

Announcement for a Lecture by Rudolf Steiner in Stuttgart (May 1919)

Abstract

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), an Austrian-born author, publicist and reform educator, became known above all as the founder of anthroposophy, a spiritual-esoteric worldview that gained a growing number of followers after the First World War. In 1912, Steiner founded the Anthroposophical Society in Berlin, which had around 2,500 members at the time. A prolific writer and speaker, Steiner disseminated his theories through journal articles, books, and popular public lectures, such as this one. Steiner's theories inspired the founding of Waldorf schools, whose pedagogical tenets derived from the notion that human beings consisted of the spirit, the soul, and the body and that one's education should therefore promote intellectual-cognitive, artistic-creative, and manual-practical skills in equal measure. The first Waldorf school was founded in Stuttgart in September 1919, just four months after this lecture, at the behest of the cigarette manufacturer Emil Molt, who wanted a school for the children of his employees. Molt and his wife had attended Rudolf Steiner's public lectures in Stuttgart and become followers of his anthroposophical teachings. Molt had earlier joined with Steiner in April 1919 to found the "Bund für Dreigliederung des sozialen Organismus" [the Association for a Tripartite Social Organism] in Württemberg, which sought both to counteract the radical political movements of the time and to eventually abolish capitalism. The fact that this particular lecture was an encore presentation of a sold-out Steiner lecture just five days earlier highlights the public appeal of his spiritual philosophy.

Source



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