

Dear PAAM Members!

The year is winding down. May you enjoy the upcoming winter festivals, and we hope have already enjoyed the Thanksgiving time with family and friends! This is also the time for membership renewal. Thank you to all of you who have already renewed your membership. You have also received an important fundraising appeal letter from our President, Peter Hinderberger, M.D. Please consider a generous donation to PAAM as we try to expand our services and outreach in the coming years. Our goal is to have a more vibrant and knowledgeable membership that can meet the certain upcoming demands and challenges to come. With your help we can get there! Please read Peter's letter, if you haven't already done so, to get a sense of what is happening in the anthroposophical medical movement and why you should help. The board of PAAM is completely voluntary and committed to expand the AM movement and serve you, the members, better. Please help us make us financially strong and capable! With much appreciation, we thank you.

This issue, devoted to the heart, the blood and the circulation is largely a contribution from member, Branko Furst, M.D., who has worked for years to understand the heart and circulation. Many will remember his monograph, *The Heart and Circulation: An Integrative Model* published in 2014 and mentioned in this medical newsletter last year. While the 226 page monograph may be too much for many of you to read, he has recently published an journal review article that summarizes the relevant and salient scientific literature, and is the subject of this medical newsletter. Relevant passages from Rudolf Steiner will of course round out this issue. For those who want more depth and detail, then the monograph is important to read.

Please note: This Letter is for your thoughtful consideration and personal research and is not to be taken as something dogmatic to believe in nor promote as something official from PAAM or the international anthroposophic medical movement.

There are many Michaelic mantras Steiner gave. During this autumn season of the mighty and courageous Archangel Michael that leads up to the birth celebration of Jesus of Nazareth as the future human, earthly vehicle for the Christ Sun-Being, may you receive the following meditative verse:

Victorious Spirit!
Flame through the impotence
Of irresolute souls,
Burn out egoism,
Ignite our compassion
So that selflessness,
The life stream of humankind
Wells up as the source
Of spirit rebirth.

Attachment #1 *The Heart: Pressure-Propulsion Pump or Organ of Impedance?* By Branko Furst, M.D in *Emerging Technology Review*, 2015. We are fortunate to live now at a time when modern science can begin to recognize the truth of what Steiner said about the heart not being a mechanical pump providing only pressure and propulsion for the movement of blood. Branko points to many of the anomalies that argue against such an inveterate view and offers an alternative explanation in line with anthroposophical thinking. The heart and blood act just the opposite to what the prevailing, century-old

view has stated! Both experimental and phenomenological evidence is adduced to show that it is the blood that must be the primary mover and the heart temporarily and rhythmically impedes its motion to maintain pressure in the vascular system. We should deeply understand the issues involved because a proper biological view of the heart and circulation has profound implications of how we view the human being and how we care for cardiac patients. Steiner has also pointed out that that a proper, non-mechanical view of the heart has deep social and spiritual implications as well. Thank you Branko for this effort!

Attachment #2 Some references to the heart, the blood, and circulation in Rudolf Steiner's work. A warm thank you goes to Branko Furst for several of these references. I have collected these passages and printed them for you with, I hope, enough of the surrounding context that will facilitate understanding. There are many more passages that would be potentially relevant that cannot be included. As with reading anything by Rudolf Steiner, you will need considerable will-directed forces of concentration, unbiased openness and good will to understand him! The first passage is a general remark Steiner gave regarding objections one can have against anthroposophical spiritual science. Keep this in mind when reading the rest of the passages. Also, remember Branko's article showing the reasonableness of the idea of the heart as an organ of impedance ("a damming up organ" is Steiner's expression) would have been considered ridiculous and unworthy of consideration by any "serious" (read "materialistic") scientist and physician a decade ago. When Steiner counsels patience in 1917, he really means patience!

The first four specific passages are from the 1st Medical Course, Spiritual Science and Medicine (CW 312), 20 lectures in 1920 (aka Introducing Anthroposophical Medicine). Here he talks about the physical action of the heart as being like a hydro-ram, about the heart as a mediator between the upper and lower human being, as the great synthesizer, as well as breathing and blood formation activities and the heart. Significantly, and far before the Framingham Study results and the beneficial evidence of physical activity, Steiner mentions not only the harmful cardiac effects of inactivity, but also the pernicious effects of modern transportation with its "abandonment to passive motion". Mindless exercise is not the answer, but the spontaneous, self-propelled movements that are full of warmth, life and soul are. Steiner created eurhythmy as a potent antidote for the modern person's life. He envisioned eurhythmy as a regular practice people would do along with meditation.

The next two specific passages are from the 2nd Medical Course (313), Anthroposophical Spiritual Science and Medical Therapy, 9 lectures in 1921. Steiner mentions that the ego or "I" uses the somewhat "dead" RBCs as part of the "I"-organization to interact with the physical world and as an instrument in bringing movement into balance. This is all in the context of the ego's use, via the ego-organization, of phosphorus and the phosphorizing process. The heart is the archetypal organ and is formed entirely out of the activity of tissue fluid and blood movement. The heart is a sensor for the systemic and pulmonary venous blood that flows into it. The heart is put into the context of complex, true nutrition and the activity and interaction of tissue fluids.

From the book, Cosmic Memory (CW 11), Chap 18, The Fourfold Man on Earth. Steiner reminds us that human organs are either descending or ascending in development. The heart is really only in the beginning of its development; it will someday be an organ of volition with voluntary striated muscle. A moral and spiritual development will help ensure that our future soul expressions through voluntary heart movements will be positive for the world.

The Occult Significance of the Blood: an Esoteric Study (CW 55), lec. in Berlin 10.25.1906. This is an important lecture that discusses the blood in relation to the 4 members of the human being, the "I", and

the evolution of consciousness from a group soul consciousness to a personal, individual self-consciousness with a modern intellect. This transition was brought about by the “mixing of blood” (exogamy) from outside one’s tribe or group.

The passage from *The Human Spirit and the Animal Spirit* (CW 60) lec. in Berlin 11.17.1910 discusses the blood and circulation in the human in contrast what occurs in animals; it is a subtle but important difference.

The 10th passage, Lec. 7 in *An Occult Physiology* (CW 128) Steiner discusses the blood as the meeting place of spirit and matter where both lofty supersensible processes in organic manifestation and physical-chemical processes can occur. The vital blood stimulates salt-forming processes, fluid condensation processes and warmth generation. The anuclear RBCs, already undergoing a death process, are able to be the instrument for the “I” to interact with the physical world. The blood-organism has delicate organic processes that allow it to be a “tablet” for conscious and unconscious soul-ego experiences. (During our cultural epoch the “I” is largely experienced in the soul; hence the expression, soul-ego processes.)

Attachment #3 *An Occult Physiology* (CW 128), lec.6, *The Blood as a Manifestation and Instrument of the Human Ego*. This whole lecture is reproduced and can act as summary of many of the points already made. The nutritional stream, widely conceived, and the soul-ego experiences and processes all affect the blood and its circulation. The blood and nerves are both important formative forces in forming the human organism. Steiner contrasts the blood system directed towards vitality and life, and the skeletal system directed towards death. However, both are products of different ego processes. See *Fundamentals of Therapy*, chap. 6, *Blood and Nerve* for Steiner and Wegman’s mature, yet succinct presentation of the same material for a medical audience.

Contributions, Questions and Answers

Our and friends at the Lili Kolisko Institute (PAAM members Ross Rentea, Andrea Rentea and Mark Kamsler) are offering a free webinar Wednesday, December 9, 2015 on “Michael and the Being of Eurythmy – A Christmas Imagination” 7PM CST. This webinar is jointly sponsored by the Anthroposophical Society in America. Given Steiner’s view and hopes for eurythmy (see above) this webinar may renew or intensify our interest in this unique, healing movement—just what the modern soul needs.

Until the New Year and for the PAAM Board,
Ricardo Bartelme, M.D.