



SECTION FOR THE LITERARY ARTS AND HUMANITIES

International
Whitsun Conference
Parzival's quest
for the Grail
26 to 29 May 2023

With Bruce Donehower, Esther Gerster,
Christine Gruwez, Christiane Haid,
Heinz Mosmann, Astrid Oelssner,
Markus Osterrieder, Frank Steinwachs,
Mathijs van Alstein, Emmanuel Vukovich,
Andrew Wolpert



International Whitsun Conference

Parzival's quest for the Grail

When indecision's in the heart
The soul is bound to grieve and smart.
For scorned alike and feted
Is he who bold is rated
But vacillates twixt dark and light
Like magpies in their black and white.
Yet such a one may well be glad,
For both in him their part have had,
Twixt heaven and hell he's drifting.
The man whose faith is shifting
Is wholly black as darkest night
Inside and out, devoid of light.
But fate on him's conferring
Pure white, whose faith's unerring.

*From the Prologue
in Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival.
Translation by Edwin H. Zeydel and
Bayard Quincy Morgan*

The international Whitsun Conference is devoted to Wolfram von Eschenbach's great epic Parzival. Parzival's path, described by Wolfram in medieval imagery, can be read as the modern human being's imaginative path of the soul to the spirit. The central questions of our

life about origin, home, family, kinship, destiny, self-knowledge, loneliness and community are to be understood in this sense as stages of an initiation. Wolfram presents this in a three-step process: it starts with «simplemindedness» («tumbheit») - Parzival's emotional inability to understand his surroundings and the other person. In a second step, it leads to «despair» («zwivel») through the failed visit to the Grail, bringing with it inexpressible loneliness and abandonment, in order in the last step to let Parzival finally achieve «salvation» («saelde») after many false paths - that inner purity and accord with the spiritual world which enables him to carry out his life's mission to reach the Grail once more. Only now can the Grail Community be made real out of Parzival's free, individual decision.

What is the nature and secret of the Grail, who are its antagonists, and what does the Grail tell us today? We intend to explore these questions together with speakers from Belgium, England, Germany, California, Canada and Switzerland. During the conference we will be able to enjoy the premiere of «Parzival & Feirefiz - A New Grail Narrative», a special intercultural project from Canada, and also hear all the sonatas and partitas for solo violin by Johann Sebastian Bach, interpreted by Emmanuel Vukovich, in a double concert. We look forward to deepening our work together with you at Whitsun!



Yours, Christiane Haid

Programme

Friday, 26 May

17.00 Uhr

Welcome

Christiane Haid

The Grail between East and West

Christine Gruwez

18.30 Uhr

Evening break

20.00 Uhr

Parzival & Feirefiz – A New Grail Narrative

followed by discussion

Saturday, 27 May

9.00 Uhr

Lance, wound, star and question: From Gondeshapur through Caltabellotta to Munsalvaesche – The Clinschor problem

Markus Osterrieder

10.30 Uhr

Coffee break

11.00 Uhr

Healing and reconciliation in Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival

Andrew Wolpert

12.30 Uhr

Lunch break

15.00 Uhr

Workshops

16.30 Uhr

Break

17.00 Uhr

Sovereigns of the Grail: Parzival and Galahad as contrasting Grail heroes

Bruce Donehower

18.30 Uhr

Evening break

20.00 Uhr

Wegspuren

performance by the Goetheanum-Eurythmy-Ensemble

Sunday, 28 May

9.00 Uhr

Gawan - artist, social creative, peacemaker. A central motif in

Wolfram's Grail imagination

Heinz Mosmann

10.30 Uhr

Coffee break

11.00 Uhr

Workshops

12.30 Uhr

Lunch break

15.00 Uhr

Workshops

16.30 Uhr

Break

17.00 Uhr

Falcon and phoenix: the continuation of the Egyptian mysteries in Wolfram von Eschenbach's work

Mathijs van Alstein

18.30 Uhr

Evening break

20.00 Uhr

Concert:

Emmanuel Vukovich, violin.

Sonatas and partitas by Johann Sebastian Bach. Part I

Monday, 29 May

9.00 Uhr

Grail and Rose Cross – colour symbolism in Wolfram von Eschenbach's work

Christiane Haid

10.30 Uhr

Coffee break

11.00 Uhr

Concert:

Emmanuel Vukovich, violin.

Sonatas and partitas by Johann Sebastian Bach. Part II

12.30 Uhr

End of conference

(Subject to change)

Workshops

1. **Bruce Donehower:** Sovereigns of the Grail: Parzival and Galahad as opposing Grail heroes. EN
2. **Esther Gerster:** Painting the Parzival themes, with pastel crayons, for everyone, no previous knowledge required. DE/EN/IT/F
3. **Heinz Mosmann:** Parzival and his «brothers» - Wolfram's conception of the triune human being in «Parzival». DE
4. **Astrid Oelssner:** Modelling - finding through doing. DE
5. **Markus Osterrieder:** Wolfram's Parzival poem against the background of contemporary events. DE/EN
6. **Frank Steinwachs:** Wolfram von Eschenbach's «Parzival» in Biography and School. DE
7. **Mathijs van Alstein:** Riding in the dark: how the Grail Knights become a mirror for us. DE/NL
8. **Andrew Wolpert:** The meaning of the beauty of the body in Parzival's descriptions, how can we understand it? EN/DE

Biographies 1/2

Dr Bruce Donehower

Bruce Donehower PhD (UC Davis) is the representative of the Collegium of the Section for the Literary Arts and Humanities of the School of Spiritual Science in North America. He is a poet, author, musician and scholar of British and German Romanticism, with a particular interest in Novalis and early German Romanticism. Further information on the website TheLiteraryArts.com.

Esther Gerster

After training and working as a kindergarten teacher at the Rudolf Steiner School in Lugano, four years of art training at the Goethean Studies Centre in Vienna; teaching art at the Rudolf Steiner School in Oulu, Finland; glazing commissions and murals; collaboration on the ceiling painting in the Grosse Saal of the Goetheanum; training in glass etching; painting courses; Goetheanum tours; exhibitions.

Christine Gruwez

Studied philosophy, classical philology and Iranian studies at the University of Leuven. After her studies she became a Waldorf teacher and lecturer in teacher training in Antwerp and at the Thomas Moore College. Lecturing and seminar work worldwide; numerous research trips, especially to the Near and Middle East. Main research interests are:

becoming a citizen of our time, Manichaeism and Rudolf Steiner's Mani intention.

Dr Christiane Haid

Studied education, German, history and art in Freiburg and Hamburg. 1993 Friedrich von Hardenberg Institute Heidelberg, 2001 Section for the Literary Arts and Humanities, 2006 Albert Steffen Foundation. 2012 doctorate: «Mythos, Traum und Imagination. Die kleinen Mythen Albert Steffens». 2009-2019 Manager of Verlag am Goetheanum, from 2019 programme management. Since 2012 head of the Section for the Literary Arts and Humanities and since 2020 head of the Visual Arts Section.

Heinz Mosmann

School and first experiences of studying in Frankfurt. Search for meaning, travels abroad, 1970 first encounter with Rudolf Steiner's writings. Anthroposophical study seminar with Frank and Brigitte Teichmann, Stuttgart. Studied Slavic studies and history in Tübingen, publication on Soloviev's philosophy. After teacher training seminar, from 1984 Heilbronn Free Waldorf School (history/art history/ German/computer technology), setting up the upper school, numerous projects (art trips, quarterly magazine «Kursiv», lectures). Publication «Der

Biographies 2/2

Parzival Wolframs von Eschenbach. Erkenntnis und imaginative Gestaltung des Gralsmysteriums», Verlag Freies Geistesleben, Stuttgart 2020.

Astrid Oelssner

Studied sculpture at the State Academy of Fine Arts, Stuttgart. Teaching at the Tübingen Waldorf School. Lecturer: Priests' Seminary Stuttgart, Edith Maryon School of Art Freiburg, Goetheanum Studies and in further training. Percent for Art. Exhibitions at home and abroad and courses. Freelance work.

Dr Markus Osterrieder

Studied eastern European history, Slavic studies and political science in Munich, Toulouse and Warsaw. Researches and works as a freelance historian, publicist and lecturer, especially on questions of cultural exchange and cultural mediation between East and West. Author of, among others: «Sonnenkreuz und Lebensbaum» (1995, 2nd ed. in prep.), «Welt im Umbruch» (2014).

Frank Steinwachs

Dr. Frank Steinwachs, teacher training in German and history in Berlin and Konstanz (StEx 1 and 2); since 2005 senior school teacher at the Waldorf School in Berlin Mitte and Hitzacker; doctorate on the topic of «Medieval Literature at Waldorf

Schools»; since 2006 lecturer in teacher training and since 2020 full-time at the Seminar for Waldorf Education in Hamburg. Publications include literature and history didactics, most recently: «Studienbuch Waldorf-Jugendpädagogik» (co-editor).

Mathijs van Alstein

After attending Waldorf school, studied philosophy at the universities of Antwerp, Brussels and Leuven and obtained a doctorate on the subject of «Hören auf das Sein: Heideggers Lehre vom Logos». 2006 Hamburg Priests' Seminary; 2010 ordination as a priest and assignment to Zeist, Holland. Publications in Verlag Urachhaus in 2022: «Versuche in der Leere. Von der Leidenschaft zur Erkenntnis». Mathijs van Alstein is married and has two children.

Dr Emmanuel Vukovich

After attending Waldorf school in Spring Valley, studied violin and music at the Juilliard School, McGill University, New England Conservatory of Music and Stony Brook University (PhD). Studies in Environment & Agriculture at McGill University and Biodynamic Agriculture at the Pfeiffer Center in Spring Valley, New York. As a concert violinist, Emmanuel Vukovich performs in Europe, North and South America and Australia. He is the founder and artistic director

of the Canadian foundation «The Parzival Project», which among other things produces the piece «Parzival & Feirefiz - A New Grail Narrative» in an international collaboration of performing artists. His interest in collaborative leadership and musical timbre led him to explore the role of music in human evolution.

Andrew Wolpert

Arthur, the Grail, and Parzival are themes Andrew Wolpert has worked with for a long time at Emerson College, at the Freie Hochschule - Seminar for Waldorf Pedagogy in Stuttgart, and in Waldorf schools in Europe and Asia. He currently coordinates the work of the Section for the Literary Arts and Humanities in Great Britain.

TICKET PRICES

- Prices include lunch on 27/28 March and coffee breaks on 27/28/29 March.
- The dinner 26/27/28 March can be booked as an option to the conference ticket: CHF 84

Sponsorship price	CHF 600
Normal price	CHF 390
Reduced price	CHF 300
Students	CHF 180

REGISTRATION

Registration is possible via:

<https://goetheanum.ch/en/events/pfingsttagung-parzival-und-der-gral>