

10th Worldwide Biography Conference

Kékvölgy Waldorf Iskola • Pilisszentlászló near Budapest • Hungary

Report following closure meeting 5th - 7th September 2019 • Goetheanum • Dornach • Switzerland

Trusting in our being in resonance with the communal destiny of the Worldwide Biography Conference © (WBC), we, as the five colleagues variously responsible for preparing, coordinating and organising WBC 2017, met at the Goetheanum for our final review and closure of our work, by arrangement with the *General Anthroposophical Section of School of Spiritual Science* in which the worldwide representation of biography work is anchored: <https://goetheanum.co/en/school/biography-work> The following is a brief outline of our overview and preparation for the formal transmission of organisational responsibility to our Finnish colleagues who are already preparing themselves to host WBC 2021 in Finland.

We opened our meeting with a ritual initiated by *Anna Romanova*, followed by an intimate sharing towards each other and about our respective experiences and feedback from participants which we had each received to date. We followed this with a more formal evaluation of the design and content of the conference, including the practical implementation of our various tasks and responsibilities. Then we moved on to the formal conclusion of the organisation and business of the WBC 2019. In due course we are passing our collective and individual experiences and conclusions on to our Finnish colleagues.

Wednesday 26th June : Opening Plena

The opening plenum became a worthy vessel to receive the in-pouring of rich experiences flowing from the previous two days Prelude activities offered by Hungarian colleagues and co-ordinated by *Anna Tóthfalusi*; which was an opportunity to arrive in a new region and get a sense of the “middle” of Europe. The quality of having been introduced to the Hungarian culture continues to resonate with grateful participants. The expression of gratitude to the local community who made this all possible also encompasses the following evenings, which were filled with dance, music and song.

For the first time it was possible to hold an Open Conversation in the Michael School as part of the conference programme for all participants. This possibility deserves further careful consideration in the future. Gratitude to all colleagues who carried this initiative.

Throughout the plena simultaneous translation between English, German and Spanish was facilitated by interpreters with access to audio-wireless equipment.

Thursday 27th June : Biographical Adventure in a Landscape

In total 94 colleagues participated fully, including all 13 Shepherds . A few of the 28 colleagues who did not participate were hindered for health reasons. Despite discernible trepidation at the outset, the feedback on return was overwhelmingly positive and very often moving. We cannot express enough gratitude to those colleagues who took up the challenge of preparing to become Shepherds. The overall planning, preparation and coordination by *Victor Streza*, together with *Robert Kiraly* on horseback, created the sense of security which eventually all those who took part were able to trust without reservation.

Friday 28th June : Professional Workshops

Twelve colleagues had been invited by *Leah Walker* and *Vera G. Klein* to offer professional level workshops which could mediate their specialised instruments of biographical transformation. The 106 participants across the 8 groups in English, 3 groups in German and 1 group in Spanish were fairly distributed: 67 got their first choice, 9 their second and 4 their third. Leah and Vera were particularly satisfied with the result of the attention they gave to ensuring that language needs were served in all twelve groups.

Saturday 29th June : Islands of Humanity & Process Ownership

Over many months, supported by other colleagues in Finland, *Mikko Romppanen*, *Jaana* and *Hannu Tuovinen* had been preparing a full day of work in small groups dedicated to exploring their visions and creating scenarios of how biography work can evolve to serve coming generations? We are grateful to Mikko, Janna and Hannu, who have offered to send their own feedback about the process so far and how they will take this further into the next conference.

Sunday 30th June : Closing Plenum

With foresight *Eszter Kökény-Hámori* had invited a Hungarian colleague to accompany the unfolding process by leading the creation of a ‘living labyrinth’ together with the gathering of conference participants. All who were privileged to be able to move through this pathway surely caught a glimpse of future possibilities ...

Towards 2021

Transmission of organisational responsibility also involves sharing our experience about the financial management of the budgets and resources of conferences, including for this last conference. As with the report following WBC 2017, we bear witness by way of a brief financial overview for WBC 2019, this time with a comparison to WBC 2017 (* *excl. bursaries*):

	2019		2017	
Opening Balance	€ 7.405		€ 4.388	
Total Conference Receipts	€ 44.098	100%	€ 41.760	100% (*)
Venue Registration Catering Interpreting Presentation Materials	€ 30.442-	69,03%	€ 26.375-	63,16%
Organisation Development Administration Communication Travel	€ 13.469-	30,54%	€ 12.368-	29,62%
Total Conference Expenses	€ 43.911-		€ 38.743-	
Closing Balance	€ 7.592		€ 7.405	

We confirm the experience and conviction of our forerunners, that the continuity of the financial viability of the WBC requires considerable financial management skills and the practise of due diligence which differentiates between commitment, sacrifice and service. On this occasion forward budgeting was arduous; however, the decision to stay with a choice of 'solidarity', 'standard' and 'basic' conference contributions at the same level as WBC 2017 proved to be a stable foundation on which to proceed.

In the course of preparing readiness to open registration for WBC 2019 it became necessary to establish a website providing secure, password protected, online registration, payment and profile facilities. Whilst this can be improved on in the future, a platform has been engineered, which can be maintained in a sustainable way to serve future conferences. These facilities are purely functional and do not constitute the presentation format of future conferences, each of which will undoubtedly need its own individualised online presence.

Participants of WBC 2019 are now invited to go to the link under 'Community' on WBC 2019 website or click [Worldwide Biography Conference Login](#) to log in to their WBC account with their user name or email address and their password ... if forgotten then click [Worldwide Biography Conference Request New Password](#).

Here you can not only update your individual profile, but you can also view all the profiles of the other WBC 2019 participants, with contact details, etc.. The recommendation will be passed on to the WBC 2021 organisers to consider inviting WBC 2017 participants to open WBC accounts with profiles. Perhaps later all colleagues in the conference community will be able to do this. This, however, is a work in progress, and as some will understand well, time is needed for these possibilities to ripen and be adapted to future needs.

Once again individuals representing the conference community have demonstrated their will, generosity and dedication by contributing their time, energy, experience, competence, devotion and tolerance, in addition to financial resources and facilities. Establishing and maintaining clear boundaries between 'organisation' and 'content creation' continues to be essential. In Hungary we learned once again how the oft 'unacknowledged' services rendered by the local community are so fundamental to the hosting of a conference.

In Conclusion

Having closed our WBC 2019 business we moved on to look at the Guiding Light Principles which were passed from the WBC 2017 to WBC 2019 for the first time. The result of our deliberations will be sent out when these have been integrated for the purpose of passing these on to our Finnish colleagues. Afterwards we started the process of preparing this report. Finally we gathered 'essences' which we as individuals and collectively want to pass on to the future, before sealing our WBC 2019 closure meeting with ritual.

We want to thank everyone who participated in the last conference, particularly those of you who took up the considerable challenges we created, intentionally and unintentionally. We also want to thank everyone who could not take part, for following the whole process and supporting your colleagues, inwardly and outwardly, locally and regionally, in their preparations, travel and contributions.

Each Worldwide Biography Conference is a challenge which embraces our highest aspirations and reveals our hardest struggles ... the "middle" holds the balance. How could it be otherwise, when we all strive to work together consciously at the threshold, as our service to the Victorious Spirit of the coming generations ...

With love in our hearts ...

Christopher Bee

Anna Tóthfalusi

Eszter Kökény-Hámori

Victor Streza

Anna Romanova