

## **'Karl König in our time' by Richard Steel**

### **ACESTA conference at Emerson College, June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019**

The last talk in the conference was by Richard Steel on 'Karl König in our time'. It was the first Sunday in the Ten Days and Richard's talk was very much like a Whitsun address. He touched on various aspects of the conference and also brought in the failure of Max von Baden to implement the 3-fold Social Order as had been proposed to him by Rudolf Steiner. Max von Baden was one of the descendants of the House of Baden of which a young prince, later known as Kaspar Hauser, had been made to disappear, and was then killed, as was his younger brother, thereby changing the destiny of Germany and Europe. The failure of implementing Rudolf Steiner's proposals had made the possibility of war all the more likely.

Karl König carried the weight of Europe's tragedy on his shoulders when he left Austria as a refugee and he founded the Camphill Movement with this in the background. Seeing the Advent Garden in Ita Wegman's Sonnenhof as well as the verses of the Soul Calendar had been great inspirations to König. When in exile on the Isle of Man as refugee/prisoners he and a group of friends founded a 'mini-anthroposophical university' and there Dr König made pictures for each verse of the Soul Calendar.

Rudolf Steiner had said that if we want to realise the 3-fold social order we would have to find 'partial solutions for a specific space and time' in social groupings. Camphill did just that for many years. We were not meant to be 'comfortable'! Staying in the past is a very Luciferic thing to do. In Camphill we created our own 'blood stream' and change was often seen as unnecessary or unwanted. Ahriman lives in the future, making us insecure and afraid. We are the creators of the future.

The present around us is true, as Waldorf Education teaches. ...AND IT IS RIGHT! The now, the present is the finding of the balance between Lucifer and Ahriman.

Gustav Mahler, who used to live next to Karl König's mother, said:

## **Tradition is to nurture the flame, not to worship the ashes.**

The right place for you is here and now and we have to learn to face our destiny. This is very much a Whitsun motif. We can build Community out of the Spirit of Whitsun by seeing the flame on the other person's head (because you cannot see your own!).

Richard then spoke about Darwin and how Dr König described (in 'At The Threshold of the Modern Age') that, at the end of his life Darwin was very sad about how his life's work had been used and that he no longer supported the theory of the 'Survival of the fittest'. His theory is still used as an example for being 'successful'. Those who are not successful need to be 'safeguarded'. We need to learn to overcome Darwinism in our time and the Inner Path can help us overcome the 'animal' within us.

The drive to heal the other lies within our soul and this is the reason for our existence: having interest in the other's difference out of the wish to heal. 'True love is the will impulse in your interest.' This was a quote from Rudolf Steiner's lecture 'Love and its meaning in the world' given on Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> 1912, hundred years after Kaspar Hauser's birth and on his death date!

Camphill's task was always a completely anthroposophical one - to help the spirit connect to the individual and to society. Society cannot be "inclusive" until we learn to include the spirit. That is our task as curative educators and social therapists - a true therapy for society. That is the logo, that is the "candle on the hill" of Advent and that is true Whitsun. Kaspar Hauser's mission was just this, that we stay able to connect to the spirit. This mission could not be thwarted. This is why Karl König drew Kaspar Hauser for the Soul Calendar verse of St John's, where we travel on the path from Whitsun to reach our true being and incorporate it into daily life: a path of practice and a social task!

Richard ended his talk by pointing to the Camphill logo, the Whitsun dove descending.

(notes by Edeline LeFevre, revised by the speaker)