Foreword to the Chinese edition of *The Educational Tasks and Content of the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum*
By Martyn Rawson

For many people the Waldorf Curriculum (whatever they understand by this term) is integral to the definition of Waldorf education. They think a school is Waldorf (or is a Steiner school) if it uses the Waldorf curriculum. However, things are not so simple. And this takes a little explaining. Firstly, it is necessary to state that a definitive, universally valid, unchangeable Waldorf Curriculum doesn't exist.

There are many curricula that are Waldorf in character, including the 'Yellow Book' or the *Educational Tasks and Content of the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum*. This book has now been translated into 18 languages to my knowledge, the latest being this current work. The book, first published in 2000, was an attempt to outline the basic principles that inform Waldorf education in terms that people both inside and outside of Waldorf education and in particular public education authorities could understand. It tried to use accessible terminology and explain all its key terms. Secondly, it described typical practices that groups of Waldorf 'specialists' thought were representative. By practices I mean, what is taught, how it is taught and why it is taught. It is fair to say that other Waldorf 'specialists' sometimes disagreed with what we wrote at the time. That is why it was written in a way that said, one can do this or that and then gave examples and avoided terms like, "in class 5 this or that has to be taught". The book is not prescriptive but descriptive.

The book was an attempt to meet a need at that time and it was always intended that the book would be revised within at least 5 years. In the foreword at the time, I wrote that the book would be reviewed and amended. This has not happened- mainly because no one has been willing to fund or organize the work in English. It never claimed any absolute authority. [i]

Previous Waldorf curricula were based on the collated statements of Steiner drawn from lectures and discussions with teachers in the original Waldorf School in Stuttgart complied by Karl Stockmeyer or Caroline von Heydebrandt. The curriculum used in Waldorf schools in earlier years became a blend of practice based on these recommendations from Steiner but also on traditions of practice that developed in the early Waldorf schools, which gradually formed what one could call a 'body of Waldorf knowledge'. This often became canonized, especially when translated into other languages in other countries. This body of knowledge often acquired a kind of status of orthodoxy, forming the basis for 'the way we do things' based on the assumption that every detail is significant and unalterable. One can often read on school websites statements about the Waldorf Curriculum that make it sound like it is a standardized curriculum. This idea can sometimes be found when Waldorf is taken to other countries. It is sometimes transmitted one to one from some European model usually by older Waldorf teachers who themselves have always done things a certain way. For them, the way they or their home school does things, is the right way.

So what status do the examples in the curriculum have? Many are excellent ideas that have been used for decades and appear to have the desired effect. Others can best be seen as good examples. Rüdiger Iwan, a German Waldorf teacher who has written a critical book on Waldorf education (Iwan 2007), calls this the 'wooden spoon principle'. This refers to the fact that the idea of carving a wooden spoon as the first activity in woodwork is now standard in most Waldorf schools. Apparently Steiner asked the woodwork teacher at the original Waldorf school what the children could usefully make. The teachers suggested a spoon and Steiner approved of the suggestion. Steiner's response could be interpreted as meaning that

that was the definitive solution, or, as Iwan suggests, just a good suggestion alongside other possible solutions. This highlights in a nutshell what the problem is with the idea of a definitive Waldorf curriculum. Some ideas may be good in one situation but don't make sense in another. Because children in Germany learning knitting with wool, does this mean that knitting with wool is standard even in countries that do not traditionally knit with wool (perhaps they weave with cotton)? Some ideas were never a good idea. If children learn to play recorders in some traditional Waldorf schools- a fact that Western Waldorf music teachers have argued against for many years because groups of children playing recorders is totally unmusical- does that mean that all children should play the recorder from class 1 on? Some good ideas are very good but should not be simply standardized. Christof Wiechert has written that the idea of the rhythmical part of the main lesson did not originate from Steiner and, though sometimes useful, should not be seen as a standard part of the lesson.

So how do Waldorf teachers know what is right? The challenge of Waldorf education, right from the very beginning has been to develop curriculum locally, practice it, review and evaluate it and then modify it.

Waldorf education: a continuous cycle of renewal
At a parents' evening on January 13th 1921 Steiner justified the autonomy of the teachers on the grounds that only those who know the children and work with them pedagogically can really have a spiritual connection to them and be able to 'read' their learning and developmental needs. The teachers therefore have to continuously review and evaluate their teaching and the pupils' learning. He said, " In the time since we began our work, we have carefully reviewed from month to month how our principles are working with the children. In the years to come, some things will be carried out in line with different and more complete points of view than in previous years. This is how we would like to govern this school- out of an activity that is direct and unmediated, as indeed it must be if it flows from spiritual depths" (Steiner 1996),78-79).

If we unpack this statement and put it in modern terms, we would say; Waldorf schools practice collegial school leadership. Teachers evaluate their practice using the principles of Waldorf education as criteria, thus leading to an iterative process of teacher learning and skill and the development of quality. This will be done in holistic way using substantive values or key principles as navigational references for orientation. Below I address the question as to what those Waldorf criteria may be.

Novice teachers are inducted into the practices of a Waldorf teaching community by their more experienced peers. The curriculum is a central part of these practices and is a wise resource and novices are well-advised to follow it. Experienced teachers however, continuously review their teaching and especially the actual learning of their pupils. Waldorf education has often placed great emphasis on the teaching and on individual child development but has often neglected the evaluation of teaching and learning more generally across classes and subjects, though guidelines for this are give in the 'Yellow Book' and have been further developed (Ciborski & Ireland 2015; Mepham & Rawson 2001; Rawson 2015). Generally the quality of learning is high, but that does not mean it couldn't be better, reach more children, enable richer, more transformational learning, and could enable all children to reach their potential. Therefore curriculum is ongoing, emergent, situational and highly dependent on how it is taught.

As the educational researcher John Hattie points out in his book *Visible Learning for Teachers ((Hattie, 2012)*), the most important factor in the quality of student learning is when the teachers understand that it is their role to understand the effects of their teaching

(including the way they are as people) on the learning processes of the pupils and when learners learn to understand their own learning processes. These discoveries match much that Steiner recommended.

Curriculum rather than standardization

Today we are used to school curricula that are predominantly focused on learning outcomes. Most state curricula list outcomes in the form of knowledge and skills- often called competences- that pupils are supposed to have by the end of their time at school, so that they can contribute to the modern, globalized knowledge economy or in other ways fit into existing society. Most national educational standards focus on literacy, numeracy, science and ITC skills. That is no doubt important but it overlooks the important contributions of personal development, intercultural skill, judgement and ethical and democratic citizenship skills.

According to Professor Martha Nussbaum (Nussbaum, 2006), a modern education for ethical citizenship is based on enabling children and young people to cultivate three important qualities; the powers of critical judgement, cosmopolitan citizenship and narrative empathy. The capability to form ethical judgements as free individuals means the ability to act consciously and responsibly out of insight. Cosmopolitanism is the ability of people of different cultural backgrounds to live in mutual respect and tolerance in peace with each other. Narrative empathy is the ability to experience the world from the perspective of the Other Person – to be literally able to tell the other person's story and make sense of it. Of course it also means that a person has self-knowledge and feels secure in herself to be open to others without losing herself. Nussbaum and Nobel Price winner Amarthya Sen have developed what they call the human capabilities and development approach (Nussbaum, 2011), which maps out the basic conditions for people to develop the capabilities they need to actively contribute to social progress. Waldorf education seeks to provide a practical pedagogical context for realizing such aims.

There is widespread consensus among scholars (du Bois-Reymond 2009), that the most important skill young people actually need today is the ability to navigate new economies and fragmented social life. That means, they can construct stable and coherent identities across difference life situations in a rapidly changing social context. In order to navigate, one needs to be able to locate oneself in the world in relation to self, others and the world. It means that one has meaningful goals and knows how to set about achieving them. This does not only mean self-management (many problems in today's economies are caused by people whose primary goal is managing themselves at the cost of others), it also means being able to engage with other people in a constructive, mutually respectful way.

Modern education is frequently based on competition from an early age. In early years children are coached to reach school-entry requirements, in the assumption that they need a head start over others or simply to be able to cope with the rigorous demands of school. Primary and secondary education is structured around continuous testing, which inevitably leads to teaching to the test. Children's motivation for learning is reduced to attaining grades, passing exams, collecting awards and accumulating as many qualifications as possible. Academic qualifications are now required for professions that previously required a professional training. Higher education is a race to collect credit points. Educational institutions have to meet targets or risk their ranking in league tables. Following Professor Stephen Ball's (Ball, 2012) researches, the education system globally is a big business dominated by standardization, performativity, surveillance and managerialism. Schools, teachers and pupils work in an environment, which may espouse cooperation but actually practices and rewards competition, democratic and intercultural values but actual practices

privilege and elitism. As the psychotherapist Paul Verhaeghe (Verhaeghe 2013) put it, there is no such thing as competitive social solidarity and we should not be surprised if our pupils ask: what is it worth if I do this? What credits do I get for doing this?

The nature of the Waldorf curriculum

A curriculum that reflects Waldorf educational principles can be called a Waldorf curriculum. A Waldorf curriculum approaches the task of preparing children and young people for the challenges in the world in quite a different way. It describes experiences, activities, themes, story material and phenomena that can provide children and young people with learning contexts in which they can form and shape themselves, school their abilities, cultivate their feelings, define and re-define their relationship to the world and others and above all, to develop new ideas. Instead of delivering prescribed outcomes- often described in fine-grained detail step by step, thus allowing little scope for creative teaching- a Waldorf curriculum enables general, integrated and holistic (the embodied person) learning and development.

These experiences are mediated using learning methods that address the developmental age of the learner in an open way. The Waldorf curriculum avoids specifying what the outcomes are in too much detail, since these outcomes are ultimately unknowable because each person constructs her own relationship to the world. It is of course appropriate and indeed pedagogically necessary that teachers know what their pupils should and can achieve as a minimum. The pupils should also know what is expected of them. And they should be helped to recognize whether and how they realizing their learning potential and what minimum skills are essential. If they are not yet able to reach this level, they need support to get there. There is a world of difference between having standard attainment targets, which are so determined that some, perhaps many are bound to fall short (as is the case in many exam systems) and showing each person and group what they could achieve and how to get there. Attainments should be attainable for all, which is why they have to be individualized. The key message for pupils is; can you do better than you have managed so far? Waldorf education does not promote a competitive climate of winners and losers, though we do value real, meaningful achievement.

Two key statement of Steiner on educational attainment are:

> We should not ask: what does a person need to know or be able to do in order to fit into the existing social order? Instead we should ask: what lives in each human   being and what can be developed in him or her? Only then will it be possible to direct the new qualities of each emerging generation into society. Thus society will change and become what these fully developed individuals construct through their engagement with the existing order. The new generation should not merely be made into what the existing social order wants them to be. ((Steiner, 1985), 8).

> The capabilities that each child develops can best be transmitted to the community if his/her education is the exclusive responsibility of those whose judgement rests on a spiritual foundation. To what extent a child should be taught one thing or another can only be correctly determined within a free cultural community. How such determinations are to be made binding is also a matter for this community. (Steiner, 1977),12-13)

Of course Waldorf schools are also committed to enabling children to acquire the cultural techniques and skills they need to access learning and participate in society, as well as pass exams. These include the ability to read and access literature of all kinds, the ability to express oneself fully in word and text, the ability to work with numbers and numerical values, use tools of all kinds and master foreign languages. Thus the *Yellow Book* described learning outcomes for each grade up to grade 8 specifically in these fields. These are of course not *the only* learning outcomes. They are simply the ones that are needed for communication and for academic and scientific work and which can realistically be monitored. We know that every subject taught in a Waldorf school and every project and practical task enables the children and young people to develop themselves in holistic ways (head, hand and heart).

Thus a *Waldorf* curriculum is one that describes subjects, experiences and topics that enable students to develop themselves. It draws attention to the important issues related to these topics and offers criteria for choosing them. For this reason the curriculum applies to every child regardless of his or her abilities, interests, strengths and weaknesses or social background. It is in that sense universal rather than specific. What each human being makes out of it is entirely individual and specific.

The Waldorf curriculum responds to changing developing contexts

The French philosopher and teacher Michel Serres (Serres, 2013) has argued that the changes that have occurred over the past generation are as dramatic and far reaching as those that occurred in the Neolithic Revolution, when human societies changed from being nomadic hunter-gatherers to being settled farmers and ultimately urban city-dwellers. What has driven this revolution is the digital technology of Internet communications. It has started to change everything globally. The full sociological implications of these changes have barely been understood, not least because those who study such things inevitable were educated in the previous age, prior to open internet access. Combined with other factors relating to globalization, including the rapid movement of international capital across markets, the distribution of industrial production to countries with lower costs (and frequently lower standards for workers and the environment), the shift in Western countries away from industrial economies to service economies, the breakdown of many social structures that used to regulate family relationships, employment, social and welfare services and shifts in global power away from the West and global insecurity- life in many countries has changed rapidly.

The German sociologist Ulrich Beck (Beck, 2009) has called these conditions risk society. It is also characterized by processes of individualization, which mean that the individual is no longer embedded in secure and predictable social structures but is increasingly thrown back on her own resources, with little help from others, who are now competitors for jobs rather that members of the same social class or community and the social solidarity these provide. Whilst advertising and schools mediate the message of individualism, consumerist egotism and being whoever you want to be and realize your dreams, social injustice is growing and the gap between rich and poor widening.

As Michel Serres puts it, almost all social institutions, but especially educational ones, were designed to meet the needs of a previous cultural age and are thus generally obsolete, though they would be the last to recognize this fact. Waldorf schools should be the exception to this rule.

How does Waldorf respond to these changing conditions?

Thus the conditions under which children and young people grow up have radically changed. What consequences does this have for Waldorf education?

Human development from birth to adulthood and beyond is a complex blend of inherited genetic, social, cultural and individual factors that interact with each other. This fact

alone accounts for individual variation. Development is never simply the unfolding of a model or the running of a software package. Development is always a complex interaction of factors and circumstances and it is usually not possible to understand all these factors. However, even recognising that there are so many factors and that some are invisible to us, helps us to shape our response. Not everything can be explained by (or blamed on) biological, family background, economic and social status. Each of these factors needs to be taken fully into account and not ignored or downplayed, particularly factors related to social injustice. Nevertheless, we always need an integrated perspective that takes the whole as much as possible into account. The integrating factor in this vision is our recognition of and interest in what comes to us out of the future, what the present as it really is reveals of the future in each child that is emerging.

There is no doubt that children and young people at different ages face different developmental challenges. Some are related primarily to biology, such as physical growth and maturation. We are embodied beings and when our bodies change, so too does our relationship to our body, our self and to the world. One need only think of the changes related to puberty. Individuals respond to biological change in different, often highly individual ways.

We are also social beings and this means that the way we relate to biological change varies in social, cultural and individual ways. For example, it is well known that family members respond differently to first-born children, than they do to subsequent siblings and this affects their development. In many cultures attitudes towards boys and girls vary, not to mention attitudes towards people of different ethnic, religious backgrounds and social status as well as to differences in the wealth of the family. The onset of puberty, though obviously a biological process, is nevertheless also related to socio-economic factors. We can see this in the age at which girls have their first menstruation. This now occurs earlier than it did in 1919 in Europe. In northern Europe, for example, in the 1920s in Norway, puberty started later than in middle or southern Europe. There are still significant differences today, between developed and developing countries.

Social attitudes towards early childhood, childhood and youth vary considerably between different societies and cultures and over time. In 1900 youth as a distinct developmental phase between childhood and adulthood was barely recognised even in Europe. Today, sociologists define youth as a distinct phase between childhood and adulthood. In Western, post-industrial societies youth is considered to range from 10 to 26 years of age. This is mainly because structures of universal education have changed. The work of work is now very different to that of even two generations ago. The transitions between the socially significant life phases have become fuzzy with many more overlaps. The traditional signifiers of adulthood used to be, the end of formal education, the start of paid employment and thus economic independence and the founding of a family. Today, young people often remain in education until their mid-20s, they engage in part-time employment from the age 14 onwards and in many societies, they may live in long-term relationships but not have children until much later. Many more women are able to enjoy university education and have professional careers than in earlier generations. Sexual behaviour and the kinds of relationships that are socially acceptable have changed radically over time and between cultures.

Many descriptions of life phases, for example by the psychologists Erik Erikson (Erikson, 1995) or Robert Havighurst (Havighurst, 1982), authors often cited in support of the Waldorf approach, have been criticised more recently for assuming that what was normal for middle class America in the 1960s and 70s are universal norms. Erikson or Havighurst were not wrong with their ideas about identity or developmental tasks, indeed both contributed much to our understanding of what enables healthy development and, especially Havighurst, what hinders this socially, but their models of phases and stages cannot be taken as fact. They

are best seen as ways of looking at actual developmental situations. These are just a few examples, which show that the life phases are culturally constructed and largely overlay biological processes. Therefore it is important to understand the factors that influence development locally.

Thus, while it is true that the Waldorf curriculum aims to meet the developmental tasks of each age group, these tasks vary according to the social and cultural context and biological maturation, which shows many individual differences. If we take all the factors that contribute to learning and development into account such as physical (e.g. motor coordination), language skills, social abilities, emotional maturity, practical skills, cognitive capabilities and so on into account there is a wide span within the normal spectrum. The Swiss professor of child development Remo Largo (Largo & Beglinger 2009) has calculated the average span among children of normal development at the age of school entry (age 6) spans three years. At the age of 14 (grade 8) it spans 5 years! Thus there is no fixed or detailed universal developmental trajectory and therefore no one-to-one match between the Waldorf curriculum and any specific age. The developmental match is broad stroke rather than fine grained. We can speak of early childhood, early adolescence and so on but if we then talk about *the class three child* as if this were a fixed developmental category. The point is, though every class three situation is unique, each is located within a culture and time that shapes the way adults see children and what they expect of them.

What then are the educational tasks of the Steiner Waldorf curriculum?

In my view – and not everyone agrees with me - the tasks consist in providing learning environments (and these include appropriate spaces, organizational forms and arrangements, material and so on) in which the pupils can learn and develop in ways that optimize these processes. One of the primary ways in which the Waldorf curriculum supports this process is by providing appropriate experiences so that each child and young person can expand her learning to the next stage based on inner, intrinsic motivation and existing capacities. This means that each learner can proceed to the next phase of development. The Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1978) called this the zone of proximal development. This developmental learning process is mediated by teachers, the content of the curriculum, texts, tools, materials, spaces and so on. The structure of the existing Waldorf curriculum offers a structured, or scaffolded pathway of development through all the subjects and activities and through the way the learning is organised. It channels and guides development rather than follows it. When all the children in a particular class or learning group encounter the same stories, experiences, challenges at the same time, often mediated by the same teacher (such as the class teacher or subject teacher), then this harmonizes their development. Some will be ready for the new challenges; others have to be supported to engage with them. This is a very important aspect of social learning.

It is a mistake to think that learning is only an individual activity. It is above all a social activity because almost everything we do in life involves other people, depends on what other people have achieved, or is communicated by other people or is done so that other people can benefit from our actions. This is not just a nice ideal. It is a social reality, even if much in contemporary society privileges individualism, egotism and self-determination. Of course the individual has to do the learning but this is always in a social context. The German term *Bildung*, which means self-formation of the person in and through engagement with other people, culture and the world implies a reciprocal, mutually formative process. The person transforms herself through *Bildung* and in doing so can change the social and natural worlds they are embedded in.

Sharing the same rich experiences in mixed groups (mixed in background, personality, interest and ability) of the same age right up to the 12th grade is one of the most important aspects of Waldorf education because it enables individualised learning based on shared

experiences in a social group committed to mutual support and understanding. Each Waldorf class is a community that develops a strong group identity through its shared experiences and the fact that the pupils undertake tasks that activate developmental processes. The curriculum provides developmental tasks. Thus these developmental processes align, just as they do in a traditional community in which many aspects of life are practiced together. The rituals, festivals and social life of the class community reinforce this collective identity and sense of belonging, which is so essential for each person to have as a basis for her own development. Whoever feels at home in her body, in her social community, in sets of common practices and has practiced the values of listening and caring for others, being open to others outside of that community of practice, who has learned narrative empathy, the ability to tell another's story, is equipped to cope with social complexity in an otherwise fragmented, individualized society that has lost many of its traditional social structures and values. This is indeed a basis for intercultural competence.

The Waldorf class is thus also one of the best and most intensive preparations for life in a complex multicultural society. It is both character-forming in the best sense and a preparation for social life, based not on competition and privilege but on mutual respect- qualities the corporate boss, politician, general, police woman, scientist or social worker all need.

Of course, having an open curriculum and no grading means that teachers have to monitor students' progress and development carefully to ensure that those who need support get it promptly. Here is an area that urgently needs research. One of the most important tasks for experienced teachers is developing the curriculum by understanding the social and cultural changes that shape the learning experience of the pupils.

My information about the development of Waldorf education in China shows that the curriculum is being carefully developed very much as I have described. Regional groups of colleagues based around particular subjects or themes are involved in ongoing curriculum development and review. It is this fact that makes me believe that Waldorf education will have a vital future in China and will soon be reaching out to the rest of the world. I trust the future of Waldorf education in the hands of the Waldorf movement there. I think they can avoid some of the mistakes other countries have made. My appeal to the Chinese movement is to stay connected with the wider Waldorf community in the world. It is networking an exchange that matters today more than ever. It is one of the anthroposophical challenges of our times.

So what is Waldorf as a quality?
At heart Waldorf education is, as Dr Stephen Sagarin has written in his excellent blog (ssagarin.blogspot.com), an emergent process. Waldorf is not an objectified thing complete in itself, like a model that simply needs unpacking, assembling and using, nor is it like a programme that only needs to be installed and run on the appropriate hardware. Using a perhaps more appropriate metaphor, we can say that it is also not a handbook of modules, with content descriptors, assessment criteria and methods supplied with recommended readings (though it could be packaged as such). Nor is it an account of practice in Germany, or anywhere else that can and should be emulated.

Waldorf is a way of seeing the world and the human being and on the basis of this, it is a way of entering into a pedagogical relationship between teachers, pupils and parents. It sees human beings as social individuals, as people not as cases or files. It sees the world as something precious that needs to be cared for. This way of seeing and being is complex but I believe it can be broken down to some basics, to what I call Waldorf essentials. I would like

to outline some of these. Obviously in an article of this length I cannot explain them in detail, nor can support this reading by choosing quotations from Rudolf Steiner or other authorities - though I could. I offer these essentials as a basis for discussion and would be very happy to engage in discussion (either directly or via email) with individuals or groups who see things differently or who just want to discuss the issues involved.

Before listing these, let me just explain how I think we can arrive at such ideas.

Where do we get Waldorf criteria?
Criteria for judging Waldorf quality are drawn from two fundamental sources. The first source comprises knowledge generated by teachers through ongoing observation, study, inquiry, reflection, contemplation and discourse about the pupils, the pedagogical practice and the natural, social and cultural context that the education is located within. I call this source, experience. It is enhanced by the experiences of other people, which I try to make my own.

The second source is ideas. Firstly this involves anthropological ideas about how human beings grow, learn and develop. This includes what we know is generally true of human beings. It is often knowledge that has a broad tolerance of variation since human beings are incredibly varied. The second set of ideas relate to an archetypal-ideal notion of harmonious human development. This source of ideas about human development has been enriched enormously by Rudolf Steiner's spiritual insight. These are the insights, for example that Steiner presented to the teachers at the first Waldorf School and which were based on his basic works and on a lifetime of spiritual research (Steiner, 1996a). The relationship of these sources is interesting, complex and needs to be explored because the individual and particular situation can be understood in the light of the archetypal ideal and that ideal gains its validity and relevance only when we recognize it in the individual. The particular – the child- and the general laws of development become meaningful to us through the archetypal-ideal of harmonious growth and development. The archetypal-ideal is a thought tool- a heuristic- to enhance our understanding of both the particular and the general and is a real alternative to working with normative standards.

Together these two sources, experience and anthropological/anthroposophical ideas (i.e. ideas drawn from human science and spiritual science) inform Waldorf practice. The term anthroposophy literally means knowledge of and through the human being. Waldorf practice and therefore curriculum are derived from experience understood in the light of ideas. Reduced to its simplest we can say, Waldorf is:

experience + ideas = knowledgeable practice.

Brief overview of some basic principles underpinning the Waldorf approach
The following list characterizes what I see as some (but not all) of key aspects of Waldorf education that we can use as criteria for interrogating our practice. Each of them has a complex set of explanations and frequently is only fully comprehensible taken in the context of other ideas. For the sake of brevity, I do not ground these criteria. They may be taken as suggestions.

The Waldorf view of learning and development includes:

- understanding the basic processes of holistic learning, including the processes of forgetting and remembering, the formation of abilities as I-substance and the stages of conclusion, judgment and concept;
- recognizing that learning means the transformation of the whole person as embodied mind (soul) and spirit;
- seeing learning as a on-going process of constructing identity across changing situations and relationships;
- recognizing the importance of self-formation in social contexts, and that learning is a social process,
- understanding that the learner must be active in learning and that motivation should lead to expansive learning that values learning in itself (and not just as the accumulation of rewards) and sees learning as a process of inner change and outer connectivity in which the learner is connected with other learners and ideas become linked.

Teaching supports healthy processes of learning and development by:
- ensuring that learners develop sense of coherence based on the pupils regularly having the feeling that what they are asked to engage with is basically comprehensible, manageable and meaningful;
- using artistic, aesthetic and interdisciplinary processes in learning;
- learning in and through the world, which means starting from where we are, moving from the tangible to the intangible, going from the phenomenon to the meaning, recognizing the actual situation as symptomatic of more complex processes;
- providing the same amount of time and resources for practical craft activities, artistic work, projects and academic learning,
- providing adequate opportunities that afford rich informal learning in authentic situations so that learning for life in life can occur.

Teaching:
- enables and supports the self-activity of the student;
- uses narrative and living pictures at all levels to convey complexity;
- is skilled artistry;
- is based on 'reading' the child and cultivating pedagogical tact, the ability to act meaningfully in the pedagogical moment.

Pedagogy:
- recognizes that pupils have a need and a right to formative feedback that they can understand and that helps them take the next step in their learning;
- requires teachers to be able to identify the needs of their students and know how to address them;
- requires the abilities of critical self-observation and the self-development of the teacher since the personality of the teacher is an educational factor in its own right;
- means offering the pupils moral guidance through example.

Educational practice:
- is based on inquiry by the practitioners;
- is based on open discourse among practitioners and between institutions;
- is based on collegial accountability in any given school.

I would just like to emphasize the significance of this last point. There are many external and organizational forms that Waldorf schools can take, such as private, independent institutions but also as state funded, public schools. Schools can have flat, collegial leadership with no hierarchies or they can have distributed leaderships in mandates and they can even have school directors and educational directors. The existing world list of Waldorf schools includes all these forms and more. My personal belief is that recognizing what makes a school Waldorf should not be bureaucratic (i.e. determined by checklists of criteria and assessed by people who don't currently teach in a Waldorf school) and should be based on the joint pillars of self-assessment and peer-assessment.

The key principles of Waldorf school governance are:
- Collegial leadership (which by definition is non hierarchical and distributed);
- Educational leadership that is based on knowing and working with the children (and their parents), a shared vision of the educational principles and the developmental good of the school;
- A commitment by each person to personal, spiritual development, as spirit of service and mutual support.

Obviously teachers have to attain a level of professional expertise before they take full responsibility for the development of the education in their school. This means having appropriate qualifications and experience and demonstrating proficiency. Steiner intended the teachers' meeting to be an ongoing academy in which inquiry, learning, exchange and professional development occur on a weekly basis (a process that should not be reduced by a focus on organizational issues). This was to be the ultimate guarantee for relevance and quality. He also expected Waldorf education to be based not on faith and belief in tradition but on critical thinking and ethical judgment. Above all, I am convinced that Steiner did not want the education to be determined by external or bureaucratic bodies- this includes external bureaucratic Waldorf bodies. Thus a definitive Waldorf curriculum cannot be a criterion for deciding whether a school is Waldorf or not. However a school can be considered Waldorf if it is striving to develop curriculum and educational practice in the ways suggested above.

Conclusion
I would like to repeat my belief that the development of Waldorf education in the Chinese culture is of great significance. Waldorf education is based on universal truths about the nature of the human being, many of which are denied by those with rationalist and positivistic world views. Nevertheless over time, these universal truths will be discovered again and again. The Chinese culture is one of the most ancient and contains similar universal wisdoms. Both look not only to the past but also to the future. Thus bringing these two streams of universal knowledge together seems to offer hope that humanity will be able to meet the challenges we have in the world today.

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[i] Unfortunately this book was reissued in 2014 without my knowledge by Floris Books under the editorship of Kevin Avison. At no stage was I, nor my original co-editor Tobias Richter informed about this. The situation is particularly unfortunate because I have been working for years on modifications and corrections to the original text.