal-

224 human principles instead of upon the basis of social rank, philosophical conceptions of any other specialized line
225 of thought. (Steiner, 1986, p. 203) This line of thought leads, as we have seen, to a separation between the
226 Anthroposophical worldview as such, and the contents learned in Waldorf schools. The role of Anthroposophy
227 should become a source of inspiration for the teachers and educators only, and must in no way be passed on to
228 the children themselves. Schieren (2015) expresses this view as follows:

229 The point of Waldorf education is not to be a means of practical realization of the Anthroposophical worldview?
230 but to create the best possible conditions for the development of children and youth: the children themselves are
231 in the center? within the context of Waldorf education, Anthroposophy has no pure/absolute status, but only
232 the status of a means to an end, it is supposed to serve as a means of developing and creating a good educational
233 path (p. 145).

234 Indeed, as arises from research done on Waldorf school alumni (Randoll & Peters, 2021; (2016), and from
235 the author's own experience in the field, there is a separation between the Anthroposophical worldview, which
236 is intended for the teachers (for those who want it) -and the content learned in Waldorf schools. The pupils are
237 not exposed to this worldview, and it does not manifest in the contents that are taught at any stage (ibid). Most
238 of the teaching methods are inspired by Anthroposophical knowledge about child development, but the way this
239 occurs is that this knowledge forms a kind of burden the teachers carry but is not spoken about with the children.

240 However, the question of contents is much more complex. Despite Steiner's unequivocal words (see above),
241 he himself, in his lectures and seminars with the teachers of the first Waldorf school, mentions in several areas
242 contents directly inspired by the Anthroposophical concept world -for example, in his instructions on how to teach
243 Zoology in the lower school, as well as botany and history (Richter, 2006;Steiner, 1975), One can tentatively say
244 that the Anthroposophical concept world is passed indirectly to the pupils through the teaching methods. Let
245 us take as an example teaching the world of animals in the lower school. Here, Steiner wants to demonstrate the
246 relation between man and animal and conceive the shape of the animal as arising from the human form. He says
247 that animal shapes are a kind of one-sidedness of the whole human being. His teaching method on this subject
248 was to teach the various animal forms from the forms of the human body and its various systems. Although not
249 teaching Anthroposophical content directly, this does convey them through the teaching methods.

250 To expand this dilemma, clearly every teacher brings along some kind of worldview, which is expressed through
251 what he says, his manner of teaching, and the values he/she teaches, more or less overtly. Teachers who are
252 inspired by the Anthroposophical worldview will pass qualities and values from this worldview to their pupils
253 -which is something that we see in every educational path, especially a unique one that has a clear identity of its
254 own.

255 8 VI. Ideology and Education

256 "Without a narrative life has no meaning. Without meaning learning has no purpose. Without a purpose, schools
257 are houses of detention, not attention" (Postman, 1995, pp. 3-4).

258 In his book *The End of Education* (1995), Postman claims that the school has lost its purpose (end), or its
259 narrative, which is why it reached its end. Without purpose, or what Postman calls "grand narrative", he claims
260 that there is no justification for holding children for so many hours in educational institutions. A Grand Narrative
261 is a larger story, a comprehensive conceptual system, or in other words, an ideology. A grand narrative provides
262 answers to the greater questions of life, questions that direct our actions and our thoughts: "Know from where
263 you come, and where you are going, and before whom you are destined to give an account and reckoning." (Pirkei
264 Avot 3, 1).

265 Educational narratives are derived from grand narratives about the good life: the life worth living (Harpaz,
266 2020).

267 Hence, every educational process, educational setting, or educational event arises, first and foremost, from a
268 worldview, an ideology -whether consciously or subconsciously. (Harpaz, 2020; (Noddings, 2016).

269 It is the nature of education to discuss the questions of a worthy life or the question what a worthy image of
270 man is. And this is not a scientific question, but a question of values (ibid). Some will even say that it is an
271 art (Eisner, 2002). There is a constant gap between the educational act and scientific research: "Educational
272 research has become very good at gathering and reporting scores and statistics, but it still cannot tell us what
273 to do about the problems underlying the numbers (Noddings, 2009, p. 23)... Scientific research can serve as a
274 thought basis for an ideology of educators after it had been established. Science itself does not determine what it
275 is: "Scientific research has no answers to the question of what worthy education is. The answer to this question
276 expresses the preferences of the one who gave it." (Lamm, 2002, p. 54).

277 By nature, educational and learning processes are influenced by the educators' worldview. These carry their
278 worldview within them, more or less consciously, and this worldview influences their pupils. The educators'
279 worldview influences their own educational methods and thus, obviously, it affects their pupils as well. The
280 question of what determines this worldview, is very complex, and in any case, scientific research probably weighs
281 only little in this decision:

282 People do not choose an education of a particular kind because research proved its efficacy, and they certainly
283 do not choose it because research has chosen its "rightness". They choose it because an ideology acceptable to
284 them dictated to them this kind of education (Lamm, 2002, p. 54).

285 Lamm goes one step further and claims that even the science of education is ideologically biased.

286 Nowadays, at the age of science, most educational ideologies are concealed as science? the prevalent educational
287 theories in our times present their preferred goals as if they were necessary conclusions of scientific research,
288 whereas, in fact, they have nothing but ideological preferences of their formulators. (Ibid, p. 52) Thus, the
289 question is not whether behind educational processes or an educational approach there is a worldview, for it
290 is always there. The question is, how and whether this worldview affects the pupils, and in this regard, it is
291 most significant to ask: To what degree are educators aware of this influence, and can they control and direct it
292 according to relevant standards and the right measure?

293 Most researchers' criticism of Waldorf education is that behind it there is an unscientific, irrational, and
294 mystical worldview. Precisely such criticism can also be directed toward church schools, ultra-orthodox schools,
295 or religious public schools. In every form of religious belief, we have to do with an unscientific, irrational, and
296 faith-based worldview. But this is not only true to education systems that are influenced by and originate
297 from institutionalized religion. The other alternative educational approaches lack a scientific foundation as well.
298 Thus, for example, the democratic educational approach did not stem from scientific research or view, but from
299 a liberal-democratic worldview, according to which every person -including children -is entitled to the right to
300 choose and to be treated as an equal in all walks of life. Montessori education is based on Maria Montessori's
301 research -just like Steiner, she was a single person who founded an educational stream -and her scientific basis is
302 doubtful as well (Gustafsson, 2018; Marshall, 2017).

303 Educational innovation, breakthroughs, and the development of successful educational systems do not stem
304 from scientific research but from educational work, usually by groundbreaking educators, who are inspired by
305 some unique worldview, ideas, or conceptual thought. As we have seen, scientific research can examine educational
306 approaches, research them, and compare them -but they do not create them: "All research findings in the field
307 of education are either accepted or rejected by educationists based on ideological filters" ??Lamm, 2002, p.
308 47). And he concludes this situation from a historical perspective: "20 th Century rhetorics was amazing in its
309 richness, whereas the educational act was depressing in its mundaneness. The abundant rhetorics? gained the
310 name "information boom"? only a very small part of all this abundance manifested in educational practice or
311 had any real influence on it." (Introduction).

312 Hence, criticism of Waldorf education as arising from a mystical or faith-based worldview is irrelevant, in my
313 opinion, because every educational approach arises from some worldview, which in turn relies mainly on forces
314 of feeling and faith, and not on scientific research.

315 In secular public schools, the worldview is not as clear as in religious education or the alternative one, because
316 educators in this educational institute often have many varied worldviews. Therefore, uniformity and common
317 direction are much weaker there than in ideological education approaches. This is both the weakness and the
318 strength of the public education system. If we view the subject positively, we can say that in public education
319 there is more chance of diversity, openness, and a wider worldview. However, public education always faces the
320 challenge of having a clear direction. The issue of scatteredness and changing trends, both in the surrounding
321 culture and in the policy of the Ministry of Education, can of course have an adverse and destabilizing effect.

322 So the question we face is not whether an ideological worldview stands behind one educational approach or
323 another; nor is it whether this worldview is rational and scientific. Behind every educational stream and every
324 teacher, there stands some kind of worldview, which is not rational and does not originate from scientific research.
325 This is true for public education, religious education, all types of alternative education, and, of course, Waldorf
326 education as well.

327 I think that the relevant question here is the degree to which educators are aware of their worldview and how
328 they work with it in educational and methodical processes. To refocus on Waldorf education, we can say that
329 those working in it, by virtue of their training and its clear spiritual and ideological direction, are well aware of
330 the spiritual direction they are in -Anthroposophy -and in the best case, they are also aware of their ability to
331 influence their pupils. As we saw above, Steiner himself was conscious of the danger of an illegitimate influence of
332 Anthroposophical contents on the pupils of the first Waldorf school, and kept warning against it (Steiner, 1980).

333 Undoubtedly, this is a great challenge facing Waldorf educators today, and the entire educational approach.
334 The influence of Anthroposophical content may be conveyed through teaching methods, stories and narratives,
335 conversations, and many even less overt ways. Raising awareness for this topic, both in teachers' training,
336 teachers' conversations, and in the dialogue between the school community and the teachers, can help prevent
337 any inappropriate influence.

- 338 [Ravagli ()] , L Ravagli . 2014. (Polemischer Diskurs)
- 339 [Cohen ()] *A book called Adam -Studies in Humanistic Education*, A Cohen . 1983. Haifa: Haifa University press.
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