Freie Hochschule Stuttgart

Developing a Waldorf Curriculum in Asia

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Abstract

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As Waldorf education with its European roots expands to different countries around the world, it is important that the local curriculum reflects the geographical, historical and cultural environment the children live in and not a "copy-paste" approach. This thesis explores guidelines, the criteria for and the process of adapting the Waldorf history and culture curriculum to the local context, and possible Asian content and variations for Classes 1-8.

Exisiting literature, surveys and interviews with Waldorf teachers and mentors in Asia shed light on Eurocentric Waldorf traditions and practices, adapting key aspects of the curriculum to specific cultural and historical traditions, teaching history in Asia, and selecting stories that meet the developmental needs of the Asian child, balanced with multicultural content to educate world citizens.

Designing a local curriculum also requires teacher education, inner development, foreign mentor guidelines and training, quality development, cultural sensitivity, understanding child development and the evolution of human consciousness.

Asian fairy tales, fables, legends, creation stories, mythology, historical events and perspectives are explored, with examples from China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and India. This research aims to contribute to pioneering schools in Asia by providing resources and suggestions to trigger ideas or further research.

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1. Introduction

"Waldorf education is being offered in more than 60 countries and is growing rapidly with major new areas of development in Asia. In the process of becoming global, it has spread from its origins in Europe, yet it has barely begun to reflect critically on what this expansion means in terms of the transmission of ideas into different cultures and different settings."

-Martyn Rawson, Sustainable Teacher Learning in Waldorf Education, 2010

This thesis explores how to adapt the Waldorf history and culture curriculum to the Asian context, in particular East Asia and Southeast Asia, and also explores possible Asian content and variations for Classes 1-8. As Waldorf education, with its European roots, expands to countries and cultures that have very a different history, religion and worldview, it is important that the curriculum reflects the geographical, historical and cultural environment the children are living in. Through surveys and interviews with Asian Waldorf teachers, foreign mentors in Asia, experienced Waldorf teachers, as well as literature reviews, this project will compile and examine possible Asian variations of the curriculum. The aim is not to provide a recipe solution, but to explore the process of adapting a curriculum, and the criteria and considerations that should be taken into account. This research hopes to inspire educators from non-European cultures to explore how the richness and diversity of their cultural backgrounds can be incorporated into the curriculum design, while meeting the developmental needs of the children.

As an Asian Master's student at the Freie Hochschule Waldorf Teacher's College in Stuttgart, the site of the first Waldorf School founded by Rudolf Steiner and Emil Molt, I observed that the archetypal curriculum used in many Waldorf schools around the world very much reflects the European culture, values, and history. The need to modulate the curriculum to fit the local context is recognized by Waldorf educators all over the world, and although there is much interest and research in this field, many pioneering Asian initiatives tend to lack the resources, time, staff, training, and mentorship to devote adequate attention to this aspect.

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Born in the UK to Chinese parents, my first words were in English. I had a Chinese name, but no one ever used it. I later studied in Singapore, a former British colony whose education policies were still heavily influenced by the British. As a teenager, I could quote Shakespeare and Jane Austen, yet I had never read a single Chinese novel. I knew the granite tors of Dartmoor and limestone caves of Yorkshire, but knew little about Asian geography. I was what they called a "banana", yellow on the outside, white on the inside, estranged from my cultural identity and roots. More overpowering than physical colonisation was the colonisation of consciousness.

In my search for a sense of belonging, I became interested in the effects of education on cultural identity, and how a curriculum influences one's worldview and sense of self.

When I encountered Waldorf education, I was drawn to its holistic and child-centered approach, yet was at the same time acutely aware that it had the potential to propagate a Eurocentric worldview. Although experienced practitioners state that there is no definitive Waldorf curriculum, there are certain themes and practices from the first Waldorf schools that have evolved into an archetypal curriculum and in some cases dogma, particularly in places that are new to Waldorf education.

The Waldorf curriculum that is commonly used around the world contains many Western themes such as the Old Testament, Norse Mythology, and Greek and Roman history. They understandably reflect the social and geographical environment the first Waldorf schools were born out of in Germany, 1919.

Waldorf education has since become increasingly popular in Asia. However, the archetypal European curriculum is sometimes imported wholesale with nominal attempts to localize it. Reasons include limited staff resources, insufficient teacher training opportunities, lack of knowledge, together with a postcolonial mentality of western supremacy, among others. This creates a real danger of estrangement from one's own cultural identity and roots. As Waldorf education spreads across Asia, it is important to critically examine if, in the adoption of the archetypal Waldorf curriculum, Asians are imposing a form of cultural hegemony on themselves, and if so, how to bring about a balanced approach. According to a New Zealand Waldorf teacher, Neil Boland, Aengus Gordon questions whether Waldorf education is a form of

colonisation, establishing "settler outposts overseas to bring civilising influences to those in need of them." He describes many different levels of colonialism, "not only the economic model but also the spiritual mode, and it would be imperative in any school right now, in my view, to actually do its own audit of time and place" (Boland, 2016).

To children living in Asia, it may be more relevant to build a deeper understanding of their history and cultural achievements as well as that of their close neighbours in the Asia Pacific region, which have greater social, emotional, geographical and historical connections. The advantage of such a place-based education, according to Boland, would be that learning would be "experiential, 'real', in tune with nature, with the community, in touch with the history of the location, the environment, culture, economy, literature, and art of a particular place." According to the pedagogy, "lower school students often lose what place-based educators call their "sense of place" through focusing too quickly or exclusively on national or global issues" (Boland, 2016).

A balanced, multicultural curriculum that takes place-based pedagogy into account would be helpful in building up important skills, such as intercultural competencies, that young people will need in an increasingly global world. According to Rawson, many scholars agree that the competencies needed in today's modern and global world also include the ability to navigate new economies and fragmented social life, construct stable and coherent identities in rapidly changing social contexts and have a coherent sense of self and identity (Rawson, 2017).

This research seeks the inclusion of more multicultural content in Waldorf curricula used all over the world, particularly in Asia. The thesis provides an alternative selection of narratives and themes, as a resource for teachers in Asia, or those seeking a more culturally diverse curriculum. The topics are drawn from countries in East Asia and Southeast Asia, like China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore, etc, - countries which tend to be underrepresented in the existing framework.

The objective of this research is to collect and compile Asian content, narratives, traditions and activities that can be used in the Waldorf curriculum for Classes 1-8. This research also seeks to provide some guidelines of how Waldorf educators could adapt the curriculum to the local context.

Through email interviews and surveys with Waldorf teachers and mentors in Asia, as well as literature reviews, this research compiles a diverse collection of Asian stories, myths, and cultural history, and examines how they fit into the existing curriculum framework to meet the needs of the child at each stage of their development through Classes 1 - 8. The aim is to create a database as a resource of multicultural content, with representations of different cultures. For the purpose of this research, the focus will be more on the more variable aspects of the curriculum, including stories and fables, teaching of history and culture. There will be less focus on adapting empirical subjects such a mathematics, chemistry, physical and astronomy. It is also assumed that for subjects like Language, Botany, Geography, and Zoology, local flora, fauna, terrain and traditions will be taught. Data collected relating to other subjects such as art, crafts, form drawing, performing arts, games and movement will be included in the appendix.

2. The Waldorf Curriculum

2.1 The First Waldorf School and Curriculum

"We must take advantage of the possibilities presented by the Waldorf School to reform and revolutionize the educational system."

-Rudolf Steiner, Opening Address, Teacher's Seminar, 1919

It was just after the First World War and Germany was in chaos. In the post-war upheavals, various people tried to alleviate the suffering and initiate new social developments in hope of a brighter future. One such person was Emil Molt, the director of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory (Wiechert, 2016).

Emil Molt had requested that Rudolf Steiner help found a school for the children of the factory employees. Before the opening of the school, Rudolf Steiner met with the 12 individuals he had chosen as teachers. For 14 days, from August 20 to September 5, 1919, he gave seminars to prepare them for their new task. This was the first Waldorf teacher training.

Rudolf Steiner began the day with the lectures that are collected in "The Foundations of Human Experience" (previously titled "The Study of Man"); then he followed these with "Practical Advice to Teachers". The lectures which are compiled in "Discussions with Teachers" followed in the afternoons (Schmitt-Stegmann, 2000). He concluded with three "Curriculum Lectures" on 6 September 1919.

The first Waldorf school opened in Stuttgart on September 7, 1919 with 12 teachers, eight classes and 256 children (Schmelzer, 2017). The teachers learned on-the-job while teaching their first classes, children and teachers learning together. Steiner himself was actively involved in the school affairs and was available for teachers to consult him on pedagogical and curriculum issues (Göbel, 2017).

The first Waldorf curriculum was a result of Steiner's guidelines, as well as suggestions and discussions by the founding teachers in Stuttgart, striving as a team to develop the curriculum together (Stockmeyer, Everett-Zade and Avison, 2015)

Some subjects, and when to teach them, were specifically mentioned by Steiner, such as the teaching of Greek and Oriental people in Class 5 and Roman History in Class 6:

> *"In the fifth grade, we make every effort to begin to introduce the children to real historical concepts. With fifth graders, we need not hesitate at all to teach the children about the cultures of Asian peoples and of the Greeks..."*

> *"Greek and Roman history and its aftereffects (until the beginning of the fifteenth century) belong to the sixth grade" (Steiner, 1997, p. 204-205).*

However, some subjects were left open to suggestion.

> *"In the fourth grade we make the transition from this type of instruction to speaking about what belongs to recent history, still in a very free way. For example, we can tell the children how it happened that grapes came to be cultivated locally (if in fact that is the case), or how orchards were introduced or how one or the other industry appeared, and other similar things. Then, too, we draw on the geography of the local region, beginning with what is most readily available, as I have already described" (Steiner, 1997, p. 204)*

In the first lecture of "Discussions with Teachers", Steiner writes a summary on the blackboard of what can be taught for the different grade levels, and the indication for Class 4 is "Scenes from ancient history" (Steiner, 1997)

The pioneering teacher for Class 4, Caroline von Heydebrand, happened to be well-versed in Norse mythology and so she proposed this to Steiner as a topic to be taught to her class. He agreed, and Norse mythology thus became part of the first curriculum (Rawson, 2017).

Naturally, the suggestions and ultimate choices of the first Waldorf curriculum were born out of the geographical and cultural environment and needs of 1919 Germany.

The topics taught tended to be those that Steiner and the teachers were familiar with, and that were in the awareness of Europeans in the 1900s.

2.2 Defining a Waldorf Curriculum

"Firstly, it is necessary to state that a definitive, universally valid, unchangeable Waldorf Curriculum doesn't exist."
        -Martyn Rawson, Waldorf Education: A Continuous Cycle of Renewal, 2017

In his lectures and discussions with the first teachers, Steiner provided many specific examples and commentaries, suggestions for lessons, characterizations of how various stories can be brought before the children, and a knowledge of the developing human being. In the introduction to "Discussions with Teachers", Craig Giddens emphasises that the indications given by Steiner are not meant be copied by teacher after teacher. "If they were, they would become quickly 'out of date'. Rudolf Steiner's training method was, instead, to elicit a lesson from the teachers themselves, and only then to make his own contribution based on what was presented" (Giddens, 1997, p.12).

This is echoed by Astrid Schmitt-Stegmann who writes in the foreword of "Practical Advice to Teachers" that Steiner's lectures were given in response to particular situations surrounding the opening of the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart, Germany, and are not meant to be indiscriminately applied across time and space. "These few dated indications must not deter us from seeing the uniqueness and universality of this education that today is practiced in Waldorf schools all over the world" (Schmitt-Stegmann, 2000, p.19).

The International Forum for Steiner Waldorf Education highlights the importance of the curriculum continuously evolving over space and time:
        "The curriculum is not an arbitrary but a constituent element of Waldorf education. It marks essential teaching guidelines whose age-appropriate application strengthens the development of the children and young people through its inherent mirroring and composition across subjects in connected

arcs spanning several years. It is continuously being developed taking account of the geographical and cultural location, the political as well as general and global lines of development of the time" (International Forum for Steiner Waldorf Education, 2016).

The Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen (Federation of Free Waldorf Schools) defines the curriculum as a "constantly evolving framework, which can be individualized and modified in the concrete co-operation of the teachers with their pupils." They also acknowledge that the archetypal curriculum, what they call the "Richter Curriculum", evolved from the basic curriculum recommendations of Rudolf Steiner, as well as the wealth of practical experiences accumulated by practitioners over the years (Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen, 2017). [1]

In the foreword of the Chinese edition of "The Educational Tasks and Content of the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum", Rawson writes,

> *"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"* (Rawson, 2017).

One example is the 'wooden spoon principle', referring to the fact that carving a wooden spoon as the first activity in woodwork is standard practice in most Waldorf schools. Apparently Steiner asked the woodwork teacher at the first Waldorf school what the children could usefully make. The teachers suggested a spoon and Steiner approved it. The wooden spoon quickly became the standard in Waldorf Schools (Iwan in Rawson, 2017).

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[1] A copy of the Richter curriculum can be found is available at:
http://www.waldorfschule.de/eltern/lehrplan/#main-content

Another example is knitting. Steiner has extolled the benefits of knitting, which was a traditional practice in Germany, where the cold winters would necessitate the need for warm socks, hats and scarves. Yet knitting has become synonymous with Waldorf handwork curriculum, even in countries that have neither cold winters nor easy access to wool.

This reinforces the idea that there cannot be a definitive and fixed Waldorf curriculum. A curriculum that reflects Waldorf educational principles should be developed locally, practiced, constantly re-thought, re-evaluated and modified to fit to geographical and cultural context.

2.3 The Need for Asian Narratives in the Curriculum

"Each school is located in a cultural, geographical and political space. This acts on the curriculum in a way comparable with the suggestions made by Rudolf Steiner as to the design of the classrooms and the school architecture in order to create the special atmosphere appropriate for each class. Every region and country has its own access to world history which is the result of its unique history and also affects the curriculum."

- International Forum for Steiner Waldorf Education, 2016

The first Waldorf curriculum was birthed in post-war Germany in 1919, based on years of Steiner's research, his lectures for teachers, as well as the resulting decisions and practices of the first cohort of teachers in Stuttgart. The curriculum, its narratives, concepts and worldview developed out of the cultural, geographical and political space of middle-Europe. Designed for children growing up in Germany in 1919, the curriculum drew heavily on European history, folklore and traditions, and viewed the world from a European perspective.

Nearly 100 years later, and on the other side of the globe, Waldorf schools have been founded in many different countries. Each region has a different climate, culture, history, worldview and reality, not to mention a century worth of changes and

technological developments. As schools in different countries and cultures across the world embrace Waldorf education and its curriculum, there is a need for local teachers to distill the core principles of Waldorf education from the culture-specific traditions that have evolved into established practices over the years. If the original German curriculum with its European traditions and perspectives is imported wholesale into non-European countries without adapting it to fit the local context, its incongruity with the local culture will soon become apparent. In the recent years, there has been a growing awareness that the Waldorf curriculum practiced by many countries all over the world reflects a tendency to interpret the world in terms of European or Anglo-American values and experiences. This has led to the Waldorf curriculum being described as Eurocentric by a number of practitioners, and contributed to lively discourse and research.

With a rapidly growing Waldorf movement in Asia, local schools and teachers need to critically consider to what extent their own curriculum is a "constantly evolving framework, individualized and modified in the concrete co-operation of the teachers with their pupils", whether it is modulated to fit their geographical and cultural context, or whether it is simply imported, lock, stock and barrel (Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen, 2017).

In "International Political Economy in the 21st Century", Smith, El-Anis and Farrands describe cultural hegemony as the social phenomena where "western culture can be seen to be imported by non-Western societies at the expense of existing cultures". It occurs when one culture overshadows or dominates the local culture. The authors cite several examples of cultural imports from the west, such as the widespread use of English and French in the Middle East and North Africa, the proliferation of football viewing and merchandise, and even the popularity of western celebrities like Michael Jackson in places like South America or South East Asia (Smith, El-Anis and Farrands, 2013, p.186). The danger of cultural imperialism is that western tastes will gradually replace local cultures and practices around the world.

In "The McDonaldization of Society", George Ritzer coined the term "McDonaldization" to describe how speed, convenience, and standardization (like that of the fast food chain) have replaced the flair of design and creation, resulting in

homogenization of global culture and life. "Anywhere you go in the United States and, increasingly, throughout the world, you are likely to find the same products offered in the same way" (Ritzer, 2014, p.142). The McDonaldization of the world applies not only to the fast-food chain with its franchises in almost every country, but to any industry that applies the technique of McDonald's on a large scale (Understanding Media and Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication, 2016).

Waldorf schools around the world need to consider the effects and implications of their curriculum choices and practices. When a new Waldorf school in Asia imports a Eurocentric Waldorf curriculum into Asia, are they imposing a kind of cultural hegemony on themselves, unthinkingly adopting the European point of view over their own? Will they be unwittingly participating in the "McDonaldization of the Waldorf curriculum", with Waldorf franchises in every country? Waldorf music lecturer Professor Stephan Ronner speaks of the need to revitalize the Waldorf curriculum and warns against schools becoming "Waldorf museums", around the world, referring to the formulaic approach of unquestioningly adopting and replicating the original practices, music and songs of the first Waldorf schools. He calls for a revival of the pioneering spirit, for new content and music to be composed that reflect the modern cultures and needs of the children (Ronner, 2017). Bo Dahlin, who writes about education as cultural power says that any culture, traditional or modern, is not just a way of life, but is also a way of cultivating specific ways of thinking, perceiving and understanding the world. He asserts that non-mainstream cultures today need active protection and support – unless we want to end up in a virtually totalitarian world system, a worldwide "monoculture of the mind" (Dahlin, 2010).

In today's cosmopolitan world, how can we raise children who feel comfortable with their own culture and everyone else's? According to Rawson, Li and Panasot, the modern child needs to develop intercultural competences, a stable sense of self and identity in a fast changing, multicultural world, yet at the same time, experience the universality of human values (Rawson, Li and Panasot, 2013). Experiencing life through the eyes of another culture fosters a sense of universality of human values of love, compassion, and goodness.

Suzanne Keen's theory of narrative empathy describes the sharing of feeling and perspective-taking induced by reading, viewing, hearing, or imagining narratives of another's situation and condition (Keen, 2013). Rawson, Li and Panasot explain the importance of narrative empathy in the Waldorf curriculum, which takes the person into the flow of another person's life, even if only for a short moment. Empathy allows us to feel from a distance what another person has experienced. Narrative empathy employed in the telling of stories and history closes the distance between different countries and cultures (Rawson, Li and Panasot, 2013).

At the time the first curriculum was developed there were some parts of the world that the western world knew little about. As the world becomes more global and cosmopolitan, there is a growing need for the voices and stories of these cultures to be heard and understood.

3. Setting the Scene in Asia

3.1 Asian Perspective on the Waldorf Curriculum

As Waldorf education leaves its Middle-European origins and takes root in Asia, it is important to critically examine the archetypal curriculum and ask ourselves:

What topics are universally relevant?

Which ones are less relevant or too far removed from Asia?

Are there Asian equivalents that fulfill the same requirements?

From whose point of view are we teaching history?

What practices or ways of thinking have we been taking for granted?

How do we balance local and global narratives?

An open, honest reflection where everything can be asked, and everything can be questioned, would certainly raise some discomfort or even resentment. As educators of world citizens, the challenge we face is to remain centered on the task of finding balance and healing in our journey of developing an education towards freedom.

3.2 Asian Cultures and Themes

The largest continent on earth, with approximately 44.4 million square kilometers, Asia occupies about a third of the world's landmass. With more than four billion people, about 60 percent of the world population lives in Asia. In China alone, there are. 1.3 billion people and India has over one billion inhabitants, even though both nations together are geographically smaller than Russia (Asia, n.d.).

Due to limited time, resources, language and data availability, for the purposes of this research, I will focus on the following countries in Asia that have been referred to as the Orient, or the Far East:

Southeast Asia –Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore

East Asia – China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea

Although it would be impossible to summarise or make generalisations for such large and diverse groups of people, with different cultures, beliefs, climate and lifestyles, I shall attempt to sketch a rough picture of a region that has traditionally been underrepresented not only in the Waldorf curriculum, but also in the mainstream media and texts.

3.2.1 Asian Kingdoms and Empires

Civilisations and kingdoms in Asia date back to prehistoric times, as far back as 9000 B.C., and powerful kingdoms and empires that emerged include the Indus Valley, China, Japan, Korea, Siam, Khmer, Srivijaya, Majapahit, Borobodour, Philippine Chiefdoms, and the legendary Mongols. Huge historical structures built include the Angkor Wat, Borobudur, Taj Mahal, the Forbidden City, and the Great Wall of China.

3.2.2 Cultural Achievements and Inventions

There were extensive inventions and discoveries in science, technology, art, religion, and philosophy. Inventions that originated from Asia include paper, printing or movable type, printed paper currency, the compass, an early seismograph, gunpowder, the crossbow, silk, porcelain, and many others. The Song Dynasty Chinese were using movable type printing 500 years before Gutenberg invented the printing press in Europe. Asian goods like silk, fine textiles, porcelain and spices were in high demand in Europe, which contributed to the European colonisation of Asia.

The first ocean crossings were almost certainly accomplished by Austronesian people who, over a period of some 5000 years journeyed countless miles over open ocean, from Taiwan and Maritime Southeast Asia throughout the islands of the Pacific Ocean, using highly complex and sophisticated navigation techniques (Moana Pasifika Voyage, n.d.).

Decades before Christopher Columbus discovered America, it is believed that the world and many continents were discovered by Chinese Admiral Zheng He, whose "Treasure Fleets" roamed the oceans with seven voyages between 1405 and 1435, solidifying Chinese's influence over much of Asia (Fernandez-Armesto, 2001).

3.2.3 Colonialism and Imperialism

From the 1500s onwards, Western countries began to colonise Asia, taking control of the international trade of Asia, and diverting the profits to Europe. As a result, the Europeans became stronger while Asian empires and kingdoms became weaker. By the 1800s the Europeans were in a position to establish their authority over much of Asia, particularly the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia (Wilson, n.d.).

The Philippines was colonized by Spain, followed by America; Indonesia was colonized by the Netherlands; Singapore, Malaysia, Burma, India and Brunei by Britain; Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos by France; East Timor and for a while, Malacca, by Portugal.

While the colonial powers profited much from the region's vast resources and large market, imperialism negatively affected the region's development, destroying native culture and local craft industries. Other countries like China and Japan were pressured into giving the Europeans and Americans privileged trading rights. One reason why the standard of living was so poor in many of these countries was that the natural wealth of these regions had been funneled to Western countries (Romano, 2010). The colonial experience led to the rise of an anti-colonial nationalist fervor that spawned independence movements.

However, commercial agriculture, mining and export-based economies developed rapidly during this period. Western countries introduced legal systems, modern medicine that stressed the use of vaccines, and more sanitary hygiene that helped to save lives and increase life expectancy.

The presence of Western European colonial empires and imperialism in Asia lasted six centuries, formally ending with the independence of the Portuguese Empire's last colony East Timor in 2002.

3.2.4 World War II

In the period leading up to World War II, the Europeans and Americans were preoccupied with their own domestic economic problems and with defending

themselves against the German advance in Europe, and were consequently less interested in their Asian colonies.

Around that time, Japan began to invade and occupy many parts of Asia, moving southward through China into Southeast Asia. The Japanese cultural campaign proclaimed that Asia should be ruled by Asians and promised independence from the Western colonial/imperialist rule. At first, some Southeast Asians admired and welcomed the Japanese. However, when the promised independence was not forthcoming, nationalist resistance movements arose, fighting to free their nations from foreign interference, whether throwing off the colonial yoke of Europe or military control of Japan (Neher, n.d.).

3.2.5 Post War and Independence

The postwar emergence of independent nation states marks a period of economic, political, as well as social and cultural rebuilding for many Asian countries. Cultural and indigenous religious movements surfaced and emphasized a national identity based upon traditional religious and cultural values. Western-style political movements were created; they drew inspiration from western ideologies and models. The local elites who had received a Western education led nationalist movements and often assumed positions of leadership and power.

While the economies of most Asian countries can be characterized as developing, there are economically prosperous countries including Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Brunei and Singapore. The political landscape in Asia is constantly evolving. Political dynamics within Asian states range from vibrant multi-party democracies, Authoritarian "Democracies" to some of the world's most closed and repressive regimes.

The Asia Foundation, a nonprofit international development organization working in 18 Asian countries cites as the most critical issues Asia faces today the following:
- Lack of transparency and accountability in government;
- Persistent poverty and rising income inequality;
- Exclusion of women from political and economic life;
- Ethnic and religious conflicts;

- Access to justice and human rights; and
- Disaster management, climate change, and water resource management

(The Asia Foundation, 2014).

3.2.6 Religion

Unlike in Europe, where Christianity was widespread for many centuries and until today has visible influence on the culture and worldview, the dominant religions in Asia include animism, ancestral worship, Chinese folk religion, Confucianism, Taoism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism. Christianity was brought in by European missionaries during the colonial period and while there are small communities of Christians in a number of Asian countries, the Philippines is the only Asian country where it is the main religion. Buddhism is prevalent in various forms in China, South Korea, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar. Islam is the main religion in Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia. There are also small Hindu communities in many Southeast Asian countries.

The local religions and beliefs of a country play a role in shaping a school's curriculum, customs and festivals. Class teacher and researcher Vera Hoffmann states that in Waldorf schools in Europe, North America or other parts of the world where the majority of the population has a Christian background, annual festivals are often oriented to traditional Christian festivals. As Waldorf education moves into Asia which has a very different religious landscape, transformations of typical Waldorf festivals would have to be explored, based on local or indigenous religions, beliefs and customs. The process of adapting Waldorf festivals to the local context requires the teachers' openness to detach and free themselves from European or Christian Waldorf traditions (Hoffman, 2016, 2017).

3.3 Waldorf Schools in Asia

"In many countries, there are the requirements from the state which influence the curriculum and contradict the understanding of child development in Waldorf education. These range from the early start of schooling to various forms of premature academic learning. Every school finds solutions, ways and compromises that preserve the spirit of Waldorf education while at the same

time conforming to the statutory requirements. With such conflicting priorities, it is important to establish a productive convergence between the possible and the ideal in order to work creatively and support the development of the child through the curriculum."

-Key Characteristics of Waldorf Education, International Forum for Steiner Waldorf Education, 2016

According to Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners, prior to the early 1980s, there were no Waldorf initiatives in Asia. In 1987, a Waldorf school opened in Tokyo, followed by a kindergarten in Bangkok a year later. In 1996, the first schools opened in Thailand and the Philippines, 1998 in India, and 1999 and 2000 in Taiwan and Nepal. Since then, schools have been founded in Korea, Malaysia, other parts of Asia, and the expansion has been particularly rapid in China (Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners, n.d.).

The Waldorf World List published in March 2017 indicates that there are 1092 Waldorf and Rudolf Steiner schools in 64 countries and 1857 Waldorf Kindergartens in more than 70 countries around the world. Of this, 61 schools are from Asia, having been founded in the last two decades alone (Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners, 2017).

It is worthwhile to note that this list does not include unofficial, unregistered, or pioneering initiatives, Waldorf-inspired schools, or schools that have chosen to remain unlisted. The actual number is likely to be much larger.

According to Anna Hu in an article "Waldorf education on the move in Asia", as of May 2017, there are about 60 Waldorf schools and more than 400 kindergartens that are solely or partly practising Waldorf education in China alone. There are also six Waldorf early years teacher training centres in different parts of China (and another will be opened in 2018) running at full capacity and providing three-year training courses that aim to train up-to-standard kindergarten teachers; not to mention countless other Waldorf or anthroposophy-related training courses and workshops conducted every year (Hu, 2017).

In the Coordinator's Report of the China Waldorf Forum, Ben Cherry, former Waldorf teacher, with more than 30 years of experience in Australia and UK, describes the rapid but somewhat fragmented and chaotic expansion of the Waldorf movement in China, resulting in calls for unity and common standards. He also points out the growing risk of people "using the Waldorf name to satisfy their own ambitions, without knowing what the education really is" (Cherry, 2016).

The Asian Waldorf Teachers' Conference (AWTC) was first held in 2005 and has been running every two years ever since, in Taiwan (2005), Bangkok (2007), Manila (2009), Hyderabad (2011), Seoul (2013) and Tokyo (2015), Chengdu (2017). The most recent conference in May 2017 saw more than 900 participants from Asian countries and regions including mainland China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Nepal, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam, gathering to discuss the conference theme "Cultural Identity and Individualisation in Educational Practice".

The discussion revealed some common issues faced by the Waldorf movement in Asia. Most Waldorf schools were initiated by parents, considered private schools, and thus received little support, funding or even legal recognition by the local governments. Compromises have to be made in order to achieve legal status so students can sit for national examinations, such as becoming a branch of a public school (Hu, 2017). In more extreme cases, the Waldorf schools have to conform to certain requirements by the local authorities in order to avoid being shut down. In Singapore, only foreign children are allowed to attend the full school day at the young Waldorf initiative and local citizens are permitted only to attended artistic lessons as a form of "enrichment".

In an interview with Waldorf Resources, high school teacher Anna Slater from the Philippines talks about the struggles of her school:

> "Our school is always struggling to financially make ends meet. Because of lack of funds, there haven't been enough classrooms, enough teachers, and other facilities that are urgently needed such as a library/study room, cafeteria and a covered court. We have students craving for books and we can't provide them as many books as we would like. There is no cafeteria at school

so everybody brings their own lunch and eats in his or her own classroom. This adds to the teachers' load because each classroom has to be monitored during lunch breaks. The court for playing sports and games is not covered and this creates problems in a tropical country wherein it is often either too hot to be under the sun or it is raining" (Slater, 2014).

Even the teachers, she says, are paid very little and some live in substandard homes with dirt floors and no electricity (Slater, 2014).

Despite the struggles, the demand for Waldorf education in Asia is growing at an unprecedented speed. Parents are increasingly seeking an alternative education for their children, and the number of Asians seeking Waldorf teacher training both locally and abroad is on the rise.

The Freie Hochschule Stuttgart/Seminar für Waldorfpädagogik in Stuttgart, Germany, at the site of Uhlandshöhe, the first Waldorf school, offers a fully accredited Master of Arts Programme in English for Steiner School class and subject teachers, and nearly half of the students are from East or Southeast Asia (Freie Hochschule Stuttgart, 2017; Ludzker, 2014).

3.4 Waldorf Curriculum in Asia

"(The curriculum) is continuously being developed taking account of the geographical and cultural location, the political as well as general and global lines of development of the time... ...the use of Rudolf Steiner's specifications for lessons which relate, for example, more to western cultural values could be supplemented or replaced by cultural content of corresponding value as long as the educational effect is maintained."

- International Forum for Steiner Waldorf Education,
Key Characteristics of Waldorf Education, 2016

As we travel the globe, we encounter various ways in which Waldorf education has been transferred from one place to the other. In some cases, there is an imagined idea of what the curriculum "should be". These ideas have often become a model, but are sometimes not what Steiner said or used in his first school. (Rawson, Li and Panasot, 2013). For instance, Wiechert addresses the classic division of the main lessons of Classes 1-8 into a rhythmical part, a work part and a story-telling part. He states, "there are no grounds to be found for dividing the main lesson into three parts in Steiner's work, neither in the lectures nor in the books of the teachers" (Wiechert, 2011).

In Asia, home to a myriad of cultures and ethnicities, there is a wide spectrum of how the curriculum has been implemented. Local stories, content and history are included to varying degrees, ranging from schools that draw heavily on the European curriculum, to schools that use local variations of the content.

During the Asian Teacher's Conference in Seoul, 2013, many Waldorf teachers gathered for a discussion on the curriculum at the workshop titled "History and Culture Curriculum – A Multi-cultural Approach", indicating a growing awareness and desire to adapt the curriculum to the local context.

Some schools in Asia had stable visiting mentors right from the start, experienced Waldorf teachers, usually from Europe, North America, Australia, or New Zealand, who had completed several cycles of teaching and would visit the pioneering school regularly a few times a year, for a few weeks or months at a time. The mentorship style would vary according to the individual, and would usually include teacher training, workshops, and observation of classes. Depending on the teachers and the mentor, there may be curriculum discussions of how local elements could be included in the curriculum.

In Taiwan, where the Waldorf movement is nearly 20 years old, it is encouraging to see how the traditions and the indigenous cultures are embraced in the Waldorf curriculum. An overview of Waldorf education in Taiwan states:

"*There is a very strong wish to bring the traditional aspects of Taiwanese culture back into modern life, to re-ensoul the often fragmented and hectic existence the society is into. Whether this occurs through songs, plays, stories, agriculture, craftwork or any other medium, the aim is the same: to reinvigorate traditional Taiwanese culture as a way of strengthening the coherence or meaningfulness of life as an anodyne to the one-sidedness of our modern times*" (Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners, n.d.).

Some schools that do not have regular mentors try to organize scattered workshops and trainings from any experienced Waldorf teacher they encounter. Monika Di Donato, an experienced Waldorf teacher from Germany who went to Nepal for a holiday and visited a Waldorf school there describes how excited the local teachers were when they discovered she was a Waldorf teacher. To her surprise, they immediately asked her to conduct teacher training, and on the spot, organized a 1-week training for their teachers (Di Donato, 2017). This very much illustrates the hunger in Asia for teacher training and Waldorf education, where teachers and parents jump at every opportunity to learn more. The dangers of such an approach would be that in having multiple and diverse sources of training, there would be varying or contradicting teaching styles and approaches, gaps in the learning and a resulting piecemeal understanding of Waldorf education, though some might argue that it is still better than having no training at all.

There are some Asian schools that start up with great effort but very little training. The European curriculum is imported wholesale, with little adaptation to fit the cultural context. Another German mentor and former Waldorf teacher Ursula Nicolai expressed her surprise at how a class and blackboard in Asia looked almost exactly like those in Germany. The only difference was that the words were in Mandarin. It was as if it had been a simple matter of "copy and paste" (Nicolai, 2017). There are also anecdotal stories of knitting being taught in tropical countries, having wool imported from overseas, many traditional German tunes and songs being taught on the recorder, instead of exploring local instruments, Norse mythology taught in Asian countries that are far-removed and feel little connection to the Nordic countries, celebration of European seasonal festivals in countries that are tropical or do not experience the same seasonal cycles, and Christian festivals such as Easter or St.

Martin's Lantern Festival celebrated in non-Christian countries (Stemann, 2017).

According to Neil Boland, although Christmas in New Zealand occurs in the middle of summer and not in winter like in Europe, the Christmas Shepherd's play was performed with actors dressed in sheepskin and wooly hats, with sweat running down their foreheads. He sees it a sign of 'total cultural colonialism' in Waldorf education when practices of Central European Waldorf schools are strictly adhered to even when the circumstances are different. In Waldorf schools outside of Europe, local teachers need to consider "if verses, annual festivals or Middle European narratives are suitable in other cultural settings" (Boland cited in Stemann, 2017).

There are a number of possible reasons for this "copy-paste" curriculum adoption. Limited teaching training resources in Asia means that in some cases, a teacher starts teaching, having had perhaps a week of lectures and workshops by visiting mentors. Without a thorough understanding of the principles of Waldorf education, it would be a challenge to even begin thinking of how to adapt the curriculum to the local context. Furthermore, as novices to Waldorf education, there would be a general desire to faithfully reproduce what one has just learnt, to do it the "right" way, as well as a natural fear of making mistakes, and doing something that is "un-Waldorf". It can then become a mere "handing on of traditions, ever more poorly understood and empty, saying the right words, complying to a series of norms to be thought of as 'a good Waldorf teacher'" (Denjean, 2014).

Furthermore, new Waldorf school initiatives in Asia tend to be understaffed, due to lack of funding or resources, and teachers often wear many hats, handling administration, finance, enrollment, publicity, organising trainings and workshops and more, on top of their teaching responsibilities. When time, energy and resources are limited, it is hardly surprising that one would prefer a recipe solution – a "ready-to-use" curriculum.

Another more worrying reason could be a subconscious (or even conscious) postcolonial mentality of western supremacy, that the white man's way is superior. In "Black Skin, White Masks", Frantz Fanon argues that the inferiority complex is a result of the colonized people internalizing the coloniser's image of them as inferior.

The colonised try to escape their skin colour, to 'turn white' by adopting the culture and language of the coloniser (Fanon, 1967, McEwan, 2009, p47). In "Internalized Oppression: The Psychology of Marginalized Groups", E.J.R David examines the 'Colonial Mentality', or internalized feelings of inferiority among Asians which denigrates and devalues the local culture as being inferior to that of the west (David, 2013). In "Colonization by Stealth", Edward Rush writes about "self-marginalization' in which the "domestic education system represents inferiority, while 'international' standards are unquestionably superior" (Rush, 2014, p117). Indeed, among the upwardly mobile and affluent Asians, a European or Eurocentric education is seen as a desirable step forward, an upgrade or improvement, or even a prestigious brand to be associated with. It seems that the idea of the western imperialism may have already been unconsciously internalised by some Asians who consider local or indigenous traditions and crafts a backward activity of the poor and lower classes.

Hu succinctly summarises the tasks of Waldorf schools in Asia:

"*Schools are moving along a path in search of their own cultural identities in Waldorf educational practices. Even today most of the tutors and mentors in Asia come from Europe or other western countries, but how can teachers in Asian countries substitute the European fairy tales, histories, songs and children's rhymes with appropriate local counterparts that are relevant to local people? Especially in some Asian countries with a very short period of independence due to a lengthy colonial history, this is a pressing issue*" (Hu, 2017).

As pioneering schools in Asia strive to build up their schools, the challenge faced by the teachers is how to modulate the Waldorf curriculum to fit their cultural, geographical and historical context.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Research Design

4.1.1 Documentary research

In order to collect and compile Asian content, narratives and activities that can be used in the Waldorf curriculum for Classes 1 to 8, I sought to gather stories, myths and traditions from teachers who have a lived experience in an Asian culture as well as some understanding of Waldorf education.

Online surveys and email interviews were conducted with Asian Waldorf schools and teachers. Information on the curriculum was also gathered from their school websites and existing literature. The main aim was to discover the local variations used in their curriculum.

To collect data for the second part of my research, which was to create some guidelines of how Waldorf educators could adapt the curriculum to the local context, in-depth interviews, both live and via video teleconferencing were conducted with Waldorf mentors who had worked in Asia, as well as lecturers and teacher trainers. Most of them were experienced Waldorf school teachers, many of European, Australian or New Zealand origin, who had spent many years in Asia researching in this field. The interview questions focused more on the "how" aspect – the guidelines, criteria and methodology for a curriculum design in Asia.

To gain a clearer picture of the curriculum requirements at each age level, Steiner's original writings and lectures as well as secondary literature on the curriculum were studied, in order to glean the thinking and reasoning behind each curricular decision. Combined with the data collected on Asia, I explored the process and criteria for selecting local variations for the curriculum.

4.1.2 Design of Interviews

Waldorf teachers in Asia were asked more content-related questions. Presented with the archetypal Waldorf curriculum, the teachers were asked to indicate which ones they used or found relevant to their country, and the reasons. They were also asked to suggest local or regional variations and topics for different subjects, including stories, history, arts, crafts, etc.

Waldorf mentors and trainers were interviewed in-depth and asked questions relating to the bigger picture of how a local curriculum could be developed. The questions included but were not limited to the following:

- Are Asian Waldorf schools adapting the Waldorf curriculum to their cultural context, with place-based pedagogy? If not, what are the factors preventing it?

- What steps or approach should schools take when embracing the Waldorf curriculum in a new country while maintaining their own identity and culture? Are there any guidelines / models / thought processes that would be helpful to new Waldorf schools or teachers when planning their curriculum?

- There are also Asians who precisely want a European education because they see it as the way forward, by having a white man's education. It seems that the idea of the western imperialism may have already been unconsciously internalised by some Asians who consider local or indigenous traditions backwards and of a lower class. How could this be addressed?

- What Asian narratives, myths or creation stories, or history can be used as an equivalent for topics like Old Testament (Class 3), Norse mythology (Class 4), Greek studies (Class 5), or Roman history (Class 6)?

- How do we differentiate universal values and Eurocentric topics?

- Should European narratives be simply replaced? Or should Asian students learn both European and Asian narratives, and perhaps compare them?

- Does religion play a role in adapting the curriculum?

5. Overview: Asian Variations for the Curriculum

5.1 Approach

"…let's take this question of story-telling lessons. It would be good if you could consider what you really want to foster in the children by means of these lessons. Our study of the general educational principles will give you what you need for the actual class teaching, but for the story-telling lessons you will have to find the material yourselves to be given to the children during all of their school life, from seven to fourteen years of age, in a free narrative style."

-Rudolf Steiner, Discussions with Teachers, 1919

Whenever I mentioned to people that I was researching content for an Asian curriculum, it was usually met with interest and excitement, followed by a request for me to share my findings with them, particularly if they were from Asia. This suggests that there may be a growing number of Asian teachers who wish to find an expression of their culture, or at least an Asian culture in the curriculum, but perhaps lack the time or resources to explore this.

Ideally, every Waldorf school in each country or even city should develop their own unique curriculum that is contextualized to their own culture, environment and beliefs. A regional curriculum may perhaps be a better fit, but every school and culture has different needs, which would be best understood by those living in that particular environment. There is no one-size-fits-all solution and a Waldorf curriculum should provide general principles, and not recipes.

Having said that, starting a Waldorf school in Asia is a Herculean task. New schools are often understaffed, teachers overworked and undertrained, and not having as much support as they would like. In the absence of time, guidance, and a deep understanding of the thinking behind the curriculum, a new teacher may prefer to stick to a tried and tested curriculum, or, if they do courageously attempt to adapt it without a proper process, important elements of Waldorf education may be unknowingly excluded.

Although many parts of the curriculum can and should be adapted to the local context, such as arts, crafts, performing arts, music and dance, my focus will be on history and culture in the curriculum, and less on more universal empirical subjects like Mathematics and Science. A list of additional Asian curriculum resources will be included in the appendix.

For this research, the focus is on East Asia and Southeast Asia. However, not all cultures are homogenous and in the course of history, many Asian kingdoms and civilisations have conquered, influenced, traded with and intermarried. There have been strong cultural influences from China and India throughout history, as well as waves of migration, resulting in significant Chinese and Indian populations in various Asian countries. A history curriculum in Asia, particularly Southeast Asia, would not be complete without mentioning India. As such, where possible, I have included Indian content and variations for the curriculum. In developing a local history curriculum, an educator could draw from the different cultural streams that shaped the local culture. For instance, in Thailand, besides local history, educators would probably include Chinese and Indian history. In a multi-racial country like Singapore, studying the history of the Chinese, Malays and Indians would allow the main ethnic communities to be represented.

5.2 Overview of Class 1-8

"…in the initial school years you should have a number of fairy tales available. These must be followed by stories from the animal world in fables; then Bible stories taken as general history, apart from the actual religion lessons; then scenes from ancient, medieval, and modern history. You must also be prepared to tell about the different races and their various characteristics, which are connected with the natural phenomena of their own countries. After that you must move on to how the various races are mutually related to each other— Indians, Chinese, or Americans, and what their peculiarities are: in short, you must give the children information about the different peoples of the Earth."

-Rudolf Steiner, Discussions with Teachers, 1919

During the session Rudolf Steiner wrote the following summary on the blackboard:

" 1. A fund of fairy tales

   2. Stories from the animal realm in fables

   3. Bible stories as part of general history (Old Testament)

   4. Scenes from ancient history

   5. Scenes from medieval history

   6. Scenes from modern history

   7. Stories of the various races and tribes

   8. Knowledge of the races"

   (Steiner, 1997)

In the 2013 Asian Teacher's Conference, Martyn Rawson gave a general outline for the type of content that could be included in a history curriculum:

"Standard Waldorf History and Culture Curriculum (Without Content):

Grade 1:   Fairy Tales and Nature stories

Grade 2:   Fables, Legends, and Saints

Grade 3:   Creation stories

Grade 4:   Mythology, Local Geography/ History

Grade 5:   Transition from Myth to History (early civilizations)

Grade 6:   World Religions (religious orders), pre-modern societies, Medieval Period, (Warrior societies), emergence of Town/City culture, Trade

Grade 7:   Encounter of East and West, emergence of Science/Technology, World Trade

Grade 8:   Modern History to the Present, history as a story of people's lives"

(Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013)

The danger with an outline is that one may be tempted to oversimplify the guidelines and simply substitute an Asian narrative without careful consideration of the effect on the children and their stage of development. We need to consider, for instance, the effect of substituting a conventional happily-ever-after fairy tale, with a local fairy tale that ends tragically. Would the fact that the fairy tale is more suited to the cultural context outweigh the fact that it is developmentally inappropriate? When it comes to the Grades 5 and 6, what "early civilisations" or "medieval societies" from Asia might fit the criteria and meet the needs of the children?

Steiner explains in "Practical Advice to Teachers", how history lessons should be approached:

> *"Until they have reached their twelfth year I will not teach history, except in the form of stories. At this point the children begin to take an inner interest in great historical connections. This will be quite important for the future, when it will become more and more distinctly necessary to educate people in an understanding of historical coherence; up to now they have never really achieved a proper conception of history. People have first and foremost been members of economic and national life, in which they have participated routinely and unthinkingly. They have coped quite adequately with the requirements and interests of this economic and national life by knowing a few anecdotes about rulers and wars—which is not history—and a few dates of kings and one or two famous people and battles.*
>
> *Lessons in the future will have to be particularly concerned with the way in which the cultural life of humankind has developed. They will have to include appropriate views on the impulses of history, and these impulses will have to find their proper place in the curriculum so that they are given at the right moment" (Steiner, 2000, p.108).*

In the foreword of "Practical Advice to Teachers", Schmitt-Stegmann writes:

> *"What is often taught under the name of history, dates of kings and battles (though some are necessary and helpful) is dead and completely uninspiring. This is not history. The real essence of humanity lives in historical impulses… The teacher is called upon to open the eyes of the students to the evolution of human culture around the world and to the place and influence of the individual in historical development"* (Schmitt-Stegmann, 2000, p.xv).

The focus is not to impart dates and facts, but rather, to create an understanding of the historical impulses that shaped the development of human consciousness.

5.3 Universal Historical Impulses

"Throughout all historical time one can wonder about events that appear simultaneously in quite different lands but make a common impression, thus indicating that it is fruitless to search for causes of events in outer, social conditions. Rather, we are led to search for the active impulse in the supersensible sphere. Here are a few examples. Around the year 500 B.C. strong personalities appeared simultaneously but independently of each other in different lands and 12 cultures: Lao Tse and Confucius in China, Buddha in India, Daniel in Israel, and Heraclites in Greece. In their spiritual orientation they prepare the way from a mystical picture consciousness to a more brain-focused, conceptual thinking."

 -Oddvar Granly, A Phenomenological Approach to the Subject of History, 2007

History teachers are challenged to understand the deeper, developmental forces and present the historical events so pupils can view an open future filled with possibilities for their own meaningful contributions. This takes the children beyond the narrow definitions of conventional historians, be they Marxist or Darwinist in approach.

5.4 Child Development

"To find the right curriculum for children aged seven to fourteen or fifteen is bound up in general with a true knowledge of child development over this period of time."

    -Rudolf Steiner, Practical Advice to Teachers, 1919

"It is a naïve reading of Steiner's ideas on developmental phases and stages to believe that there are any other than very broad developmental phases that are universal, such as second dentition or puberty. There is no way that children in a specific school class align with standard developmental or behavioural patterns. There is no typical class 3 child or class 9 student."

    -Martyn Rawson, Some Guidelines for Developing a Global Waldorf Curriculum Locally: A Generative Approach, 2017

This paper presents some of Steiner's views on child development as well as secondary literature on Waldorf education as a basis for forming a child-centred curriculum. According to Rawson, it is unrealistic to think that children in different parts of the world and at different times in history develop in the same ways within the same timeframe (Rawson, 2017).

Rawson writes that according to Swiss paediatrician Professor Remo Largo, the normal developmental range of children at the age of 14 spans across 5 years. Thus, a 'typical' student could be at a developmental stage up to 5 years above or below her actual age. There is also evidence that human development has changed over time and is affected by nutrition, social expectations and cultural differences (Largo, cited in Rawson, 2017). It would thus be beneficial for teachers to understand the whole of childhood, and not only the particular age group they happen to be teaching.

According to Michael Zech, despite the different personalities and stages of development of children in the same class, the curriculum sets the developmental processes in movement and has a homogenising effect on the children (Zech, quoted in Rawson, 2017). Rawson says that it is beneficial for pupils of the same age to be taught the same thing at the same time due to the social nature of learning, where pupils learn with and from each other.

> "*This means that the curriculum shapes, influences and directs the development of the children and young people and to some extent harmonizes their development by providing them with a range of age-appropriate developmental tasks. Age-appropriate means that the activity activates the child in ways that are healthy at that stage*" (Rawson, 2017).

Understanding the developmental stages as broad strokes instead of narrow definitions would enable teachers to have greater freedom in designing a curriculum, and would also aid in understanding why the same topic could be taught at different ages in different countries. The Chinese epic "Journey to the West" is suggested for Class 2 in Thailand but for Class 4 or Class 6 in China, revealing a wide range in the age group that, according to Largo's indications, still falls within the normal developmental range. Every child in every culture has its unique characteristics of

development, and the teacher needs to carefully observe the children to see where they are at, rather than adopting a rigid reading of Steiner's descriptions.

6. Class 1: Fairy Tales and Nature Stories

6.1 Developmental Profile and Needs

Around the age of seven, the child begins to develop independent, representational and pictorial thinking, marking the start of formal schooling in Steiner schools. There is a general mood of dreamy wholeness, with more broad awareness than focused concentration. Much learning is done through practical activity and imitation (Rawson, 2014).

During the first year, the aim is to cultivate in the child the imagination, the ability to create vivid inner pictures, a reverence for nature, care for the environment, respect for others, interest in the world, and a feeling of confidence in their teachers (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

6.2 Curriculum Objectives and Themes

The child's holistic experience of the world is nourished by archetypal images and characters such as those found in fairy tales.

According to William Harrer, fairy tales have their origin in the period of humanity's own childhood, in "far-distant times when people lived in a naive dreamlike state of soul, before the unfolding of intellectual capacities." According to biogenetic law, the psychological development of children mirrors the different stages of humanity's evolution. The development of children between age four and eight, corresponds approximately with the period of humanity's childhood in which fairy tales originated (Harrer, n.d.). Fairy tales also have common elements that are found in the various cultures, because they hold universal truths and human characteristics beyond national or cultural distinctions (Waldorf Publications, 2015).

Compared to the less dramatic, "boring" fairy tales that the children heard in Kindergarten, the fairy tales told in Class 1 are more complex and dramatic, where people suffer great trials and tribulations, are sometimes killed, yet ultimately good prevails over evil. The tales speak about the transformation of love, the overcoming of evil, courage, taking responsibility of one's own deeds, and the search for one's

own higher self. Gilbert van Kerckhoven, an experienced Waldorf teacher and mentor from Australia says,

> "*The 'European' fairy tales are thus images of the striving, searching, stumbling, and ultimately victorious human being. True fairy tales in the way that we want them in a Waldorf school are consequently stories about the developing human being. They are images the children relate to as evolving human beings*" (van Kerkhoven, 2017).

Fairy tales use narratives and imagery to portray inner struggles and transformation, a packaging of reality into a more formal form. This transformation may be internal or physical, and usually has a moral character. Harrer states that because the fairy tales are imaginative analogies of the inner development of humanity as a whole as well as that of the individual child, they are ideal spiritual nourishment for a child during the period of transition or awakening (Harrer, n.d.).

In "The Poetry and Meaning of Fairy Tales", Steiner describes the effect of a fairy tale on our soul, saying that a fairy tale expresses something so integrated in human experience that it has to do with the comprehensive truth of all mankind:

> "*It is not about some special individual who finds himself at a certain time of life in a singular dilemma; what the fairy tale describes lies so completely in everyone's soul nature that it represents actual experience to children in their early years to persons of middle age and even to old men and women*" *(*Steiner, 1913).

Van Kerckhoven states his criteria for choosing a fairytale: "The stories must reflect the search and striving of human beings of the consciousness soul and be rich in images" (van Kerckhoven, 2017). According to Rawson, Li and Panosot, other essential elements of fairy tales include a stable starting point, where all is well. Then a problem or crisis occurs and the protagonist goes through trials and tribulations. Helps comes from another being, usually a magical or supernatural force. There may be a dark element to the story, such as "the wolf was cut open" or "the swan was sacrificed". The characters are not bound by logical time and places, and the storyline is often immune to reality, with concepts like "eternally young", "living happily ever after" or "Water of Life" (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013). In a curriculum

discussion by the China Waldorf Forum, the teachers suggested that the stories should be light, warm and wholesome (Li and Li, 2014). They should also make a moral point, but without adopting a moralizing tone.

The "dreamy" seven-year olds can be gradually led to become more aware of their immediate surroundings, through imaginative stories about the animals, plants, stones, rivers, hills and fields that are known to them, made up by the teacher. These also serve as useful preparation for future geography lessons. According to Rawson, Masters and Avison, the best stories are those made up by the teacher, drawing on the children's immediate surroundings (Rawson, Masters and Avison, 2013).

6.3 Existing Curriculum

Grimms' fairy tales, written by the Grimm Brothers, are often used for Class 1 children. Stories like "The Fisherman and His Wife", "The Golden Goose", "Vasilisa the Beautiful", "The Seven Ravens", "Hansel and Gretel", "The Twelve Dancing Princesses", "The Frog Prince" and "Briar Rose" are popular choices, as well as perhaps Irish, Russian, and other European fairy or folk tales.

6.4 Adapting the Curriculum

"If only people would learn what an enormous difference it makes whether children are read fairy tales or if you create such fairy tales yourself. No matter how many fairy tales you read or tell your children, they do not have the same effect as when you create them yourself and tell them to your children. The process of creation within you has an effect upon children; it really is conveyed to them. These are the intangible things in working with children."

-Rudolf Steiner, Renewal of Education, 1920

The Grimm Brothers were German nationalists who wanted the various German states to unite as one country, and had a political intention of preserving the German folk identity via fairy tales, which they believed were the true expression of the German folk soul. Even stories like "Red Riding Hood", told in varying versions in many languages, were thought by the Grimms to originate from ancient Germanic tales and they identified themes and incidents in Germanic mythology and legend that they believed were echoed in folk tales (Cavendish, 2012). In modern times,

these tales may seem too intellectual or romantic, and very much an embodiment of the German folk identity.

One approach would be to begin with the fairy tales from the local culture, and then adapt or modify them. Furthermore, the language, imagery, environment, seasons, and habits would be closer to children's every day reality.

As fairy tales are universal, it would be ideal to select stories from all around the world. The contents of the most famous fairy tales are often found, in one form or another, in legends, mythologies and folklore of all different cultures around the world. In our multi-cultured classrooms, it would be good when selecting stories, to have representations from all the different continents, and especially the cultures of the families in the class, in order to build the class community and so that each child may feel that their heritage or ethnicity is acknowledged and valued. In "Multi-Culturalism in Waldorf Education'', Janni Nicol writes that when telling a folk tale to a minority culture - something which reflects their own cultural background, you see the child "light up" - the story acknowledges their own cultural background. "These folk tales and stories also help enrich the children from European backgrounds and enable them to live into other cultures" (Nicol, 1998).

Sometimes, European fairy tales have a great variety of variations on the same theme. Van Kerckhoven shared that he found three different versions such as Grimm's Mother Holle, and that the Bulgarian version was much richer in content than the Grimm's one. There are also Asian versions of European fairy tales that reflect the same deep soul-spiritual content (van Kerckhoven, 2017). There are many Cinderella-type stories from all over the world, such as "Ye-Xian" (China), "Kongjwi and Padjwi" (Korea), "Angkat" (Cambodia), "Jouanah" (Hmong), "The Golden Slipper" (Vietnam), and "Kao and the Golden Fish" (Thailand) (Northrup, 2009, Mascarenhas, 2014).

6.5 Asian Variations and Alternatives

6.5.1 China

According Rawson, Li and Panosot, many of the local stories contain blatant moral lessons, and so the teachers prefer to tell more Grimm's fairy tales to the children

(Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013). However, there are some Chinese stories that could be told. The ninth century story of "Ye Xian" or "Yeh-Shen" is similar to the European Cinderella story, and is a rags-to-riches story of gentle, hardworking orphan girl who befriends a magical fish. The cruel stepmother kills and cooks the fish, but Yeh-Shen saves the magical bones which help her dress beautifully for a festival. When she loses her slipper after leaving abruptly, the king finds her and falls in love with her. A story that defies gender stereotypes is "The Serpent-Slayer", where Li Chi, a teenage girl, volunteers to be the village's annual sacrifice to a fearsome serpent, and with the help of a hunting dog, kills the serpent, saves her village, and becomes the queen of the land. The China Waldorf Forum curriculum discission group suggests stories such as "In Search of the Sun", from "Folkales from the West" (寻找太阳《西部民间故事》), "The seed of a date" (枣核), "Ma Liang and the Magic Paint Brush" (神笔马良), "A Brocade of the Zhuang Nationality" (一幅壮锦), "The Snail Maiden" (田螺姑娘) and "The Frog Rider" (青蛙骑手) (Li and Li, 2014, own translation).

6.5.2 Korea

The Korean folk culture has many suitable tales that can be used in the Class 1 fairy tale curriculum. "Heungbu and Nolbu" is a popular story of a kind man, Heungbu, who rescues a swallow with a broken leg and is rewarded with seeds that grow into gourds with gemstones inside. His greedy older bother Nolbu then breaks a swallow's leg in order to rescue it in hopes of the same reward, but instead meets with misfortune. He repents and they all live happily ever after.

Kongjwi and Padjwi is another Cinderella-type story of a beautiful girl who is mistreated by her cruel stepmother, but is helped by magical animals and beings, and eventually marries the king. However, her jealous step-sister drowns her in a river and takes her place. When Kongjwi's spirit reveals the truth, the king finds her body and she comes back to life.

The story of "Sim Chung", meaning "the devoted daughter", is a tale of a girl who sacrifices her life in the sea in order that her blind father can regain his eyesight. However, she is saved, marries the king, and is reunited with her father who regains his sight.

6.5.3 Japan

Japanese traditional fairy tales should be chosen carefully, avoiding those with sad or even tragic endings, or those with animals assuming the main roles. Possible stories include "Issun-bōshi", "The Eight-headed Dagon", "Momotaro", "The Piece of Straw" and "The Tongue-cut Sparrow".

Issun-bōshi, meaning "Little One-Inch" or "The Inch-High Samurai" is a tale similar to 'Tom Thumb', where a tiny boy who is born to a childless old couple goes on an adventure, and despite his small size, cleverly rescues a girl from a demon. He is magically enlarged to normal size and marries the girl.

"Momotaro" is the story of a boy who came to earth inside a giant peach and was raised by an old, childless couple. Years later, Momotaro embarks on an adventure to fight ogres, with the help of a talking dog, monkey and pheasant. He defeats the ogres and lives happily ever after with his old parents.

The "Tongue-Cut Sparrow" is a traditional tale of a kind old man who rescues and cares for an injured sparrow. When it eats the wife's starch, she cruelly cuts out its tongue and chases it away. The old man searches for the bird and a multitude of sparrows present him with a basket of treasure. His greedy wife does the same and is given instead a box of horrible creatures.

6.5.4 Indonesia

Fairy tales from the various ethnic groups can be told, including Sundanese folklore from West Java, "Budak Pahatu " and "Leungli".

The folklore tells the story of a beautiful friendship between a poor girl and her magical pet goldfish named "Leungli", who helped and comforted her whenever her older sisters abused her. The theme and moral of the legend are similar to those of the European folktale "Cinderella".

"Budak Pahatu" is a story of two orphan siblings searching for food in the forest. When the sister is swallowed by a snake, her dismayed brother embarks on a search, helped by the forest birds. He battles the snake, rescues his sister, and they are eventually adopted by a kind couple.

6.5.5 Malaysia

The ancient wisdom of the indigenous Orang Asli tribes passed down by oral tradition not only imparts important social and ethical values, but also serves as collective knowledge, an encyclopaedia of information necessary for the utilization of natural resources (Nicholas, 2004). Orang Asli nature or animal stories describe local animals in their natural environment, with tales of how the once-cruel tapir got its white band and became the timid animal that it is today, why the flying lemur always hides his tail and flies only by night, or how friends of the slow-loris protected him from the punishment of blindness ordered by the king for outraging the modesty of his daughter (Lim and Ong, 2010).

6.5.6 Singapore

In Singapore, the children are told traditional nature tales and fairy tales from Europe, Asia and all over the world.

6.5.7 Philippines

According to the teachers present at Asian Teacher's Conference workshop on history and curriculum, there are not many fairy tales present within the folk culture of the Philippines (Rawson, 2013).

6.5.8 Thailand

Western fairy tales, as well as little known but carefully studied Thai fairy tales are told in Class 1. They are imbued by the same qualities as fairy tales in the West (Panosot, 2001, 2017).

6.5.9 India

Traditional "Cradle Tales" of Ancient India, which include the Cycle of Krishna — stories about Krishna's childhood conjure up the mood of glorious ancient India. Other possible tales that defy stereotypes of damsels in distress are "A Game of Cards with the King of Demons" where the wise and humble younger sister rescues her two foolish older brothers who gambled and were tricked and imprisoned by the demon king, and "The Barber's Clever Wife", where a quick-witted woman manages, time after time, to fend off thieves and even trick them into doing work for her.

7. Class 2: Fables, Legends and Holy Men and Women

7.1   Developmental Profile and Needs

Eight-year-olds remain in a largely self-created psychological landscape, developed from the imagination and inner life. They are more alert to what happens around them, and are drawn to contrasting ideas of the religious as well as mischief.

In contrast to the wholeness of the previous year, in Class 2, a mood of contrast or polarization often surfaces, which can be seen in the way the children relate to one another. Stories of contrasting human qualities portrayed by holy people and saints in legends and by animals in fables can be told to help children through this stage. Strong leadership is needed from the teachers, through consistency of approach and the power of imagination. From the images they are given, the children derive direction and form (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

The curriculum should cultivate a sense for the breadth and richness of feelings and emotions. Learning through movement and organic imagery awakens the intellect through the artistic approach.

7.2   Curriculum Objectives and Themes

Fables highlight the lower aspects of the human soul. This is appropriate for the eight-year-old child, who has become 'clever' and enjoys wit and trickery. The cleverly devised fable meets them on their own ground.

> "*It works like a homeopathic remedy: clothed in the form of fable, the intellect treats the very illness it causes. The intellect is linked to the rise in egoism and the fable holds a mirror to its baser inclinations. The fable offers the child a first and gentle awakening to her less agreeable aspects*" (Kornberger, 2013, p.128-129).

In the same way, the saint legends do the same for the higher self. While the fable deals with animal instincts, and portrays vices in the form of animals, the legends depict virtues and goodness in the inspiring lives of saints and heroes. Between

them, legend and fable provide a balanced perspective of the human soul. This helps the children to orient themselves in a world they are slowly awakening to (Kornberger, 2013).

These images from legend and history are aimed at cultivating and guiding the will, enabling the growing children to find their personal direction and values.

7.3 Existing Curriculum

Fables told in Class 2 include Aesop's fables such as "The Hare and the Tortoise", "The Fox and the Crow" and the "Wolf and the Stork". Stories of trickery such as Michael Rosen's adventures of Till Owlyglass may also be told.

The children are also told stories and legends such as "The King of Ireland's Son", and of European saints, such as Saint Patrick who chases out the snakes from Ireland, Saint George who fights the Dragon, Saint Martin of Tours who shares his cloak with a beggar, and Saint Francis of Assisi, who loves nature, talks to the animals, embraces lepers and helps the poor.

Kornberger describes the interplay of fables and saint stories: The story of how Saint Francis tames the wolf will not fail to have a deep impact on a child who has first heard the fable of the wolf and the stork.

> "In this way, the separated parts become whole again, united in the child. Her soul will relate the stories to one another and she will actively find the balance between the two extremes. Together, the two separate stories become incentives to achieve a wholesome inner balance" (Kornberger, 2013, p.130).

7.4 Adapting the Curriculum

Fables tend to be short, involve wit and intelligence, and carry a strong or even religious moral. The fable uses metaphor to illustrate moral concepts and ideas, and the moral it contains is often presented at the conclusion. The children learn that there is a moral quality within our responsibility for the world. The characters are

usually animals, but some fables depict humans controlling animals in a moral way, such as the fable of St Patrick driving all the snakes out of Ireland.

Many Asian folk tales can be classified as fables rather than fairy tales as the stories often feature animals and have a moral embedded in them. Parables, such as the Persian tales of Nasruddin, the wise fool, written by Rumi, have an inner moral line that makes them powerful fables (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

Legends have left the realm of fairy tale fantasy and descended to earth. Placed in time and space, they are often based on events or historical figures. Their protagonists may be heroes who conquered others, or the saints who conquered their lower instincts. In the saint, the 'enlightened', the virtuous, the 'perfected one', the prophet or yogi in any culture, we find the human being who not only fully embodies their culture or tradition, but also exemplifies a quality that transcends culture into universal humanity" (Live Education!, n.d.). The term "saints" may carry Catholic connotations, and it may be helpful and more universal to speak of "holy men and women" instead, great individuals who embody a self-realised nature and universal human values of love, compassion, and truth.

In our modern, multi-religious society, it is important to include holy men and women from different religions and cultures. There are also several women saints, both in the Christian tradition as well as in other religions, who must find a place in the curriculum, in order to create a balanced picture of sainthood (Bana, 2007).

7.5 Asian Variations and Alternatives

7.5.1 Fables told in Asia

7.5.1.1 Buddhist Tales

The Jataka tales are original retellings of stories of the Buddha interacting with animals. Each short story is a fable featuring an animal that personifies a particular human weakness or vice, a metaphor for the base animal instinct in humans. The flawed character of the animal, such as pride or greed, is usually corrected by a

negative consequence or advice from the Buddha or a wise person, leading to a moral at the end of the story. The stories include:

- The Two Oxen and the Little Pig
- The Quarreling Quail
- The Elephant and the Beetle
- The Three Fish
- The Hungry Quail
- The Brahmin and his Ox
- The Unholy Jackal and the Rats
- The Monkeys, and the Plants That Would Not Grow
- The Four Hungry Cats
- Sanjaya and the Elusive Wind Antelope

7.5.1.2 China

The ancient folklore of the 12 Chinese zodiac signs (十二生肖) features 12 animals, each with their own characteristics and weaknesses, such as the quick-witted rat, the crafty snake and the hardworking ox.

7.5.1.3 Indonesia

The Sundanese, a local ethnic group in Indonesia, have a popular series of friendship between the monkey and turtle, the "Sakadang kuya jeung sakadang monyet".

7.5.1.4 Malaysia

Indigenous Orang Asli Animal fables (cerita binatang) feature the clever mouse-deer, Sang Kancil. The tiny mouse-deer is able to overcome obstacles and defeat larger animals, and is highly regarded in Malay folklore. The mouse-deer appears in the state herald of Melaka and even plays a part in the legend of Malacca's founding. The stories include:

- Kisah Sang Kancil dengan Buaya - The tale of the mouse-deer and the crocodile
- Kisah Sang Kancil dengan Monyet - The tale of the mouse-deer and the monkey
- Kisah Sang Kancil dengan Harimau - The tale of the mouse-deer and the tiger

- Kisah Sang Kancil dengan Sang Sempoh - The tale of the mouse-deer and the bison
- Kisah Anjing dengan Bayang-bayang - The dog and the shadow
- Kisah Burung Gagak dan Merak - The crow and the peacock
- Kisah Burung Gagak yang Haus - The thirsty crow
- Kisah Labah-labah Emas - The golden spider
- Kisah Labah-labah dengan Burung Merpati - The spider and the pigeon
- Kisah Kerengga dengan Pemburu - The fire-ant and the hunter
- Kisah Burung Murai - The mockingbird
- Kisah Burung Kakak Tua - The cockatoo

7.5.1.5 Singapore

Stories of Chinese saints, legends, traditional animal tales, and Jataka Tales from India are told, such as the "Deer of Nine Colours".

7.5.1.6 Philippines

In the Philippines, the local hero and writer Jose Rizal translated and wrote a few fairy tales and fables which can be used for Class 2. "The Turtle and the Monkey" is an animal fable about a turtle outwitting a greedy monkey, showing the victory of the weak yet cunning over the strong but foolish. The origin of the tale can be traced back to the Ilocano people in the Philippines. Although various versions of the story also exist in Borneo and Java, the Ilocano version offers an explanation of why monkeys do not eat meat (Cole, 2000; Heiner 2005). There are also fables such "The Boastful Turtle", who is flown in the air by birds, biting onto a stick, but when it opens its mouth to boast, loses grip of the stick and falls to the ground, and "The Legend of the Pineapple Fruit" which is about a spoilt little girl who cannot find things in the kitchen and is turned into a pineapple with many eyes.

7.5.1.7 India

The "Panchatantra" is a widely translated collection of ancient Indian fables believed to be originally in Sanskrit. It is a series of inter-woven fables containing practical

wisdom, depicting anthropomorphic animals with human virtues and vices (Olivelle, 1999).

7.5.2 Legends, Heroes and Holy Men and Women in Asia

7.5.2.1 China

In Chinese cultures, the Taoist legends of the Eight Immortals, such as Zhang Guolao and He Xian'gu can be told. The China Waldorf Forum suggests stories of the Medicine Man Sun Si Miao (药圣孙思邈), Chinese physician Zhang Zhongjing (张仲景), the eccentric Buddhist monk Jigong (济公), The Story of Buddha (佛陀的故事), The Bodhisattva Story (菩萨的故事), The Eight Immortals （八仙）, The Monk with a Cloth Bag (布袋和尚), Confucius (孔子)， Laozi (老子) and Three Kings and Five Emperors (三皇五帝) (Li and Li, 2014, own translation).

7.5.2.2 Japan

Stories of local monks can also be told, such as legends of Japanese monks.

7.5.2.3 Thailand

Chinese stories and Buddhist stories are told in Class 2, such as the tales of Arahats, a Buddhist monk who received illumination, and the sufferings of Kuan Yin, the Chinese Goddess of Mercy and the story of the Eight Immortals or the Chinese Monkey God from "Journey to the West" (Panosot, 2001, 2017).

7.5.2.4 Philippines

The Tales of Aliguyon (Hudhud Hi Aliguyon) is about two heroes from opposing tribes, Aliguyon and Pumbakhayon, who fought for three days in an intense duel. Equally matched in skills and intelligence, they eventually decided to stop the senseless fighting and find a peaceful solution. The two leaders became close friends, and from that day onwards, their tribes lived harmoniously and settled their differences peacefully, recognizing that each tribal member deserves to be accorded

with respect regardless of tribe or stature. There are also many stories woven about Mariang Makiling, a guardian spirit who who helps the poor and sick in the guise of a peasant girl.

7.5.2.5 Indonesia and Malaysia

In Muslim countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia, the story of the prophets in Islam would be an obvious choice, as well as stories of local heroes.

7.5.2.6 India

There are legends of the Hindu saint, Sri Ramana Maharshi of Arunachala, Tiruvanamalai, who could tame even wild tigers through his love and reverence for all living beings.

8. Class 3: Creation Stories

8.1 Developmental Profile and Needs

According to Avison and Rawson, at age nine, the child has a stronger physical constitution and increased heart size, blood flow and breath capacity. The breath of the trunk of the body increases and growth is more focused on the limbs and metabolism. There is a metamorphosis in the feeling life, what Steiner calls the crossing of the Rubicon. Where there was once a feeling of wholeness and connectedness with the world, the child begins to have a growing awareness that he is separate from the world and the people around him. The child awakens to his own individuality. Contrasting emotions of the sense of loss of the previous unity with the world and a sense of wonder at seeing world in a new way will often lead to doubt, confusion, insecurity and a sense of alienation. The child begins to question, "Who am I? Am I really my parents' child? Where do I belong? How do I live?" (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

Kornberger writes that the child has a stronger experience of its own individuality or identity (ego) and develops a tendency to criticise and question adult authority. He may feel isolated from family and friends and therefore need more sympathy and firmness from teachers and parents. At the same time, a sense of responsibility emerges and leads to him seek guidance from a loving and respected authority. And since he cannot yet find it in himself, he will seek it from parents, mentors, family members, friends, and teachers. At this stage he longs for authority in the best sense of the word, authority that is followed because it is loved, respected and deeply believed in. At this time, the child believes something to be true not because he can fully understand it, but because it was said by someone whom he deeply respects (Kornberger, 2013).

At this stage of growing identity and a search for a sense of belonging, it is important to cultivate a sense of confidence and security.

8.2 Curriculum Objectives and Themes

Avison and Rawson state that in Class 3, the human being's responsibility towards the earth and the divine is depicted in the creation stories or other similar material. "Three essential elements in these myths are the creation of the heavens and earth, the plant and animal kingdoms, divine origin of humankind: the tasting of the Tree of knowledge, the origin of human community and the laws which govern it" (Avison and Rawson, 2014, p. 61).

The curriculum should also meet the needs of the child going through Rubicon, echoing their sense of separation and leaving their childhood paradise, while at the same time providing a sense of security and dependable authority. The myths should have a sense of laws, guidance, fostering a sense of inner security. Myths differ from the legends told in Class 2, in that although both legends and myths are stories of heroes, myths are often more complex and explain the origin of a people, often through the story of a hero (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

Avison and Rawson also describe how the main lesson blocks on farming, building, etc, help the children to engage in a new relationship with their surroundings. In farming and house building, the children's journey is brought literally down to earth. They carry out practical farming and building activities, which can be customised to the home environment, and include fishing for coastal communities, and the building of local or indigenous-type housing (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

8.3 Existing Curriculum

Stories from the Hebrew world (the Old Testament) are taught. Teachers will delve into stories of creation of the world, Genesis, Moses and Israelites in Egypt, David the King and the return from exile, the blinding of Old Man Tobit, and the Song of Solomon, as well as the parable of the Tower of Babel (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

Many Old Testament stories meet the stage of the child's growing identity, individuality, alienation and desire for a dependable authority. "Images of the Old

Testament, its laws and guidance foster inner security during the unsettled period"
(Avison and Rawson, 2014, p. 58). These Hebrew stories give the nine-year-old an
inner picture of the security of a God who looks after His chosen people. The story of
the Fall from Paradise is a vivid image of what the nine-year-old is experiencing in its
soul (The BEarth Institute, 2013).

8.4   Adapting the Curriculum

Although the Old Testament is a collection of ancient religious writings, Kornberger
purports that "there is no need to see the stories as necessitating a commitment to
Judaism or Christianity. Take them as a particular means of story medicine for a
particular phase of development" (Kornberger, 2013, p.130). The Old Testament
stories are also viewed as a telling of the history or mythology of the Hebrew people,
its historical contributions, impulses and its influence on the development of
humanity. The Hebrew Scriptures can be viewed as describing the development of
the human being and the evolution of our earth. This is applicable to all human
beings and the scriptures thus have a universal value (van Kerckhoven, 2017).

There is a caveat– "One must be cautious of this patriarchal view of the world, where
an Old Testament God is a jealous, possessive and unfair masculine figure.
Examine your communities, evaluate whether such stories meet them before you
follow a traditional curriculum" (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

While objections to telling stories from the Old Testament in Class 3 may stem from
its links with Christianity and Judaism especially if the school is in a non-Christian
country, one should take care not to throw out the baby with the bathwater and
substitute it for local or regional creation stories without careful consideration.

A creation myth is a cultural, traditional or religious story, which describes the earliest
beginnings of the present world. Themes from the Old Testament, such as creation
from emptiness, a primordial divine being, the first mother and father, or a great
flood, are also found in many creation myths around the world. Other creation
themes include bringing order from chaos, creation by the dismemberment or from
the body of a primordial being, a cosmic egg, an earth diver plunging into a primordial

ocean, and the emergence or metamorphosis of a race (Long, 2016; Creation myth, 2017).

While stories from all over the world provide a rich treasure chest of creation myths, it is also important to consider whether and how each story meets the psychological needs of the child in the midst of Rubicon, seeking inner security and self-identity. For instance, van Alphen and van Alphen write that flood stories are found all around the world and for nine year olds, they could represent the end of early childhood and the start of a new phase (van Alphen and van Alphen, 2010). One approach would be to tell stories from the Old Testament as well as local myths, allowing the students to compare how similar ideas originated from different parts of the world.

8.5 Asian Variations and Alternatives.

8.5.1 Buddhist Creation Fables

The Agganna Sutta presents an elaborate myth about the origins of the world, how humans came to inhabit the world system, and the different ways of living which led to the four castes, and how they became bound to the wheel of life in the Six Realms of rebirth. Interestingly, in contrast with the Book of Genesis in the Old Testament which attributes the Fall of Man to pride and disobedience, Buddhism locates the origin of human suffering in desire (Keown, 2013).

8.5.2 China

In place of the Old Testament, Chinese creation stories, Zhang Guo Lao (张果老), He Xian Gu (何仙姑), Pangu (盘古开天), Nüwa (女娲), Fuxi (伏羲), Shen Nong (神农), Confucius legends (孔子的传说) can be told. The "Classic of Mountains and Seas" (山海经/Shan Hai Jing) is a Chinese classic text and a compilation of mythic geography, culture and Chinese mythology. Versions of the text have existed since the 4th century B.C. Other well-known ancient Chinese myths from this book include Yu the Great, who spent years trying to control the deluge, Kua Fu (夸父) the giant, Houyi (后羿) the archer, and the Yellow Emperor (黃帝) the legendary deity.

The "Epic of Darkness" (黑暗传 / Hei An Zhuan) or is a huge collection of tales and legends of primeval China in epic poetry, both of the Han Chinese and ethnic minorities. It includes stories of how the earth was formed, and how the first people were made from yellow silt, and of a great flood.

8.5.3 Korea

Besides Old Testament stories like the creation of heaven and earth, Abraham, Noah, and Moses, local stories are also told, such as the Korean Creation myth (우리나라 천지창조 신화) of Dangun who was the legendary founder of Gojoseon, as well as the story of the "Big Star King And Small Star King" (대별왕 소별왕 이야기).

8.5.4 Philippines

Many of the different tribes and cultures in the Philippines have a wealth of their own creation stories, such as the Lumawig (a Cordillera Legend), Wigan and Bugan, the first man and woman, Manobo, Tboli, Tagalog, Maguindanaon, Talaandig, Tausug, and Maranao (or Meranao).

8.5.5 Indonesia

Old Testament stories are generally acceptable in Indonesia as there are parallels in the Koran, the Muslim Holy book. An Indonesian story that can be told is the Ilagaligo epic from the coastal Southeast Sulawesi.

8.5.6 Malaysia

In Malaysia, the Waldorf school students are mainly ethnic Chinese, so the stories of the Old Testament and Chinese creation stories are told. The creation stories of the Indigenous Orang Asli in Malaysia are told in Class 4.

8.5.7 Singapore

In Singapore, the children are told Old Testament as well as Jewish stories.

8.5.8 Thailand

Old Testament stories, Chinese stories and Thai legends are told in Class 3, and the children build a bamboo hut in the house-building main lesson and plant and harvest rice (Panosot, 2001, 2017).

8.5.9 India

Creation and "Exile" Stories from India include:
- Ramayana epic (exile and wandering in the world)
- Manu and the seven Rishis (the great deluge or flood)
- The Ten Avatars 'Dasavatara' of Lord Vishnu: Matsya (fish); Kurma (tortoise); Varaha (wild Boar), etc.
- King Rama, the seventh Avatara of Lord Vishnu, the ideal human being.

8.5.10   Other countries

Some New Zealand Maori creation stories reflect a similar content and can also be included.

9. Class 4: Mythology and Local History

9.1 Developmental Profile and Needs

Steiner-Waldorf pedagogy refers to this period around the age of ten as the 'Heart of Childhood', where the transition from early childhood is complete, but the transition towards puberty has not yet started. A new confidence can be observed in the child's relationship with the world after the existential sense of separation around age nine has passed. Physical development brings a new strength and agility. The children have boundless energy and an eagerness to look at and learn about the world around them (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

While the Class 3 curriculum can be regarded as leading up to and accompanying the 'Rubicon', Class 4 serves as a confirmation, encouragement and completion of this step (Rawson, Masters and Avison, 2013).

9.2 Curriculum Objectives and Themes.

In Class 4, the child's home surroundings are explored through local history, geography, and flora and fauna (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

The myths of various cultures are continued in Class 4. A culture's collective mythology conveys a sense of belonging, shared experiences, truthful or exaggerated accounts of historical events, or explanations of rituals or phenomena. Mythology is a vital part of the development of consciousness, and a precursor to history. Myths tell of how great heroes defeated enemies, and their courageous deeds in times of crisis (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

The narratives of the curriculum aim to respond to the child's changing consciousness by offering stories in which a multiplicity of personalities contributes to the social whole. The stories are more dramatic, and darkness and evil become real and more concrete. The vigorous characters speak to the new sense of individuality in the child, such as the cunning trickster, the valiant hero, and the ultimate tragic deaths. The children begin to identify individual badness in contrast to social

communal goodness and develop a sense of where they are in relation to the environment in both a social and geographical sense (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

9.3 Existing Curriculum

Norse mythology is the set of indigenous stories the Vikings or other Germanic peoples told to one another before they were converted to Christianity. The Gods of Asgard, Twilight of the Gods and Volsung Saga are powerful fare, painted in fierce contrast between light and dark, with gods, giants, dwarves, elves, witches, valkyries and warriors. The conflict between giants and gods spans all time, from the beginning of the world to its cataclysmic end known as the Ragnarok, the Twilight of the Gods (Korberger, 2013).

Following the omnipotent god of the scriptures in Class 3, the Norse myths provide a literature that meets the newfound confidence of the Class 4 child. The robust resilience of the sea-faring Vikings was fired by the imagery of their mythological world. The 10-year-old is equally inspired by the range of emotions, the sophistication of the narratives, the alliterative verse and by the strength of purpose of the characters. The darkening dreams describe an evolutionary change undergone by humanity as a whole, and now being experienced individually by the children in their own development (Rawson, Masters and Avison, 2013).

Unique among world mythologies, these stories have an end. Ragnarok, the last battle which sees the end of the era of gods, ushers in the new current world, and is also a metaphor for the end of childhood, the final glimpse of the magical world of unity that pervades the child's first experience of life. The 10-year-old's crisis is the Ragnarok of childhood. Childhood ends, the imagination weakens and with it the glamour of childhood begins to fade (Kornberger, 2013). The growing individual now moves into the world of adult rationality on a healthy foundation of confidence and strength.

Other myths from the region include the medieval Icelandic Edda, the Germanic Nibelungen Saga, and the Karelian and Finnish Kalevala.

9.4 Adapting the Curriculum

As mentioned in Chapter 2.1, the choice of Norse mythology for Class 4 was not specifically stated or discussed by Rudolf Steiner and the first teachers in Stuttgart. When the first Waldorf School was about to begin in 1919, the pioneering teacher for Class 4, Caroline von Heydebrand, happened to be well-versed in Norse mythology and thus proposed this to Steiner as a topic to be taught to her class. He found it suitable, and so Norse mythology became a part of the Class 4 Waldorf curriculum, and over the years, developed into standard practice (Rawson, 2017). Stephen Sagarin writes,

> "*The arguments over whether or not we can replace Norse mythology are ad nauseum and, in my opinion, put up roadblocks for Waldorf education expanding in an international context. If people knew that his only indication was ancient stories, that would change the picture*" (Sagarin, 2016).

Despite being popularized in modern media and movies, there may be objections to devoting large amounts of time to the myths of the Nordic people – a culture distant, seemingly unrelated and far removed from Asia. However, it is important to first understand its value as 'story medicine' and not completely remove it for the sake of including Asian content.

In seeking an Asian alternative for Norse mythology, the question to keep in mind is, "Which mythologies best meet the child's needs at this stage?" Do other Asian myths meet the needs as well as the Norse myths?

9.5 Asian Variations and Alternatives.

9.5.1 Chinese Mythology

The Chinese epic "Journey to the West" has a menagerie of colourful characters, gods, demi gods and deities who reveal their cruel and humanistic sides. The story is based on the legendary pilgrimage of the Tang dynasty Buddhist monk Xuanzang who travelled towards the west to Central Asia and India to retrieve sūtras or Buddhist sacred texts, in the hope that the Chinese people may be enlightened, so that their behaviour may be in accordance to the tenets of Buddhism. The monk and his escorts, including the trickster hero Monkey-God and the greedy Monk-Pig,

encounter great dangers, wicked demons, many trials and much suffering. The story ends with the monk successfully returning to the Tang Empire and translating the Buddhist scriptures from Sanskrit to Chinese, bringing a new era of spirituality and wisdom to China. This could also echo the 10-year-old's newfound understanding and relationship with the world.

Other stories which have mythological qualities include the "Classic of Mountains and Seas" (山海经 / Shan Hai Jing) which contains a tale of an ancient turtle god who came before Pangu (盘古之前的神龟）and myths from "League of the Gods" (封神演义 / Feng Shen Yan Yi), such as "Ne Zha" (哪吒) and the Great Duke of Qi (姜子牙). The legends from Zhou in ancient China are also told, including that of King Wen of Zhou (周文王) (Li and Li, 2014).

9.5.2 Japanese Creation Myths

In the Yokohama Steiner School, the Japanese Creation Myth (Kojiki) is told, as well as that of their neighbouring country, the Chinese Creation Myth (Pangu). Local legends are also told in connection with the local geography.

9.5.3 Korean Myths

In Korea, the focus is on mythical stories that awaken the spirit of challenge (Freie Waldorfschule Busan Curriculum, n.d.).

9.5.4 Indonesian Seafarer Mythology

A teacher shared that a local football team in Bandung calls itself "The Viking", and as a result, there is an interest and some emotional connection to Norse mythology in some areas. In addition, as Indonesia is largely composed of islands and many ancestral people were seafarers, there are many stories of great sailing expeditions, fierce pirates and fishermen, such as the Bugis people from Sulawesi.

9.5.5 Malaysia

The children are told Indigenous Orang Asli oral tradition stories, such as the Jah Hut cosmology and other creation myths with spirits and shamans, fierce battles and cosmic creation.

9.5.6 Singapore

The children learn about Norse mythology, and are also exposed to Indian and Chinese myths. Like Nordic myths, there are many stories about gods in Indian mythology where their cruel or human side is revealed, such as the story of how Parvati created Ganesha whose head was cut off by Shiva. The children also hear stories from Chinese mythology, and are told the popular Chinese epic "Journey to the West".

9.5.7 Thailand

Norse myths and Thai folktales and legends are told in Class 4 lessons (Panosot, 2017).

9.5.8 Philippines

According to the The Aswang Project, the ancient Philippine mythology includes a plethora of deities, creation stories, mythical creatures, and beliefs. The myths vary among the many indigenous tribes of the Philippines. Some groups during the pre-Spanish conquest era believed in a single Supreme Being who created the world, while others worshipped nature deities or diwatas, which originates from the Sanskrit word "devata", one of the several significant Hindu influences in the Pre-Hispanic religion of the ancient Filipinos. The deities include Bathala, the supreme god, Amanikable, the god of hunters, and Idiyanale, the goddess of labor and good deeds (The Aswang Project, 2017).

9.5.9 Indian mythology

The great Indian epic, the 'Mahabharata' (excluding the 'Bhagavad Gita' or the Song Celestial) has some parallels with the Norse myths, featuring great human drama, culminating in the inevitable battle at Kurukshetra, and the end of the old world order. There are many similarities in the gods and goddesses of the two cultures. Like Nordic myths, there are many stories about gods in Indian mythology where their human side is revealed, such as the story of Brahma and Vishnu having a competition about catching a flower that fell from Shiva's head, or the story of Indra the king of the gods and his jealousy of Krishna, Narada the celestial sage and his mischievous nature, and how Parvati created Ganesha who had his head cut off by Shiva. The main difference is that the Norse tales have the Ragnarok, the Twilight of the gods and their decline in importance in cultural consciousness. On the other hand, the gods in Indian mythology are still very much alive today in the people's consciousness. They experienced no 'twilight', but dwell alongside other religions (Bana, 2007).

10. Class 5: Early Civilisations

10.1 Developmental Profile

Around the age of 11, the child's movement becomes more coordinated, balanced and harmonious. The individual 'will' begins to grow and the awareness of self strengthens. During this age, moving forward with the confidence to meet the world from their individuality, the children can now freely chose to connect to the other through empathy. A depth of feeling can be noticed and a sense of personal responsibility, a moral compass. The increasing memory powers correspond to developing the sense for time. Memory enables one to look to the past or plan for the future and, combined with a growing capacity for feeling, a sense of conscience and responsibility emerges (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

10.2 Curriculum Objectives and Themes

> *"In the fifth grade, we make every effort to begin to introduce the children to real historical concepts. With fifth graders, we need not hesitate at all to teach the children about the cultures of Asian peoples and of the Greeks."*
>
> *-Rudolf Steiner, First Lecture on the Curriculum, 1919*

Having lived in the dreamy world of fairy tales, fables, legend and myth in the previous four years, the children now are ready to make the transition from mythology to history proper. The children begin to look outwards from their local surroundings, are interested in the larger context, and develop a deeper and more conscious engagement with history.

The curriculum should give the children vast images and experiences of human evolution, studying the different ancient worlds and their cultures, architecture, farming, building, lands, heroes and mythology. In order to have a deeper understanding of history, one should first study one's own history, then rigorously compare it to at least two others so that one has three balanced points of view. Then one can triangulate on the truth (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

Through interesting examples of how our present culture is founded on the achievements of past, this can create a sense of how the different flowers of human civilisation unfolded in the many peoples of the earth, that every culture has its own essence and yet, at the same time, contributes to the history of humanity and to our own civilization. In this way, the horizons of the child will extend far beyond their own geographical boundaries, and the foundation is laid for an understanding of how culture is universal and belongs to humanity as a whole (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

The way in which human consciousness evolved parallels the way children develop, from being totally part of the environment towards becoming more conscious and intellectual. Jacobson summarises the task of the Class 5 curriculum, where the stories of mythologies and historical events echo the child's inner processes beneath the surface. "Stories from these ancient civilizations give an historical picture of the human being in his development into the material world, which parallel the child's own descent into the world of matter; we are giving the children a picture of their own evolution" (Jacobson, cited in Steiner Education Australia, 2014).

10.3   Existing Curriculum

In Class 5, history involves providing historical images of the Asian and Middle Eastern people, beginning with the older myths of India, Persia/Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Babylon.

In the Ancient Indian stories of Manu, Ganga, Arjuna, Krishna, Rama, and Buddha, the children are given a glimpse of a civilization that was closely connected to the spiritual world in every aspect of their lives, be it tree, animal, mountain or weather. Believing that the earth was "Maya" or an illusion, they longed to return to the spiritual world through death. This spiritual wisdom has been passed down through the Vedas, Ramayana, Bhagavad Gita as well as poetry, songs, and legends (Shirley, 2012).

The Ancient Persians were more down to earth. Their spiritual leader, Zarathustra brought domestication of animals and agriculture, working on the earth for their god

Ahura Mazdao, as tools against the powers of darkness. Their legends bring a powerful picture of the struggling human being able to choose between good and evil (Shirley, 2012).

In Ancient Mesopotamia, the human soul journeys further away from spirituality towards the earth. The people traded using weights and measures, money, invented the wheel and Cuneiform, an early form of writing. Prior to that, writing was unnecessary as people had strong cultural memories and a spiritual connection to the gods. According to Steiner, writing emerged as the people's memories faded and this was connected to their materialism and loss of awareness of the gods. In the famous Sumerian epic, Gilgamesh's fear of death leads him on a journey in search of immortality, a far cry from the Ancient Indians who longed to return to the spiritual world (Shirley, 2012).

In Ancient Egypt, the connection to the divine was maintained by the priests who initiated the Pharaohs and ensured that spirituality remained despite material advancements in an age of pyramids, temples, geometry, arts, hieroglyphics and written records on papyrus and clay tablets. Through the stories of Isis and Osiris, Khufu, and other Egyptian gods, goddesses and Pharaohs, the children are drawn into the Ancient Egyptian life. We see the human being steadily descending to earth and consciously needing to hold on to the spiritual connection (Shirley, 2012).

Following that, Ancient Greece is studied, where the human thinking comes to the fore, people began to take their lives into their own hands, make their own decisions and to work ideas out for themselves. The birth of the intellect echoes the child's inner development. Like the ancient Greeks, the 11-year-old child strikes a rare balance of imagination and intellect (Kornberger, 2013). Physically they are beautifully balanced and graceful, as in the Greek art forms, and taking part in their own version of the Olympics is very much a highlight of Class 5. It was as much the inquisitive, argumentative minds of the Greeks that led them to democracy, as a desire for self-rule. Myth becomes history in the story of the Wooden Horse of Troy. We journey through the development of the city-states and daily Greek life. Plato, Aristotle and Alexander laid the foundations for the rational, logical world to come (Jacobson, cited in Steiner Education Australia, 2014). Yet, development of the ego

and intellect came at a price: the loss of their connection to the spiritual world. Achilles' words when he returned from the Underworld, "Better a slave on earth than a King in the Underworld" reflect the Greek's fear of death (Shirley, 2012).

Interestingly, although China is mentioned as an ancient culture that is relevant in Class 5, it is not often included in many European curricula, probably because of lack of knowledge and readily available resources. Likewise, legends from the Pre-Columbian cultures of Central and South America, the life of the Mayas, Toltecs and Aztecs are relevant, but often not included in the archetypal curriculum (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

10.4   Adapting the Curriculum

History differs from mythology in that it is written down and documented in a way that is clearly understood by historians. In Europe, history was truly documented for the first time in the age of Alexander the Great, Athens and Pericles. According to Rawson, Li and Panosot, the situation in Asia is more complex because many cultures lacked written documentation, but had a strong oral history tradition. Although the Mongols and Scythians did not leave written documents, they did record events via other means. During the Mongolian invasion into Europe and China, they did not actually destroy whole civilizations like the Europeans did in America*, but rather transformed societies, like the Yuen Dynasty in China" (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

It is thus important to discern history from mythology when researching Asian history. With an understanding of the evolution of human consciousness from physical, sentient to intellectual soul, one can find parallels of the different stages and growth of consciousness in cultures and tribes in Asia, both past and present, and a parallel can be drawn to how the same consciousness developed in different parts of the world.

10.5   Asian Variations and Alternatives

10.5.1   China

History tutor Ineke van Florenstein Mulder suggests connecting Steiner's Cultural Ages with events in Chinese pre-history and recorded historical events. For the Ancient India epoch, incorporating Manu's stay in the Gobi desert could connect this Age for Chinese students (van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

The battle between light and dark in Ancient Persia also finds its echo in the "yin" and "yang" duality of Chinese philosophy, which literally translates to "dark-bright" or "negative-positive". It describes how seemingly opposite or contrary forces may actually be complementary, interconnected, and interdependent in the natural world. The battles between the Turanians and the Iranians, the settled farmers and the nomads find their parallel in China's history, which led to the building of the Great Wall of China. Other parallels include the development of agriculture and herbal medicine by the mythological Sage Emperor Shennong, the domestication of pigs, fowl, cattle, sheep and goats and the use of the plough in Yangshao, the cultivation of the silk worm around 2600 B.C., and the development of irrigation by the wise Emperors Yao, Shun and Yu (around 2300 B.C.), who controlled the frequent floods by digging canals and diverting the flood waters to fields and draining marshes (van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

There are some periods of Chinese history that bear similarities to Ancient Egypt. For the study of early agricultural societies one could look at the San Xing Dui culture in west China (5000-3000 B.C.). Like Egypt which developed around the Nile river, the San Xing Dui was also a river culture. Here archaeologists unearthed sacred objects, gold masks of humanoid beings and many jade ornaments. Parallels between the Egyptian and the Chinese cultures include the belief that the ruler was the connection between the earth and heaven, and had to maintain a balance, the Chinese Emperor with the heavenly mandate through rituals and sacrifices, and the Pharaoh, by sustaining the '*ma'at', or* harmony and balance. Both civilizations had elaborate burial customs, similar social structures shaped like a pyramid with the Pharaoh/Emperor at the top, with administration done by the scribes or priests of Ptah in Egypt, or the mandarins in China who were Confucian scholars who had passed state examinations. In terms of building cities, one could look to the ancient capital cities of Anyang, Yin, one of the 8 ancient capitals, mausoleums, palaces and temples built

by Sage King Zhanxu and Emperor Ku in 2000 B.C., and the capital city of Yin built by Pengeng in the Shan Dynasty, around 1300 B.C., evidenced by the 150,000 oracle bones discovered there (van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

The time of Ancient Greece saw the rise of great philosophers around the world. While Socrates (470-399 B.C.), Plato (427-347 B.C.) and Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) in Greece brought about new ways of thinking in the West, Buddha in India (563-479 B.C.), Confucius (551-479 B.C.), Sun Tzu (544–496 B.C.), Lao Tzu (570-490 B.C.) and Mencius (372–289 B.C.) in China shaped the ways of thinking in the East, all within about two hundred years of each other. Just as Ancient Greece influenced the cultural consciousness of the West till this day, the Han Dynasty, considered the Golden Age of China, had its cultural influence in the East (van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

Li Zewu, founder of the first Waldorf school in China suggests that stories from the Spring and Autumn Warring States (春秋战国) (771-453 B.C.), and biographies from Qin and Han Dynasties (秦汉人物), Qinhuang Han Wu (秦皇汉武), Wei Jin (魏晋人物) should be told. Corresponding to the four ancient civilisations and the Greek civilization would be, in China, the era of Zhou Li (周礼时代), the events before the turbulent times and disintegration of culture in the warring era (礼崩乐坏之前), such as the "Book of Songs" (诗经 /Shijing), the oldest existing collection of Chinese poetry said to have been compiled by Confucius, which contains the "Ya" (雅）Court Hymns and "Song" (诵) Eulogies (Li, 2017; Li, 2012). Other texts that can be considered are the "Book of Changes" (易经 / I Ching) and the "Book of the Way of Virtue" (道德经 / Dao De Jing) (Li and Li, 2014).

10.5.2   Taiwan

In Taiwan, the Spring and Autumn period is taught in Class 6 instead of Class 5. There are differing opinions on the appropriate content for each level, which is understandable considering the size and diversity of the region, its rich history, and differing interpretations and perspectives.

10.5.3   Japan

The Fujino Steiner School follows Steiner's recommendation to tell the mythology of Atlantis in Class 5 (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013). In Yokohama Steiner School, Japanese history is also taught at this stage, as well as Japanese traditional short poems such Haiku and Tanka.

10.5.4   Indonesia

In order to draw a parallel of world cultures with Indonesia's own history, the curriculum can include the old Southeast Asian kingdoms, such as Srivijaya, and how those kingdoms worked with the Thai kingdoms, sailed and tried to spread their wings up to the Philippines and even Madagascar. The curriculum could also include the Borobudur temple in Java, one of the greatest Buddhist monuments in the world, and how it was built in the 8th and 9th century during the reign of the Syailendra Dynasty (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, n.d.).

10.5.5   Malaysia

The Class 5 curriculum includes the history of Malaysia and the indigenous Orang Asli tribes, who are said to be the ancestors of the modern-day Austronesian populations of the Malay Archipelago, having migrated there in 2000 B.C. The consciousness of indigenous Orang Asli is similar to that of Ancient India in that they have a dreaming consciousness and a close spiritual connection to their environment. Their world is sacred, having been shaped by heavenly beings, and their landscape is alive with spirits. Their lives are embedded in nature and they make minimal impact on the environment. Colin Nicholas, the head of the Centre for Orang Asli Concerns writes that the Orang Asli believe that "the whole of their physical and supernatural worlds are imbued by spirits, both good and evil" and that for them, "indigenous spirituality is about acknowledgement that they are equal beings with others - animate and inanimate, seen and unseen - in the created world" (Nicholas, 2006).

10.5.6   Singapore

In Singapore, ancient cultures of India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece are taught.

10.5.7   Thailand

With strong influences from India and China throughout its history, Class 5 pupils in Thailand are inspired by the great Indian epics such as the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, and also stories about great Chinese thinkers such as Confucius. Thai history is also taught (Panosot, 2001).

10.5.8   India

The Indian curriculum introduces the sacred "Bhagavad Gita", the "Song Celestial" of the "Mahabharata", at this point where the child enjoys a balance and harmony within themselves and with their surroundings. The most widely read book in India, it has influenced the thoughts, feelings and deeds of Indians through the ages. The children hear about Lord Rama and Lord Krishna, both Avataras of god Vishnu, the Preserver, in the Hindu Trimurti, the seventh and the eighth in the Dasavataras respectively. As the ninth Avatara is thought to be Lord Gautama Buddha, the children also learn about Buddha's life and teachings, the importance of compassion, the Four Noble Truths, the Eight-Fold Path, and living in the Golden Middle Way (Bana, 2007).

There is a connection with the Ancient Persian Culture as Zoroastrianism exists as a religion in India with about 70,000 Parsi and Irani Zoroastrians, and "the children have the opportunity to get acquainted with it closely, even if non-Zoroastrians are barred from entering the Fire Temples" (Bana, 2007).

In Botany, the children can also be taught the significance of trees and plants which are sacred and used in Indian rituals, like the Tulsi, Peepal, Neem or Babul, which would complement the Ancient Indian epoch (Bana, 2007).

10.5.9   Other Countries

In "Hear the Voice of the Griot!", Betty Staley also mentions that this can be the time of Bantu and San stories from Africa. Like the Ancient Indians, the San were hunter-gatherers who had an innate connection to every living thing. Their gods were present and spoke to them through animals and plants, so they became aware of where to hunt, find water and food or herbs for healing. Like the Ancient Persians, the Bantu tribe like the Kikuyu were farmers who worked with the land and worked with iron, using iron ploughs and tools (Shirley, 2012).

11. Class 6: World Religions, Pre-Modern and Medieval History

11.1 Developmental Profile

Around the age of 12, the children begin to feel the weight and inertia of the skeletal system in their bodies. The limbs begin to lengthen, they start to lose the natural rhythm and grace of their younger days, and they can appear awkward and clumsy. Accompanying the physical changes is the newly developing ability to understand cause and effect and feel the effects of their actions on others, intellectual thought, judgment, critical thinking and an increasing interest in social relationships and the outer world (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

11.2 Curriculum Objectives and Themes

"… at about 12 years old, the student begins to enter this period of retrospection, and this is the time when one can introduce the concept of cause and effect in history…"

-Rudolf Steiner, Dornach Easter Course, 1923

Around the age of 12, history lessons make the transition from the origins of civilisation to the dimension of human events. The material for Class 6 spans more than 2000 years, covering the history of the Romans and the Middle Ages from about 800 B.C. to A.D. 1500. The study of an organised culture, such as the Romans, or any similar culture, with the development of laws, organisation and strategy in warfare are consistent with the development of the children in Class 6 as they seek to make boundaries and order around them, reflecting their desire to understand laws, structure and causality (Rawson, Masters and Avison, 2013).

In Class 5 and earlier, students learnt about how human culture were founded and developed. In Class 6, history enters the dimension of human confrontation – with armies, battles, rape, and death. According to Christoph Lindenberg in "Teaching History", key topics are the emergence of the different World Religions, from the

Roman Empire to Christianity to Islam, and how they developed into theocracies, where religion was the basis for state power (Lindenberg, 1989).

With a greater ability to recognise cause and effect, the 12-year-old seeks to understand how and why events occurred, the characters who brought about the historical changes, and encounter the duality that is expressed between opposing powers, personalities, groups and institutions, such as the patricians and plebeians, Rome and Carthage, Romans and Barbarians, Arabs and Franks, the Emperor and Pope, monks and knights (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

The students continue to develop an appreciation for the evolution of culture. As they reflect on the characters and actions of significant historical figures, they come to recognise that change, in even the greatest civilisations, can be brought about by actions of individuals. They investigate the concepts of rights, freedom and responsibilities in the historical context (Steiner Education Australia, 2014).

11.3   Existing Curriculum

"Greek and Roman history and its aftereffects (until the beginning of the fifteenth century). belong to the sixth grade."

-Rudolf Steiner, Discussions with Teachers, 1919

"It is possible to treat wars in ancient times from a cultural-historical perspective...You must describe the constitution of Lycurgus and, for example, the difference between the Athenian and Spartan way of life...with regard to the Roman constitution you must awaken the picture that every Roman was a law-fanatic and could count up the laws on his fingers. The Twelve Table Laws were taught there as the multiplication tables are taught in our times."

- Rudolf Steiner, Lecture, 25.9.1919

In Class 6, the children study Ancient Rome, its myths and the founding of the Roman Empire, and the Middle Ages. Kornberger describes the Romans' creation of the republic, complex laws, engineering feats, military tactics and clever diplomacy, which meet the needs of the Class 6 child. "Romans are ideal lawyers and politicians, just as a 12-year-old who becomes politic at home - a republican ready to challenge

the status quo. The rule of mum and dad is over, just as in ancient Rome the old has to yield to a new constitution. Agreements have to be reached in the family senate." The sense of order of the Roman world particularly addresses the needs of the Class 6 child who is at the threshold of adolescence. "The study of Ancient Rome gives a picture of a people establishing a new relationship with the world, separating themselves from their gods and learning to develop their own laws and structures" (Kornberger, 2013, p.138).

History lessons also cover the life of Christ, the rise of Christianity, the Crusaders, Prophet Mohammed, the Islamic people and the Ottoman Empire. Through these historical events, the children consider cause and effect, learning about cultural changes throughout history, such as the changes that were brought about in Europe by their contact with Islam. According to Avison and Rawson, Europe was lagging far behind the Orient, and contact with the Arabic culture brought the development of science, culture, and technological progress (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

11.4 Adapting the Curriculum

Shirley, who developed a history teaching manual to support teacher development in East Africa, proposes that "it is valid for cultures outside of Europe to begin with a focus on their own historical and cultural development", and that later on, one can turn to world history to study the Romans, as their influence on the western world has been profound and is now felt in all countries, all over the world" (Shirley, 2012).

While looking for local or regional cultures or events that reflect this consciousness, it is important to note that the eras or events do not have to fit into a particular time frame or occur in a chronological order. Rawson, Li and Panosot advise educators to "free yourself from chronology!" The idea is to look for archetypes in the local culture that reflect significant changes in consciousness, without being concerned about the time frame or chronology. In planning the history curriculum, some useful questions include: Which occurrences within your culture reflect the "Roman Mentality"? When did elements of centralization and administration become obvious? How did architecture change during that time? What were the roles of military power, and mystical or esoteric streams? What were the profoundly artistic influences? What

were the changes in consciousness that allowed these changes to occur? (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

Within each culture, we are looking for archetypes of the same consciousness that occurred in different parts of the world, the "state", the "religious state", the "warrior culture", the "feudal system", etc. For instance, the Qin Dynasty in China (221-206 B.C.) and the Samurai in Japan, were warrior societies containing very deep spiritual practices and philosophy (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

It is important to keep in mind that Class 6 history is not so much a comprehensive history of any one distinct period, but rather a "symptomology" of history, as defined by Rudolf Steiner, showing the characteristic archetypes of one period in relation to the development of a child, and showing the next stage in human development where the spirit descends into an earthly life (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

In seeking the Asian perspective of the Class 6 curriculum, it is important to consider whether and how the history of Ancient Rome, the Ottoman Empire, and the arrival of Christianity and Islam affected the local culture. These historical events, though occurring in Europe and Central Asia, had far-reaching effects on the rest of the world, and are part of our collective history. The era of individuality, or the "individual soul" begins. In Europe, this is the Roman era. In Asia, the Qin Dynasty in China, the Mauryan Empire in India (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

At the same time, it is worth exploring whether the Medieval Asian kingdoms and events in East Asia and Southeast Asia reflected similar themes, such as feudal Japan, the Khmer Empire, or the Kingdoms of Burma or even Medieval Java (Multiculturalism In Waldorf Homeschooling, 2015). There are also many parallels drawn between Ancient Greece and Rome (753 B.C. - A.D. 476) and dynasties in China such as the Spring and Autumn period (770 - 476 B.C.), the Qin dynasty (221-206 B.C.) and the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. – A.D. 220) in China.

11.5   Asian Variations and Alternatives

11.5.1   China

In China, the 12-year-old's changes in the physical, emotional and intellectual find resonance in the Chinese Spring and Autumn period, the Warring States, and the Qin dynasty with the First Emperor of China who united the fighting states and unified China.

According to Van Florenstein Mulder, the Han dynasty in China is the first empire based on Confucian philosophy. Parallels can be drawn between the Han Dynasty and Ancient Greece, both rich in philosophy and culture, and having a strong influence on the east and west respectively. The Han dynasty also saw in China and other parts of Asia, the rise of Buddhism as a world religion, which could be studied alongside the rise of Christianity and Islam (van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

The more military, legalistic and architectural Qin dynasty in China finds its western parallel in the Roman Empire. In the west, the Ancient Romans conquered many parts of the world and brought them under its power, in the east, the First Emperor of China in the Qin dynasty unified the warring states, standardized Chinese written characters, currency, units of measurement, built great buildings, the Great Wall of China, and even had terra cotta soldiers guarding his mausoleum. Both the Roman and Qin Empires waged war against the invading nomadic Mongol tribes from central Asia, and also traded along the Silk Road. The 12 tablets of the law in Rome allowed the protection of the rights of all citizens and permit wrongs to be redressed through precisely-worded written laws known to all (Cartwright, 2016). The First Emperor of China was also interested in laws, but the stream of the legalists drew up laws that were repressive and harsh. Under his rule, many books by earlier philosophers like Confucius were burnt (van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

This era could be rounded off by the study of the Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618 to 907), which occurred during the European Middle Ages. During this golden age of China, when vast areas were under the wise and compassionate rule of Emperor Taizong, the arts flourished, and there was peace and stability.

11.5.2   Taiwan

In Class 6, the children at the HaiSiann school learn about the Spring and Autumn Period (771-453 B.C.) in China, a dynamic era of cultural development, the time of great Chinese philosophers Laozi, Sun Tzu, and Confucius, who promoted the notions of equality, 'Ren Dao' or benevolence to all, as well as the development of 'laws of the land' (Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners, n.d.). Chronologically, the period of Spring and Autumn in China overlaps with the Ancient Greek and Roman civilisations, and it is also interesting to note the parallels of great thinkers and development of laws and structures in the East and West (Auyang, n.d.).

In Taipei, the Han or Qin dynasties can be compared with the Roman Empire, examining the similarities of their huge military systems, and how they built the social empire within the system. The children consider the development of human consciousness in these events, and how it unfolded in the East and West (Nicolai, 2017).

11.5.3   Japan

In the Japanese curriculum, the history of the Nara era (A.D. 710 - 794) can be taught, combined with a class trip to Nara. The Nara period saw an increase in economic and administrative activity, and a profound change in Japanese government brought about by the adoption of Chinese Tang Dynasty models of government which incorporated Confucian ideals. Laws were codified and compiled in the Taihō code in 701 to replace the less-structured native tradition of legal process. The Japanese central government consisted of a Council of State and various ministries (Nara Period, 2015).

The Jomon period (10,000 B.C.) can also be taught in Class 6, with the students making their own Jomon pottery. The Jomon Period is the earliest historical era of Japanese history which began around 14,500 B.C., coinciding with the Neolithic Period in Europe and Asia, and ended around 300 B.C.. The name Jomon, meaning 'cord marked' or 'patterned', comes from the style of pottery made during that time. (Hoang, 2016).

11.5.4   Korea

The Cheonggye Free School states that students learn about causality in Roman history and medieval times, and that the main themes are the technological and industrial developments through the encounters with Islam and the Orient (Cheonggye Free Waldorf School, n.d.). Besides Ancient Rome and the Roman Empire, Busan Waldorf School students also study the local historical period of the Three Kingdoms of Korea (57 B.C. to A.D. 668) (Freie Waldorfschule Busan, n.d.).

11.5.5   Malaysia

Most of the children in the Malaysian Waldorf schools are of Chinese descent, and the current language of instruction is Chinese. Besides the local and indigenous Malay history, both western and eastern history are taught, as the country has been influenced from many directions through the course of history. Two blocks of history are taught independently, one block of western history and another of China history. The teachers felt that while the impulses of Western history can be loosely matched to the China history up to the impulse of Roman Empire, China does not appear to have gone through any "dark ages" to resurface with a new kind of consciousness. They gave the example of how the Chinese had, from the beginning, the awareness that the sun is central to the Earth's planetary system (Malaysia Teacher's Group, 2015).

11.5.6   Philippines

At the Waldorf schools, students hear stories about Roman history and the Medieval Ages (Tuburan Institute, Inc., n.d.). Class 6 students study local hero Jose Rizal, his relationship within his family, how he broke away from their rules, and how he fought and was bullied at school. (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

11.5.7   Thailand

While Class 6 children in Europe learn about the Romans, in Thailand they are told the history of the great ruler of the Qin Dynasty who united the warring feudal states in the vast Chinese realm (Panasot, 2001).

11.5.8 Other Countries in Southeast Asia

On the topic of World Religions, the students in Southeast Asian countries could explore how Buddhism arrived and expanded in early kingdoms like Khmer and Srivijaya, leading to the building of Angkor Wat and Borobudor.

The Empire of Srivijaya (650-1377) saw the blossoming of a complex, stratified, cosmopolitan and prosperous society with refined tastes in art, literature and culture, and complex rituals. The written records of the Chinese monk Yijing described Palembang in Srivijaya as a great centre of Buddhist learning where the emperor supported over a thousand monks at his court. Art, culture and architecture flourished in the period which saw the building of numerous Buddhist temples and monuments, including world heritage site Borobudur, the world's largest Buddhist temple, rich portrayal in bas-reliefs of temples, as well as statues and sculptures (Srivijaya Empire, 2016; Srivijaya, n.d.).

The Khmer capital at Angkor (802–1431) was the centre of a powerful, opulent empire noted for the vast number of breathtaking 'temple-mountains', which were profusely decorated with sculptures. Under the Khmer, more than 900 temples were built in Cambodia and in neighbouring Thailand. Angkor was at the centre of this development, with a temple complex and urban organisation able to support around one million urban dwellers (Khmer Empire, n.d.; UNESCO World Heritage Centre, n.d.).

12. Class 7: Age of Cultural Encounters /East meets West, Science/Technology and World Trade

12.1 Developmental Profile

In Class 7, the pupils turn thirteen and become teenagers. Their lengthening limbs bring awkwardness of movement. Sexual identity and capacity emerges and they become more self-conscious about their changing physical bodies. Sporadic bursts of energy and willingness to engage in physical activity and looking outwards contrast with periods of lethargy, heaviness and self-reflection. The students have a growing sense of self and their desire for independence and solitude comes with anxiety, sensitivity, embarrassment and subdued introspection. Boys and girls deal with the onset of puberty in different ways, often forming strong friendships in small groups or cliques of the same gender. Crushes on teachers, sporting figures, or celebrities may develop as they search for role models in the adult world (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

As the children develop what Steiner refers to as "earth" maturity, rational intellect, conceptual and critical thinking are dominant, and students are eager to expand their horizons and knowledge of the wider world, while developing personal judgments and their own point of view about the world (Steiner Education Australia, 2014).

12.2 Curriculum Objectives and Themes

"In the seventh grade, it is important to get the children to understand how the modern life of humanity dawned in the fifteenth century, and we then describe the situation in Europe and so on up to about the beginning of the seventeenth century. This is one of the most important historical periods, and we must cover it with great care and attention. Indeed, it is even more important than the time immediately following it."

-Rudolf Steiner, Discussions with Teachers, 1919

"Many questions of students in the older grades, spoken or unspoken, revolve around "who am I and what am I doing here?" By experiencing human

struggle as revealed through historical development and biographies, the
young people receive profound answers that stir their souls.
- Astrid Schmitt-Stegmann, Foreword to Practical Advice to Teachers, 2000

The Class 7 history curriculum aims to mirror the student's outward exploration of the world and inner development, through the voyages of exploration in history, new ideas, perspectives and changes in the arts and sciences, and biographies of famous historical figures.

Echoing the development of new perspectives and impulses in the 13-year old is the theme of discovery. From the 15th to the 17th century, a new interest in the material world became apparent. It was the time the East and West encountered each other, the discovery, or rather the re-discovery by Europeans of new continents, and the discovery by non-Europeans of the invasive forces from Europe. At the same time, there were changes in the consciousness of that era, where the sense for the practical, mechanical, and technical began to grow, and the sense for the wondrous and sacred began to fade (Lindenberg, 1989). In its place came the discoveries of natural laws, laws in art, anatomy, biology, physics, the beginning of scientific thinking and the emergence of a new individual self-consciousness that began when long-held views of the world and faith were challenged, topics that would resonate with the adolescent who has begun to think independently (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

The curriculum aims to direct the students' attention into the world and they should be encouraged to "challenge attitudes and assumptions which formerly they accepted on authority", formulate their own points of view, and accept that others see the world differently. The teacher should also "appeal to the individual judgment of the children" and lead them to exercise social responsibility as world citizens and as individuals (Avison and Rawson, 2014, p71).

12.3   Existing Curriculum

The overarching themes in the European Class 7 curriculum are the Age of Discovery, and the Renaissance.

According to Lindenberg, what is new in the modern age first appears as discoveries such as voyages by Vasco de Gama, Columbus, and Magellan; inventions such as Gutenberg's printing press, clocks, gunpowder, mills and turbines; new forms of commerce, and to a limited extent, conflicts such as the German Reformation, Netherland's fight for freedom and England's victory over the Spanish Armada (Lindenberg, 1989).

Kornberger says that puberty is an age of exploration, and that in the European curriculum, it can be matched by the age of exploration that followed mediaeval times, through stories of how European explorers found their way through uncharted territory. "Like teenagers, they lacked maps, but drew them themselves." The teenager encounters great biographies in the destinies of explorers like Vasco da Gama and Francis Drake. Henry the Seafarer and Christopher Columbus go against the grain of public opinion. In the spirit of adolescence, they embody the independent spirit, breaking new ground, challenging boundaries, bringing fresh thoughts and daring ideas (Kornberger, 2013, p.140).

In the studies of the late Middle Ages, they meet the self-willed Eleanor of Aquitaine and the courageous St John, Joan of Arc and the religious fervour that swept across Europe leading to the Crusades. The students also hear about the travels of Marco Polo, the dawning of the European Renaissance, Humanism, the flowering of art and culture, natural science, the rise of city states, and the lives and works of artists like Dante, Giotto, Raphael, Michaelangelo, and Leonardo da Vinci (Kovacs, 2004).

12.4   Adapting the Curriculum

In a lecture on "Colonialism and Nationalism in Southeast Asia", Rey Ty says that the Europeans' "Age of Discovery" was for Asians the "Age of Colonisation" or Imperialism, one phenomenon with two interpretations (Ty, n.d.). When considering the Age of Discovery, it is important to maintain a balanced perspective, bearing in mind that history is written by the victors. Even the term "discovery" brings to mind the question of "who discovered whom?", carrying the risk of Eurocentricism (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013). If we were to speak of how the Europeans

discovered Africa and Asia, we would be speaking from the European point of view, which may not be a true reflection of what happened, nor take into account cultural relativism. A more neutral title for the history curriculum reflecting similar themes could be the "Age of Cultural Encounters" (Rawson, 2017).

The story of great discoveries should also be told from the eyes of the "discovered" peoples (Sunar, 2016). For instance, although some Philippine history books may state that the Spanish Ferdinand Magellan discovered the Philippines, which may be true from the European perspective, being the first time the Europeans discovered the Philippines, it does not reflect the fact that the Philippines was in fact discovered by other people long before that, when the Malayo-Polynesians migrated out of Taiwan to northern Luzon around 3,000 B.C. Great explorations and travels by Southeast Asian people could be said to have occurred during this period, where they traveled and resettled as far as Madagascar and Hawaii (Diaz, 2007).

It is also important to discern what Rawson calls "European propaganda". In some history books, we learn that 90% of the silver in the world came from Spain, when in fact, it came to China via the Philippines (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013; Rawson, 2017). Similarly, historical accounts stating that before the arrival of the British, Singapore was a "sleepy Malay fishing village" which the British transformed into a bustling trading port, fails to take into account that prior to their arrival, early Singapore was framed within the various kingdoms in the Malay Peninsula including Langkasuka, Funan and Champa, and the Johore Empire. In "Textbook Prescriptions: Malays in Singapore Historiography", Miharha writes that the gaps in Singapore or even Asian history, in particular the pre-colonial era, are a result of overdependence on history writing from British sources, which are considered more authoritative than the Malay indigenous written or oral sources. Furthermore, the education systems in former colonies have been dominated by expatriates and English-educated locals, which in turn relied on the British curriculum framework (Miharja, 2011).

While many of the stories focus on the voyages and discoveries of the Europeans, the issue facing teachers from non-European cultures would be how to tell the stories without arousing anger and a feeling of exploitation rather than discovery? How do

we give modern children an understanding of each other without creating a feeling of separation, of us versus them? If the original intentions were to meet the needs of the adolescent's passionate and independent world, how would tales of their ancestors' oppression and exploitation meet them? What aspects of this would it be useful to highlight?

While avoiding Eurocentrism and Orientalism, it is also important to avoid the other extreme. Occidentalism refers to the inverse of Orientalism where non-Western cultures produce their own stereotypes of the west, the Occident (Carrier, cited in Miharja, 2011). Post-colonial nationalism or Sinocentrism as a backlash against Eurocentrism do not provide a balanced or nurturing view of history. As long as one adopts a reactionary tone to Eurocentrism, we will not be able to move away from neo-colonialism, and remain enclosed within the colonial imagery. Boahen explains: "myths are myths, be they white or black" (Boahen, cited in Miharja, 2011).

Besides the narratives of European discoveries and colonisations, where aggressive, technologically more advanced societies explore the world for new resources and areas to be colonized, there are examples of discoveries and explorations by Non-Europeans, but of a different character, such as Muslim-Chinese Admiral Zheng He's voyages, or the Indonesians who colonised Madagascar in about A.D. 850 (Fortune and Lal, 2000, Cox et al., 2012). The past 2000 years were far more global than we realise, and students can also explore how non-European voyages influenced the rest of the world, the impact of Islam on European culture, the Asian influence on Islam, and how Islam and China colonised large parts of the world (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013). Diverse stories of how the East and West met and influenced each other would provide a universal and multi-cultural perspective. Class 7 students, now more capable of conceptual thinking, can explore what elements of conceptual thinking existed within various groups, and the factors that prompted each culture to respond in a certain way. The students can also learn about the movement of ideas and culture from the different parts of the world, and how they manifested in each culture. For instance, the knowledge of navigation led to voyages and circumnavigation of the globe in one culture, while in another culture, the knowledge was applied conceptually in the form of navigation in space via charts and geometry (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

Some Asian cultures or eras that reflect the themes of discovery, voyages, and meeting of new cultures and ideas might include Kublai Khan, Mongol culture and history, the Marco Polo, the Silk Road and China. Outside of Asia, Native American tribes can also be covered.

In looking for Asian variations of the Renaissance, the factors to consider would be to find instances or periods in Asia, where there was flourishing of art and culture, with developments in art, poetry, architecture, or advances in science and technology. Beauty and knowledge can be expressed in a myriad of ways, with each culture flowering in a different way. It is not necessary to be a mirror of the European Renaissance, or to be limited to a particular time period.

12.5   Asian Variations and Alternatives

12.5.1   China

The history content could include stories of Xuan Zang (玄奘）, the Buddhist monk who embarked on a voyage to India (the historical figure who inspired the legend "Journey to the West"), Yang Gui Fei, the favourite consort of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang dynasty and one of the four beauties of Ancient China, and also the inspiration for the Tang poetry masterpiece "The Song of Everlasting Regret" (长恨歌). Biographies could include Admiral Zheng He and his expeditions; historical characters from the period of the three Kingdoms (三国人物), such as Cao Cao and Zhu Geliang; outlaws from the Song Dynasty novel, the "Water Margin" (水浒人物), such as Wu Song, Lin Chong and Lu Zhishen; historical officials like Lin Zexu who campaigned to suppress Opium, leading to the Opium Wars against the British, and Wang Yangming, a Neo-Confucian philosopher, educationist, calligraphist and general during the Ming dynasty (Li, 2014). Other personalities of this period include Shang Yang (商鞅), Qu Yuan (屈原), Qin Ying Zheng (秦嬴政), Li Si (李斯), Xiang Yu (项羽), Emperor Wu of Han (汉武帝) and Zhang Qian (张骞) (Li and Li, 2014).

According to Van Florenstein Mulder, an era that bears some similarity to the European Renaissance and Age of Discovery could be the Yuan and Ming Dynasties. The Yuan dynasty that was ruled by Mongolian Kublai Khan saw

advances in the sciences, agriculture, communication, transport and astronomy. Printing was refined and gunpowder was used for cannons. China was open to the world and there were many connections to the outside world, including the Silk Road, Marco Polo and his friends (van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

The Ming Dynasty (1368-1633) could be described as the Age of Discovery for China, with long sea voyages led by the Muslim-Chinese Admiral Zheng He in huge ships many times larger than European ships ever were. Archaeological excavations have led shipping and navigational experts to concede that the Zheng He's treasure ships actually reached 122 meters long and 52 meters wide. Their knowledge of astronomy led to good navigational skills. The 63 ships went on seven voyages, demanding tribute from the countries like Vietnam, Java, Sumatra, Ceylon, India, Ormuz, Somalia, Aden, Jeddah and even Mecca. He also collected rare spices, plants and animals (Gronewald, u.d.; Lim, 2003; van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

Figure 1: Comparison of Zheng He's treasure ship vs. Columbus' Sta Maria

Source: http://www.chinapage.com/zhenghe.html
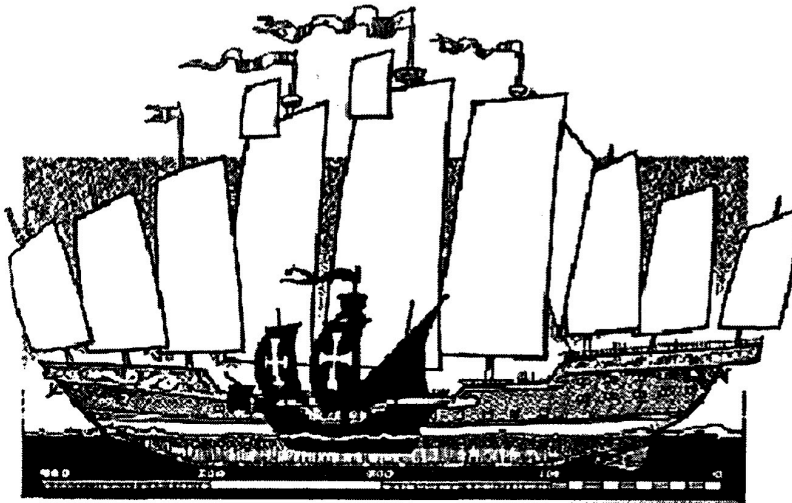
Source: Lim, 2003

However, on his return to China, he found that it had closed itself to the outside world, as did Korea and Japan. Less than ten years after the expeditions were launched, the Emperor Zhu Gaozhi prohibited overseas travel and trade. Interestingly, while China was open to the world, Europe in the Middle Ages remained closed, and when Europe expanded and embarked on voyages of

discovery, China began a policy of isolation, as if there was a worldwide breathing process of expansion and contraction. China's isolationist foreign policy, neglect of naval military defense and retreat from international overseas trade had tragic consequences, leaving it vulnerable and defenseless against pirates who devastated coastal villages as well as the growing military power of the Europeans (Lim, 2003). In the reign of Emperor Zheng Hong, the Forbidden City was built and the Temple of heaven. Arts and culture flourished. It was during this time of interest and discovery that the Yong Le encyclopedia of 11,095 volumes was created (van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

The European's Age of Discovery was the beginning of cultural imperialism. There was a huge demand in Europe for tea from China. Unable to pay the silver that China demanded, the English brought in opium from India to pay for the tea, leading to the opium wars which China lost. The western nations demanded Treaty Ports after the opium war, the resulting discontent led to the Boxer rebellion and the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911 (van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

Some influences from China on Europe and the rest of the world include the concept of the Emperor as the "sun king" with a heavenly mandate, like the French King Louis XIV, the ornate Chinese-style embellishment of Rococo art, and the Chinese meritocratic civil service where leadership positions are determined not by birth, but by the ability to pass state examinations (van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

12.5.2   Korea

In Korea, besides European discovery, the 'New World', and Renaissance, Korean history can be included, and students learn about the founding and middle period of Kingdom of Great Joseon, a Korean dynasty which lasted five centuries from 1392 to 1897, as well as the anti-war era in world history (Freie Waldorfschule Busan, n.d.; Cheonggye Free Waldorf School, n.d.).

12.5.3   Indonesia

The students could learn about the kingdom of Ternate and the Maluku Islands. The islands were known as the Spice Islands due to the nutmeg, mace and cloves that

were originally exclusively found there, and the presence of these sparked colonial interest from Europe in the 16th century.

12.5.4   Malaysia

The two separate history blocks of Chinese and European history begin to converge in the Class 7 Age of Exploration where both streams of history cross each other, such as the voyages of Admiral Zheng He and Columbus (Malaysia Teacher's Group, 2015).

12.5.5   Philippines

In Class 7, students discuss how Filipino hero Jose P. Rizal defended his ideals (as a knight and crusader). He also becomes a bit demystified as they note that he was a "ladies man", with a German wife and a Filipino girlfriend. As the students practice some traditional Filipino dances which involve changing partners frequently, they notice the parallel! (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

Filipino seafarers from Butuan were already exploring Asia over a thousand years ago. As early as 1001, the Song Dynasty recorded the arrival of a diplomatic mission from the "Kingdom of Butuan". The Rajahnate of Butuan was an Indianized kingdom known for its metallurgic industry and sophisticated naval technology, and purported to be a major center for cultural, religious, and commercial relations in Southeast Asia. Archaeologists have found a massive Balangay boat estimated to be 25m long and about 800 years old, centuries older than the ships used by European explorers in the 16th century. Historian Dr. William Henry Scott in his book, "Barangay: Sixteenth-Century Philippine Culture and Society" quoted a Spanish priest as having written in 1667, "The care and technique with which (Filipinos) build them makes their ships sail like birds, while ours are like lead in comparison" (Dimacali, 2013).

12.5.6   Thailand

In Thailand, Chinese history is taught in Class 7. Ancient and Modern Southeast Asian History is also taught extensively in high school (Panosot, 2017).

12.5.7   Southeast Asian Voyages of Discovery

A search for Southeast Asian voyages of discovery could point to the 'Austronesian Expansion', which suggests several waves of sea voyages from Asia to different parts of the world, as far as Africa and Hawaii. Evidence from linguistics and archaeology indicates that the 'Austronesian Expansion,' which began 4,000–5,000 years ago, likely had roots in Taiwan. The ancestry of Austronesian groups around the world is more closely related to aboriginal Taiwanese than to any other modern mainland populations (Lipson et al., 2014).

There is also evidence of sea voyages from Indonesia to Madagascar and the Comoro Islands, scattered between Madagascar and the African coast around A.D. 800. Linguistic, ethnographic, and genetic evidence points clearly to a colonisation of Madagascar by Austronesian language-speaking people from Island Southeast Asia, who brought Asian crops like sweet potato with them when they settled in Africa (Crowther et al., 2016).

12.5.8   Southeast Asian Kingdoms

It is possible to speak of Golden Ages in Southeast Asia, where art, literature, architecture and culture flourished, such as Majapahit and the Malacca Sultanate.

Majapahit (1293–1527) was one of the last major powerful empires of the region. The Old Javanese epic poem Nagarakertagama, written in 1367, depicts a sophisticated court with refined taste in art and literature, and a complex system of religious rituals (Glover, 2004; Gunn, 2011; Majapahit 2014). Important artistic traditions included metalwork and sculptures, many of them on a large scale (Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, 2001).

The Malacca or Melaka Sultanate (1400–1511) was a bustling cosmopolitan trading port and a centre for Islamic learning and dissemination. The Malay language, literature and arts flourished, and the "Sejarah Melayu" (The Malay Annals), considered one of the finest literary and historical works in the Malay language, was written. It ascribes the origins of Melaka as a royal centre to the arrival of Parameswara, a Hindu Srivijayan Sumatran prince. Classical Malay became the

lingua franca of the Maritime Southeast Asia and Jawi script became the primary medium for cultural, religious and intellectual exchange (Gunn, 2011; Ooi, 2004).

13. Class 8: Modern History to the Present

13.1 Developmental Profile

At the age of fourteen, the students are well into adolescence, with significant physical and psychological changes. They experience growth in height and sexual development, with the 'breaking voice' in boys, and physical maturation and menstruation in girls. Acne and awkwardness are some of the characteristics of the adolescent. New feelings arise in the midst of the emotional, sexual and physical changes. As an individualized and independent inner life develops, the adolescent experiences emotional turbulence, often full of anger. Gender differences are apparent: girls may become more giggly and share their feelings in small, tight-knit groups, while boys may lapse into moody silences or prefer vigorous physical outdoors activities (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

A state of 'crisis' occurs as they start to challenge the authority of parents and teachers, and may come across as rude and rebellious. As their critical faculties sharpen, they begin to question previously accepted rules and structures. Counter-balancing this critical tendency is the emergence of a reasoning or 'reasonable' side. They are developing capacities for conceptual thinking, the ability to understand problems by identifying patterns, connections, and underlying issues, thoughtful and open-minded enquiry, and are able to identify bias and prejudice. Adolescence is a time of struggling to find out who they are, what they believe in, and their own moral stand to issues of the world (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

13.2 Curriculum Objectives and Themes

"In the eighth grade, we try to bring the children right up to the present in history, including a thorough consideration of cultural history. Most of what is included in history, as it is ordinarily taught, will only be mentioned in passing. It is much more important for children to experience how the steam engine, the mechanized loom, and so on have transformed the Earth than it is for them to learn at too young an age about such curiosities as the corrections made to the Emser Depesche. The things our history books contain are the

least important as far as the education of children is concerned. Even great
figures in history, such as Charlemagne, should basically be covered only in
passing."

<div align="right">

-Rudolf Steiner, Discussions with Teachers, 1919

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Puberty is often described negatively as a crisis or revolution where the chaos of the adolescent's inner life is projected onto the outside world. It is important for educators to treat this more as an opportunity than a crisis (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

The history curriculum meets the student with the history of the great revolutions, and brings him up-to-date with modern history. The emphasis is on the experience of the individual in a rapidly changing world. The ideologies that motivated the revolutions are usually left until Class 9 (Shirley, 2012).

Studying the rise of industry, the industrial revolution and the human being's role in shaping social order right up to the present time, the students are led further into the real world. In studying cultural history, they experience how human beings transform the world. They can investigate the causes of events and thus, more and more, become citizens of the world (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

The students study history via the stories of people's lives. Biographies of human beings living in or on the brink of modern times engage the students intellectually and emotionally. Their world is widening as they encounter a great range of human experiences and endeavours. As the world emerges from war, they explore how the people experienced it, and how individuals rose up to change the course of history. With their developing capacities for thoughtful and open-minded enquiry, studies of typical biographies, eyewitness accounts, letters and journals give opportunities for the adolescent to relate their own experiences to what real people have said and done in real circumstances (Steiner Education Australia, 2011).

13.3   Existing Curriculum

Class 8 students learn about the development of humanity from a time where each person had their place in the hierarchy of society, to the awakening of individuality in modern times (Maclean, 2003).

The historical study chronicles major events in 18th and 19th century Europe leading up to, during, and after the French Revolution. This includes Absolutism and Louis XIV, the Sun King, the building of Versailles, The storming of the Bastille, Robespierre and Danton, the French Empire, and the rise and decline of Napoleon. The students also learn about the American War of Independence including the lives of the founding fathers, Washington, Jefferson, Adams, and Franklin, examine the economic forces and philosophical movements that led to both the break with England and the secession of the Southern states, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, and the resistance and fate of native Americans and slave labourers (Kovacs, 2003).

The study then moves into the rise of the Industrial Revolution, the social and technological changes it brought, as well as the causes and effects. Students learn about inventions such as the steam engine, mechanical loom, spinning machine, locomotive, and the subsequent changes in social structure, child labour, family and working life in rural and urban areas. They also study significant issues and developments such as trade unions, suffrage, factories, urban poverty, economic expansion, slavery and materialism (Kovacs, 2003).

In bringing history up to the present day, a historical overview of World history of the 20th century can be used, beginning with the late 19th century British Empire, the European colonisation of entire continents, the First World War and the chaotic situation in Europe. The students investigate the rise of totalitarian societies such as Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia, and examine the different points of view, Democracy and Marxism. The students learn about the Second World War, and read biographies of Concentration Camp victims. The rise and fall of Communist states, the Berlin Wall, Cold War, Korean and Vietnam wars, Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution; freedom and independence movements, Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement, Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro; colonialism and post-

colonialism, First-and Third World issues, and environmental issues are also covered (Avison and Rawson, 2014).

13.4   Adapting the Curriculum

Revolutions have occurred throughout human history, but the last 400 years have seen revolts and transformations that have changed human life significantly. Shirley lists what he calls 'defining revolutions' as follows:

- *"The English revolution – 1640 to 1649 – when the growing parliament ejected the king, went to war with him and finally executed him. The king was no longer ruling by divine right under God, as in the model of the Egyptian Pharoah.*

- *The Industrial Revolution – 1720 to 1900 – is a period where major changes in agriculture, manufacturing, mining, transportation, and technology had a profound effect on the social, economic and cultural conditions of the times. It began in England and then spread throughout Europe, North America, and eventually the whole world. The Industrial Revolution marks a major turning point in human history; almost every aspect of daily life was influenced in some way.*

- *The American Revolution – 1776 to 1783 – when the Americans were the first people to throw off colonial rule.*

- *The French Revolution – 1789 to 1799 – when the people demanded Liberty, Equality and Brotherhood from the king. When he dithered in granting them these rights, they executed him and founded a new republic ruled by elected representatives.*

- *The Haitian Revolution – 1791 to 1804 – when the Haitians were the first black people to throw off colonial rule.*

- *The Russian Revolution – 1917 to 1925 – where the Bolsheviks seized power, executed the tsar, or emperor, and founded the first socialist republic of workers.*

- *The Chinese Revolution – 1946 to 1950 – when a non-European people threw out the dominant military and financial powers and founded a new socialist republic of workers and peasants.*

- *The anti-colonial struggles for independence – 1947 to 1994 – where the peoples being ruled by European powers firstly threw them out, either peacefully or not, and then set up governments of various types to rule themselves."*

(Shirley, 2012, p.178-179)

Each teacher must decide which are the relevant revolutions for the class of that particular country, considering factors such as geographical location, colonial history, and the revolutions that have had the greatest impact on the local society. For instance, in a country colonized by the French, such as East Africa, the teacher may discuss the industrial, French and anti-colonial revolutions in Africa (Shirley, 2012).

Furthermore, it is important to teach history in a way that does not fuel hatred or resentment in the students. Besides the colonial narratives of imperialism, exploitation and oppression, a balanced perspective would involve looking at the benefits and positive changes in the local society brought about by the colonisers, as well as exploring the factors that made the colonisers successful, and the colony vulnerable.

Biographies of influential Asians can be taught. Peaceful revolutionaries such as Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Aung San Suu Kyi and Liu Xiaobo; heroes who led independence movements like Sukarno, Mohammed Hatta and Sun Yat-sen; Asian leaders and dictators Tan Malaka, Mao Zedong, Chiang Kai Shek, Lee Kuan Yew, Suharto, Pol Pot, King Bhumibol, etc.

In bringing history up to the present day, the students could observe the current post-industrial society in which production processes are increasingly computerised, and the impact of the internet and social media on present day culture and politics.

13.5 Asian Variations and Alternatives

13.5.1 China

The Qing dynasty (1644-1911) was the last imperial dynasty in China, marked by reforms and revolutions and was followed by the Republic of China. Biographies may include prominent royalty from this dynasty, such as the Empress Dowager Ci Xi, the last emperor Pu Yi who was forced to abdicate, and the longest reigning emperor of the Qing dynasty, KangXi, who sent for western teachers to learn mathematics, geography, astronomy and Latin (van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

The biographies of political revolutionaries and their roles in the creation of modern China can be studied. These include: Lin Zexu, who opposed the opium trade, Wang Yangming, a Neo-Confucian philosopher whose teachings inspired many reformers and revolutionaries even in Japan, Sun Yat-sen, first president and founding father of the Republic of China, Chiang Kai-shek, leader of the Chinese Nationalist Party and Mao Zedong, founder of the People's Republic of China (Li, 2012).

The students could explore how the industrial revolution came to China, and how it differed from Europe. Unlike in Europe where the agricultural revolution brought workers to the cities and set the stage for the industrial revolution, in China, Mao Zedong's "Great Leap Forward" tried unsuccessfully to force industrialization on China, and was followed by the Cultural Revolution. This was followed by a very rapid industrialisation of China in the late 20th Century (van Florenstein Mulder, 2011).

13.5.2   Korea

In the Busan Waldorf School, Class 8 students study the late Joseon period in Korean history, industrial revolution, civil war and modern history (Freie Waldorfschule Busan, n.d.). The French Revolutionary Manifesto, the Meaning of the Revolution in Korean Modern History, and the Artistic Revolution can also be taught. A Korean teacher spoke about taking her class to the nearby House of Sharing which serves as a home and information center for those women who were held as sexual slaves by the Japanese military during WWII. Visitors above Class 7 may meet with the survivors, who encourage the young people to study hard and ensure that this history does not repeat itself (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

13.5.3   Malaysia

A block on colonisation could be taught in Class 8, after the block on explorations and the Industrial Revolutions. Biographies from the Dutch colonial era, such as Jacob van Kal who was known as "The Unfortunate Dutchman" or "An Orphan's Lure Of The Far East" can be told, as well as from the British Colonial period, such as Captain James Cook, or other colonisers from the East India Company.

A balanced or neutral perspective would involve understanding the negative impacts of colonial imperialism, as well as acknowledging the positive colonial legacies and contributions, such as the building of ports, railways, roads, law and order and technological advances through the industrial revolution, and the emergence of local intellectuals and nationalists rising up to liberate the country from the colonialists. Students could also consider the larger picture, looking at colonialism as a whole, and comparing the colonial experiences of other countries and reasons for the differences, and also the impact of the Japanese occupation on colonialism.

13.5.4   Singapore

The curriculum would include biographies of influential people from Asia like Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Aung San Suu Kyi, etc.

13.5.5   Philippines

In this age of revolution, students could learn about the biography of Jose Rizal, a Filipino nationalist whose writings in part inspired the Philippine Revolution against Spain. He became a local hero and martyr because of the ideological and non-violent way he opposed the Spanish colonialists.

There was once a time when Muslims were the dominant group in the Philippines, when the Muslim Sultanate of Sulu (1405–1915) ruled over many islands in the Sulu Sea, including southern Philippines, and was the center of Islamic learning and trade in the region. From 1578 - 1927, the Sulu sultanate put up heroic resistance against western colonialists, repelling Spanish attacks for hundreds of years.

The Muslim resistance in the Philippines was considered an extension of the Crusades, only the fight was not between the Europeans and the Arabs but between the Spaniards and the Muslim Filipinos, whom the Spanish called "Moros". If the historical development of the Muslim sultanate had not been disturbed by western colonialism and the introduction of Roman Catholicism, Islam might have shaped the destiny of the Philippines (Bara, 2015).

14. Discussion: An Integrated World Curriculum

14.1 Curriculum Planning and Development

"The capabilities that each child develops can best be transmitted to the community if his/her education is the exclusive responsibility of those whose judgment 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."

-Rudolf Steiner, Towards Social Renewal: Basic issues of the social question

"The subjects of these discussions will necessarily include a wide range of themes, ranging from the adaption of key aspects of the curriculum to the specific cultural and historical traditions of a country, to developing appropriate structures which reflect the individual needs and requirements of a school, to the question of what the study of Anthroposophy and Waldorf pedagogy means in an international framework."

-Peter Lutzker, Waldorf Education and Teacher Training in an International Context: New Challenges and Developments, 2014

To begin with, every school should clearly identify and state its curriculum principles, goals and direction, and how they relate to their local context. Because Waldorf teachers have the freedom to create and innovate, it is important to have a shared and clearly stated framework they can work within, to ensure some degree of quality control and teaching that is in line with Waldorf education principles.

The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America suggests three criteria for young schools: First, that those directly in contact with the children will determine the educational program, as the relationship between the students and teachers who are committed to inner work and reflection, will bring about the necessary insights. Second, the school faculty should be committed to an ongoing study of Waldorf education. Third, teachers should be able to justify innovations either in the light of anthroposophical views of child development, out of insight based on experience, or with respect to guidelines developed based on the local context (Flynn, Olmstead & Pewtherer, 2005).

While curriculum development is primarily the responsibility of the faculty, agreements on the broader educational mission and philosophy are the concern of the entire community and should thus be reviewed and re-stated on a regular basis with opportunity for input by the community. The Association also asserts that the school leadership should authoritatively respond to any requests from the community to follow trends, fads and incompatible ideas. "The best way to do this is to make the building of common understandings of both the foundations and successful strategies of Waldorf teaching one of the highest priorities of faculty work together" (Flynn, Olmstead & Pewtherer, 2005).

One approach would be to dive into the existing "Rawson-Richter Curriculum", develop a living understanding of the subjects, their nuances and how the children respond to them, and then seek local variations.

Ben Cherry, a coordinator of the China Waldorf Forum and teacher trainer, suggests that in general, new teachers may "need something to copy the first time and then, when they have a bit of experience, they start to experiment within their own context" (Stemann and Cherry, 2016).

Horst Hellman, an experienced teacher and mentor who was involved in setting up 14 schools/initiatives across Australia and Asia, compares the process to learning calligraphy, first learning the basic strokes by copying the teacher, and after a certain level of proficiency and understanding is reached, one would have the skills and confidence to create individualised art pieces (Hellman, 2017).

The danger of localising the curriculum without a deep understanding of the "why" and the "how" may result in a superficial inclusion of local content which may not serve the needs of the developing child.

Another approach would be to study the curriculum, and in discussion groups, adapt it right from the start. The local content and variations could be implemented immediately, and it should be subject to periodic reviews, peer observations and open discussion on what worked and what could be changed. If teacher training or internships are not possible, the school could receive guidance from experienced

teachers, experienced mentors from overseas, and subject matter experts who are familiar with the local culture and community.

Adopting a grassroots approach to creating a local curriculum, the China Waldorf Forum organises research seminars in different regions several times a year, focusing on different aspects of teaching. The Curriculum Research Sub-Group developed in 2013 aims to make it an interactive process through which teachers can grow together and gain confidence in their own abilities to find solutions to their challenges. All the teachers from the region are invited to participate in the seminars which are led by a group of more experienced Chinese teachers. The collaboration then continues in meetings organised by the teachers themselves (Cherry, 2016).

In Malaysia, the teachers from the different regions meet at least once a year at the Malaysia Teacher's Conference to discuss how they can practically adopt the Waldorf curriculum in Malaysia, and they also invite overseas mentors from abroad, such as experienced teachers and principals from Waldorf schools in Australia and New Zealand, to guide them through this framework development process. They also include in their meetings consultants from outside the "Waldorf circle' - subject matter experts, individuals whom are well-informed in the areas of both Western and Eastern history, and individuals who are involved in the business economic world.

14.2 Understanding the Core Principles of Waldorf Education

"We then have to approach the curriculum in quite a different way. Our approach to it in fact has been such that we must put ourselves in the position of being able to create it ourselves at any moment..."

-Rudolf Steiner, Practical Advice to Teachers, 1919

Christoph Wiechert, the former head of the Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum, describes the criteria for developing an international curriculum: "First, you need profound knowledge of the teaching subject and second, you need profound knowledge of developmental psychology, particularly of anthroposophical anthropology" (Stemann, 2017) .

A comprehensive understanding of child development is needed, as well as how the Waldorf curriculum supports the developmental needs of the children's physical, emotional and soul bodies at each grade level.

Understanding the basics of Waldorf education and anthroposophy is not an easy task, and this is not made easier when undertaken in a different place and time. In an article by Taiwanese Waldorf lecturer Cheng Hongfei which features an online discussion of "A Prescription for Waldorf in Asia'', Zhao Li Zhen expresses the challenge of understanding the core principles of Waldorf education, which in Asia includes overcoming the barriers of culture, location and time. The concepts would be understood and interpreted differently from the time it was first created as it filters through the various modes of transmission, translations, different cultures, peoples, times, location and environment. She suggests that one's understanding would vary according to time, culture and place (Cheng, 2015).

Chengdu Waldorf School principal Li Zewu writes in his blog that in order to properly construct a local Waldorf curriculum, teachers need to vigorously study the existing framework, resources, and to do this thoroughly would mean a lot of translation into the local language would have to take place to enable more teachers to have access to the information (Li, 2012). Translation is rarely a one-to-one correspondence between two languages. John Berger wrote, "true translation is not a binary affair between two languages but a triangular affair. The third point of the triangle being what lay behind the words of the original text before it was written. True translation demands a return to the pre-verbal" (Berger, 2016, p.4). However, even with translation of texts, it would be necessary to have face-to-face teaching and guidance from more experienced teachers to interpret and understand the sometimes complex and unconventional principles of Waldorf curriculum. The experienced teachers or mentors are often from Europe or Western countries, and may require the assistance of competent translators, people who are familiar with the languages and nuances of both countries to be able to bridge the cultural gap in understanding.

Cheng stressed the importance of deeply understanding and experiencing the core principles of Waldorf education and anthroposophy, which requires humility, diligent study, digestion and absorption, and warns against a skin-deep understanding which

leads to arbitrarily sticking different ideas together in what he describes as a 'patchwork understanding' (Cheng, 2015). I watched, with deep respect and admiration, Asian colleagues attending lectures on the "Foundations of Human Experience" in English, followed by discussion groups in their native language, armed with one copy of the book in English, one in their native language, and a Translation App on their mobile device, all necessary tools to piece together the puzzle of a educational philosophy which was originally written in a completely different language, culture and time.

14.3 Questioning Existing Practices

"When the guru sat down to worship each evening, the ashram cat would get in the way and distract the worshipers. So he ordered that the cat be tied during evening worship. After the guru died the cat continued to be tied during evening worship. And when the cat died, another cat was brought to the ashram so that it could be duly tied during evening worship. Centuries later learned treatises were written by the guru's disciples on the religious and liturgical significance of tying up a cat while worship is performed."

-Anthony de Mello, The Song of the Bird, 1984

The story of the Ashram cat humorously illustrates the human tendency to unquestioningly continue established practices. In any Waldorf school around the world, there too lies a danger of transmission of unexamined practice and values. If the curriculum is not constantly renewed and reviewed, it can become an empty following of traditions. Boland writes in a humorously titled article "Travels in Education: Towards Waldorf 2.0" that "we have wanted to be 'good' Steiner teachers, and have striven hard to faithfully (re)produce what we have seen and learned as 'right'; in this process we have subdued or blunted some of our instincts for experimentation and adaptation. If this is the case, this self-imposed obligation to be dutiful needs to change" (Boland, 2017).

It is important to first understand the original curriculum and the reasons why particular subjects, cultures, and topics were chosen for a particular age group, and ask - why is this topic here? Is it a universal human theme that is best expressed by a particular culture? Or is this topic there simply because someone in the early 1900s felt that this topic was suitable for a particular class? By taking a step back and

reflecting on practices that may have once had meaning and purpose in one context, but are less relevant in our current context, we are able to distill the key aims and objectives of the Waldorf curriculum choices.

Without an in-depth knowledge, there is a risk of making quick generalisations and stereotypes of the curriculum, of simply replacing a particular European cultural study with an Asian equivalent that bears superficial resemblances to the original, or that just happens to be in the same era or category. This would result in shallow, piece-meal Asian narratives that fit the cultural context but may not meet the developmental needs of the children.

Cherry points out the dangers of working with only a superficial understanding of the Waldorf curriculum in China, or indeed any other part of the non-European world:

> "*It is more to rediscover Chinese sources and also really try to understand what has already been developed in Waldorf education. In other words, to learn more and more about the development and processes of children and how children learn. Because otherwise it is just a kind copy and paste thing. It is not a sustainable way and it is not productive if a school says it doesn't like Norse mythology and therefore replaces it with any randomly chosen Chinese story*" (Stemann and Cherry, 2016).

Ursula Nicolai, an experienced Waldorf teacher who is mentoring in Taiwan, advises teachers to first understand the reasoning and meaning behind the curriculum, and then start to explore local variations. Her recommended process is to research, suggest, discuss, try it out, and adjust it where necessary. "Be brave," she urges (Nicolai, 2017).

14.4 Understanding the Development of Human Consciousness

> *"First and foremost, you must begin to distinguish between the conventional subject matter of tradition (though this may not be stated clearly and concisely) and knowledge based on the recognition of universal human nature."*

The idea that the development of human consciousness goes through different stages, and also mirrors that of the developmental stages of a child is not limited to Waldorf education. Jennifer Gidley compares the different phases identified by theorists and researchers on developmental and evolutionary discourses, including Steiner, Piaget, Gebser, Cook-Greuter, and Wilber. Despite differences in terminology, the parallels in the evolutionary stages identified include the Paradisiacal Lemurian or Archaic stage; the Atlantean or Paleolithic Magic consciousness, sentient soul or Mythic stage, the abstract Intellectual soul or Mental-Rational stage; and finally, the consciousness soul or Postformal-Integral-Planetary stage. The table below shows the different approaches to the evolution of human consciousness (Gidley, 2007, 2007, 2016).

Figure 1   Relationships among Approaches of Gebser, Steiner and Wilbur

Time	Gebser Structures	Steiner Macrohistory	Wilber Synthesis
P A S T	Archaic (pre-history)	Pre-Diluvian, pre-history Spiritually embedded	Archaic-uroboric
	Magic (includes Ice Age)	Ancient Indian cultural era (7,000–5,000 BCE approx.) Ancient Persian cultural era (5,000–3,000 BCE approx.)	Magic-typhonic
	Mythical (pre-800 BCE)	Mythic and pictorial cultures Egyptian cultural era (3,000–800 BCE approx.)	Myth-membership
F U T U R E	Mental-perspectival (800 BCE–1,500 CE)	Rational intellectual ego development Greco-Roman cultural era (800 BCE–1,500 CE)	Ego-rational
	Integral-aperspectival (1,500 CE–future)	Consciousness soul/mind Current and future cultural era (1,500 CE–3,500+)	Vision-logic

Source: Gidley 2016

When considering an Asian variation of the curriculum, it is necessary to evaluate the extent to which it meets the stage of development that children are at, as well as the extent that it reflects the development of thinking and consciousness in the history of humanity.

There is a need to differentiate irreplaceable topics that encapsulate a particular aspect of human consciousness, such as the development of democracy or intellectual thinking, and topics where a local or regional alternative can be found. It is important to be mindful not to over-contextualise, to remove valuable "Western" content just for the sake of having Asian representation in the curriculum.

The danger in the other extreme is that the curriculum is over-localised to the extent that important links relating to the evolution of human consciousness might be ignored or forgotten.

For instance, when teaching history, such as the Roman Empire in Class 6 in which the growing intellectual soul of humanity is reflected, a local equivalent that occurred at the same time can be shown and compared, but it is not necessary to include it just for the sake of having a token Asian empire, but rather, it could be used to show that the same developments in human consciousness occurred in different ways with different cultures around the world.

Andrew Hill, the principal of Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School, Australia, who has helped Malaysian Waldorf schools develop a local curriculum explains it is important to distinguish between a European consciousness and a world consciousness that happened to begin in Europe. Although the study of Greek and Roman history may at first glance seem like a study of European history, they reveal the development of human consciousness towards democracy and freedom (Hill, 2017).

According to Hill, a man who exemplifies the modern worldview in a way that is not European but rather global and contemporary, is Liu Xiaobo who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010, was arrested for "inciting subversion of state power", and died in July 2017 after years of imprisonment. In a letter to his wife, he wrote: "I am sentenced to a visible prison, while you are waiting in an invisible one. Your love is sunlight that transcends prison walls and bars, stroking every inch of my skin, warming my every cell, letting me maintain my inner calm, magnanimous and bright, so that every minute in prison is full of meaning" (Liu, 2010; Hill 2017). His contributions to the fraternity of peoples through non-violent resistance echo the

sentiments of many modern communities living in oppressive environments calling for democracy and human rights, suggesting that these values belong to the world, and not just to the western world where the movement began. The story of the growth of this consciousness which has developed into a world consciousness, but which happened to begin in Europe would be in line with the aims of the Waldorf curriculum.

A Waldorf curriculum in any part of the world should not only be embedded in the local cultural context, but also "honour the spiritual needs or the multi-layered nature of the developing child, as part of a consciously evolving human species" (Gidley, 2007).

14.5 Reflecting on the Local Culture

"We must be conscious of the great tasks before us. We dare not be simply educators; we must be people of culture in the highest sense of the word. We must have a living interest in everything happening today, otherwise we will be bad teachers for this school. We dare not have enthusiasm only for our special tasks. We can only be good teachers when we have a living interest in everything happening in the world. Through that interest in the world we must obtain the enthusiasm that we need for the school and for our tasks."

-Rudolf Steiner, Opening Address, Teacher's Seminar, 1919

Waldorf educators in Asia who seek to modulate the curriculum to the local context should not only have a living interest in the world, but also a strong background knowledge and feeling for the local and regional cultures and history. Studying the local literature, digging deeper into their own cultures, history, traditions, handcrafts, and physical environment, would be necessary. It may also be beneficial to bring in experts in the relevant fields to contribute to discussion on the curriculum.
In researching the curriculum, the teachers also rediscover buried aspects of their culture and develop a deeper understanding of their own traditions. Nicolai shares how in the metropolitan city of Taipei, there is a feeling of being a generation that has lost great parts of its own culture. For the house building module, the teachers had to

research on traditional Taiwanese house building, and in the process, discovered how it was not just a physical process of craftsmanship and construction, but that it also involved a social element of relationship building, helping each other and a communal effort – a tradition drowned out by modern city life (Nicolai, 2017).

Uncovering the significance of religious traditions that have been taken for granted and performed for generations without understanding the meaning underlying them, would build a greater appreciation for the local culture. In one instance, when asked why certain Hindu rituals were performed, such as putting a mark on their heads every morning, or sprinkling various powders, some locals realised that they had never questioned the significance of what they had been taught to do by the previous generations, and this brought about a renewed interest in their own culture (Di Donato, 2017).

Observing the local environment, the sounds, the sights, the smells, the crafts, the practices, and traditions that are usually taken for granted could inspire new ideas and understanding. Rather than importing expensive materials from overseas, the local markets or even the physical surroundings could provide materials that children encounter every day. Di Donato observed that walking through the streets of Nepal, one could observe and be inspired by many local craftsmen at work (Di Donato, 2017).

After observing that many parts of the city were cluttered with discarded plastic, she had the idea of using them as craft materials, creating something beautiful from items that were desecrating the environment. She stressed that due to the lack of other available materials, it was used as an example, and that the teachers should not unquestioningly adopt the idea, but find their own variations. There may be objections to using plastic bottles, unnatural and hardly aesthetic, but it would be for the local teachers to evaluate if these concerns outweigh the benefits of recycling and the gift of creating beauty from the wastes of modern city life that the children are living in (Di Donato, 2017).

Another example given was the Nepalese relationship with fire. Fire was part of their every day life. As a funeral ritual, dead bodies were burnt every day and people

would gather around to watch the huge spectacle. The ashes would then be scattered into the holy (but unfortunately, dirty) river, where people would bathe in, and illnesses could be spread. When considering building a fire for a chemistry class, one would wonder how it would be received in a country where fire is so real to them and part of their religious ceremonies and every day life (Di Donato, 2017).

14.6 Teaching History: Whose Point of View?

"ON the small island of Mactan in the Philippines there is a monument erected by the Spanish in the nineteenth century to glorify God, Spain, and Ferdinand Magellan. In 1941, during the American era, a historical marker inscribed "Ferdinand Magellan's Death" was erected nearby. It stated: "On this spot Ferdinand Magellan died on April 27, 1521, wounded in an encounter with the soldiers of Lapulapu, chief of Mactan Island. One of Magellan's ships, the Victoria, under the command of Juan Sebastian Elcano, sailed from Cebu on May 1, 1521, and anchored at San Lucar de Barrameda on September 6, 1522, thus completing the first circumnavigation of the earth." Exactly a decade later, the by then independent Republic of the Philippines erected a second marker, entitled "Lapulapu." It read: "Here, on 27 April 1521, Lapu-lapu and his men repulsed the Spanish invaders, killing their leader, Ferdinand Magellan. Thus, Lapulapu became the first Filipino to have repelled European aggression." This example illustrates vividly the historian's predicament. In the wake of such wide variation of interpretation of what at first appears as fact, the attempt of the historian to impose order on the past may seem a dubious undertaking."

-David Porter Chandler, In Search of Southeast Asia: A Modern History, 1987

According to Lufti Sunar, Eurocentrism brings Western-dominated social scientific perspectives and ignores alternative views originating outside the West. In the 1980s and 1990s, in a move to critique Eurocentrism, an increasing number of books have been published that aim to re-write the histories of "conquest" and "discovery" from an anthropological perspective, highlighting the cultural relativism, the relevance of the gaze, its direction, the perspectives of the gazer and the gazed. Authors such as Eric Wolf in his book "Europe and the People Without History", or Marshall Sahlins, in "The Islands of History", attempt to tell the story of the great discoveries from the eyes of the "discovered", giving a voice to the local oral narratives (Sunar, 2016).

How history is taught to students sets the foundation for their values, and their point of reference. The question of whose side of history should be told becomes a tricky one especially in multi-racial classrooms. If a class on the voyages in the Age of Cultural Encounters has both European and Asian children, descendants of the colonisers and colonised, whose side of the story should be told? How does a teacher do justice to the diversity in the classroom?

The teacher could give a voice and representation to the different cultures in the classroom. The same story can be told twice, from two different points of view, from the perspective of the boy on the shore, as well as the explorer on the ship (Boland, 2017). Care should be taken to provide a balanced perspective and not to incite anger, but rather understanding and empathy in the students.

When adding Asian content into the curriculum, it is important to have a good understanding of why a particular narrative or topic is chosen, and how it supports the development of the child. Is the Asian content added to the Waldorf curriculum just for the sake of being politically correct and having more local representation? Is decolonisation of Waldorf curriculum an expression of post-colonial resentment, with the curriculum as the scapegoat?

It is important that the teachers not only understand the curriculum choices, but also remain centred, balanced and self-aware of their thoughts and inclinations.

14.7 Over-Localisation – The Other Extreme

In the drive to refocus Waldorf education, there is also the danger of swinging to the other extreme, of indiscriminately removing European content, running the risk of throwing out the baby with the bath water.

With the freedom to design the curriculum comes the risk that certain interest groups could design the curriculum to further their own agenda. In the 'decolonisation' process, the curriculum could be over-localised and no longer serve its original purpose to educate a child in freedom. It is important to review the curriculum to

ensure it does not tend towards nationalism or anti-colonial tendencies that create a sense of duality – us versus them.

Rawson's personal experience in India was that some teachers at the Bangalore Steiner School with Hindu Nationalist tendencies left the school in order to pursue a more Hindu-focused curriculum. In China, he found that some teachers saw Chinese history and culture as so rich and all encompassing that there was little room to learn about other cultures (Rawson, 2017).

In post-colonial Asia, teachers have to be mindful of their conscious or subconscious sentiments, taking a step back and consciously aiming for neutrality. A deep-seated anti-colonial resentment or nationalism, like tinted glasses, would cloud one's vision and influence decisions. If, for instance, a teacher is very much against the concept of white superiority, he may constantly choose narratives that portray locals as superior, and the westerners as "the other", thereby giving an equally unhealthy perspective to the students. Likewise, educators who have nationalistic tendencies, with strong patriotic feelings, or even a belief in the superiority of one's own culture over others, need to be mindful of how their beliefs can shape their perceptions and ideas, which would in turn shape their curriculum decisions and even the way they present material to their students.

Is the aim of Waldorf education to enable children to be embedded in their own cultures? Or to create an understanding and empathy with all peoples and enable them to become citizens of world, viewing the world as an interconnected living organism? It is important to strike a balance, that each child finds his place in the world and has a feeling for the universality of the human experience.

14.8 Seeking the Middle-ground between the East and West

> *"We are not trying to transfer the German Waldorf pedagogy to Taiwan, but are helping the Taiwanese find their traditional way. I call it "maintaining the red thread". I think it's important to find the living cultures and traditions and how we can bring these cultures and traditions into the Waldorf Pedagogy... We don't want to change the Chinese Culture but bring the Waldorf pedagogy*

into the Chinese culture to make it possible for children to develop in freedom."

- Margrit Bölgli-Röschke, Taipei Steiner
Teacher Training Video, Compositio Consulting

There are no clear positions for Waldorf schools on the character of the curriculum. Each school has a different agenda, and even within a school, there may not be a unified stance. Some locals see the Waldorf school as offering a European education superior to the local education, and thus favour a European curriculum, particularly if parents are westernized and of a higher social class, while others may have a more nationalist standpoint of reviving the traditional culture.

According to Cherry, there is a strong wish amongst the teachers in China to rediscover the treasures of Chinese culture. There is a whole area of current research about "when to bring what in what way". Cherry describes the different attitudes of the schools, and that there are some schools that want to replace everything, but that is not the general attitude the China Waldorf Forum encourages (Stemann and Cherry, 2016).

A middle ground approach that some schools have adopted is to retain some of the original European content that the teachers feel have universal relevance, and include content from local and regional cultures in the curriculum. Where appropriate, parallels and comparisons are drawn between the different cultures, building a sense of the universality of the human experience and consciousness. The students experience an appreciation that different cultures were going through similar experiences in different parts of the world.

However, such an approach could result in Asian children having a heavier curriculum than children in the west, as they would, in many cases, be studying content from both the east and west. There is a Chinese saying: 学贯中西 （xué guàn zhōng xī), which literally means "well-versed in the east and west", suggesting that having a thorough knowledge of both west and east and incorporating both perspectives into one's understanding would be ideal. In an email interview, Li Zewu wrote that a child in China or Asia would certainly have more content to cover,

because of the rich and heavy content from both European and Chinese or Asian streams, but that it can be done, and it requires the teacher to have a thorough understanding of both cultures. However, he says that more important than whether or not the curriculum includes content from the west, is whether it meets the developmental needs of the children (Li, 2017).

According to van Florenstein Mulder, after studying the history curriculum, the Waldorf School in Yilan, Taiwan, decided to take a shortened form of the European-centred curriculum suggested by Steiner and then study the same theme in Chinese and Taiwanese history.

In Malaysia, the general consensus of the teachers' discussion group was that both Western and Eastern history are important for the Malaysian children, as both regions have exerted a strong influence over the country through the course of history, both pre- and post-colonial. The teachers felt that the history of China was particularly relevant as practically all the children in the school were of Chinese descent and the language of instruction was Chinese. Their suggested approach was to teach at least two independent history blocks each year from Class 5 onwards, with one block of Western history and another of China history. The convergence of historical events would start in the Age of Cultural Encounters in Class 7 where both streams of history converge.

If Waldorf education aims to provide intercultural roots, a balanced approach would be to have a blend of both the east and west, with the lower grades focusing more on local content, and the higher grades taking a more international perspective.

14.9 World Curriculum for World Citizens

> *"You might realize that even if the principles of Waldorf education arose in one specific country, they do not have anything to do with some kind of nationalism, but with internationalism in the best sense, as they search for the universally human quality in all of us. We do not want to educate people who belong to a particular class, nation or profession, but people with the broadest, most heartfelt human interests."*

-Rudolf Steiner, The Modern Art of Education, 1923

As Waldorf education travels around the globe, the question that faces local teachers is how to educate children and young people to grow into world citizens whilst at the same time leading them to an appreciation of the treasures within their own culture (Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners, 2017).

Embedded in the original curriculum is a framework of the story of the world, the development of human consciousness from archaic, through mythic, to modern individual and scientific consciousness. Rawson suggests that the aim is to make the case for the collective spiritual descent of human societies and the rise of individuality and emancipation at the price of materialism. He says that "Steiner taught a spiritual path of individual development leading to the possible emancipation of individuals from collective, social and cultural forms of being, so that they can achieve spiritual consciousness in a new form" (Rawson, 2017).

The curriculum tells the story of modern values, and not just those of Europe. Although some of these notions, such as human rights and democracy, first emerged in and are associated with Europe, they have become universal modern values, and the European curriculum stories are merely archetypal but not prescriptive stories of the journey of humanity.

The choices made in the first Waldorf curriculum were based partly on the available literature and information available at the time, such as the ancient civilisations of Egypt, Greece and Rome. If Asian teachers are able to find local cultures and civilisations that exemplify the archetypes and development of human consciousness, it would contribute to the rich resource of universal humanity.

Rawson says that one of the tasks of the curriculum narratives is to locate us in "a global evolution of consciousness from mythic to historical, from magical to scientific, from intuitive to rational, from collective to individual and to prepare for a new form of conscious intuitive knowledge." As modern society evolves, he says that "we now need to add the journey from individualism to social responsibility alongside tales of "the other" and tolerance and difference. Not only do heroes need to be girls and

women, but some of them need to gay, disabled and other ways of being different"
(Rawson, 2017). With this in mind, the degree to which a Waldorf teacher adapts of
selects stories that reflect modern changing values would be dependent on the local
culture, community, as well as the values and direction of the college of teachers.

A world curriculum should build connectedness, a felt connection between things,
between communities, and a sense of being a citizen of the world, and understanding
the different ways and expressions of being human, at the same time anchoring the
children in their cultural heritage.

15. Guidelines for Developing a Local Curriculum

15.1 Self-Reflection and Quality Development

"A specific kind of inward humility, the sense that we ourselves are still only becoming, is something which will give the teacher strength, for out of this feeling more arises than out of abstract principles. If we stand in our classroom, conscious of the fact that it is a good thing we do everything imperfectly – for in that way there is life in it – then we will teach well. If on the other hand we are always patting ourselves on the back over the perfection of our teaching, then it is quite certain we are doing badly."

- Rudolf Steiner, Balance in Teaching, 1923

According to Rawson, "good practice occurs when self-reflective teachers assess their own teaching and its results for the children and share their evaluation with colleagues on a regular basis." In this way, individual insights are tested, reviewed and improved by the college and flow back into the classroom. Good assessment can lead to transformation in both teaching and learning, improving the quality of education (Rawson, 2015).

There are several stages of evaluation that can be used in a school, especially one that is experimenting with localising the Waldorf curriculum.

Self-evaluation is an ongoing process for teachers which involves reviewing lesson plans daily, weekly, monthly, or even annually. These are shared with colleagues who support and give feedback.

Departmental self-evaluation involves a group of teachers meeting regularly to review their aims, whether they are meeting the children's needs, their practices and effectiveness, and reporting these to the rest of the college.

Peer evaluation and assessment involves teachers being assessed by colleagues within the same department, fellow class teachers or co-workers. This is best done internally within the school. All parties involved should agree beforehand to assessment procedures and consequences (Rawson and Swann, n.d.).

Alain Denjean in his article "Curricula in Kiswahili, Arab, French ..." says that the implementation of the Waldorf curriculum requires an extraordinary flexibility by the teacher, who can achieve this only by artistic means, and with absolute freedom. Denjean lists several four styles of teaching below, and I have taken the liberty to add a fifth:

(I)   Freely exploring the spiritual foundations of the curriculum day by day, putting it into practice according to the teacher's insights,

(II)   Drawing from existing practices of other teachers so the curriculum becomes a worn out path,

(III)   Following practices over generations that have developed into tradition,

(IV)   Adopting a mere list of norms which have to be adhered to (Denjean, 2014).

(V)   Moving to the other extreme of rejecting the foundations of the curriculum and replacing them with new content.

In the process of implementing local variations to the Waldorf curriculum, the college of teachers could benefit from periodic self-reflection, evaluating themselves against the above list, where their current practice lies, how they feel about where they are, and what changes they wish to see, if any.

In a Quality Development series "Teachers As Researchers: Using the Teachers' Meetings as a Focus for Practice-Based Research", Rawson suggests that action research is another approach to curriculum development that can be done individually or as a group. If an imported curriculum is already being taught, the teachers can evaluate the existing practice by examining what each teacher actually teaches, why they teach it, and how the pupils respond. Alternatively, they could begin by examining what the pupils in specific age groups need in their development and how the specific subject responds to their needs. The curriculum questions can also include why particular content has been chosen (tradition, experience, someone's suggestion), what the teacher expects a particular content to achieve, what developmental process the topic is designed to address, and the needs of the students in that particular class. Teachers need to closely observe how the pupils respond to a subject, theme or activity, and the method of teaching, and review how well the chosen curriculum content met the original expectations (Rawson, n.d.).

Rawson writes that an important factor in quality development in Waldorf schools is for educators to perceive how children respond to the learning situations created through their teaching, curriculum, school environment, and climate, and that they should learn from this and then adjust the approach accordingly (Rawson, 2015). As part of educational quality evaluation in a Waldorf school, Rawson suggests a structure of action research with collegial exchange and with three starting points. A school developing a curriculum would need all three elements, and may begin at any point:

- Establish vision, aims and principles for the school
- Evaluate the current practice
- Implement innovative ideas, new programmes or practices (Rawson, n.d.).

Figure 2 Action Research: Three starting points
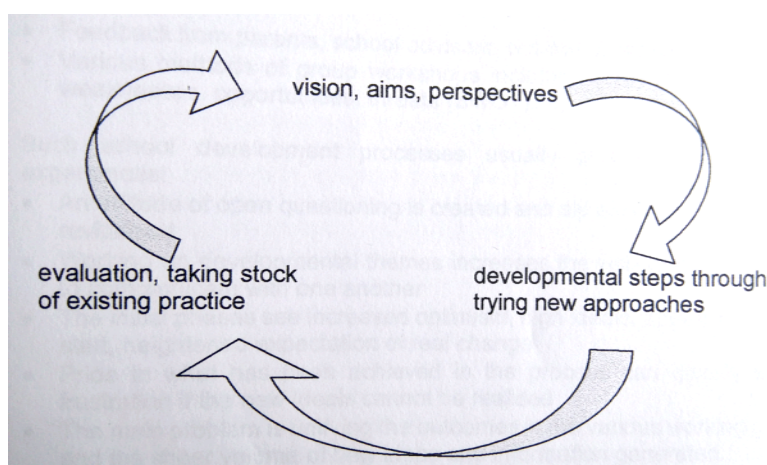
Source: Rawson, n.d.

Educational quality evaluation using self and group reflection is especially relevant in Asian schools that seek to develop local variations to the curriculum. These methods are directly connected to the anthroposophical path of self-development, and enables teachers to develop and evaluate the educational quality of their own teaching.

Many Waldorf teachers in Asia have not had the privilege of a Waldorf education, and may have had years of training and immersion in an education that is based on what Steiner calls "dead concepts", definitions, and memorization (Steiner, 1996). In order to break out of the old models of learning and understanding the world, teachers need to self-reflect and consciously remain open and aware of the deep-

seated habits in their thinking and practice which have become second nature to them.

A German mentor who conducted training in Asia observed that while the local teachers were eager to learn a new and creative way of teaching, many of them had themselves been taught in the form of rote memorization in order to answer questions. They had not been encouraged to ask questions in school and had not understood the concept of cause and effect. Limited by their own education system that they were trying to get away from, the teachers had to strive to overcome this through self-reflection, re-educating themselves and teacher training. The mentor also felt that the teachers would need at least one to two years of teacher training, and that ad hoc workshops, though beneficial, would not provide the depth and scope of training that was needed.

In my own experience of learning Chemistry as part of my Waldorf Teacher training, I was highly skeptical of the anthropomorphizing of chemicals and elements, and of finding metaphors for human life and spirituality in the physical qualities of substances like carbon and diamond. When the lecturer compared the way sulphur solidifies, expands and darkens when heated, to an egoistic being that focuses on himself and swells with importance, drawing the warmth back to his own centre instead of diffusing outwards, I found myself recoiling in horror, feeling that all this was too unscientific and mystical an approach. My husband (who is also my classmate in the same course) suggested that my closed mindset had its roots in the notion I had received from school that science had to be strictly clinical, using carefully worded definitions and terminology, and detached from feelings, emotions, metaphors and imagery. A period of self-reflection enabled me to overcome this rigid mentality, and open myself to seeing an interconnectedness of scientific phenomena and human life, its metaphors and parallels, and overall develop a deeper appreciation and interest in Chemistry, a subject that I had never before enjoyed.

Thus, a teacher who wishes to exercise true freedom in teaching needs to be open to self-reflection and observation, watching one's behaviour, reactions, and aware of unconscious biases, pre-conceived notions, and deep-seated belief systems that are often taken for granted.

Hellman advises teachers not to be afraid to constantly try, re-evaluate, and re-think their teaching practices and curriculum. While striving for the ideal, it is important for teachers to not be afraid of making mistakes, to be open to criticism, and to constantly reflect on how well one's teaching practices and content meet the needs of the children (Hellman, 2017).

15.2 Inner Development of Teachers

"What kind of school plan you make is neither here nor there; what matters is what sort of a person you are. In our day it is easy enough to think out a curriculum, because everyone in our age is now so clever. I am not saying this ironically; in our day people really are clever. Whenever a few people get together and decide that this or that must be done in education, something clever always comes out of it. I have never known a stupid educational program; they are always very clever. But what is important is that you have people in the school who can work in the way I have indicated."

-Rudolf Steiner, Kingdom of Childhood, 1924

When Steiner laid down the foundation for Waldorf education, he emphasized the importance of inner development that every Waldorf teacher has to undertake in order to be good teachers: "You will not be good teachers if you focus only on what you do and not upon who you are" (Steiner, 1996, p.42). Through contemplations of nature, traditional spiritual texts, verses and images, and developing the imagination, inspiration and intuition, teachers can develop inner qualities that can lead to deep insights and transform into inspiration for lessons, pedagogical intuitions and a heightened awareness of the needs of the children (Klugman, 2015). In "First Steps in Inner Development", Steiner highlights the benefits of inner development: "Once we develop these inner qualities, we stand above all the dangers that can arise from the division in human nature. We can no longer stray from the path. These qualities, therefore, must be formed with the greatest precision" (Steiner, 1999, p.35).

Christoph Gögelein describes the fruits of a teacher's inner work:

"The most important dimension of a teacher's preparation is not the

accumulation of knowledge which is then used in the classroom, but rather that the teacher actively and regularly works on herself, transforming her spiritual, emotional and physical being. She can then trust that this form of preparation will lead to fruitful and new insights at the right moment while preparing her lessons, and also in the act of teaching itself" (Gögelein, 1990, p.307, translation by Peter Lutzker).

Schwartz pointed out that due to the worldwide shortage of teachers, many teacher training programs are becoming shorter and more compressed, and focused mainly on content to enable the teacher to know what to do in the classroom. While this is important, there is often insufficient time allocated to helping the teacher with her own inner preparation and self-education, which is a key component of being a Waldorf educator and a worthy role model for students (Schwartz, 2017).

In Asian schools where teacher training and mentorship are less widely available than hoped for, educators are challenged to forge a path and make new inroads in their homelands, both in the running of a school as well as in pedagogical and curriculum-related matters. While working with the Curriculum Research Sub-Group in Chengdu, China, Cherry highlighted the need for Waldorf teachers to develop inner strength and confidence:

> "*Our wish has been to make it an interactive process through which teachers can grow together and gain confidence in their own ability to find solutions to their challenges. On each occasion we have had to face the tension between the need for group leaders and for every teacher to learn to think for herself*" (Cherry, 2016).

Working on their inner development helps teachers build up the confidence to find solutions and make decisions. This may seem a tall order, especially if training and mentorship are not readily available in the local context, but it is still an ideal that we could strive for.

Cheng's observation of teachers in Taiwan is that they are under immense pressure and stress, swamped with work and responsibilities, and that they often compensate for the school's lack of resources and experience by doubling their workload. He

proposes that the teachers' quality of life and work-life balance should be a topic of reform that the community should address so that teachers can enjoy a healthy, balanced life with enough breathing space for self-development, personal reflection, and creativity (Cheng, 2017). Cheng's account very much describes the situation of many schools in Asia where teachers are overworked and underpaid, and may sometimes even go for months without pay. The risk of teacher burnout is real, and it affects not only the wellbeing of the children but also the long-term sustainability of a school.

15.3 International Discussion Forum

Denjean suggests that an exchange of thoughts and ideas between Waldorf teachers worldwide could have a tremendously enriching effect on one's own teaching practice. "This enlivening exchange can start with discussions with close colleagues in our own school and expand to include teachers in other countries and those who speak different languages" (Denjean, 2014, p21).

In the course of collecting curriculum content from the different schools in Asia, many of the teachers whom I contacted were very interested to know what other schools in Asia were teaching and repeatedly requested that I share my findings with them. Adapting the curriculum can be a daunting task, particularly if one is doing it for the first time in a different culture. One teacher wrote, "We'd like to be in a forum where we can share and see what and how others do with their culture and curriculum and how it plays with Steiner's teaching." Hearing about how other schools in similar situations responded would provide new ideas, inspiration, and a feeling of support and connectedness.

There are a number of websites that publish articles and content from all over the world, such as Waldorf Resources, Elewa, Millennial Child and Waldorf Teacher Resources. As Waldorf education spreads to different parts of the world that lack established teaching training and mentor support, an online discussion forum that would allow teachers to exchange ideas, ask questions, and seek advice from other teachers may provide a platform for pioneering teachers to receive guidance and support which would otherwise be impossible. The discussion platform could be in

the form of a forum where discussions take place along different threads and topics, or even a closed and moderated Facebook group, which is popular among Waldorf home-schooling families. The discussions would have to be moderated by experienced teachers or practitioners. Although some might argue that this lacks the live interpersonal relational element, it could be a source of great support and community for pioneering schools in Asia that are geographically distant from other Waldorf schools.

15.4 Teacher Training

> *"In the Waldorf School, teachers are given absolute freedom in their application of basic principles. Education is an altogether free art. The subjects might remain the same, but teachers may present their content in their own individual ways and according to the specific character of their pupils."*
>
> *-Rudolf Steiner, Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy, 1921*

Unlike in Europe which has established and accredited Waldorf teacher training in universities and colleges, teacher training in Asia is more often than not part time, or in some countries, ad hoc, limited by availability of trainers, resources, finances, among other factors.

The Chengdu Waldorf School in China started its own training courses on the school premises to keep up with the rapid growth of the school and demand for teachers. These courses run during the school vacation in the summer as well as in October and May (Swisher, 2007). In 2013, there were five Waldorf preschool teacher-training centers and four primary school training centres in China, each center running at full capacity with 120 teachers. "There's a saying in Waldorf circles that everything in the Waldorf world is a scramble. You have to scramble for education, for dining, for training, for internships." As Chengdu Waldorf principal Li Zewu explains, "It's all fueled by increasing demand" (Wu, 2013).

At the other extreme are countries where teachers have to either travel overseas for training, or grab any learning opportunity that comes by. As I described in an earlier chapter, a German teacher on holiday in Asia was surprised by excited local teachers

who, upon discovering she was a Waldorf teacher, immediately asked her to conduct teacher training for them. She sought advice over the telephone from experienced mentors and scrambled to improvise a teacher training session, which was greatly appreciated and helpful for the local teachers (Di Donato, 2017).

The lack of teachers means a new teacher would often have to start teaching after a short period of training, usually during the school holidays. In some cases, the school holidays available may be so short that the teachers opt to have the training during the school term itself, on top of the regular teaching hours.

My own experience of Waldorf teaching training has been interesting, ranging from scattered workshops in Asia to a full-time Master's degree program in Germany. The following is a description of my own experiences and opinions, and not representative of any institution or group.

I first became interested in Waldorf education when I was living in Singapore and decided to home-school my two kindergarten-aged children. I purchased a Waldorf home-school curriculum from the USA over the internet and soon received a huge box full with CD recordings of songs, videos, a mini library of stories, crafts and resources, as well as several thick manuals with pedagogical guidelines on child development, the nature of the human being, child study, the teacher's inner development, and more. I pored over the books and implemented the curriculum as best as I could, with online consultations from the experienced teachers and guidance from online Waldorf support groups on Facebook and Yahoo Groups. There was growing interest among the small home-schooling community in Singapore and some mothers asked me to start a regular Waldorf-inspired home-schooling group, which eventually grew into daily sessions that I conducted together with my husband, who is a Waldorf music teacher.

As my responsibilities grew, I became more and more aware that the information that I had received from books, videos and the Internet though helpful, was not sufficient - I needed real-life teachers. I flew to the Philippines to attend the annual Asian Teacher Training which lasted five days, conducted by mentors from Germany, the Netherlands and Japan. The course was well-organised, with singing, movement and

pedagogical lectures taking place in the mornings. In the afternoons, the teachers would attend main lesson classes for the class level that they would teach the next school year, ranging from kindergarten, to Classes 1 to 8. There were also workshops on Blackboard Drawing, Eurythmy, Moving Games and more. I understood from some of the other trainees that this would be the bulk of the training they would receive before starting their Waldorf teaching career, and that the next training would take place the following year to prepare them for the next class level that they would teach. The training provided the teachers with a better understanding of Waldorf education and more confidence, but five days were only enough to receive a broad overview.

There I encountered some interesting ideas and interpretations of Waldorf education. I was told that kindergarten teachers should wear an apron to "protect their etheric body". I also saw that there was a school where all the teachers dressed every day in the colours of the week according to Steiner, so on Thursday, for instance, all the teachers wore orange shirts. Having had limited exposure to Waldorf schools, I was interested to learn more about how characteristic of Waldorf education these ideas were.

When I returned to Singapore, another Waldorf parent and I coordinated a local teacher training program that would take place on scattered weekends over a period of three years, sometimes with weeks or months in between. The sessions were dependent on the availability and schedule of the school mentor, Horst Hellman, an experienced class teacher whose time was divided between various Asian countries, as well as his own homeland, Germany. The training was also supplemented by other visiting mentors who conducted ad-hoc workshops. There was more time for in-depth understanding and hands-on practice, but the nature of it being an irregular part-time program made it difficult to be fully immersed in the content.

The desire to give our children a Waldorf education brought our family to Stuttgart, Germany, where my husband and I began a full-time International Master's program in English. Being a full-time program that spanned more than a year, we were able to explore each topic slowly and more thoroughly, although one could argue that a deeper understanding would be the work of a lifetime. Learning from lecturers, former

teachers and experts from different parts of the world, being at the site of the first Waldorf School, and being in dialogue with Waldorf teacher trainees from different parts of the world brought about lively discussions about culture and curriculum, a deeper awareness of anthroposophy and how certain practices that we had previously thought of as the "Waldorf way" of doing things, such as knitting, felting, the study of Norse myths, certain songs, and festivals were partially a reflection of the German or European culture and not a universal "Waldorf ideal". It was also interesting to see how Waldorf education had evolved in Germany since its beginnings nearly a century ago. As international students who had thought that traditional songs and the Waldorf Song Book compilations contained the most appropriate music choices for Classes 1 – 8, we were surprised to learn that experienced and respected Waldorf German music teachers were bringing rap, modern and international pop songs into their classes. It seemed to me that teachers around the world, in a desire to be 'good' Steiner teachers, as Boland puts it, striving hard to faithfully reproduce what we have seen and learned as 'right', were holding on to 100-year-old practices of Middle Europe that teachers in Germany had already started to move away from (Boland, 2017).

Having experienced three different types of teacher training, I can see the benefit of an accredited and well-planned program, but I recognise that this option would not be possible for many countries in Asia.

According to Cherry, the biggest challenge in teacher education is that one has to find a balance between the urgent needs - because many teachers who are in the teacher training are already teaching - and the real intentions of the teacher training program which is to build foundations for the future, so that the new teachers can become more and more autonomous. If teachers can understand what they are doing and why they are doing it, then they can make their own decisions. So on one hand, the challenge is speed and the other is the huge number of trainee teachers - reportedly up to 180 in a South China teacher-training course (Stemann and Cherry, 2016).

While Waldorf teacher training is largely focused on meeting the increasing demand for teachers in Waldorf schools, it can also provide opportunities for transforming and

improving education practices outside the Waldorf community. In a reflective article about the growth of the Waldorf movement in Taiwan, Cheng writes that he has over the years observed that there is increasing interest from teachers from mainstream schools in studying Waldorf education and applying its principles to their teaching methods and curriculum in non-Waldorf schools. He applauds this and strongly recommends that Waldorf teacher training should do its best to include the needs of non-Waldorf teachers in the teacher training programme, with the aim that eventually, every mainstream school should have teachers who are "friends of Waldorf education" – seeds of transformation to bring an education of freedom to children from all schools, and not just Waldorf schools (Cheng, 2017).

15.5 Mentorship

> "Imagine the situation of a new colleague at a young school. A lot of tasks beset this colleague, who not only has to build up his school but also his own teaching style, particularly in non-European countries facing difficult economic conditions. It is easy to imagine in this case that cooperative support to tackle the daily challenges of education is helpful and necessary."
>
> *-Florian Osswald, Are you enthusiastic about Rudolf Steiner's educational impulse?, 2017*

First-time teachers in a pioneering Waldorf school may feel alone and daunted by the demands of the curriculum and the task of paving the way on new terrain. While a school mentor would undoubtedly provide support and guidance, the process, quality and outcome would also depend on the people offering the support, and whether they are in touch with contemporary issues, and are able to offer high quality training (Osswald, 2017).

15.5.1   Role of a School Mentor

A school mentor is usually an experienced class teacher who has taught in an established Waldorf school and has been appointed by the young school to advise and provide pedagogical guidance. Their periodic visits may include training, observing individual teachers, offering suggestions in follow-up, and providing

support and resources to help the school in its development (Soule, Gerwin & Brunetta, 2016).

In countries like Germany or North America where Waldorf education is more established, new schools may enjoy the support of a School Support team where a team of 2-3 experienced teachers, usually from the delegates group and member schools, provides ongoing support to the school as it progresses. Members of this team may make visits to the developing school to observe and assess progress, as well as provide support and resources.

15.5.2   School Mentorship in Asia

In 2014, the growing need for school mentorship outside Europe gave rise to the project of Cooperative Support, run by the Pedagogical Section at Goetheanum, in collaboration with the IAO (International Association for Waldorf Pedagogy in Middle- and Eastern Europe and Far Eastern countries) and the Friends of Waldorf Education. Schools in need of cooperative support can apply for cooperative support, and mentors are recruited and allocated accordingly. Some of the mentors who have been working for this project since 2016 include Max van der Made (Philippines), Anders Hoier (Slovenia), Christoph Jaffke (Mexico), and Roland Steinemann (India) (Goetheanum Pädagogische Sektion, 2017).

Outside the umbrella of any governing body, young Waldorf Schools all over the world have taken the initiative to invite experienced teachers to provide mentorship and support. At large conferences like the Asian Teacher's Conference, Rawson has also observed what he terms a "marketplace of mentors", where teachers from pioneering schools seek out mentors whose diaries quickly get filled up with requests from all over Asia (Rawson, 2017). According to Christoph Jaffke, China Waldorf schools are supported by a large number of mentors, mainly retired colleagues from New Zealand, Australia, the US and Europe (Jaffke, 2016).

The Cooperative Support project by the Pedagogical Section lists the following skills required for mentors:

> 1. a rich experience in the art of teaching
> 2. a serving attitude as well as social skills

3. fluent command of English - apart from your native language
(Goetheanum Pädagogische Sektion, 2017).

While these attributes are indeed prerequisite for mentors traveling to Asia to guide a pioneering school, Nicolai suggests that it would be beneficial for prospective school mentors to receive some training on how to be a mentor (Nicolai, 2017). Boland spoke about the importance of mentors and the quality of mentorship, which can be very varied, and how the mindset and approach of a mentor can affect the development of the local school, for better or for worse (Boland, 2017).

15.5.3 Contemporary Thinking

Osswald highlighted the importance of trainers being in touch with contemporary issues and having the ability to spark the trainees' enthusiasm for Steiner's educational impulse (Osswald, 2017). Boland raised a question of whether the guidance from mentors reflected the educational impulse as well as contemporary Waldorf pedagogical thinking, or whether it was a propagation of 40-year-old traditions and songs that they had learnt in their own teacher training days decades earlier (Boland, 2017).

15.5.4 Cultural Sensitivity

"In the 21st century, one of the keys to the further development of Waldorf education will lie in the nature of the dialogue that takes place between those educators who are presently creating and developing new Waldorf institutions in their respective countries and those educators who have been working within longstanding Waldorf traditions. The quality of this dialogue will depend on the mutual respect and genuine interest which each of the partners bring to these discussions."

-Peter Lutzker, Waldorf Education and Teacher Training in an International Context: New Challenges and Developments, 2014

Kerckhoven suggests that school mentors need to have a great sensitivity about both culture and people, so that they appreciate the universal human aspect of that particular culture and work accordingly. "Too often mentors are missionaries rather than farmers who help seeds grow according to the climate and soil structure of the

local area. Of course you can't grow apples in the tropics, but then, maybe you have to either forego apples or find an alternative fruit" (Kerckhoven, 2017). Boland related two possible approaches to bringing Waldorf education to a foreign country: One school mentor packs a huge suitcase full of expensive "Waldorf treasures", beeswax crayons, beeswax, wool, felt, etc. Another mentor brings nothing and upon arrival, heads straight to the local markets and picks up affordable and abundant local materials, and develops some ideas from there (Boland, 2017). To use Kerkhoven's imagery, the Waldorf missionary imparts knowledge and practices, while the farmer plants seeds and allows the local teachers to grow and find their way in their own environment.

When two cultures with ancient philosophical traditions meet, cultural sensitivity, mutual respect, open dialogue and deeper reflection are necessary to bridge the two cultures. Schwartz relates an east-meets-west anecdote:

> *"We also have to proceed very carefully. My translator told me that some Europeans were in China recently and were speaking about the four temperaments, the four seasons, and the four elements. Someone in the audience raised her hand and said that there were five elements in China. So what happened? The teacher from Germany said that was wrong, there are only four elements — and that was that!" (Schwartz and Kennedy, 2012).*

China's ancient traditions and worldview shaped Confucianism and Taoism date back centuries before Anthroposophy, which has its roots in Europe. Great care must be taken to avoid strong, sweeping statements that override another culture's deeply ingrained beliefs. A deeper approach and understanding of Waldorf education and Asian culture are called for, as well as a re-examination of what really defines Waldorf education, or, as Ludzker puts it, "what the study of Anthroposophy and Waldorf pedagogy means in an international framework" (Ludzker, 2014).

A common approach mentioned by school mentors whom I spoke to was to be observant and open to the new culture and practices, seeing it not as imparting knowledge but as a two-way street of learning from each other. Kerckhoven described an approach of offering "suggestions" and "possibilities":

"I had the attitude: I don't know the people, I don't know the culture, the language, how they work, etc. So I sat back and observed, listened and sensed where I needed to offer suggestions. I say "suggestions" because Waldorf education is so wide and limitless that what is right for one place or time, may not be relevant for another place or time. What I saw in that beginning school was enthusiasm, good will and an honest striving to give the children a good education. How can one be critical about that? How can you tell those young and enthusiastic, sacrificing teachers that what they are doing is "not Waldorf?" So I suggested things here, offered advice there and, starting from where the teachers were at or did, developed possibilities with them. I say "possibilities" because this is what I saw and felt, but I was not sure whether that would suit the teacher's way of working" (Kerckhoven, 2017).

This approach was much appreciated by the local teachers who appreciated being able to "sit on a bench outside the classroom and talk about local birds" with a foreign mentor, feeling that they and their culture were acknowledged and appreciated (Kerckhoven, 2017).

However, some understanding of the new culture could help school mentors be more effective and aware of how their words and actions are perceived. A teacher in the Philippines who expressed her gratitude for the contributions of foreign mentors also noticed that cultural differences between mentors and the local culture could sometimes result in misunderstandings. When pressed for an answer, she explained that some teachers were intimidated by what they perceived to be a confrontational manner of feedback from some foreign mentors, and a feeling of constantly being told what to do, pointing to cultural differences in how confrontation is viewed and practiced.

According to Erin Meyer, INSEAD professor and author of "The Cultural Map", in some cultures it is appropriate to say "I totally disagree" or to tell the other party he is wrong, while in other cultures the same behavior would provoke anger and possibly an irreconcilable breakdown of the relationship. Interestingly, a cultural map by Meyer describes confrontational levels of different nationalities and places the Philippines and other Asian countries as avoiding confrontation, and on the other

side of the spectrum, several European countries are described as more accepting of confrontation (Meyer, 2015).

Figure 3: Cultural Map of Confrontation Attitude and Expressiveness

Preparing to Face Your Counterpart
The map below sorts nationalities according to how confrontational and emotionally expressive they are.
Although negotiators often believe that the two characteristics go hand in hand, that's not always the case.
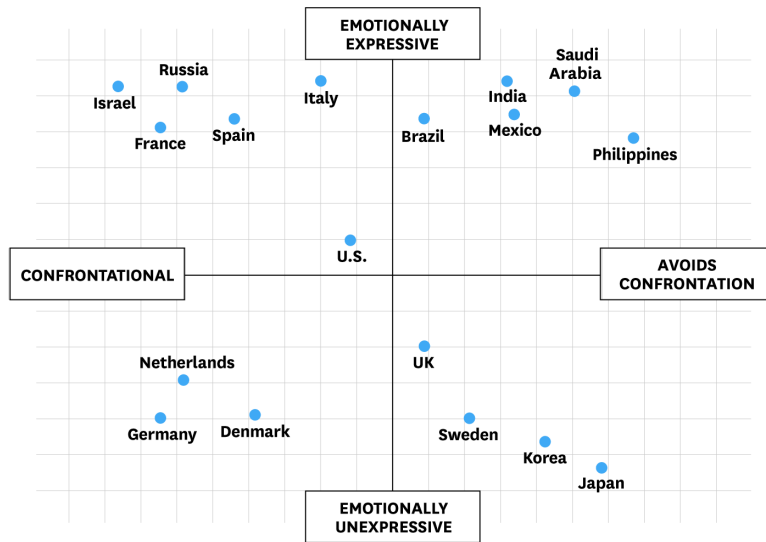
SOURCE ERIN MEYER
FROM "GETTING TO *SÍ*, *JA*, *OUI*, *HAI*, AND *DA*," DECEMBER 2015   © HBR.ORG

Source: Meyer, 2015

Meyers writes that some cultures consider it rude to give a direct negative response to someone they respect, and prefer to convey disagreement more subtly, through body language, tone, or indirect answers. For instance, instead of answering a direct "no", a person from Southeast Asia, Japan, or Korea (perhaps also in India or Latin America), might hesitate, suck in their breath, or mutter, "I will try, but it will be difficult". Conversely, an Asian related an encounter where a French person's expressive response of "no-no-no-no" felt to the Asians like they were being slapped repeatedly, even though the speaker merely wanted to debate the terms before agreeing (Meyer, 2015).

These culturally different attitudes towards confrontation and emotional expressiveness could help to explain some of the feelings expressed by the teachers, and suggest that an understanding or study of the Asian culture beforehand could help to create more nurturing and fruitful experiences.

15.5.5   Working closely with teachers within the school

Nicolai observes that while a new school begins with great enthusiasm and effort, the pressures and hugeness of the task lead her to suggest that it should ideally be mentored intensely for at least one cycle, and that huge conferences which provide more general and abstract ideas do not provide the benefits of a dedicated school mentor who works within the school itself, looks at its different aspects, understands its individuality, and works on and follows up on its issues (Nicolai, 2017). Di Donato also pointed out the importance of observing and working with teachers during lessons, and not just providing training and consultations after school hours (Di Donato, 2017).

Max van Der Made who mentors a school in the Philippines describes the wide scope that a school mentor covers:

> *"…in Class 1, I help by forming the groups according to temperament, and with questions like where the children should sit and where the tables should stand, what hangs on the wall and what is on the blackboard, and what the best rhythm for main lesson is. The art of composing the main lesson also comes up repeatedly, as does the art of narrating and the difference between telling a fairy tale and telling a story. At the beginning, there is a lot of hard work in such a new school: much needs to be studied and organised. The teachers study various books in the teachers' meetings: The Study of Man – naturally! – and special lectures for upper school. The teachers discuss the pupils, how they work and also how they play. When, for example, should the children be allowed to take their skateboard around with them?"* (van Der Made, 2016).

Van Der Made's account expresses the enthusiasm of the teachers in a new school as well as their need for guidance in practical issues, needs which are more easily addressed by a dedicated, long-term school mentor.

15.5.6   Long-Term Commitment and Regular Visits

Nicolai underlines the importance of a new school having a stable mentor who can provide guidance, journey together with the teachers and follow up on issues. She has observed teachers who, lacking a stable, regular mentor, attempt to study

Steiner's lectures on their own and "flutter from one workshop to another" in search of answers and direction. Although she recommends a full-time mentor, she acknowledges that many young schools in Asia would not be able to afford one, and that a committed mentor who visits the school three to four times a year, for at least two to three weeks at a time would be a possible compromise (Nicolai, 2017). Having supported a young school since 2011, Van Der Made found that the benefit was being able to create a close connection with the whole development of the school over a longer period of time (van Der Made, 2016).

On the other hand, Hellman, who has mentored schools in Asia since 1982 while juggling class teacher work, family and personal life, feels that spending long periods of time in young Asian schools would be a challenge for school mentors who often have other commitments. Over the years, he has developed a system of compromise in order to assist numerous schools in a sustainable manner: "I am with a school about for 10 years, often only once a year for two weeks, but this can give important impulses. I try to send other mentors to the school. I keep in contact and advise over the distance" (Hellman, 2017). In light of the long-term global shortage of school mentors, this approach would understandably allow a larger number of schools in Asia to receive support and guidance.

A number of teachers in Asia have also expressed a desire for a consistent or resident mentor who looks into the quality of the curriculum and the processes that lead to innovations and improvisations. However, they also see the benefit of having visiting mentors from different cultures to provide different perspectives. A teacher suggested that one of the major roles of the "regular mentor" would be to bridge or orientate the visiting mentors to the processes of the school and the contextualization of some cultural nuances.

15.5.7   Insufficient Mentors

There are currently insufficient school mentors around the world to meet the growing demand from young Waldorf schools. Teachers have expressed a desire to have more grounding in the foundations of anthroposophy and Waldorf education, and to have mentors for different subjects or disciplines. Furthermore, teachers from pioneering schools have shared that they cannot afford to bring in mentors as frequently as they need to and thus turn to books, videos and the internet, until they

become more established and are able to hire a mentor or send teachers for training. Ironically, it is the older and more established schools that can afford to bring in school mentors more regularly. The result of a lack of mentorship, Nicolai warns, is that new teachers feel alone, overworked and under-supported. The problem of teacher burnout is real, and in extreme cases, the young school falls apart (Nicolai, 2017).

15.5.8   Screening of Mentors and Quality Control

Another issue facing mentorship in Asia is the lack of quality control, evaluations, audits or feedback mechanisms. In the process of mentorship lies the risk of there being a one-way street in terms of mentors evaluating the school, without a mechanism of feedback from the local teachers on the quality of mentorship, guidelines on what they can expect from a mentor, or fruitful ways of working with a mentor to develop a local school and curriculum.

Mentorship is highly subjective and there are no screening mechanisms or criteria to determine who is qualified or suitable for the role of a mentor in Asia. As mentioned earlier, the mentorship in Asia is a free-market where a Waldorf teacher from a western country (regardless of ability and personality) could be invited to mentor or conduct training in a school in Asia without any screening, referrals, or some kind of quality control.

While the motives of a mentor are often an altruistic wish to serve a community as an ambassador of Waldorf education, Schwartz believes that there may be other factors that might prompt Waldorf teachers in western countries to travel to Asia. He observes that in recent years, it has become "fashionable" or "trendy" for Waldorf teachers in America to mentor in China. Compared to other professions, American Waldorf teachers often do not enjoy high incomes, and mentorship in Asia provides an opportunity to travel, often with all expenses and accommodation provided for. Schwartz paints a picture of a Waldorf teacher who feels unrecognized, undervalued, is lowly paid, perhaps with disapproving relatives or peers who question his career choice, students who are sometimes less than cooperative, and a college of teachers who provide feedback on his flaws. He points out the positive emotional strokes a western mentor receives when he goes to an Asian county where he is "treated like a

god", greatly admired, respected, and listened to, and where his words and recommendations are taken seriously and become even embedded into school culture. Whether the mentor is actually an effective and experienced Waldorf teacher in his own country is often unquestioned, but according to Schwartz, it is unfortunately not always the case (Schwartz, 2017).

This deference to Western mentors in Asia is further reinforced by Asian cultural norms of respect for authority or teachers, influenced by the Confucian ideals of respect and deference to one's superiors (Hershock and Ames, 2006). Clay Williams writes about the attitudes in Hong Kong, which could to an extent reflect the situation in other Asian countries: "It would be unthinkable for a student to critically question, and thus undermine respect for, a teacher… According to Confucian ideas, teachers are automatically afforded respect as a source of wisdom, learning and moral guidance. Teachers are supposed to be role models, and that respect parallels the respect which children are expected to show to parents, elders and moral leaders" (Williams, 2017, p42).

In an 'open market' of foreign mentors, young schools seeking guidance should exercise caution when selecting and hiring mentors as their choices would impact the development of their school and curriculum. It would be worthwhile to have a system of screening or selecting potential mentors for young schools.

Ideally, an association for mentors or some regulatory body could serve that function, requiring members to fulfill certain criteria such as experience, references from colleagues who have observed his classes, and perhaps even live or telephone interviews to assess suitability. The association would also be able to gather feedback from the school as a means of quality development. However this sheer volume of work and manpower required would render such a proposal difficult to implement, but it could serve as a starting point for both associations and schools to consider the issue of screening and quality control. More viable measures could include creating guidelines for young schools on how to select and screen mentors, perhaps seeking referrals or recommendations, or even references from the colleagues of the potential mentor. Guidelines on how to work with and communicate with foreign mentors effectively can also be included.

As a pioneering team attempting the monumental task of starting a new Waldorf school and developing a local curriculum seeks co-operative support and guidance to tackle the tasks and challenges, there would be much to gain from exercising caution and care when hiring a foreign mentor. Screening for quality teaching and experience, cultural sensitivity, openness and a knowledge or willingness to learn about the local culture are factors that would contribute to a more successful and fruitful partnership.

15.5.9   Mentorship Network or Support Group

Like teaching, mentorship is an art, and like teachers, mentors can benefit from meetings and discussions with other mentors, sharing of resources and peer-observations. The Goetheanum Pedagogical Section plays this role to a small extent, but the area of mentorship is largely a free market, in that it does not have a central body or meeting point. Because of the sheer volume and diverse geographical locations of mentors, the dialogue between mentors from around the world would have to be made an official part of international conferences, or through an Internet-based resource or support groups.

The Pedagogical Mentorship Network in the USA is an example of a mentor support group. It consists of experienced teachers who have been working together for several years to develop a deeper understanding of the role of mentoring in Waldorf schools. The group aims to build a body of experience and resources that can be helpful to schools in developing their mentoring programs. Members also take active roles in offering regional mentoring seminars to support the development of sound mentoring practices (Soule, Gerwin & Brunetta, 2016).

15.5.10   Training or Guidelines for Mentors

Mentor training is an important component of any successful mentoring program as it provides the tools needed to improve the quality of the relationship and interaction, as well as feelings of support and satisfaction, which lead to more positive outcomes and increase the effectiveness of the mentorship (MENTOR, 2015).

In the context of Waldorf school mentorship in Asia, a training program or guide book for mentors would provide the basic knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to build an effective and positive mentoring relationship using culturally appropriate language and tools. Topics for mentors could include techniques on how to communicate with mentees, increasing multicultural understanding, particularly regarding issues of race and class differences, and poverty education, which would provide middle class trainers and mentors with a better understanding of the challenges faced in families or cultures living in poverty or difficult conditions. Programs could also facilitate mentors' recognising and respecting cultural resources while simultaneously promoting equal status between mentor and mentee, that mentors may appreciate and value the mentees' culture and understand the differences are not an indication of deviance or deficit. Training could also focus on how to prioritize collaboration and capacity building with mentees, "providing training and support to mentors on how to adopt a developmental (ie. mentee-driven) vs. prescriptive (ie. mentor-driven) approach in decision making" (DuBois and Karcher, 2014, p.184). These attributes in a mentor would be especially helpful when working with the teachers to develop a local curriculum.

According to Schwartz, it is not enough for a mentor in Asia just to be a capable and experienced teacher with a strong background in anthroposophy and Waldorf education. Ideally, the mentor should be well versed or at least have some understanding of the local history. For instance, in the case of China, a mentor who is conversant with Confucius, Lao Tze, China's long history of meritocracy and the educational and testing system that evolved over time would be a far more effective ambassador of Waldorf education. It would be beneficial to establish a training platform, such as seminars, workshops or even handbooks for mentors to learn about Asian culture in the light of Anthroposophy and vice versa (Schwartz, 2017).

The China Waldorf Forum has drafted guidelines, criteria and policies for a number of different aspects of school life, which are disseminated to each school. They include Guidelines for Foreign Mentors in China, Policy for Mentoring in China, Guidelines for Conducting Meetings, Guidelines for Opening a New School, Guidelines for Opening

a High School, Criteria for School Evaluation, and more, which are available upon request (Cherry, 2016).

The process of each school or country working together and preparing and compiling a handbook, though time-consuming, could potentially lead to clearer expectations, fewer misunderstandings and a more fruitful and effective mentorship.

15.5.11   Online Mentorship

The Waldorf movement in Asia, in particular China, is expanding at a dramatic rate and the supply of foreign mentors who are willing and able to travel cannot keep up with the growing needs of the young pioneering schools. One way to meet this demand to enable Asian teachers to receive training and on-demand help would be through online conferences, training videos and telecommunications.

Eugene Schwartz, a former Waldorf class teacher has been working online for the past eight years, supporting teachers and home-schoolers who are unable to travel or are in geographical locations that do not have access Waldorf teacher training, conferences, or mentorship, or are unable to afford the costs involved in flying in a mentor from overseas. Besides running online conferences on different subjects and topics for hundreds of teachers around the world, Schwartz also provides online consultations to teachers or even groups of teachers from Asia who send questions in advance and connect for an hour via Internet voice calls. He also works with Yu Ningyuan, founder of Beijing Spring Valley Waldorf School who translates simultaneously for voice calls with 50-100 Chinese teachers. They also created short training videos on Waldorf education which are subtitled and translated into Chinese (Schwartz and Kennedy, 2012; Schwartz, 2017).

The downside to online mentoring and training would be the lack of the "live" and social element as the long-distance mentor would not be able to observe classes or have a complete picture of the school, and it would have to be the last resort for a school that has no other available and affordable forms of assistance.

While there are practitioners who believe that Waldorf education and anthroposophy cannot be conveyed online, Schwartz believes that the times have changed, and

human beings (even those employed by Waldorf schools) have changed as well, and that technology can be harnessed for positive purposes:

> *"Rather than place everything anthroposophical or "Waldorf" on one side, and everything technological on the other, there is a growing recognition that we may now be empowered to transform or even begin redeeming technology by using it for spiritual purposes. There are, of course, great hurdles raised when you try to squeeze the living, pulsing spirit of Waldorf education into the micro-circuitry of the Internet, but with good will and consciousness on both ends of the broadband, it can be done" (*Schwartz and Kennedy, 2012).

15.5.12   Local Mentorship Strategy and Inter-School Collaborations

The need for school mentorship and the shortage of mentors has prompted schools in Asia to formulate creative and sustainable strategies to address this issue.

The China Waldorf Forum has a "Policy for Mentoring in China" which discusses a sustainable model of mentorship for Waldorf schools in China. The working committee for coordinating mentors and supervisors points out the paradoxical situation of more mature schools having more resources and a large number of supervisors while some new schools which are in dire need of guidance have none at all. However, having too may supervisors may lead to confusion when they present differing viewpoints on the same issue (China Waldorf Forum, 2015).

To address the issue of lack of mentors, the committee proposes several possible solutions. One approach would be to find more experienced supervisors who would simultaneously guide several schools in the same area, visiting each at least once, ideally twice, a year. The schools would then be able to support each other when the mentor is absent. A second approach would be to organise annual short courses for experienced teachers to learn how to become mentors as a long-term strategy to meet the rising demand, develop a sustainable growth model and avoid an unhealthy overdependence on foreign mentors. A third approach would be to set up an inter-school support system so that experienced teachers from more mature schools can support and guide younger schools, and teachers from the younger schools can observe lessons and have internships at the more mature schools. This would create

a sense of social responsibility and community, and lay the foundation for coping with the continued growth trend. Organising annual conferences would help to promote communication and support between schools. In addition, all new schools receive a handbook with guidelines on founding a new school, which they are encouraged to share with any prospective founders (China Waldorf Forum, 2015).

In Taiwan, Cheng proposes that besides annual national conferences, Waldorf schools and groups can find creative ways to cooperate, share resources and form an active support system. For instance, he cites the practice of teachers of the same grade from different schools meeting to discuss the curriculum content and prepare lessons, which has been ongoing in Taiwan for some few years. Another possibility of cooperation would be for several schools to pool resources and share the cost and effort of inviting a foreign mentor to conduct training (Cheng, 2017).

Countries or regions with more than one Waldorf school can find ways to work together to develop a local curriculum, support one another, share resources and findings, and avoid reinventing the wheel. Taking some time to document processes or guidelines, or support other Waldorf schools in the area would help towards building a sustainable long-term growth strategy for Waldorf education in Asia.

15.5.13   Making Compromises

"We shall need to make compromises, however. Compromises are necessary, as we have not yet reached the point where we can accomplish an absolutely free deed . . . On the one hand we must know what our ideals are, yet we must be flexible enough to adapt ourselves to things that are far removed from our ideals. The difficult task of harmonising these two forces stands before each one of you."

-Rudolf Steiner, Opening Address, Teacher's Seminar, 1919

Over the past 30 years or so, school mentors like Hellman have been involved in the founding and running of schools in Asia and have made significant contributions and developments with the limited resources that were available. The sheer hugeness of this task required a strong will to act and do one's best within the available means.

Hellman believes that making mistakes is preferable to doing nothing, and that errors and contradictions will be overcome over the years. "I met my destiny on my travels and was not prepared, and I developed my faculties by 'doing'." More important than expertise were enthusiasm, sacrificing, striving, and an attitude of learning and humility. "When the mentor is mindful for a different culture and deep in anthroposophy, it will go the right way. The truth will grow out of a good soil" (Hellman, 2017).

Waldorf schools in Asia are growing at an increasing rate, and there is a rising demand for school mentors. As modern technology increasingly allows for better global communication and sharing of resources, an area that can be looked into would be how schools and mentors can work together to improve the quality of mentoring young initiatives in Asia to build their school and curriculum.

15.6 Sticking Wings on a Caterpillar

When considering how to include local history and practices into the Waldorf curriculum, Boland questions whether it is merely a 'tag-on' to the existing framework. Developing a place-based pedagogy that is rooted in the local cultural, geographical and historical context calls for a metamorphosis of the original European curriculum. Simply adding or replacing original content with local variations is akin to "sticking wings on the caterpillar and calling it a butterfly". There has not been a metamorphosis, only an outward change in form. We need the 'traditional', inherited, Eurocentric caterpillar to metamorphose into a contemporary, local butterfly (Boland, 2016, p.5).

This idea is echoed in Cheng's article and discussion on "A Prescription for Waldorf in Asia" where Liao JingCen describes superficial curriculum changes, using the Chinese idiom "换汤不换药" (huàn tāng bù huàn yào). which literally means to change the broth but use the same ingredients, implying a change in form but not in substance (Cheng, 2015).

Besides identifying the difference between existing practices based on Steiner's original indications and what Wiechert calls Waldorf myths, the curriculum has to reflect the richness of the entire local context and "grow as it were out of the people

and the land itself and not be developed by just extending or modifying European practices" (Boland, 2016; Wiechert cited in Boland 2016).

A twenty-first century Waldorf curriculum in Asia would have to take into account and reflect multiple cultures and worldviews, a different geography, flora, fauna and natural forces, air, water and climate, and different histories that may not be aligned with conventional European accounts (Boland, 2016). Only from working with a deep understanding of the local context as well as a critical examination of the Waldorf practices can a true metamorphosis take place.

15.7 The Hidden Curriculum

The hidden curriculum refers to the unwritten, unofficial, and often unintended lessons, norms, values, and perspectives that are conveyed in a school environment. As educators focus on developing a local Waldorf curriculum, focusing on the main lessons and learning activities that are intentionally brought to the students, they should also be aware of the unspoken academic, social, and cultural messages that are also transmitted to the students, such as how they should interact with peers, teachers, and other adults; how they should perceive different races, groups, or classes of people; or what ideas and behaviors are considered acceptable or unacceptable. The hidden curriculum is described as "hidden" because it is usually unnoticed or unexamined, and often reinforces the accepted status quo (Abott, 2014).

According to Boland, the hidden curriculum in a Waldorf school includes the choices of songs, poems, stories and images, how history is taught, how indigenous or non-dominant culture groups are represented, the choice of foreign languages taught, the festivals celebrated, messages about gender values, and even the staffing – the enthicity, gender, class and personality of the people the school chooses to employ (Boland, 2015).

While a hidden curriculum is unavoidable in any school, recognising, discussing, actively reflecting on and questioning assumptions, biases, and tendencies

individually or as a group would be a move in a positive direction (Abott, 2014). This is particularly pertinent to schools in Asia modulating a Waldorf curriculum which has European roots. While overtly Eurocentric content can be adapted in the formal curriculum, educators could also be aware of how their language, stories, images, attire, or even the way they decorate the classroom may be communicating unintended lessons and messages to the students.

16. Limitations and Commentary

When I first began my research, I intended to survey as many schools and teachers in Asia as I could to compile the different Asian variations of the Waldorf curriculum. However, the limitations of this research method soon became apparent. Language was a barrier, as the surveys and email communications were conducted only in English and Chinese, which excluded people who were not conversant in either language. A number of respondents also indicated that they felt inadequate to answer questions on the curriculum as they felt that they had not received sufficient training and so had no frame of reference or theoretical basis to respond. The irony was that the experienced teachers who had more training and understanding of the curriculum were often too busy to respond despite multiple attempts to contact them.

In the course of my research, I began to realize that more important than collecting Asian content from the various countries was to document the process and considerations to take into account when developing a curriculum in Asia. My research took a new direction and I began to conduct more in-depth interviews with the local teachers and school mentors to understand the issues and situations they encountered, and to explore possible solutions and compromises.

Due to limited time and resources, and the fact that many Asian resources are written in the native languages, I was unable to fully explore, translate and understand myths and history of all the cultures before making a selection. It was necessary to rely on the recommendations of Waldorf teachers and trainee teachers from Asia, as well as existing literature. Furthermore, Asian history has a heavier reliance on oral traditions and cultural events were not always extensively recorded or translated in English. Any materials available in English would have also been filtered by the writers and viewed through the lenses of their worldviews.

Another limitation I faced was my own biases and prejudices, which I became increasingly aware of. Having grown up in a former British colony which still showed remnants of a consciousness that valued European culture above the native culture, I had been hoping to find Asian equivalents of the major epochs which might put them on equal standing. As an Asian, I myself was in danger of doing what I had warned

against – of seeking Asian variations for the sake of being politically correct. A deeper study of history and the evolution of human consciousness, and consciously taking a step back to understand history as a neutral observer and not as an indignant descendent of a colonised people brought new understanding, empathy and respect for both parties, and a new hope for a more global and connected future.

16.1 Moving Forward

As Waldorf education continues to grow and expand in Asia, educators constantly seek ways to improve the Waldorf educational model and practices through curriculum development, educational quality reflection and evaluation, and inner striving. In addition, inter-school support, cooperation, resource sharing, teacher training and mentorship are areas where the larger community of Waldorf practitioners can contribute to this growing movement in Asia.

It would be worthwhile to explore the idea of setting up an "East meets west forum" – an international platform of communication for Waldorf schools and teachers to ask for help and share their ideas, and for young initiatives in Asia and around the world to be able to hear and learn from experienced teachers from all over the world, and not only the mentors who are able to physically travel to Asia.

Besides focusing on the Waldorf movement itself, it is also important to look outside the Waldorf circle, to embrace and accommodate the needs of non-Waldorf teachers who are interested in Waldorf education so that the benefits of this education can reach the wider community and be experienced by teachers and children in non-Waldorf schools.

A worldwide survey of the curricula used in Waldorf schools would be useful. Perhaps the different Waldorf schools in each country might see the benefits of sharing their curricula with other Waldorf schools which would serve as a help and inspiration, especially to young Waldorf initiatives. It would also be worthwhile to explore each subject individually, to find Asian variations for other subjects such as music, crafts, gardening, movement, drama, etc.

More research could be done in the areas of school mentorship in Asia, as well as teacher training strategies that should be focused on equipping teachers with the necessary skills and understanding to create their own curriculum. By teaching teachers how to fish, rather than just giving them the fish would be a step towards long-term sustainability and growth of Waldorf education in Asia.

17. Conclusion

"In educating, what the teacher does can depend only slightly on anything he gets from a general, abstract pedagogy: it must rather be newly born every moment from a live understanding of the young human being he or she is teaching."

-Rudolf Steiner, An Introduction to Waldorf Education, 1919

In Asia, many of the Waldorf schools are young, some in their pioneering stages, struggling to build up a school and develop a local curriculum in less than ideal circumstances. Although I am not in favour of a recipe solution, there are benefits in having some resources on hand as an interim measure, for inspiration, or to trigger ideas or further research.

The Waldorf curriculum is not a rigid model, but a living and constantly evolving framework, that should not be superficially adapted to fit an Asian culture, like sticking wings on a caterpillar, but through a deep understanding of the Waldorf principles, self-education and close observation of the students, metamorphosed to become a relevant and living place-based pedagogy that truly meets the needs of the children and enables them to develop the competencies of world citizens. Waldorf education would then truly be, as Tobin Hart suggests, an education focused on the inner transformation of a person as well as the outer transformation of culture and society, "designed for us to assist ourselves in our own evolution, enabling us to align with the rising currents of creation" (Hart, 2006, p. 105).

In this journey of exploration through the Waldorf history and culture curriculum in Asia, I have developed a deeper understanding and appreciation of the original impulses and core principles of Waldorf education. Starting a Waldorf school is indeed a great cultural deed and the monumental task that lies ahead of pioneering local teachers is in itself a journey of initiation and self-development, a journey that is no less important than the destination. Through the process of delving into the core of Waldorf education and anthroposophy, while exploring the richness of the local culture and history, the task of developing a local curriculum in Asia will be a fulfilling and life-changing journey that will bring both students and the teacher to a new understanding and relationship with the world.

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Appendix A: Additional Asian History and Culture Resources

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Class 1
《西部民间故事》、《中国古代童话鉴赏》陈蒲清著、《中国童话》上海**出版社、《汉声中国童话》、《中国本土精彩老童话》、《云南民间故事》、《藏族民间故事》、《中国民间故事珍藏系列》。

Class 2
《孔子的故事》李玉玺著，《中国神话传说词典》袁柯著，《山海经》陕西大学出版社，《图解<山海经>》，《十二生肖的故事》。

另外：《中国上古神话通论》刘城淮著，《文字考古》周清泉著，《历史的荒原》黄奇逸著，《失落的天书》（山海经解），《淮南子》等书也可同时为二年级和三年级的老师教学参考。

Class 3

《黑暗传》、《山海经》、袁珂《中国神话故事》。

《辞源》、《易经》、《黄帝内经》、《道德经》可以作为老师的扩展阅读。

Class 4

《西游记》。在当《西游记》中，四种气质的呈现与四年级孩子气质特征的明显呈现的呼应，以及在混乱当中的引领是比较突出的。

另外，《山海经》当中的故事，如：盘古之前的神龟等，《封神演义》

Class 5

书目：诗经、《上下五千年》、《史记》

教师参考资料：音乐剧：《昆仑神话》，《宇宙的记忆》（施泰纳），电影《耶稣受难记》，BBC《达芬奇的恶魔》，米特拉之子，叶之书等。

Class 6

实用网站推荐："汉典" http://www.zdic.net

(Li and Li, 2014)

Appendix B: Additional Data: Survey Results and Literature Relating to Other Subjects (without analysis)

Art and Craft

- Chinese calligraphy, ancient chinese poems, chinese paper cutting
- Chinese shadow puppetry using paper cutting (Singapore)
- Design forms based on the rhythms of nature (water, wind, grasses, rock formations, etc).
- Rangoli and kola drawings (India)
- Indian kolam for form drawing (Singapore)
- Garland weaving without needles, making local food (skill based tasks like forming dumplings) for festivals, Basket weaving using local grasses or palm tree leaves (Singapore)
- Wayang kulit, wayang golek, carving from Toraja, making Papua totem, basket weaving, "bilik" bamboo screen weaving that traditionally Sundanese use for walls of their house, tenun with pattern from different area, including tenun ikat etc. (Indonesia)
- Batik, calligraphy of traditional writings, wooden carving patterns from Toraja and Papua (Indonesia)
- Writing: Baybayin ancient script of indigenous peoples from the different islands... from Luzon tribes to Mindanao tribes. (Philippines)
- Talaandig tribe soil painting (Philippines)
- Traditional Korean Straw craft, where rice straw is used to make shoes, bags, etc.
- Chinese calligraphy - In Ci Xin, Taiwan, in the last 16 years of experience they have learned that in grades 1, 2 and 3 the calligraphy is more like an extension of painting. So they paint Chinese characters in colour. In Ci Xin calligraphy as such begins in grade 4. And form drawing is a wonderful preparation for Chinese characters, because clearly every character is a combination of straight and curved lines. Many teachers also work from the evolution of the character because the earlier forms are more alive and pictorial than the present ones (Stemman and Cherry, 2016).
- Japanese calligraphy - at the Fujino Steiner School, children are taught Japanese calligraphy from Class 4-8. However, in Classes 4, 5 and 6, they are taught the

typical "printed" style of calligraphy called Kaisho. In Class 7, students are taught Gyosho which is analogous to a "cursive" style of calligraphy. In Class 8, students advance to the Koso style, which is not used as frequently anymore, but reflects a change in consciousness and artistic expression. In all Japanese schools, Kanjis (Chinese characters) are taught first to the children in Grade 1 because of the pictorial nature of the characters. This lends itself to stories and images which are easily absorbed by the children (Rawson, Li and Panosot, 2013).

Chemistry
- Fermentation of traditional food (Indonesia)

Mathematics
- Abacus (Korea)

Language
- Traditional alphabet, Pramudya Ananta Toer, Tagore, Gandhi, Max Havelaar by Multatuli, letters of Kartini "Door Duisternis Tot Licht" and more modern writing, the type: novel, essay, pantun, puisi etc (Indonesia)
- Sign language for Class 5 and 6 to communicate with deaf people
- Write out local stories for local flavour using words from Malay or Chinese (Singapore)

Drama / Dance / Performing Arts
- In Japan Grade 7 and 8, Rakugo comic stories are told, and students learn Japanese traditional drama and dance, such as Noh, Kyogen, and Kabuki.
- Korean fan dance, a traditional dance the originated from shamanism. The dancers hold two fans, one fan in each hand, and the fans are painted and decorated with beautiful feathers.
- "Pangalay" Dance of the Tausugs and other indigenous groups,
- "Si Leungli", the traditional game/dance with long bamboo "Rangku Alu"
- No eurythymist but we have Indian folk dance (Singapore)
- In New Zealand some schools offer Maori dance practices alongside eurythmy.

Music

- Chinese musical instruments for sound effect of a chinese performance
- Songs in local languages, string instruments like Veena..
- Local instruments
- Songs and music of the local environment
- Gamelan, angklung, kecapi, suling
- Instruments Bungkaka and Tongatong of the Cordilleras, Kubing (Jew's Harp), Small gongs, Agong, Kulintang, Saluray, Kuglong / Fuglong (traditional guitar) and many more.
- Talaandig tribe flute and other instruments.

Movement / Games

- Lots of local games like Kho Kho we played in grade 2 from India, jumping with elastic rope made of rubber bands common in Asia, 5 Stones is also an Asian game, Sword fighting with sticks (Grade 5) can be adapted from local martial arts forms eg. kalaripayittu from Kerala India. (Singapore)
- Parkor (Singapore)
- Local games the children, parents, grand parents used to play, expanded with games developed by Waldorf school teachers out of the insights in the soul needs of the growing child.
- Traditional games, galah asin, benteng-bentengan, gatrik, boy-boyan etc.
- Arnis (Kali Escrima) traditional martial arts.

Festivals

- Chinese New Year, Vesak Day, Dragon boat/rice dumpling festival, Mooncake festival, Reunion festival
- Chinese New Year, Easter, Autumn Lantern festival,
- Lunar New Year, Mid-Autumn Moon Cake festival, Diwali. Celebrate as a community or with students
- The usual Waldorf festivals
- The Ramadhan and Idul Fitri, the longest holiday for the country. We had a night gathering of break fasting/ eating together, the Independence day, we play family games and do morning ceremony with song and flag raising, the planting season (just at the arrival of wet season)

Local traditions/skills/architecture

- Healing: Hilot, Agimat, Albularyo, Babaylan, Balyan. (Philippines)
- Balangay (traditional boats of ancient time-- the Southern indigenous groups were mostly sea farers.. went as far as China and Britain for barter trade) (Philippines)
- Christof Wiechert once said at a conference: if you live in a fishing village, your "house building" main lesson can equally be a "boat building" main lesson. Make use of the local situation to implement the curriculum.
- Candi Prambanan and Borobudur (Indonesia)
- Okir Meranao traditional architecture (Philippines)

Declaration

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