

Rudolf Steiner University College

Master Programme in Waldorf Education

Master Thesis

Annual Festivals in Waldorf Schools

in multi-religious

or non-Christian cultural Settings :

“She showed us the fish

but didn´t teach us how to do the fishing.”

By Vera Hoffmann

Rheinau, Switzerland, May 2015



Rudolf Steiner University College

Master Programme in Waldorf Education

Oslo, Norway

Acknowledgements

I dedicate this study
to the beautiful people I met in Kusi Kawsay and Nairobi Waldorf School.

I am very grateful for your openness,
for warmly including me in your communities
and for sharing
so much of your professional life with me.
I admire your schools and your work.

I dedicate this study to those giants on whose shoulders
Waldorf education was brought to places far away from its
European roots.

And I dedicate it equally strong to those
who now search for new ways
and place based concepts in Waldorf education,
those who stand up front
and those who do it every day in their classrooms.

I am very grateful to my mentor Arve Mathiesen who supported my plans
from the first moment we met,
and encouraged me when things got difficult

and to the other valuable advisors
who shared their knowledge and time with me.

And I am very grateful to Gerhard
who supported me in many ways
and also supported
years of stacks of books and papers in every free space.

Asante sana - Urpillay Sonqollay - thank you – takk - danke.

Vera Hoffmann

Content

- 1. Introduction..... 1
 - 1.1 Choice of topic..... 2
 - 1.2 Research question and outline of research..... 3
 - 1.3 The aim and contribution of this research..... 3
 - 1.4 The structure of this thesis 4
 - 1.5 Conceptual framework..... 5
- 2. Literature Review..... 6
 - 2.1 Introduction..... 6
 - 2.2 Brief outline of Andean and Kenyan history and culture 7
 - 2.2.1 The Andean Civilizations 8
 - 2.2.2 Kenya 11
 - 2.3 Localizing festivals – demarcation and convergence 13
 - 2.3.1 Festival, celebration and ritual..... 13
 - 2.3.2 Types of festivals 14
 - 2.3.3 The role of community and individuals in festivals..... 15
 - 2.4 Elements of Ritual Theory 16
 - 2.4.1 Central Concepts of Ritual Theory 16
 - 2.4.2 Contemporary Aspects..... 17
 - 2.5 Relevant aspects of Indigenous knowledge 20
 - 2.5.1 Characteristics of Indigenous knowledge systems 22
 - 2.5.2 Indigenous learners caught between two worlds 24
 - 2.5.3 Contemporary local or Endogenous Knowledge 25
 - 2.5.4 Concluding considerations..... 25
 - 2.6 The conception of annual festivals as understood in Anthroposophy 26
 - 2.6.1 Introduction..... 26
 - 2.6.2 Steiner’s (1985) description of the earth’s seasonal breathing process 28
 - 2.6.3 The nature of terrestrial forces – Rudolf Steiner’s understanding of the Christ-being in GA 223..... 29
 - 2.6.4 The breathing-process of the Earth as a dynamic concept – Steiner’s inclusion of the entire globe 30
 - 2.6.5 Rudolf Steiner’s representations of the characteristics of antique festivals and the inauguration of Christian festivals (GA 223)..... 31
 - 2.6.6 Steiner’s demand for a foundation of new festivals out of a dynamic understanding of nature 31
 - 2.7 Experiences in other non-European or in inter-cultural European Waldorf Schools 32
 - 2.7.1 Egypt and Israel 32

2.7.2	Taiwan.....	33
2.7.3	South Africa.....	33
2.7.4	The Intercultural Waldorf School in Mannheim, Germany.....	35
2.7.5	Questions from New Zealand.....	37
2.8	Summary of the literature review.....	38
3.	Methodology.....	40
3.1	Introduction.....	40
3.2	Methodological background and research design.....	41
3.3	Methods.....	42
3.3.1	Ethnological data collection: participant-observation, field diary and thick descriptions.....	42
3.3.2	Qualitative interviewing and semistructured interviews.....	44
3.3.3	Aspects for analysis.....	47
3.3.4	Analysis – coding processes.....	48
3.3.5	Analysis and interpretation – cross cultural processes.....	49
3.4	Methodological stances and approaches from Indigenous knowledge.....	49
3.4.1	Background of Indigenous research paradigms.....	50
3.4.2	Axiology.....	50
3.5	Bias, reflexivity and validity.....	51
3.6	Personal closing considerations.....	53
4.	Findings.....	54
4.1	Introduction.....	54
4.2	Kusi Kawsay.....	55
4.2.1	Cultural-historical background.....	55
4.2.2	Life circumstances.....	56
4.2.3	Annual Festivals in Kusi Kawsay.....	61
4.2.4	The development of annual festivals at Kusi Kawsay - a process of pedagogical integration of Andean values.....	69
4.3	Nairobi Waldorf School.....	73
4.3.1	Cultural-historical background.....	73
4.3.2	Life circumstances.....	74
4.3.3	Annual festivals in Nairobi Waldorf School.....	78
4.3.4	The development of annual festivals at Nairobi Waldorf School as a continuous search for deeper understanding.....	83
4.3.5	Festivals in the kindergarten.....	85
4.3.6	Nature observation and the unfolding of festival motives in the two Nairobi Waldorf School kindergartens.....	90
4.3.7	Transcending nature observations.....	91
4.3.8	Difference and similarities between kindergartens’ and school’s development of new festivals at Nairobi Waldorf School.....	93
4.4	Summary.....	93

5.	Discussion.....	94
5.1	Introduction.....	94
5.2	Cultural-historical background	94
5.2.1	Influences of colonialism.....	95
5.2.2	‘Waldorf Eurocentrism’ and liberation.....	97
5.2.3	And the festivals?.....	99
5.3	Rituals and Festivals	99
5.3.1	Community	100
5.3.2	Values and metaphors	102
5.4	Dialogue.....	107
5.4.1	Relationship with nature	107
5.4.2	Interconnectedness and the Sacred	110
5.5	Aspects for Festival Creation.....	112
5.5.1	Steiner’s understanding of the Christ impulse and its significance for Waldorf Festival Creation	112
5.5.2	Dialogical approach in processes of festival creation.....	115
5.5.3	Practical considerations for festival creation... ..	117
6.	Conclusion	120
	References.....	124

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to find out which forms of festival creation and related contents two Waldorf schools in multi-religious or non-Christian cultural surroundings developed, thus getting independent of traditional European ways of celebrating Waldorf festivals.

Waldorf Schools, in their history started out as schools, located in European countries with a strong Christian heritage. However, almost one hundred years later in every continent of the world, parents have been searching for this type of pedagogy for their children and have found teachers, familiar with the principles of Waldorf pedagogy and also background educational support of experienced Waldorf teachers from European or American countries. As a result there are schools in North and South America, Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Australia, with manifold cultural backgrounds. Some have an explicit Christian background, some do not. Historically within the Waldorf movement there has been a subtle issue and an insider discussion as to whether a non-Christian Waldorf School shows all the features of a “real” Waldorf School or not. Moreover another question arose about the implications of the concept “Christian” and how it can be understood with regards to Anthroposophy, the foundation of Waldorf pedagogy. It is a sensitive subject within Waldorf circles. But while the number of Waldorf schools is constantly and in certain countries (such as China) rapidly - growing, this question seems to already lose its significance, since it is overtaken by reality. It is now more a question of outlining features of Waldorf pedagogy in a world of increasingly mingled religious and cultural contexts (Boland, 2014b). It is also a question of finding possibilities of adapting the Waldorf curriculum, enabling it to be globally applicable in various cultural contexts. “Despite its apparent successful transition to most countries and cultures . . . , Steiner education has been criticized for the fact that the curriculum has been adopted and applied fairly unchanged in most instances and in most situations” (Stehlik, 2008, p.240).

Non-Waldorf authors are aware of the importance of a place-based curriculum for learners’ academic performance (Boland, 2014b). Dei even extends this to non-cognitive areas: “Identification with the social and natural environments in which teaching and learning occurs must be seen as key to spiritual and emotional self-development” (Dei, 2002, p. 127). This indicates that the adaption of Waldorf curriculum to local conditions is not only an ethical, but also a didactic question. There are examples of schools, where Christian Waldorf festivals

with central-European features have been imported to other continents and cultures, but contemporary teachers and parents seem to have a high level of critical awareness and show a growing dissatisfaction with these Eurocentric influences. So ever more Waldorf schools in other continents have started the quest to find culturally appropriate rituals, festivals and celebrations. At the same time, a considerable number of immigrants of other cultures have entered European societies. In Germany the first so-called « Intercultural Waldorf schools » have been established. Here teachers are consciously trying to integrate aspects of immigrant cultures into Waldorf pedagogical structures by for example including some of their cultural and religious festivals (Brater et al, 2007).

1.1 Choice of topic

My personal interest in this research area and the resulting specific research question sprouted from a 25 year involvement with Waldorf education; as a class teacher in Waldorf schools in Germany, Switzerland and Spain, as a four year member of the board of the Association of Rudolf Steiner Schools in Switzerland and as the seven year director of a small multicultural Waldorf school on the Canary Islands. Its original impulse was ignited through a personal experience at the International Waldorf Teachers Conference in Dornach, Switzerland in 2012. The big audience hall in the Goetheanum was filled with a 1000 Waldorf teachers from 40 different nations, -all continents were represented. At this same conference I realised the above mentioned controversial area of questions, related to the multi-religious features of Waldorf education. This realisation resulted in the decision to contribute to the development of a more inclusive approach in the Waldorf movement. Meanwhile, when concluding this study three years later, I have discovered authors who are consciously working in this field, such as Boland (2014a).

I have studied and practiced Waldorf educational ideas for decades and experienced its fruitfulness. The Master Study at Rudolf Steiner University College Oslo provided me with insight into the academic world, with academic tools for following up on my field of study and gaining a sound outside view on Waldorf education and Anthroposophy. Today I maintain that Waldorf education should be made applicable for all children, irrespective of cultural or religious background and that it is a worldwide task of Waldorf teachers, to overcome the Eurocentrism that still exists in many non-European Waldorf schools.

1.2 Research question and outline of research

Annual festivals are an essential part of Waldorf school life. Stehlik defines rituals as central factor of Waldorf school life. “The shared mission, philosophy, educational theories, practices, *and rituals* are seen as key factors in building community” (Stehlik, 2008, p. 238) [emphasis added]. As will be shown in the study there is a close connection between rituals and festivals. In many international Waldorf schools though, the influence of European traditions on annual festivals still has to be overcome. My research questions are aimed to investigate processes of festival creation that two schools have undergone.

Annual Festivals in Waldorf Schools in multi-religious or non-Christian cultural Settings

Which forms of celebrations have two schools developed?

How do the teachers understand the cultural/spiritual background of these festivals?

Which salient factors have appeared in the schools’ festival creation?

What concepts and processes could a non-European or a religiously diverse Waldorf school use to develop annual festivals in relation to its local settings?

To acquire practical knowledge within this field, I travelled to two Waldorf schools who presented the prerequisites for finding answers to my research questions. One school has an Andean Indigenous background, with its educational goals geared towards raising the Indigenous childrens’ knowledge and awareness as well as their self-confidence related to their history and culture. This school - Kusi Kawsay - is located in the Sacred Valley of Peru, in Pisac. The other school, Nairobi Waldorf School – founded by Europeans – is situated in Kenya’s capital Nairobi. It serves in a dedicated manner a colourful multitude of children and their parents with very diverse cultural and religious backgrounds.

1.3 The aim and contribution of this research

As it was my goal to contribute to a globally inclusive development of Waldorf movement, I coordinated this goal with the Pedagogical Section in the Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland. The Pedagogical Section is one of the key institutions of the international Waldorf movement. There the specific necessity has become evident to research the way in which Waldorf schools with different cultural and religious backgrounds celebrate their annual festivals. The results

of my investigation will represent one aspect of a curriculum, which the Pedagogical Section will put online, offering examples of, and criteria for, the selection of pedagogical and educational contents from the teachers' local cultural/religious surrounding, instead of traditional European Waldorf contents.

1.4 The structure of this thesis

The *Literature Review* presents insight into relevant concepts from ritual theory and Indigenous knowledge. It includes representations from Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf education, about contents related to festival creation. Subsequently, it illustrates research from authors that investigated corresponding questions in Waldorf schools and Waldorf education in Egypt, Israel, Taiwan, South Africa, Germany and New Zealand.

The *Conceptual Framework* introduces the key concepts that have developed out of the literature (and the findings) and were part of the analysis. They are presented at the end of this chapter.

The *Methods chapter* justifies a qualitative research method as an adequate approach for this study, which uses ethnological research methods to delve deeply into the life conditions of the participants. This study uses participant-observation, qualitative interviewing (semi-structured) and a field diary. Analytical methods included several steps of coding and categorizing. All these considerations and methods, as well as their practical counterparts, the steps I performed in this study are being presented.

The *Findings chapter* presents the forms and related background motives, as well as aspects of the festival creation processes that the interviewees of each school related. Values and metaphors are permeating the festivals and rituals of Kusi Kawsay and Nairobi Waldorf School, both in the process of their creation and their festive performances.

Different levels of meanings are explored in relation to the findings from the literature and lead to common concepts and processes that can be used to suggest their application for festival creation in other non-European or religiously diverse Waldorf school settings. This is investigated and presented in the *Discussion chapter*.

In the *Conclusion* findings from the field are summarized and answers to the research questions are offered or related where the details to these answers can be found. It is also the

place where questions, that arose are being mentioned, limitations are being delineated together with recommendations for future research possibilities and necessities in the research area.

It has to be justified that the evaluation of the findings of two schools and the complex ethnological methods resulted in *exceeding the supposed page limit by 3 pages*.

1.5 Conceptual framework

The concepts that were used in this study were 'ritualization', 'orders of meaning', 'liberation from Eurocentrism', 'respect for local life worlds', 'careful local contextualization', 'dialogical approach' and 'thinking with the cycle of the year'..

Ritualization, a concept from ritual theory I use equal with festival creation since the line between performances being more ritualistic or more generally festive is hard to draw and not found as a clear definition in the literature either. Festival creation is valuable for building relationships and identification within the concerned community, a concept which is taken from both, sociology and ritual theory.

In festival creation and in festival performances different *orders of meaning* can be reached. These range from low-order (basic recognition of phenomena) via middle-order (a sense of meaning is being discovered in the phenomena) to high-order meaning that can culminate in numinous experiences, a concept taken out of ritual theory.

Liberation from Eurocentric traditions is central for festival creation in Waldorf schools in non-European or religiously diverse settings. Hand in hand with it goes developing *respect for local life worlds*, a concept more directed towards nature and social conditions and *careful local contextualization*, more geared to adapting concepts to local conditions, both concepts stem from Indigenous Knowledge and related fields.

Dialogical approach has developed as a concept out of the research findings and was also found as a concept of a research project which Majores (2009) performed on the same topic in Michael Oak Waldorf School, Cape Town, SA.

Thinking with the cycle of the year is a concept that developed out of the anthroposophic background chapter. It is a notion that Rudolf Steiner used. In German it is 'Denken mit dem Jahreslauf'.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The guiding theme of my research question is 'How did Waldorf schools in multi-religious or non-Christian settings develop their individual annual festivals'?

The investigated concepts for this research question pertain to various areas. This literature review will take a look into Andean and Kenyan history and culture, to provide a background for understanding the development of the two schools' present situations. Then it will discuss the concept of *festivals*. A demarcation of different conceptualizations will be treated, as well as possible correlations.

A prominent focus of this research will constitute the question of the chosen criteria for a school's development of individual annual Waldorf festivals and - where possible - the processes that led to the development of these festivals as well as the teachers' comprehension of this conceptual background. As rituals are considered to be essential parts of the celebration of annual festivals (Durkheim, 2013; Hilbers, 2006; Quantz, 1999) I hold that they also are constituting components of Waldorf annual festivals. So the investigation of concepts of ritual theory will provide aspects for analyzing the forms of festivals that the two investigated Waldorf schools have developed.

The third part of this literature review will take a closer look into the multidisciplinary field of Indigenous knowledge. Indigenous knowledge deals with contents, achievements, problems and opportunities of the knowledge systems of Indigenous people and it also investigates the influence, colonialism had on these. These knowledge systems could be considered as rich and valuable sources of contents, motives and rituals for individual annual festivals at Waldorf schools in related surroundings. The circumstance, that the investigated schools are situated in, is one of where colonialism and post-colonialism have strongly influenced the social context of the schools. Naturally their histories represent another factor for the look into Indigenous knowledge.

To understand the central position of festivals in Waldorf school life, the fourth part will present some insights into the meaning and spiritual background of annual celebrations in

Anthroposophy, the foundation of Waldorf education. For this, I will get into some of the esoteric descriptions that the founder of Waldorf education, Rudolf Steiner, related.

As central literature of this part I have chosen one series of Rudolf Steiner's lectures : *The Cycle of the Year as Breathing Process of the Earth and the Four Main Festivals (GA 223*)* . During his life time Rudolf Steiner in many occasions wrote and spoke about the Christian festivals, looking at them from different angles. However in this series of lectures (GA 223) the approach, he took, is a specifically global and universal one. It is important for understanding not only the central position of festivals in Waldorf school life, but also offers possible aspects for celebrating festivals in non-European and multicultural Waldorf schools. However I will not strictly confine this discussion to this lecture series, but use passages of other authors, books or lectures.

The final part of the literature review will present outlines of related experiences of Waldorf schools: in the Middle East, in Taiwan and in South Africa and a thematically related experience of the Intercultural Waldorf School in Mannheim, Germany.

2.2 Brief outline of Andean and Kenyan history and culture

To understand the specific situation of the two schools Kusi Kawsay and Nairobi Waldorf School, a short look into their countries' historical and cultural development is helpful. One of the origins of the unique appearance of each school seems to partly be a result of the founders' interplay with the schools' historical-cultural background and the arising conditions of contemporary social life. Due to the very specific Indigenous background of the Kusi Kawsay school and because of many related interviewees' references concerning the Andean background, I will not concentrate on the general history of Peru, but on the history of the Andean culture(s). A basic overview of the Andean Cosmvision will be provided, especially in its relation to nature and agriculture, relevant for understanding the background of the Kusi Kawsay school.

* GA (German: GesamtAusgabe, Engl.: complete edition) a numeric classification of Rudolf Steiner's complete works

2.2.1 The Andean Civilizations

In pre-Incan times the inhabitants of various areas of the Andes had adapted themselves outstandingly to the specific local conditions of geography and climate (Bolin, 1998; Reindel, 2014). The development of higher forms of civilization, like for example the Chavín people, presents a phenomenon which, according to Willey (1962) cannot solely be understood by adaptation to local conditions. It seems to be certain though, that already prior to the Incan takeover of the region, sophisticated cultures were evident in the Andes. They were the result of trade and cultural exchanges that had their roots as far back as 1000 B.C. and possessed ingenious systems of agriculture and irrigation (Willey, 1962; Bolin, 1998; Reindel, 2014). These civilizations developed in the geographic height of 3400 m and above (Bolin, 1998).

Around 1200 A.D., the Incans started to take over the region and finally had control of a huge territory (Bollinger, 1979). The Incan empire was called *Tawantinsuyu*, meaning the *four parts intimately bound together* with Cusco as its capital (Bolin, 1998; Urton, 2011). Within 300-400 years, they developed an elaborate system of administration (Bolin, 1998; Urton, 2011) and an intricate 12 000 km road network, partly built in daring heights and under most challenging conditions, connecting the different parts of the Empire (Bollinger, 1979). They also erected famous sites such as Machu Pichu, close to Cusco. Throughout the Incan conquest and development, it seemed as though the Inca tended to deny the significance of the achievements of previous higher Andean cultures (Bollinger, 1979).

In the years 1532 – 36 the Incan Empire was conquered and subjected by the Spanish. Encountering the conditions of a spread out population, which was hard to survey and rule, the Spanish started to force the population to live closer together in artificial settlements, without regard to the local lifestyle and its agricultural necessities (Reindel, 2014). Thus the process of colonisation began, a process of belittling the local Indigenous resources, lifestyle and knowledge via imposing European education, values and religion. Indigenous holistic knowledge systems were step by step substituted by Western scientific particularisation through state and church (Schimpf-Herken, 1979; Maurial, 1999).

The separation of (formerly combined) tasks of the priesthood and scientific investigations, the destruction of the (local) science of nature observation, the process of dissolving grown social structures - functioning as mediators of cultural knowledge and cultural values - led to desolation of the inner dynamics of pre-Columbian cultures (Schimpf-Herken, 1979, p. 30).

The efforts of schooling Indigenous people in the Andes via a foreign curriculum and thus leading them to *progress* and *success* did not succeed, nor did the promises of including Indigenous rights into democracy happen (Maurial, 1999). Instead it led to a growing loss of relationship of the Andean people with nature, to social devaluation of Indigenous lifestyle and as a result to a loss of self-esteem within the Andean population (Huaman & Valdiviezo, 2012; Maurial, 1999). This influence has had lasting effects. Huaman & Valdiviezo (2012, p. 80) describe the contemporary Peruvian society as: “Indigenous farm life is devalued in Peruvian mainstream society as the occupation of the poor, barefoot and uneducated Indian.” This statement mirrors the devaluation of the most basic cultural root of the Andes, - the work in the *chakras* (Quechua for fields).

Aspects of Andean Cosmivision and its relationship to nature

One of the outstanding all encompassing concepts of Andean Cosmivision is *Pacha*. It implies, according to Rist (1999, p. 198) “everything shaped by space and time“, everything that humans can perceive via their sensual experiences, their thoughts, intuitions and inspirations of any origin.

Pacha is specified into *Pachamama* (material life) and *Pachakamac* (spiritual life) as well as *Pachakamachaña* (social life). *Pachakamac* are enlivening forces that envelop everything, whilst *Pachamama* are the material forces that enable physical life on earth and *Pachakamachaña* is everything that occurs on a social level between human beings (Rist, 1999).

A fourth concept has to be mentioned to later understand some aspects of the findings: *Pachankiri* refers to the conscious mental state of humans, enabling – despite all connectedness to nature – the experience of being a separate person, independent of any determinism, and able to reach a stage of inner freedom (Rist, 1999).

Referring to the encompassing worldview of Andean Cosmivision, Rist (2011, p. 12) recognizes that “there is no fundamental separation between material, social, and spiritual phenomena”, concluding that there is no separation between nature and culture either. In what he calls “a dialogue with a community of living beings” all treatment of and working with the earth becomes significant, which is why in some Andean communities places are given

All quotations of the authors Schimpf-Herken (from German) and Rist (1999, from Spanish) are translated by VH.

names. Those names are not only based on local specifics of landscape but more so on daily interaction, this extends to dreams and meditation (Boillat, 2012).

The Andean people throughout the year perform rituals and festivals to care for those places, which are believed to be comprised of an entity of various visible and invisible beings. These festivals and rituals are directly related to the agricultural occasions and tasks, thus supposedly establishing direct and respectful contact with the place's entity and asking for help in agricultural production (Rist, 2011).

Work in the *chakra* is one of the most central values in Andean societies and at the same time is a continuous learning space for the Andean children's broader education of techniques as well as values (Huaman & Valdiviezo, 2014). Working in the *chakra* means more than growing plants and animals for food purposes, it means nurturing those individual spaces and their beings, also nurturing the soil, the water, the air around (Maurial, 1999). "In the *chakra*, community members are taught, that the space demands respect, conscientiousness and reciprocity – reinforcing the belief, that everything carries a spirit" (Huaman & Valdiviezo, 2012, p. 80). With these rituals the people also perform the important task of giving back to the earth some restorative forces. The religious experience of Andean societies has been shaped by this close connection and interdependence with a visible and invisible animate nature (Bolin, 1998). It has resulted in a ritual calendar, which at the same time is an agricultural calendar (Rist, 1999).

This calendar allows them the synchronisation of productive practices with the rhythms and cycles of the cosmos. Christian and European colonisation were not able to change this: the communities chose to accept those Catholic festivals, that were identical or close (in date) to their most important festivals. However, underneath their catholic cosmetics, the festivals still maintain a great part of their original sense (Rist, 1999, p. 201).

This hidden sense of the original purpose of agricultural rituals is still conscious, especially amongst elder people in the high Andean mountains, above 4000m above sea level. (Bolin, 1998). To summarize and highlight the essence of Andean Cosmivision, I will use the Bolin's description (1998) who, as a professor for anthropology, had the unique opportunity to be invited by a remote Andean group, the Chillihuani, to spend some time with them and participate in the central ritual of Pukllay, which is celebrated for four to six days with various

different ritualistic parts. She framed one of her really impressive experiences into the following words the next morning after having participated in one of those rituals.

These ancient rites reconfirm a close interdependence among humans, animals and nature. This night, through a dialogue with gods and spirits, we entered the realm of the sacred. We wove threads which symbolically bound us to our physical, social and spiritual worlds. We reinforced ties with the past, with the Apus, with those ancestral spirits living in mountain peaks, and we looked towards the future, hoping for the aid and compassion of the deities from whom we requested health, prosperity, and peaceful coexistence. We engaged in reciprocity, the hallmark of Andean Life; we were offering and asking, giving and taking (Bolin, 1998, p. 43).

Her words highlight the reverence in which the ritual was performed, the interconnectedness of all levels of existence in Andean life, and their interdependence. As part of the movement of recovering Andean Indigenous self-esteem, the related awareness which had widely been lost is being brought back to the consciousness of younger people (Maurial, 1999).

2.2.2 Kenya

Kenya's scientifically known history, as part of the African history, reaches back to the very origins of mankind with various findings of ancient human skulls (Van Dijk, 2004).

According to Njoroge & Kirori (2014) Kenyan history can be divided into three key historical periods. The first one is the pre-colonial period, when the very diverse ethnic groups (tribes) had found a way of a reasonably peaceful coexistence without a formal state organizing group life. Life was more rural and less competitive.

Njoroge & Kirori (2014) describe how in the second, the colonial period, colonialists forced different ethnic groups to live together without respecting their cultural differences. The destruction of the tribal surrounding, which had developed over centuries began, according to Berman (1990), by putting people into those confined areas or reserves. Overpopulation developed in these limited areas. A consequence was the need to increase food production, which in such restricted space resulted in growing loss of soil fertility and in increasing social conflict (Berman, 1990). The loss of self-sufficiency and the growing deterioration of living standards, with the simultaneous neglect from governmental support, destroyed the relatively stable equilibrium of pre-colonial coexistence within the 42 ethnic groups of the later artificially designed area, then called Kenya (Berman, 1990).

Njoroge & Kirori (2014) maintain that the third historical period of Kenyan history begins in 1963 with the achievement of independence from British government and with the first president Jomo Kenyatta beginning to govern the country.

One of the difficult political fields that immediately appeared after independence, was the question of the official language spoken in Kenya (Mule, 1999). Right from the beginning some politicians defended that Kiswahili would be Kenya's official language, others defended English. During the following years, there were several vain attempts to make Kiswahili the official language, and in 1974 Kenyatta tried for the last time to install it as Kenya's official language. But according to Mule (1999), this was met with such great public hostility that it had to be abandoned. This development had consequences for the self-definition of the Kenyan population.

Kenya, like many other independent African countries inherited and adopted the former colonizer's system of education with its emphasis on school literacy. Since then, school literacy has been seen as the only means to overcome economic underdevelopment and promote social development. The school and its curriculum has therefore assumed a central role in the way Kenyans define their identity (Mule, 1999, p. 229).

Yet the consequences of this development were not only in the Kenyan definition of self and identity, they were also an expression of the victory of the ex-colonialists' worldview in a subtle epistemological fight between Indigenous knowledge systems and Western knowledge systems' claims of supremacy. The traces of colonialism exerted their influences right into classrooms where children had to learn in a foreign language, concepts taken out of the knowledge systems of this foreign language without respect for local conditions (Mule, 1999).

Oucho (2002) describes that shortly before independence, the country had been increasingly polarized between two major tribes, the Luo and the Kikuyu, with the Luhya as a third factor in the growing ethnic tensions. The strong ethnocentrism in Kenyan society of the last decades has its origin in these times (Njoroge & Kirori, 2014). The first president, Jomo Kenyatta, belonged to the Kikuyu, the tribe which until present times predominates Kenyan political, economic and social life. This fact resulted in a growing gap between extremely rich and extremely poor members of Kenyan society (Oucho, 2002). Since then the competition between political leaders of the largest ethnic groups has led to growing, socially destructive processes such as the annexation of land and goods and to political favourism of the Kenyan

presidents towards kinship, tribal members and friends. Kenyans up until today support politicians of their own ethnical group (Njoroge & Kirori, 2014).

The specific history of the school as a European initiative has to be mentioned at this point too. Literature about the school's foundation process describes that the founders were all Germans, and one vividly describes the adventurous process of the first years of the school's founding (Wutte, 2012). This was not so much marked by the contemporary tribal problems or the terrorist threats that Kenya is nowadays actually facing. Their time in Nairobi was rather marked by rests of colonialism. The founders, as Europeans, actually were sometimes looked at a little suspiciously but all together they met a friendly, interested and open atmosphere, in which they could go about things without fear on the one hand and with local support on the other hand, support that sometimes showed the remnants of deference of the colonized towards the colonialists.

2.3 Localizing festivals – demarcation and convergence

Festivals play an utterly important role in a society's social life. Before getting deeper into Ritual Theory and Indigenous knowledge this chapter will introduce sociological classifications of festivals and celebrations of some authors. Since rituals often are described as an integral part of festivals and celebrations, I include their significance within one sociological classification. A broader look into Ritual Theory will appear in 2.4.

2.3.1 Festival, celebration and ritual

Hilbers (2006) takes a closer look at the role of „Celebrations for Personal and Collective Health and Wellbeing“. Concerning the role of traditional annual festivals she relates the importance of these often religious festivals. She claims that they provide people with a sense of inner security and certainty, as they are ritualistic type of events and occur reliably in the course of the year. Hilbers' quote from the „United Kingdom Policy Studies“ describes this in detail :

A festival was traditionally a time of celebration, relaxation and recuperation which often followed a period of hard physical labour, sowing or harvesting crops, for example. The essential feature of these festivals was the celebration or reaffirmation of community or culture. The artistic content of such events was variable and many had a religious or ritualistic aspect (Hilbers, 2006, p.47).

This quotation with its aspect of festivals' emotionally stabilizing effect for the individual person guides towards the next two conceptually related notions 'celebrations' and 'rituals'.

Hilber (2006) puts the festivals into the larger context of 'celebrations'. She describes how celebrations involve a much wider range of social festivities than festivals, - celebrations are not only possibilities for repeated and planned celebratory events, but also offer the chance to celebrate a wide range of aspects of life, like places and groups of (or individual) people.

According to Hilbers there are various features to distinguish celebration from other social gatherings. She names ritual and play as well as the intention to positively celebrate a person or a cause, and continues describing ritual as being a common feature of both, festivals and celebrations. She affirms that the concept 'ritual' can be used as possibly pertaining to both, 'festival' and 'celebration'.

Hilbers (2006) concludes that a common theme of celebrations, which she in many cases equates with festivals, might be the capability to experience the normal as extraordinary.

2.3.2 Types of festivals

In characterizing festivals Maurer (2004) develops a conception of time. According to his understanding, one needs to distinguish three different modes of experiencing time, a cyclical one, a linear one and one that is given by the god Kairos in 'just the right moment'. The 'cyclical' experience is related to the diverse movements of sun, moon, and stars, thus creating the year and its seasons, which keep repeating cyclically every year. As human beings we have thus found as determined facts of living the resulting conditions of warmth and cold, summer and winter, growth and stillness in plant life etc. In this realm we are dependent on nature. Maurer states, that by creating festivals out of this cyclical experience, humankind has added a factor of culture to the dependency on nature. Humans can thus enhance the experience of time. The share of festivals, developed out of this cyclical experience of time, is considerable, according to Maurer (2004). In his conception of three different experiences of time qualities, as the second group of festivals he relates those celebrations that arise out of a more linear experience of time. As humans we experience the linearity of time in our own life. We go through biographical stages in a linear way, from birth to entering school, from puberty and growing up to profession and partnership and finally to ageing and at last we die. We can not repeat these stages. Linear time indicates development. The festivals, initiating these stages, mark transgressions, like a wedding or a

graduation. The third experience of time, according to Maurer is described in the Greek mythology as the god Kairos, the god of the right moment who invalidates both, the cyclical and the linear time experience. Those moments, that we experience as a gift from god Kairos, do not subordinate neither to cyclical nor to linear elements, but they let us experience their very special and festive character (Maurer, 2004).

Unlike Maurer Cameron (2004) classifies the festivals in four types. Both authors concur in the classification of seasonal festivals. Cameron, like Maurer also calls those festivals 'cyclical' and describes them as having developed out of the agrarian societies, adding to the participant's qualitative experience of different seasons and their related agricultural tasks and also increasing the participant's identification with the own community. Apart from the cyclical festivals Cameron characterizes the 'festivals of belief', which he also names 'sacred festivals'. They are of religious origin and the author claims that they can be found in every culture. Cameron describes as a third category the 'festivals of misrule', like Mardi Gras, where people can trespass social limitations within their society and release emotional pressure. As a fourth category Cameron (2004) presents the 'community festivals', ranging from small street festivals to national holidays.

Looking at festivals through the conceptual lens of 'time', provides a concise classification of festivals, which is suitable for a first overview before entering the more complex area of mankind's interactions with festivals.

2.3.3 The role of community and individuals in festivals

Homann (2004) maintains that so far, there has not been a society discovered that does not celebrate festivals. He claims that festivals are not to be understood as luxurious or superfluous factors of a society's social life but as factors that contribute to constitute and maintain social life of a society. Maurer (2004) stresses the social function of festivals; they help the individual to cope with life, on the one hand by enabling the individual to identify and merge with a given community, and on the other hand by providing the possibility to use the festivals as opportunities to transgress a society's boundaries, like in Carnival. A society can also use festivals to identify itself, like it occurred for example in the Socialist German Democratic Republic, whose authorities fought against religious festivals, trying to substitute them by newly created and strongly defended politically oriented festivals (Maurer, 2004).

Maurer (2004) also emphasizes the role of the individual in festivals. The individual's experience of a festival can strongly depend on the role, one plays in the given society. The focus on this inner festival experience of a single person, he argues, would be a new and prospective approach in research about festivals. He claims that this way a festival could not be defined by means of a central definition but through the individual's festival experience. Only by looking at these individual experiences of a festival, a judgement would be possible if a festival lived up to its prior purpose or planned sense (Maurer, 2004).

2.4 Elements of Ritual Theory

Hilbers (2006) claims that rituals constitute an important element of festivals and celebrations. In many cases rituals are equated with festivals. This chapter will present a survey over ritual theory from its beginnings, looking into two schools of ritual theory, and touching the work of important disciples of both schools. I will concentrate on central concepts, relevant for celebration of festivals and will then present a look at contemporary reconceptualization of some of the related concepts, inherent to festival creation, like ritualization, making of rituals and orders of meaning.

2.4.1 Central Concepts of Ritual Theory

The Sacred

Investigating the relation between ritual/rite and religion, Durkheim, one of the fathers of ritual theory, experienced two types of reality, separating 'the sacred' from the rest of life:

We get the impression that we are in relations with two different sorts of reality and that a sharply drawn line of demarcation separates them from each other: on the one hand is the world of profane things, on the other, that of sacred things.
(Durkheim, 2013, pp. 212-13)

Quantz (1999) shows that this led to the misconception amongst academics, of Durkheim distinguishing two different types of reality, a religious and a secular realm. However, as Quantz (1999) demonstrates, Durkheim's distinction differentiates between a sacred and a profane realm within one reality. He points out two further major motives in the work of Durkheim which are relevant for festival creation processes: the importance of ritual for reinforcing solidarity feelings within a community and for the maintenance of its social order. By emphasizing Durkheim's understanding of ritual as steadying society via maintaining

social stability and strengthening the community, Quantz (1999) comes to a deeper understanding of Durkheim's concept of *the sacred*. He shows that for Durkheim was important whether there was respect reigning in either area. Durkheim (2013) claims that the type of respect, that we can exhibit towards a physical being, as well as towards a divine one, and the feelings that arise, are so close to religious feelings, that many people consider them to be the same.

Liminality and Communitas

Van Gennep (1960), another 'father' of Ritual Theory, in his study "The rites of passage" declared that all rituals display three common stages with transformative features, either in connection with transitional moments of changes in life, such as birth, wedding, illness, death, or with the change of seasons. The stages he described were: a) a separation from everyday life, b) a transitional phase of limbo and c) the incorporation back into normal life.

Victor Turner (1987) based his work extensively on Van Gennep's concepts and puts strong emphasis on the second, transitional stage of rituals, calling it *liminality*. He describes how – after having separated from everyday life – the liminal phase is a time for the participants when all references to 'the normal' are gone, leaving space for totally new and unexpected experiences. During and after this phase, another important phenomenon appears, which Turner (2013) calls *communitas*. With these two concepts he emphasizes the transformative threshold character of rituals. The state of *liminality* is characterized by a complete repeal of social status and social limitations of the involved persons: in this phase everybody is equal. Often during this time, the normal laws of society are not valid anymore. A deep and continuous feeling of inner connectedness between the participants may develop. It is this feeling and the resulting experience which Turner (2013) calls *communitas*, a type of dynamic communal numinous experience.

2.4.2 Contemporary Aspects

The making of rituals as a growing and healing process for communities

Catherine Bell (1997) describes how until present times rituals, were considered to be performances, whose origins and inventors have to remain unseen in order to be able to fulfil ritual's function; thus there had been no justification for wilful creation of rituals. As an example, she refers to the anthropologist B. Myerhoff, who claims that creating rituals is dangerous, because we might end up discovering that we are creating our own world, and "we

may recognize all our most precious understandings, the precepts we live by, as mere desperate wishes and dreams” (Myerhoff, 1984, as quoted by Bell 1997, p. 224). However, Bell (1997) continues describing that a different approach concerning the creation of rituals developed towards the end of the past century, an approach quite different from Myerhoff’s incredulous perspective. She offers a collection of examples where communities have fearlessly and successfully invented rituals, then consequently evaluated the resulting experiences and changed them again where it seemed appropriate or necessary. These processes created a growing sense of identity and unity within the involved communities (Bell, 1997). Thus, she expands Durkheim’s central claim of ritual’s strengthening and stabilizing effects for communities, including to the creation of rituals.

Rituals do not build community by simply expressing sentiments of collective harmony; they do it by channelling conflict, focusing grievances, socializing participants into more embracing codes of symbolic behaviour and ...forging images by which the participants can think of themselves as an embracing unity.” (Bell, 1997, p. 235)

With regard to constituting elements of rituals, Bell (1997) describes how new elements of rituals developed over long times, taking up existing elements and evolving them into new performances and variations. She explains that newly developed rituals always appropriate old and familiar elements and patterns from former rituals, adapting them to new purposes with possibly holistic objectives.

These rituals (and) celebrations ... not only express a concern for respecting and safeguarding the earth but also attempt to redefine the human and natural worlds as one interrelated community for whom recognition of its interdependence is intrinsic to the health of the whole. (Bell, 1997, p. 237)

Thus, according to Bell (1997), rituals’ strengthening effects for communities is expanded to a globalized sustainable world community. Processes of invention of proper rituals, so she claims, are chances to unfold healing forces for individuals, group and even the earth.

Ritualization – deepening the conceptual understanding

Grimes (2014) deepens the understanding and the concepts of ritual creation, emphasizing the process of creation itself. “Ritualization’ is the act of cultivating or inventing rites. I use it synonymously with `ritual construction’ and `ritual making’. The `-izing’ ending is a deliberate attempt to suggest a process, a quality of nascence or emergence” (Grimes, 2014, p.

193). He claims that ritualization must not be a complicated procedure, but often emerges out of every day life's simple procedures like those we perform when getting up in the morning. By taking them into consciousness, we can elevate everyday experiences and thus create rituals. "Ritual is *condensed*. Although ritualization is rooted in ordinary human interaction, ritual is not ordinary action. It is more condensed or elevated than quotidian behaviour" (Grimes, 2014, p. 195). The conscious elevation of human interaction, which leads to ritualization and new form of rituals, can create beautiful and transforming sets of ritual elements, creating meaning and integrating symbols in ritualistic performances, "thereby embedding values in webs of significance." (Grimes, 2014, p. 319) The experience of these values, integrated in a meaningful ritual performance can create such strong feelings, that participants might even label them as sacred, religious or spiritual (Grimes, 2014).

Levels of meaning in rituals

One key feature of rituals is that their structures and contents are designed to create and transfer types or experiences of meaning to the participants. Rappaport (2013) differentiates three particular types of meaning levels, or orders, which have to be distinguished as valid criteria for the analysis of rituals.

Low order meaning – values and metaphors

This level of meaning, according to Rappaport deals with a basic exchange of everyday information, like typifications. He uses the example of a *dog* as opposed to a *cat*. This category includes distinctions and systematics.

Middle-order meaning

In this type of meaning the consciousness is becoming aware of something more than information. It discovers the hidden meaning behind words, things become *meaningful*. Rappaport describes that another type of inner activity is necessary to rise to this level which goes beyond distinctions. This is best described, according to the author, by considering what is necessary to answer the question 'What does it all mean?' The answer does not need further distinctions, but rather simplifications, discovering similarities between seemingly different phenomena. "Such similarities, hidden beneath the surface of apparently distinctive phenomena, become more significant than the distinctions themselves. They may, indeed, when illuminated or discovered, strike us with the force of revelation" (Rappaport, 2013, p. 71).

High-order meaning

Rappaport refers here to a level that rises the human consciousness (from distinctions via discovering hidden meaning) to grasping metaphors. Metaphors and their components enrich the meaningfulness of the world into something more encompassing: "... for the significance of every term that participates in the metaphor is transformed into more than itself, into an icon of other things as well" (Rappaport, 2013, p.71). This transformation to something *more* is mirrored in the human consciousness. It is the experience of one's self identifying or even unifying with this element of *more*.

High-order meaning is grounded ... in the radical identification or unification of self with other. It is not ... intellectual but is, rather, experiential. ... High-order meaning seems to be experienced in intensities ranging from the mere imitation of being emotionally moved in, for example, the course of a ritual to those deep numinous experiences called 'mystical'. Those who have known it in its more intense forms may refer to it by ... phrases as 'The Experience of Being' or Being-Itself (Rappaport, 2013, p.71).

The vehicle for experiencing high-order meaning, which can include even cosmos and the divine, is *participation*. The author emphasizes that the three levels of meaning do not always exist together without problems. "Naïve scientism and naïve rationalism tend to deny the validity of middle- and high-order meaning... Conversely, untempered commitment to middle- and high-order meaning may ignore crucial distinctions in the natural and social world" (Rappaport, 2013, p.73). In the search for summarizing concepts to describe the levels of and approaches to meaning, he names *distinction* for low-order, *similarity* for middle-order and *unification* for high-order meaning.

2.5 Relevant aspects of Indigenous knowledge

Both our social and natural world are full of uncertainties. The metaphysical world cannot be explained away through cause and effect relationships. In other words, there is no certainty in any knowledge. ... Mythologies constitute a powerful base of knowledge, that cannot be dismissed as frivolous, superstitious, illogical and unscientific' (Dei, 2010, p.79).

Indigenous knowledge historically has not always been an academic topic (Horsthemke, 2008; Morrow, 2009; Olojede, 2014). In the seventies and eighties for example, when - as a result of the sixties' students movement - the awareness about worldwide social injustices,

arising out of the capitalist system had grown, and many development aid projects had started everywhere in the world, there still was very little or no consciousness, neither in the related professional nor in the academic world, that the knowledge systems of Indigenous people are valuable, that they might offer solutions to local problems or even fruitful contributions to academic discussions (Schimpf-Herken, 1979). During those decades, a growing critical discussion developed on the part of Western helpers and their academic counterparts, about the question of positive or negative impact of development aid projects on the independence of the local populations (Schimpf-Herken, 1979). The Indigenous peoples themselves soon started to grow an awareness about those aspects of colonization and development aid projects that were destructive to their mental, social and economic independence and to their ancient wisdom systems. This growing consciousness and discussion led to the concept of Indigenous knowledge, which today is a frequently discussed topic as well in the academic as in the non-academic world (Hart, 2010; Huaman & Valdiviezo, 2014; Morrow, 2009).

One of the central notions that soon developed in this context is the concept of *Eurocentrism*. The academic suppression of Indigenous knowledge previously had occurred in all continents, where the white race had invaded and took over the land and way of life of the local people. Scholars with Indigenous roots today emphasize the heavy weight of Western knowledge systems and their reductionist pose of only accepting logic and reason as valuable scientific criteria, thus denying broader local ways of knowing (Dei, 2010; Maurial, 1999). Semali and Kinchloe (1999) go as far as speaking about the tyranny of Western epistemological systems, which construct a reality based in a materialistic Cartesian-Newtonian understanding of science and the entire world. The same authors demonstrate that knowledge imposed on others is a symptom of a power struggle, resulting in the subjugation of local knowledge. Morrow (2009) explains that the main feature of Eurocentrism is the claim, that Western understanding of reason, science and values is universally valid. Hart (2010) supports this view, stating that worldviews which differ from European ones are displaced to the periphery of academic discussion *if* they can find acknowledgement at all. He continues to argue that if and when this academic acknowledgement takes place, Indigenous worldviews are still being analyzed most often via a Eurocentric perspective (Wiredu, 2002).

This academic attitude created dichotomies and disparities by assuming Western knowledge as the only true and valid form of knowledge, thus marginalizing and devaluating Indigenous

knowledge as primitive and backward and at the same time hierarchizing the societies in the colonized countries (Martin, 2007; Maurial, 1999; Dei, 2010).

Wiredu (1995) calls for a *conceptual decolonization*, to liberate Indigenous worldviews from the imposed Western categories. Dei (2010, p.101) highlights this struggle for decolonization by describing Indigenous knowledge as resisting „the dominance of the West and its power to subsume all forms of thoughts with notions like `reason`, `progress`, `rationality` and the `Enlightened discourse` “. The process of decolonization is made more complicated because of the described limited way in which perception and knowing are defined by Western science, usually acknowledging only results stemming from reductive quantitative approaches (Kawano, 2011; Wiredu, 2002). Those thoughts and their authors show that Indigenous knowledge, as an academic phenomenon, might ask for a reconceptualization of Western understanding of the notion „knowledge“.

2.5.1 Characteristics of Indigenous knowledge systems

To get an overview over the characteristics of Indigenous knowledge, we can use Maurial's (1999) key concepts. She defines Indigenous knowledge as being local, unwritten and holistic. One additional archetypal expression of Indigenous knowledge are ceremonies and rituals (Hart, 2010).

Local and unwritten

One central feature of Indigenous knowledge is that it is place based. It is related to a location or geographical space. There the special circumstances of climate and landscape, as well as humans' interacting with these conditions during generations have created a specific geographically bound type of knowledge and a dynamic relation of inhabitants to their environment with its flora and fauna (Dei, 2010; Hart, 2010; Semali & Kincheloe, 1999). Its characteristic is a sustainable relationship with the surrounding, resulting out of this long term geographical and social development. The encompassing knowledge was and is passed from experienced elders to the younger generations (Dei, 2010). Children in these traditions can supposedly relate to all beings in their surrounding for their learning processes. They can use „the Elders, the animals, the land and the spiritual dimensions as sources of primary knowledge to which ... they can readily tap into“ (Parson & Beauchamp, 2012, p.110). We can thus understand that Indigenous knowledge has been related from one generation to the next in an unwritten way, via storytelling or shared experiences, such as the mother teaching

the children the knowledge of working with the land, or the grandparents passing on to their grandchildren the wisdom of medicinal plant use and where to find them. The connectedness with the whole system is so strong and lasting that there was no necessity to invent letters and write down all this knowledge (Parson & Beauchamp, 2012; Maurial, 1999; Dei, 2010).

Holism and spirituality

The holistic aspect plays an important role in the description of the characteristics of Indigenous knowledge, for example in the writing of Parson & Beauchamp (2012), Dei (2010), Kincheloe and Semali (1999), Martin (2008). Although the authors vary in context, in which they use the notion holistic, there are two features that are present in all descriptions of the holistic aspects of Indigenous knowledge. These two concepts are *connectedness* and *spirituality*.

Martin (2008) explains how all elements of an Indigenous system are intertwined, and whilst looking at African Indigenous knowledge, he states that the interconnectedness of everything in the world constitutes Indigenous knowledge's holistic aspect. Kawano (2011) also characterizes connectedness as an important property of Indigenous knowledge. According to Hart (2010) Indigenous worldviews show a strong emphasis on people and spiritual entities getting together for mutual help and support. He emphasizes a profound sense of community paired with respectful individualism in Indigenous life.

As far as the notion spirituality is concerned, there are many interpretative options and the authors seem to be conscious of that. In relation to Indigenous knowledge Kawano (2011) asks if using the notion spirituality is conceivable at all, if different authors really address a similar reality when they use this concept. She doubts that we can grasp the depth of spiritual experiences, feasible within Indigenous knowledge systems. Dei (2010) describes dreams and revelations, received through visions, as one part of Indigenous knowledge and establishes the central importance of the concept of spirituality for the academic Indigenous discussion. He states clearly that "the spiritual is a valid way of knowing" (Dei, 2010, p.7). One feature that Dei ascribes to spirituality is that it lies "beyond dualities, beyond the physical and material. Claims of spirituality avoid splitting of the self" (Dei, 2010, p.7).

The author's use of the concept spirituality in this research paper, where not specified, is based on this broad description of Dei.

Ceremonies and rituals

The experience of the far reaching interconnectedness of all beings in Indigenous societies coincides with an inner need to consciously celebrate, ritualize and care for these relationships. Hart (2010) especially emphasizes the interconnection between spiritual entities and the physical world and their mutual influence. He describes an inherent social reciprocity, one of the central values of Indigenous knowledge. This concept of reciprocity, as an essential expression of Indigenous worldviews, shows the consciousness about honouring all parts of the universe, and as humans giving back to all forms of life. Reciprocity, as a process of equally receiving and giving, is a quality that Indigenous people especially address via ceremonies and rituals. Hart explains that in Indigenous societies almost every process of acting in life is being sanctioned, towards other beings and realms, by rituals and ceremonies.

But rituals and ceremonies do not only aim at giving to the other life worlds, visible and invisible ones, they also provide space again for the participant's inner experiences of connection. In such ways one can develop new insights into his inner and the world's essence. Hart (2010) calls this „inner space discoveries“, in which the participant „through inward exploration taps into creative forces that run through all life“ (p.8) and reaches an individual experience of connectedness and wholeness. These experiences are facilitated through rituals and ceremonies, guided by Elders and practitioners with vaster experiences.

2.5.2 Indigenous learners caught between two worlds

Battiste (2010) describes how aboriginal people in Canada used to understand (and quite a few still do) every learning process as a *coming* to know. The emphasis lies on the process itself and not so much on the resulting outcome. They consider this process of *coming to know* as a path that is being guided by invisible learning spirits, helping the individual to realize one's personality and task in life. Battiste takes this as an example to describe the ambivalence of Indigenous people, feeling torn between their original holistic knowledge and the materialistically oriented contemporary Western knowledge systems, in which there is no room for the image of a personal learning spirit accompanying one's study.

Today, Indigenous peoples around the world continue to feel the tensions created by a Eurocentric educational system that has taught them not to trust Indigenous knowledge, but to rely on science and technology for tools for their future, although those same sciences and technologies have increasingly created the fragile environmental base that requires us to rethink how we interact with the

earth and with each other (Battiste, 2010, p.16).

Using Battiste's perspective, one solution would be to unlearn Eurocentric superiority, so she calls for reconceptualization of the notion *knowledge*. Aware of the problem of differing possibilities of interpretation of the concept *spirituality* Dei states: "The Indigenous discursive framework centralizes the notion of spirituality and spiritual ontology." (Dei, 2010, p.102).

Morrow (2009) in contrast does not question the notion knowledge but questions -what seems to him- an uncritical use of the concept Indigenous knowledge and its implications. Yet he still is looking for what he calls a *constructive use* of the concept and speaks about the importance of „careful local contextualization and ... respect for local life worlds“ (Morrow, 2009, p.72). With these notions he comes quite close to Rist (2011) and Dei (2010), as we will see.

2.5.3 Contemporary local or Endogenous Knowledge

Rist (2011) introduces a very interesting voice into the discussion by approaching it from a slightly different angle, using the term Endogenous knowledge. As an agronomist, and at the same time highly interested in Indigenous knowledge, he moves at the interface of natural and social sciences. He acknowledges the almost identical significance of the words Indigenous and Endogenous knowledge, but delineates the concepts by explaining that Indigenous knowledge excludes non-Indigenous groups with similar knowledge systems. He refers the term Endogenous knowledge to traditional ecological knowledge, thus including non-Indigenous population groups, such as people in rural, low-developed areas and also the group of organic or biodynamic farmers in Europe.

Yunkaporta and McGinty (2009) -with a similar intention- describe the development of the notion *contemporary local knowledge* within a participatory action research project in an Australian Aboriginal community. And Dei (2010) comes to almost the same result by arguing for the exchangeability of the concept Indigenous knowledge with *local knowledge* to describe the multifaceted character of Indigenous knowledge systems.

2.5.4 Concluding considerations

As we were able to see, Indigenous knowledge poses controversial issues for the Western academy but also for Indigenous people all over the world, the latter ones fighting with the

seeming superiority of Western worldviews and the first ones struggling to take seriously the holistic and integral aspects of Indigenous knowledge.

I want to close these considerations by referring to Rist (2011) and his awareness of the twofold importance of the Indigenous - Western dialogue. He, like other already mentioned authors, recognizes that „the Social and Natural Sciences can learn from the dialogue with the endogenous communities“ (p. 20). As early as 1981, Berman claimed that mankind needs a kind of participative, holistic consciousness to emerge, if humanity and many species should survive. Meanwhile the ecological conditions in all areas of life on earth are so devastated, that we cannot or only occasionally want to endure the confrontation with the full extent of all the threatening details, we know about (Boland, 2014a). Indigenous knowledge could offer an integrative and dialogical approach to these grave problems in the sense of Berman's (1981) participative consciousness. For the people, holding Indigenous/endogenous knowledge, such a dialogue would also meet a necessity, because they depend ever more on a reflexive attitude, rather than on authorities qualifying their knowledge, values and institutions. Such a serious dialogue would enhance the possibilities of solutions for vital problems on both sides.

2.6 The conception of annual festivals as understood in Anthroposophy

2.6.1 Introduction

Anthroposophy, a spiritual world view with theosophical and gnostic features was established by Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). The representations of his extensive written works and his lectures led to the foundation of the first Waldorf school, as well as to some other reform movements. Out of the work with the teachers grew the theoretical foundation of Waldorf pedagogy (Hemleben, 1963). He describes his insights and findings as having been obtained from supersensory research, oriented in scientific methodology (Steiner, 2000).

Since Waldorf schools have developed out of Anthroposophy, I will investigate which background Steiner associated with annual festivals. Since my research question is specifically related to schools in non-Christian or multicultural surroundings, as a main focus

for the anthroposophical part of my thesis I chose the series of lectures 'The Cycle of the Year as Breathing-process of the Earth, GA 223' (Steiner, 1985). These lectures put annual festivals in a seasonal and more global context than other Steiner lectures in which he concentrated more on Christian-religious aspects of annual festivals.

In these lectures from the year 1923, Steiner presents his insights into processes which are occurring in nature, according to his perceptions, during the four seasons of spring, summer, autumn and winter and also during the corresponding annual festivals of Easter, St. John, Michaelmas and Christmas. The subject of a type of global contemplation of seasons and seasonal or annual festivals also appear in other lecture series and seems to have been a major concern during these years towards the end of his life (Suwelack, 1975). This fact is important for the assessment of the importance that Steiner attributed to the subject.

If one connects the experience of the northern hemisphere's seasons with the inner motives of the corresponding Christian annual festivals, coherent pictures arise: for example Christmas and the birth of the child as a metaphor for the birth of the light in the dark time of the year, when the days start to get longer again. Or Easter and the resurrection of Christ in springtime, when the blossoming nature seems to be resurrecting from the winter cold and the seeming death of nature (Steiner, 1985). Since in the southern hemisphere of the earth the Christian annual festivals do not coincide with seasonal motives as easily as in the northern hemisphere, there is an ongoing discussion there about creating new festivals which could be oriented in the inner processes of the earth, which Steiner had depicted in this lecture series. Another controversial issue concerns the possibility of celebrating the Christian festivals in the locally coherent seasons of the southern hemisphere, i.e. Christmas in July (Anderson, 1993; Majoros, 2009). The discussion about recontextualization of annual festivals naturally is being conducted in the southern hemisphere with stronger emphasis than in the northern (Anderson, 1993; Suwelack, 1975).

Anderson (1993) summarizes Steiner's research as follows: the earth is a highly complex organism, which does not consist only of the solid earth body. It also has a bio- or vital sphere (etheric body), a feeling sphere (astral body) and a spiritual life. The seasonal movements which Steiner (1985) describes in GA 223 are referring to all of these four spheres.

2.6.2 Steiner's (1985) description of the earth's seasonal breathing process

Steiner assumes that the earth is a living organism, whose described four spheres realize a rhythmical life in unison with the four seasons. For the description of this rhythmical life he uses two metaphors from human life. He compares the earth's rhythmical life with human physiological processes, on the one hand with those of sleeping and waking and on the other hand with those of breathing. "It is not a breathing of air of which we speak, but the breathing in-and-out of forces, of which we can get a partial idea if we contemplate the plant-growth during the course of the year" (Steiner, 1985, p.12). Furthermore Steiner interrelates these two different areas of the earth's breathing and wake-sleep processes.

In his description of winter, Steiner unfolds how the earth's soul life, according to his observations, has totally moved into the earth's interior, where it is leading a vivid inner life. All the forces, like those for example who ignite the plants' growth, he relates, have retired into the interior of the earth, like in a vast process of inbreathing. What for the outer sight looks like a sleeping state of the earth, in reality is the state of its highest waking and alertness. The earth „has withdrawn its soul into itself, has sucked it in ... in a time..., in which the earth is alone with itself, is isolated from the cosmos" (Steiner, 1985, p.15/16).

Steiner describes that towards springtime the earth slowly begins to exhale these soul forces again. In the time of the spring equinox the exhaled soul forces of the earth seem to enter into growing interplay with the sun and the whole cosmos, a process which manifests itself in the increasing sprouting and flourishing of plant life and also in the intensifying warmth of the increasingly longer times of daylight (Steiner, 1985).

In the moment of summer solstice this exhaling process has reached its climax. Steiner describes how the whole breathing process now comes to a moment of stillness and silence. All the earth's soul forces, so he explains, now have poured fourth into the cosmos and have united with the cosmic elements of stars and sun. Everything is sprouting, growing and blossoming and what to a normal human consciousness might seem like a state of utter alertness in nature, Steiner conceives as a state of sleeping of the earth. Steiner even relates, that the shapes and forms of flowers and similar phenomena are not expressions of earthly forces but, he claims, the effects of the cosmic influences.

Steiner (1985) continues describing the processes in nature, which he perceives as follows. Shortly after summer solstice the earth starts its inhaling process again. The earth now begins to withdraw its soul forces from the cosmos.

Nature is slowly losing its vitality, the fruits are ripening, and are being harvested during the time of the autumn equinox. The days become shorter, the migratory birds start their move to warmer regions, leaves are fading, and towards winter solstice fields and trees are empty and still. “More and more, with the strength of the indrawn breath, the soul-element of the Earth withdraws into the Earth itself, up until Christmas time” (Steiner, 1985, p. 22). According to the perceptions of the author, then the breathing cycle of the earthly seasons starts again.

Schematically it looks like this:

Wintertime → process of the earth’s inhalation is at its climax → highest state of alertness in earth’s interior

Summertime → process of earth’s exhalation is at its climax → the earth is sleeping

2.6.3 The nature of terrestrial forces – Rudolf Steiner’s understanding of the Christ-being in GA 223

According to Steiner (1985) Christ was a very high spiritual being, which was intimately connected with the sun. Steiner declares that in ancient religions Christ had been venerated as the Spirit or God of the Sun. According to Steiner in the process of Christ’s physical death and then in the resurrection at Easter, he entirely united with the earth. Since then, Steiner describes, Christ is not only the Sun being, but also the Spirit of the Earth.

So, when Steiner spoke about the soul-forces of the earth, he likewise was describing the Christ forces, which are working in the weaving and breathing of the seasons within the earth’s interior (winter) and in cosmos (summer), streaming in- and outwards, connecting with the earth intensively in winter and giving themselves to the cosmos in summer. This context of Steiner’s understanding of the earth as an organism, enlivened by the Christ-Earth-spirit, is of considerable importance for understanding his conception of the annual festivals. It is also important for understanding how, according to Steiner (1985), they should be reconceptualized in contemporary times. It is as well essential for understanding the related contemporary discussion within the anthroposophical movement about how to comply with Steiner’s related mandate (Anderson, 1993; Majoros, 2009; Suwelack, 1975).

The corresponding complex of questions is also influencing the diverse considerations within the Waldorf school movement itself in the southern hemisphere. There are schools there which either still celebrate the traditional, Christian, European centred festivals or they are looking for their own contents, forms and times of celebrations, which would be more appropriate to the local conditions of seasons, culture and religion (Majoros, 2009). The two schools, which I visited are also located in the southern hemisphere.

2.6.4 The breathing-process of the Earth as a dynamic concept – Steiner’s inclusion of the entire globe

Steiner’s (1985) explanations in GA 223 indicate that he was very conscious of the quite different, even contrary conditions - concerning the seasons - in the two hemispheres of the globe. He claims that the observed breathing-process, which at first one might only contemplate like a regional phenomenon, in truth, as he perceived it, comprises the entire globe. While in the time of winter, in the southern hemisphere, according to Steiner is prevailing the phase of the earth’s most intensive inhalation and interior alertness, at the same time on the other side of the globe the northern hemisphere is experiencing summer, the climax of the exhalation process and simultaneously the sleeping condition of the earth’s interior. “The conditions are reversed on the opposite sides of the earth. We must imagine the breathing of the earth in such a way, that in one region there is exhalation, and in the opposite part of the earth inhalation” (Steiner, 1985, p. 12). The thought of the retiring of the Christ-Earth-forces in the winter hemisphere into earth’s interior can be integrated with the thought of the simultaneous exhalation of these forces in the summer hemisphere through what Steiner described some weeks later in Oslo as the tail of a comet, which is wandering through the earth from one side to the other.

... while in the north the Earth-soul goes outward to the stars, and - so to speak - shows itself for spiritual perception like a comet-tail, reaching out to the sky, the Earth-soul at the same time in the other hemisphere is retiring into earth *and it is Christmas*. And vice versa, in the time when the Earth-soul retires into the earth here, on the other side the comet-tail is reaching out into the cosmos. This is occurring at the same time (Steiner, 1988, p. 107) [emphasis added]

Steiner is stating here that there is a cosmic connection between winter and Christmas.

The above part of Steiner’s lecture has not been translated into English on the English Steiner reference website
<http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA/GA0226/19230521p01.html>

2.6.5 Rudolf Steiner's representations of the characteristics of antique festivals and the inauguration of Christian festivals (GA 223)

Steiner (1985) describes how people in ancient times lived with a different consciousness than today. They did not know yet our kind of logical stringent thinking, but experienced the world in a dream-like holistic awareness which also is described by Berman (1981) who calls it *participating consciousness*. Steiner (1985) also depicts that according to his perceptions, humans at that stage of ancient consciousness development did not perceive so much the physical constituents of the world, such as the shape of a flower, but the forces of the plant's growth, which for our contemporary consciousness usually are not visible.

According to Steiner's perceptions, those antique mysteries with their borderless connectedness of consciousness with the surrounding world and with its inherent forces and beings were cultivated in celebrations. These festive celebrations were closely connected with ritual music and dancing. In both - music and dance – the participants mimicked experiences from nature, such as the song of a bird. Steiner explains that the festive phase of devotion to music and dance was followed in a third stage by silent listening to what came as an answer from the cosmos, which in those times were perceptible to people.

Steiner (1985) continues describing how this connectedness was lost ever more and how finally the festivals became rituals of preserving memories. In the first centuries after the birth of Christ the central annual festivals were inaugurated by the Catholic Church to remember the cosmic occurrence of the earthly life of Christ on earth (Steiner, 1985).

2.6.6 Steiner's demand for a foundation of new festivals out of a dynamic understanding of nature

Steiner's attitude concerning nature was characterized by respect for the earth's and nature's impregnation by the essence of the Christ-being (Suwelack, 1975). In the year 1918 Steiner postulates, that even natural science would have to search for "a revelation of Christ in all natural phenomena" (Steiner, 1981, p. 319), thus transgressing the boundaries of the exterior phenomena of nature, which are abstract for contemporary consciousness. Thus a recapture of a more encompassing consciousness, corresponding to Berman's (1981) 'participating consciousness' would be possible. Since this unity of consciousness often can be found in the religions of Indigenous, non-Christian peoples (Berman, 1981; Steiner, 1985), Steiner in its description goes back to the concept of paganism. "We have to learn to overcome the abstract perception of nature and reach a tangible cognition of nature. Our Christianity has to be

broadened by being infused... with a sound paganism” (Steiner, 1980b, p. 89). In this way, he explains, the contemporary indifference towards nature could be overcome. It is in this sense that his concern of connecting the annual festivals with the related seasons has to be understood. For such a reconnection with nature an activity of *thinking with the cycle of the year* is necessary, Steiner (1985) claims, specifying that humans in ancient times always had taken impulses and strength for the foundation of festivals out of this realm. And it would be this activity and the resulting intimate connection between man and nature that also would reconnect humanity with the spiritual world. Steiner (1992) even claims that the creation of annual festivals by contemplating the seasonal cycle of the year is essential for contemporary mankind.

We want to be whole human beings, no? Then that requires that we also conduct our processes of creating in a spiritual way as whole human beings. We then don't only have to think about the significance of the old festivals. We ourselves then consequently have to become socially creative by creating festivals out of the year's seasonal cycle (Steiner, 1992, p. 216).

From Steiner's subsequent remarks we can conclude that he was conscious of the difficulties which the realization of this postulation in the future could pose for contemporary humans.

2.7 Experiences in other non-European or in inter-cultural European Waldorf Schools

2.7.1 Egypt and Israel

Willmann (2014) describes the importance of religious education, as being one central original request of Rudolf Steiner for Waldorf education. With this expectation in mind, he investigated the role and features of religious education in Waldorf schools in Egypt and Israel. His findings illustrate that in both schools religious education is central in the teachers' educational will, but that there are differences. The teachers of Waldorf School in Sekem, Egypt teach out of a natural and deep involvement with their Muslim religion, while most of the teachers in Israel grew up in an atheist kibbutz surrounding, thus having to develop a new relation to their religion.

One of the common characteristics of all the schools though, is the celebration of festivals. In both schools they celebrate the traditional religious Muslim or Jewish festivals (Chanukka, Pessach, Purim). Willmann (2014) exemplifies how in Sekem, Egypt, the very few Christian

students and teachers can speak to the community about their Christian festivals and celebrate them separately.

2.7.2 Taiwan

Waldorf education in Taiwan is 100 % subsidized by the state, and at the same time the schools have a very high amount of pedagogical freedom (Wiechert, 2013).

Tang (2010) uses the example of three Taiwanese Waldorf schools to research the question, if a successful integration of Waldorf pedagogy into Taiwanese Indigenous Culture has occurred or if Taiwanese culture has been successfully and in a convincing manner integrated into Waldorf school life. He uses (not only) the festival culture of those schools to demonstrate his serious doubts about the success of the schools' goal of Indigenous cultural integration. Tang (2010) doubts that the Waldorf teachers' division of the school year into spring, summer, fall and winter terms comes to meet the Taiwanese/Chinese moon calendar. In one example he shows how the holidays April-May 2009 did not respect one of the more important Chinese Festivals Ch'ing Ming (visit of the ancestors' graves), which is widely celebrated in Taiwan. Tang's research (2010) shows the following findings concerning celebration of annual festivals in school life. Aside of general school celebrations, the school celebrates seasonal festivals, according to the four terms of the school year. The school also celebrates traditional Taiwanese festivals like Lantern Festival, Moon Festival, Dragonboat Festival and others. These traditional festivals are only partly integrated into those mentioned seasonal festivals. In addition Taiwanese Waldorf teachers have developed „new“ traditions such as Cross-country skiing (Langlauf) as part of their Autumn Festival. They also included typical European Christian festival features like the ancient Christmas Theatre « Oberuferer Weihnachtsspiel », translated into the Chinese Minnan dialect, performed every year at Christmas by the students. Also, according to Tang (2010), in summer they celebrate St. John's Eve. The author illustrates that the school year is overburdened with general school celebrations, with the celebration of the four seasonal festivals and the integration of traditional Taiwanese festivals. He claims that the Taiwanese Waldorf schools' festival culture has not developed a less Eurocentric handling of Waldorf principles.

2.7.3 South Africa

In South Africa, the question of Waldorf school festivals has been thoroughly investigated in a thesis by Majores (2009). She observed the processes of festival planning at Michael Oak

Waldorf School in Cape Town. She evaluated the difficulties, challenges, and the problem solving strategies of Michael Oak teachers. She juxtaposed both, challenges and results and inquired into the teachers' satisfaction about the outcome of the festivals.

Starting point

When Majores (2009) investigated the development of festival planning at Michael Oak Waldorf School, she was told that in the (then) 47 years of the school's existence, there had always been a conscious shaping of the festivals' forms. A lot of the planning often had been accompanied by a priest from the local Christian Community. So there had been a current towards rhythmical regularity of the festivals and a strong orientation to traditional Christian festivals, celebrated according to the European dates (Majores, 2009).

Development

Reviewing of the festivals started with the teachers' growing consciousness about the religious diversity of teachers and students, which included Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and atheists. "Given this diversity of religious persuasions, the teachers had decided to seek what they understood to be basic, universal meanings to the festivals, meanings that might be relevant to all humans regardless of religion" (Majores, 2009, p.82). Despite this acknowledgement the following process turned out to be more complex than anticipated.

Difficulties...

Quite a few problems had to be dealt with in the process. One major one was the tension of the teachers, who were overburdened with everyday pedagogical and school administrative tasks. Majores (2009) states that it was very difficult to find the time for meetings in their busy schedules. Another problem was related to the questions of how to celebrate festivals in the southern hemisphere with Steiners' anthroposophical descriptions in the background. Should Christmas be celebrated in the local winter time (June) or in December? If Christmas would be celebrated in December, then should it contain the traditional European Waldorf features such as the Advent Light Spiral or should they develop more seasonal features? As the school had a multi-religious clientele, should the Christian festivals be celebrated at all? Majores (2009) describes the existence of very differing interpretations between the teachers, related to Rudolf Steiner's statements concerning seasons and festivals (also see 2.6.6). These divergent currents entered the teachers' discussions, leading to often fundamental debates.

... and overcoming them by dialogical approach

The teachers did not resign with these tensions of time management and anthroposophic issues of interpretations. They kept talking and searching new forms within their community and thus developed new ways of celebration, integrating the different opinions.

It seems that the Michael Oak teachers were willing to surrender their own particular perspectives for the unity of the school and the broader school community on the issue of religious diversity, although, when objections were raised, the other teachers listened (Majores, 2009, p. 83).

The path is the goal

When evaluating the teachers' impressions, thoughts and feelings about outcomes of different festival enactments and also the processes that had led to these visible results, a representative number of teachers were quite satisfied. Majores (2009, p.91) describes, that in the process of dialogical negotiation between opposite perspectives, "the teachers decided not to reduce the ambiguity, but rather in some sense enhance it", by integrating into one festival apparently opposing elements of local seasonal, partly newly developed celebratory aspects and traditional European Waldorf elements. As an example Majores (2009) names the St. John's festival in June (local winter time), in which they included the Light Spiral, which in Europe is traditionally celebrated in Advent, beginning of December.

The teachers explained to Majores (2009), that the process of dialogue itself when creating these festivals is at least just as fulfilling as the festivals themselves, if not more.

Michael Oak Waldorf School's reconceptualization of festival planning

With that positivity towards the process itself, the teachers chose to transform difficulties into strengths, continuing with the dialogical process each year and for every festival: "The teachers have chosen to remain within the tension of those opposing forces, re-negotiating and re-creating each festival each season, instead of relying on set patterns of past festival enactments" (Majores, 2009, p.154). They feel that with the continuation of this challenging path, they are open for help and inspiration from visible and invisible forces (Majores, 2009).

2.7.4 The Intercultural Waldorf School in Mannheim, Germany

The school was founded in the year 2003 as an offspring of a Waldorf kindergarten initiative and an affiliated afternoon care for school children in an underprivileged district of the inner city of Mannheim. People of various faiths and cultural backgrounds, many of them with

migrant background, live in this district together with low income German families. The school's explicit goal was to serve the immigrant children and include 50% of German children. This later proved to be a good proportion for the language and social integration of the multicultural children (Brater, Hemmer-Schanze, Schmelzer, 2007). The teachers also belong to different cultures and religions and found new ways of developing important Waldorf educational basics according to the needs of the children, combining the respect for the developmental steps of the child's consciousness, with a concern for explicitly respecting every culture, religion and language in school life. They introduced for example, besides English as a foreign language, a so-called 'encounter language': some of the languages of the migrant children are taught in class one to three in a playful manner, like Turkish or Arab and the German children can choose in which language they want to participate.

The school festivals especially enrich the school life. Every festival mirrors and honours all the religions and cultures that are present in the school community, sometimes with presentations of the children, sometimes with the international variety of food that the parents bring and often also with the parents' manifold robes and clothes. The school community finds respectful forms to also commemorate or celebrate important festivals of the various cultures and non-Christian religions (Brater et al, 2007).

One question that the founders and the other teachers meet, is the question about the school's religiously open basis; it is inclusive of all religion(s) that students body practice. This implies conflictive potential with questions coming from within the Waldorf movement: "Concerned questions are being asked to the Intercultural Waldorf School how their intercultural approach could possibly be consistent with the *Christian foundation of Waldorf education* and if the latter one would not be endangered by their approach" [emphasis added] (Brater et al, 2007, p. 234). The authors describe how the question of God, as a concept that is present also in other religions, is being treated in the classes when related questions appear. They claim that it is possible to approach Him via different paths. They hold that it is exactly this type of open attitude that constituted an element that was present already in the foundation moments of the first Waldorf School. "According to the will of Rudolf Steiner, the Waldorf school was not meant to be a 'school of worldview/ideology' (Weltanschauungsschule)" (Brater et al, 2007, p.235).

The authors investigated an expression Steiner had mentioned occasionally, when he addressed parents and students, about the Waldorf School being a Christian school. Looking closely at the circumstances, in which this expression was uttered, the authors concluded that it was not meant in a religious sense but in the sense of a certain attitude: “The Christian element was never meant to be something confessional, but an attitude of true philanthropy, the endeavour to understand the other, the struggle for tolerance” (Brater et al, 2007, p. 237). Not adhering to a fixed conception about the Waldorf school’s Christian foundation and trying to live up to the above mentioned attitude of tolerance, is what the Inter-cultural Waldorf School in Mannheim is living, and also its successor initiatives that meanwhile came into existence in other German cities like Berlin, Hamburg and Stuttgart.

2.7.5 Questions from New Zealand

The Waldorf educational movement in New Zealand is prominent. Boland (2014b) describes the questions that arise there in a multi-cultural society. The population of Auckland, especially the mixture of the city’s students of all ages is culturally more blended than New York. Auckland is the world’s second most diverse city (Bruce, 2014, as quoted by Boland, 2014b). Boland is accompanying the foundation of the first Steiner/Waldorf school for Maori children (2014c). He poses questions regarding the suitability of Eurocentric curricular Waldorf contents to the very different local and cultural conditions. Boland uses this to exemplify an issue that is relevant all over the world where Waldorf schools exist in non-European conditions (Boland, 2014b). He describes that certain Maori contents have been integrated into the local Waldorf curriculum, but implies that there could be reached a more profound level of transforming the Waldorf curriculum. He uses the metaphor of a caterpillar on which wings have been stuck, pretending it to be a butterfly. For a caterpillar to become a butterfly a real metamorphosis is necessary. Boland asks, exemplifying it with the integration of Maori contents in the New Zealand Waldorf curriculum, if the international Waldorf movement is just sticking wings on a caterpillar and emphasises the importance of related processes of metamorphosis (Boland, 2014b). For the process of festival creation this would mean a considerable difference.

2.8 Summary of the literature review

Looking into Andean history and Cosmovision, we find examples of the interconnectedness and interdependence of Indigenous people with the surrounding. This context is strongly related to some of the central concepts of Indigenous knowledge, like such as reciprocity and reverence within society and nature, encompassing all its visible and invisible beings. Those concepts, in the Andes were not only concepts, but life realities in the pre-Incan and pre-colonial times and still are in the presence in communities above 4000 m in the Andes Mountains.

Although Kenyan history, like Andean history, is characterized by the devastating influence of colonialism, the relation to Indigenous knowledge in Kenya is not that perceptible any more. Colonialism destroyed local forms of agriculture and tribal interaction. The contemporary result is a society which has to fight against strong ethnocentrism.

Concerning their rites and contents, festivals are related to time and space. An outstanding share of festivals has resulted out of the cyclical experience of repeated occurrences in time, such as the appearance of sun and stars in the sky and the respective local agricultural phases. Festivals also have developed out of social life, likewise defining and maintaining a society.

Rituals are constitutive factors of festivals. As well the 'fathers' of ritual theory, as their contemporary offspring, have conceptualized important features of rituals with concepts that are valid for investigating festivals. Such concepts are 'the sacred', 'liminality' and 'communitas' as important stages of rituals. Ritual creation is a process with healing effect for communities, 'ritualization' describes the same process with an emphasis on emergence. Different levels of meaning can be reached and transmitted via ritualistic performances.

In a certain sense closely related is the field of Indigenous knowledge, since one of its central features is the affinity of Indigenous cultures to rituals and ceremonies. These comprise a considerable share of Indigenous cultures' care for their interconnectedness with all surrounding visible and invisible life systems. These mostly holistic, local and unwritten knowledge systems have not often been acknowledged by Western scholars. So contemporary Indigenous scholars disapprove of Eurocentric influences and call for 'conceptual decolonization'. Intending to bridge this gap are concepts like 'careful local contextualization' or 'respect for local life worlds'. They all have in common the goal to expand Indigenous knowledge by including holistic, contemporary, local, knowledge.

According to Rudolf Steiner the earth is a living being which performs its rhythmical life in cycles of sleep/wake and in- and outbreathing of its soul forces. Those are intimately intervoven with Christ who, as a high cosmic being, has connected his destiny with the earth's destiny. The breathing processes occur contrariwise on both hemispheres with the highest state of the earth's alertness in wintertime (Christmas) when all the soul forces are drawn into the earth's interior. In summer (St. John's) the soul forces, together with the Christ-being, are exhaled into the cosmos and the earth's interior is sleeping. In ancient times men were so connected with nature that they were able to conceive festival celebration directly from nature. Steiner claims that modern man should learn to 'think with the cycle of the year' again to become able to conceive motives for festivals that would be respecting these earthly rhythms.

The literature review is being supplemented with research results of studies that have been performed by various authors in related Waldorf situations. It becomes obvious that the questions around adapting Waldorf traditions, such as festivals, to local necessities and settings is a topic that is urging.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to find out which forms Waldorf schools in multi-religious or non-Christian cultural surroundings developed in getting independent of traditional European forms of celebrating festivals. The study investigated the specific contents for, and forms of, celebrating these festivals in two Waldorf schools in Peru and Kenya. The schools were selected because of remote personal contacts and because I knew about their reconceptualized and re-formed festivals. They entirely fulfilled the prerequisites and the obvious local and cultural differences made them even more qualified for my research purposes.

The study aims at offering criteria for future festival creation processes in other schools in similar situations. In seeking to provide such criteria and to prior understand the context of the two schools, the study investigates the following research questions:

Which forms of celebrations have the two schools developed?

How do the teachers understand the cultural/spiritual background of these festivals?

Which salient factors have appeared in the schools' festival creation?

What concepts and processes could a non-European or religiously diverse Waldorf school use to develop annual festivals in relation to its local settings?

One of the investigated schools, Kusi Kawsay in Pisac, Peru – after a phase of European orientation - chose non-Waldorf-specific festivals. The other school, Nairobi Waldorf School in Kenya, reconceptualized the previously Eurocentric traditional Waldorf festivals. Both schools are situated in countries where the gap between extremely rich and very poor people is huge and where negative influences of colonialism left historical traces that can still be felt in contemporary local society and are influencing the social structure of the wider school community.

This chapter describes the study's methodological background and the research methods which were applied in it, including considerations related to topics of research trustworthiness such as bias and reflexivity. In my research processes I discovered a strong affinity to Indigenous research paradigms which gave words to my own biases and reflexivity. So Indigenous research considerations will also be presented.

3.2 Methodological background and research design

As an orientation with regard to the types of philosophical background of a research project one has to distinguish different epistemological and ontological approaches related to the understanding of the world. The ontological background of qualitative research is situated in a world view that rests on the conviction that reality is not something fixed that can clearly and once and forever be defined but that it is being constructed by individual people, in its interpretation depending on time and place, fluid as well as prone to changes. This comprises a constructivist perspective (Bryman, 2012; Merriam, 2002; Murchison, 2010). Qualitative research can generate concepts in a deductive as well as in an inductive way. An inductive research approach contains the development of theory out of the findings as opposed to a deductive approach where the researcher has a theory as a starting point. In the first case its epistemological orientation is an interpretive one (Bryman, 2012). An interpretive approach intends to conceive the circumstances from the participant's views and experiences and looks at these circumstances, interpreting them in a particular moment in time (Murchison, 2010). Qualitative research uses a reflexive approach towards possible personal bias (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012; Murchison, 2010). I did not intend to begin my research project with a theory but wanted to collect data in the participating schools and use the collected data for further interpretation and the discovery of a new set of concepts (the criteria for schools to perform own processes of festival creation). This entailed an inductive approach within qualitative research.

Within the possible qualitative research designs I chose an ethnographic study which investigates the conditions of a given society and/or culture in its natural surrounding (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). An ethnographic study looks into values and belief systems, customs and attitudes of a particular social group (Murchison, 2010). Ethnographic research design is not so much a question of its features, according to Merriam (2002), but a question of the analytical and interpretative 'lens', which also investigates social and cultural conditions (Merriam, 2002). Murchison (2010) emphasizes the growing significance of investigating historical components for ethnological studies. The final result of an ethnographic study and its analysis is an encompassing cultural and social portrait of a community as well from the participants' view (emic) as from the researcher's view (etic) (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Typical ethnographic methods, distinguishing ethnography from other qualitative research approaches, include participant-observation. Bryman (2012)

emphasizes that participant-observation can be very intrusive in people's life and advises to prefer qualitative interviewing if there is a choice. However ethnographic research mostly makes use of both methods and requires especially careful procedures and attitudes to avoid this intrusiveness (Bryman, 2012; Murchison, 2010). The most important research instrument in ethnography though is *the* researcher, getting in social interaction, listening and collecting data, identifying with the surrounding and stepping back again from identification, constantly moving between looking through the lens of the participants (emic) and interpreting from his/her own standpoint (etic) (Murchison, 2010).

This study's use of an ethnographic approach is mainly based on methodological considerations concerning the project's features of performing the research via participant-observation, qualitative interviewing, field notes and thick descriptions, but also acknowledging that especially in the case of Kusi Kawsay the exploration of a different social and cultural setting is a valid feature of the study. In the analysis I also used some aspects of case study methods which will be justified later. However, they were of minor significance, so that the decision for an ethnographic approach could be held.

3.3 Methods

Methods comprise different tools of data collection as well as data analysis and interpretation.

3.3.1 Ethnological data collection: participant-observation, field diary and thick descriptions

Participant-observation

The primary instrument of the ethnological process is the researcher (Murchison, 2010).

Through getting immersed in the social setting of the research field through a longer period of time, the researcher can thoroughly experience the social reality of the investigated community which enhances the quality of the outcome considerably (Bryman, 2012).

Participant-observation is a central feature of an ethnological research design though it presents the paradox of close immersion as a participant and on the other hand the need of researcher's distance (Murchison, 2010).

I spent two weeks in Kusi Kawsay, Peru and three in Nairobi Waldorf School in Kenya. At first sight that does not seem a long time but since I also had professional tasks in the schools during my stays, I got involved and immersed right from the first moment and in a quite

thorough manner. Being a professional and Waldorf colleague I was treated as such and was included in almost all school activities. In Kusi Kawsay I participated in a festival on the first morning of my arrival, and directly afterwards I was informally but extensively explained details of the world view and background of the Andean Cosmovision by Daco, an important informant. Both experiences had not been planned and laid the foundation for fruitful processes in the rest of the two weeks. Those two weeks turned out to be so intensive that for me subjectively they displayed the quality of a two months experience. In Nairobi Waldorf School the festival experience had been planned as the final experience of my three weeks stay. So I was able to experience the whole process of its planning and helped with preparations and, in small scale, with the performance itself. I was invited to visit each kindergarten group (six) and each class during these three weeks in Nairobi Waldorf School which also helped the immersion process. Murchison (2010) describes that participant-observation is a very challenging process and requires a lot of responsibility. He claims that in order to find out about the complex features of a group or society the researcher has to also get involved on a personal level. "The element of personal experience and social or cultural empathy can be very powerful for the ethnographer" (Murchison, 2010, p. 85). These words describe exactly my experience in both schools. I was quite overwhelmed by the social injustices prevailing in both societies and influencing the life of my Waldorf colleagues in both schools concerning their comparatively modest life circumstances. It took me some effort not to get too involved in all the problems of the schools and some of their teachers and to keep in consciousness the purpose of my stay. It influenced my research in so far as I delayed some of my interviews until the end of my stay in the schools to not impose myself on the burdened colleagues.

One advantage that I had in comparison to other ethnological researchers was that I speak both official local languages fluently, Spanish and English. I always was able to speak with people without the aid of a translator. In both schools they had a language they could use which I did not understand, Quetchua (Peru) and Kiswahili (Kenya). Although I did not have the impression that the teachers or parents used these Indigenous languages to exclude me from the conversations, I still considered it a positive possibility for them to exchange without my understanding should I be too intrusive.

Field diary and `Thick descriptions`

To accommodate collecting as much data as possible the writing of a field diary is useful and necessary. It would otherwise be more difficult and less reliable to recapture experiences.

“Ethnographic data is fleeting, and the ethnographer’s job is to record it before it disappears or dissipates” (Murchison, 2010, p. 70). I did not take my field diary to school to write while I was immersed in activities with children or colleagues, but when I came `home` from school I took down notes and impressions. From this field diary I was able to write up the subchapter `Life circumstances` in the Findings chapter, descriptions which for example Bryman (2012) calls `thick descriptions` in accordance with Geertz who first used this concept in connection with ethnological work in the year 1973 (p. 9): “The point ... is only that ethnography *is* thick description” [emphasis added]. Those thick descriptions are a valid method for transferring to the reader a vivid and interesting picture of `the field`. “Thick description is a vehicle for communicating to the reader a holistic and realistic picture” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p.113). And although, according to Ponderotto (2006) many authors do agree that `thick description` constitutes a feature of qualitative research, especially of ethnology, the use and the range of it differ. I use it in the sense of Halloway (as quoted by Ponderotto, 2006, p. 541): “Thick description builds a clear picture of the individuals and groups in the context of their culture and the setting in which they live”.

Thus the impressions of `Life circumstances` are important to take the reader along to the Andes and to Nairobi where the life circumstances are very different from what the reader might be used to.

3.3.2 Qualitative interviewing and semistructured interviews

Qualitative interviews

Qualitative interviews supposedly are the most used method in qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). They are highly suitable for gathering data which is inaccessible via participant-observation and facilitate the chance for the researcher to get the best possible understanding of the participant’s life world, world view, and her or his view on the research cause (Brinkmann, 2013). As long as history knows, language and conversing has been a central human activity for communication and mutual knowledge acquisition. So it is not surprising that qualitative interviews occupy such a prominent place among contemporary qualitative research methods (Brinkmann, 2013). Kvale (2006) warns to overestimate the warm and caring relationship that can develop between researcher and participant which many authors

assign to qualitative interviews. He points to the possibility of unbalanced relations which might be developing in qualitative interviews where the researcher can be endangered to exert power over the participant. This risk points to the topic of responsibility and reflexivity which, according to all authors continually have to go along with each step of the qualitative research process (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Brinkmann, 2013; Bryman, 2012; Kvale, 2006; Merriam, 2002; Murchison, 2010).

Sampling

The process of selection of interviewees began with the written presentation of the purpose of my study and the implied advantages for the school, both related via mail.

All of the further processes of preparation in Kusi Kawsay continued via the electronic way. Once the board of teachers and the 'directory' had agreed that I can perform my research in their school, the choice of the interviewees was done in mutual agreement, selecting three of those school members who, dedicated and experienced, had been part of the festival creation process timewise. When I arrived in Pisac, Peru a good contact and preparation of interviewees and mutual positive expectance had developed. I interviewed two teachers, one of them also being a member of the founders' circle of the school. The third interview I conducted with another school founder who is only teaching one subject in secondary school, but responsible for fundraising and representing the school in public.

In Nairobi Waldorf School I also interviewed three persons, all three of them fulltime teachers. The preparation for my research was done in a manner similar to that in Peru, with the exception that I had a 'personal messenger'. She had the role of a 'key person'. This way it was possible to deliberate about potential interviewees in direct conversations. I had met two of the interviewees before travelling to Nairobi Waldorf School. With the third interviewee I had established a first contact via email. A complication of my plans appeared during my stay in Nairobi. I found out, what I had not clearly been told before, that the teachers of the two kindergartens of the school on the one hand and the teachers of primary school on the other, had in the past undergone quite different processes in the development of new forms of festivals, while in Kusi Kawsay, school and kindergarten are celebrating the same festivals. This created the necessity to change the previous plan of interviewees to including one of the most experienced kindergarten teachers, to also gain research results of the specific kindergarten festivals which later turned out to be of considerable importance for

the wealth of my findings. I cancelled the interview with the third primary school teacher, to still confine the number of interviewees to the same number as in Kusi Kawsay.

Semistructured interviews and related experiences

Most frequently used in qualitative research interviews are unstructured, open ended interviews and semi-structured interviews, in which some leading questions roughly guide the process but leave adequate space for spontaneous, possibly revealing turns (Murchison, 2010).

In this study one of the pillars of data collection were semi-structured interviews. I had decided on semi-structured instead of thoroughly structured interviews because of the space they leave to the participant, but I also was aware that this form not only leaves space for the interviewee but also for unexpected questions on the researcher's part. And at some points during the interviews I made use of this possibility. Murchison (2010, p. 21) describes this as follows:

Compared to structured interviews, semi-structured interviews can make better use of the knowledge-producing potential of dialogues by allowing much more leeway for following up on whatever angles are deemed important by the interviewee. Semi-structured interviews also give the interviewer a greater chance of becoming visible as a knowledge-producing participant in the process itself...And compared to unstructured interviews, the interviewer has a greater saying in focusing the conversation on issues that he or she deems important.

In each school I conducted three interviews. Since the purpose of the study was more geared towards investigating the conceptual and formal development of festival creation than developing the picture of all aspects of each community's social life, three interviews gave an encompassing picture. Moreover, especially in the case of Kusi Kawsay it provided a profound look into Andean Cosmvision. In Nairobi Waldorf School the different development and forms of the festivals in primary school and kindergarten also became transparent. Individual emphasis and focus of the participants' illustrations varied, but the descriptions of the processes in each school were surprisingly homogenous as to the original impulse for change, the social circumstances, and the path each school took in reconceptualising the festivals. The length of the interviews varied between 50 minutes and one and a half hours. As well in Kusi Kawsay, as in Nairobi Waldorf School I conducted one additional interview further investigating questions that appeared after the interviews. In both

schools they were directed towards a deeper understanding of the specific interviewee's view on the background of festival creation.

The *lose interview guide* included a starter question to give the participant the opportunity to tell who she or he is, went into the history of the school and then turned to the process and background of festival creation itself and to its outcome. The further process of the interviews developed in the above described manner, always focusing on a deeper understanding of the festival creation process the school had gone through and its outcome, enabling not only the researcher's more profound understanding but also the interviewee's. As Kvale confirms: "...the interview ... consists of a conversation and negotiation of meaning between the interviewer and his subject" (Kvale, 1994, p. 153). Just one such moment, rewarding for the interviewer and the interviewee, shall be described here, exemplifying others of similar quality. It stands for the subtle level of communication in some moments of the conducted interviews. This exemplifying moment was at the end of the last interview, I conducted, when the interviewee Cora from Nairobi Waldorf School broke out into a joyful "Ghee, I didn't even know what I carry in me!!!" The interviewee was referring to some philosophical insights, she had been able to express at the end of the second interview that I had performed with her.

I audio-taped the interviews with two devices to double check a possible failure. In one case this turned out to be essential since one device failed after one third of the interview which I did not notice. Besides that, I took notes where the interviewees emphasized a special context or drew sketches to illustrate it visually. The quality of the interview recording was good and enabled an almost verbatim transcription. Individual differences were due to clarity and speed of an individual interviewee's speech. The transcriptions of the Kenyan interviews were written into digital files, the Peruvian ones I wrote mainly by hand. The translation of the quotes from Kusi Kawsay interviewees into English were done as part of the writing up of the Findings chapter.

3.3.3 Aspects for analysis

The goal of my analysis was to provide aspects for understanding the processes of festival creation in both schools, its conditions as well as its outcome. I also wanted to leave space though for unexpected discoveries. Those unexpected discoveries I hoped to find in an

iterative process (Bryman, 2012) between inductively doing the first rounds of coding and then deductively code again the findings of the first rounds.

3.3.4 Analysis – coding processes

According to Murchison (2010) analysis is an inductive process in which codes are generated from interviews without preformed theories. “Coding is essentially a system of classification – the process of noting what is of interest or significance, identifying different segments of the data, and labelling them to organize the information contained in the data” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 142). Coding is a method that was developed as an essential analytical method of Grounded Theory (Bryman, 2012).

In my analysis process I performed various rounds of coding, using highlighting with colour, writing notes into the transcripts and writing a considerable amount of memos that were tagged onto a big board, according to a structure I had developed. The very first step though, which also can be perceived as coding, was listening to the audio-taped interviews to decide which parts would be relevant for the research area and as such should be transcribed. I ended up transcribing almost all of the contents with exception of the interviewees’ descriptions of their personal and professional background and some lengthy parts of the schools’ histories. I continued with first analyzing the general contents of the transcripts, then I coded according to the research questions, mainly concentrating on the history of the schools’ festival creation processes and the different festivals that are being celebrated in Kusi Kawsay and Nairobi Waldorf School: the season of their celebrations and the season’s qualities, their ritualistic forms and contents. In a third round of coding I identified the background of the festivals that the interviewees described. And in the last round I let myself be guided a little by my intuition trying to identify motives and processes that might not have been directly expressed. In this phase the analytical process was more deductive, searching overarching categories from the coded data. From this two thematic categories or overarching motives emerged: the possibilities of nature observation and dialogical approach as the two salient approaches to festival creation in Kusi Kawsay and Nairobi Waldorf School. It was also the time in which part of the concepts of the conceptual framework emerged.

I performed the coding of the Peruvian transcripts in the first round in German, my mother tongue, then in the next rounds in English. The coding of the Kenyan transcripts was done in English right away.

3.3.5 Analysis and interpretation – cross cultural processes

One structural question related to the process of analysis concerned the fact that I investigated two schools. I had to decide if I would analyze my findings 'horizontally' for example by applying certain common codes or themes to both schools or if I would analyze and present the findings of each school separately. Since for some time it was not sure whether I would concentrate on an ethnographic or a case study I already was familiar with some of the possibilities of case study. Respecting the very different circumstances and cultural conditions of each school I chose elements of a case study analysis and decided for a combination of within-case analysis, looking at every case separately, and cross-case analysis which means a thematic analysis across the schools, as described by Bloomberg & Volpe (2012). The within-case analysis was performed mainly in the Findings chapter and the cross-case analysis mainly in the Discussion chapter, but both methods were used in both chapters. In both approaches I experienced an inherent interpretative element, since every decision in the coding and categorizing processes implied an interpretative stance. In the process of finding codes I perceived a double quality: codes emerge from the data, but I am the one in whose consciousness the codes appear and I decide if I want to use them. Simons (2009, p.117)) emphasizes the intuitive processes of interpreting data. "Insights might be evoked through metaphors, reflective thinking, seeing through different lenses..." Now that I am finishing and documenting the processes of analysis and interpretation, I claim that this intuitive element has been valid also.

3.4 Methodological stances and approaches from Indigenous knowledge

A notable part of my Literature Review concerns the field of Indigenous knowledge. In the process of working with the related concepts I noted a strong personal affinity to this field. When I, early in the research process, read an article about Indigenous research paradigms by Hart (2010) I knew I wanted to use aspects of what he calls 'Indigenous axiology' for my methods chapter since they relate to personal bias and give words to some reflexivity questions that I dealt with during the research process. It is part of my reflexivity processes to be true to this experience and let the reader share it. This subchapter is based on Hart's (2010) article.

3.4.1 Background of Indigenous research paradigms

A growing movement of Western trained Indigenous academics is creating an increasing consciousness about the destructive influences that 'reductive' Western knowledge systems, imposed by the colonialists, had on the more holistic Indigenous knowledge systems. Many Indigenous scholars started to question their Western superiority and some started a search for Indigenous research criteria and paradigms. Indigenous methodology, according to Hart (2010) is based on an ontology that includes the acknowledgement of a "spiritual realm" (Hart, 2010, p. 7) which is interconnected with the physical world. Another ontological feature that Hart describes is the concept 'reciprocity' which is not only a value but a subsistent basis of living in many Indigenous societies (see Literature Review and Findings). From this ontological stance, Hart describes how an Indigenous epistemology emerges out of the interconnectedness of humans, "the spirit and inanimate entities" (Hart, 2010, p.8).

Indigenous epistemology is a fluid way of knowing derived from teachings transmitted from generation to generation by storytelling, where each story is alive with the nuances of the storyteller. It emerges from traditional languages emphasizing verbs, is garnered through dreams and visions, and is intuitive and introspective (Hart, 2010, p. 8).

Such a fluid epistemological stance calls for a related methodology also. Indigenous research methodology does not emphasize participant-observation but calls for the researcher to be an active participant of the field during the whole research process, thus creating new knowledge but also transforming her- or himself. Moreover the researcher in the process has a deep sense of commitment to the community in the sense of reciprocity and accountability.

3.4.2 Axiology

Eleven values and related activities describes Hart as valid for Indigenous research axiology. They are all valid for me but for space reasons I will only illustrate those seven that were most corresponding with my own research reflections and experiences.

Reciprocity and responsibility: especially reciprocity receives a new meaning if it is applied to a research project. How do I as a researcher live reciprocity?

Non-intrusive observation: being silently aware of processes of the individual person and in the community and observing without interfering.

Deep listening and hearing: “more than the ears” are included, the researcher’s attitude includes to “carefully listen and pay attention to how his/her heart and sense of being is emotionally and spiritually moved” (Hart, 2010, p.10).

Reflective non-judgement: listening without judgements of right or wrong and considering the contents of the participant’s contribution within the speaker’s context.

Awareness of and connection between logic and heart: cognitive and emotional experiences are integrated into all research actions.

Self-awareness: close observation of oneself in relation to others during the research process.

Subjectivity: the researcher admits and accounts for bringing his own self into the research and freely discusses this subjectivity.

I claim that these values and related activities pertain to the methodological area of reflexivity. Some of them sound familiar from what I encountered in qualitative research literature. But there are also some which go beyond qualitative research stances and methods. This creates a certain tension which I also experienced in my research processes. I will in the next subchapter situate myself within as well the qualitative as the Indigenous axiology related to reflexivity.

3.5 Bias, reflexivity and validity

Murchison (2010) describes ‘bias’ as factors in the researcher’s personal background that interfere with achieving objectivity and influence his or her perspective on research.

Brinkmann (2013) claims that there is no objectivity but that it constitutes an ideal that the researcher can strive for by avoiding bias. Bryman (2012) explains that the use of ‘reflexivity’ is not clearly defined and that it varies between self-reflection on philosophical issues and confessions / self-critical analysis of personal belief systems. He illustrates that it is an attitude but also a procedure of being sensitive to the researcher’s cultural as well as social background. In other words reflexivity would be the process of being aware and openly include the researcher’s personal biases into the description of the methodological course of the research (Bryman, 2012). In the sense of Indigenous research axiology, as developed by Hart (2012) the reflexivity process is similar but less manifold since subjectivity is acknowledged, accounted for and almost welcome as a contribution to the community which

by the researcher always is included into and benefiting from the research. 'Validity' is the degree of credibility the researcher can achieve with respect to the reader. Inherent in the concept is the question whether the researcher in the documentation of his or her findings has 'proved' that she or he understood and appropriately documented the life world and perceptions of the participants (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Bryman, 2012; Murchison, 2010).

Personal bias

Hammersley (1999) as related by Hudson (2003) described four tendencies in educational qualitative research: empiricism, instrumentalism, postmodernism and ethicism. I clearly find myself in his profile of ethicism as an attitude of seeing research as almost completely serving ethical purposes and elevating a research question's background almost entirely into the area of an ethical goal. The ethical purpose of this study's contribution to the international Waldorf movement kept me going when things became really difficult. Although I started to enjoy the discourse processes for example in the Literature Review or the Discussion, I noted that I only peripherically included controversial aspects like critical articles about Indigenous knowledge. This shows my preference for holistic research approaches. In the sense of Hart's (2012) Indigenous research axiology this attitude would not be considered as critical since all research should serve the community in a reciprocal way. Another type of bias is situated in a level more closely related to the concrete research area. I went into the research process with the hypothesis that the European influence in the schools' original festival traditions was considerable. So I took up newly found concepts like 'Eurocentrism' and 'conceptual decolonization' with ease, adapting them to the Waldorf world. I had to be careful to keep my sincere respect for the great achievements of so many European Waldorf teachers who had dedicated valuable parts of their lives to bring this holistic educational approach into other continents. In Indigenous research, as I understand Hart, this critical attitude would not develop in the first place because of the interconnectedness of the systems which include considerable respect for the predecessors' achievements and also non-judgemental reflection.

Applied methods for enhancing validity

Ethics: Since my investigation referred to publicly known processes and no minors were included I did not get an approval of an ethics committee. However I tried to capture the local ethics as soon as I arrived and included them in my participant activities with the children, which was especially important in Kusi Kawsay. Although I had not met the concepts of Indigenous research axiology yet, I almost instinctively adhered to the use of *reciprocity and*

responsibility in the participant part of mentoring teachers, oral presentations in the teachers conferences and in the case of Kusi Kawsay substituting the absent class one teacher. I tried to use *non-intrusive observation* when I sat in the classes for mentoring purposes and *deep listening and hearing* when I gave related feedback, trying to grasp the teacher's life world and approach to be able to add helpful professional aspects that could be understood and would not be 'Eurocentric'. I tried to *connect mind and heart* in every activity, being *aware of myself* to avoid bringing the type of Waldorf Eurocentrism that I do not consider appropriate in an ethical sense in our contemporary globalized world.

Consent of participants: I had broadly informed both schools about the study's goals and scope before coming to the school. I had sent them the contents of the interview questions, so when I started the interviews they were well informed. I again explained the study's purpose at that moment and in Kusi Kawsay I asked the participants to sign a letter of consent. In Nairobi Waldorf School the letter of consent for technical reasons was not at hand when the interviews started. I later connected this procedure with a member check.

Member check: After completion of the Findings chapter I sent the Findings texts to the schools to check if they would agree with my descriptions. In the case of Nairobi Waldorf School I included, for each teacher separately, the digital transcripts of his or her interview and added a letter of consent in past tense, reflecting those circumstances. Those letters of consent were then sent back to me by the teachers.

Thick descriptions: As already illustrated the thick descriptions in the Findings chapter were supposed to enhance the validity of the study. This type of descriptions I also used at some points of relating what happened in the interviews. At what I had experienced as key moments I included rather long quotations of participants' statements.

3.6 Personal closing considerations

I experienced my way as a researcher as a path of continuous growth, which once again touches an essential aspect of Indigenous research axiology. The growth encompasses for example epistemological knowledge and methodological procedures, but also smaller issues like learning to avoid what my mentor calls 'strong language'. All of this has a transformative effect with considerable influence on a more encompassing world view. My affinity to a holistic approach to the world though, has not really changed in this process, but I started to enjoy academic discourse.

4. Findings

4.1 Introduction

I travelled to an Indigenous Waldorf school in the Andes of Peru in Pisac (Kusi Kawsay) and to a Waldorf School in Nairobi, Kenya (Nairobi Waldorf School) to gain insight for my research theme:

Annual Festivals in Waldorf Schools in multi-religious or non-Christian cultural settings.

This chapter will provide answers to the first two sub-questions:

- *Which forms of celebrations have two schools developed?*
- *How do the teachers understand the cultural/spiritual background of these festivals?*

I will start with the teachers' descriptions of the respective school's cultural-historical background and then describe the specific school's life circumstances, as I experienced them and noted them in my field diary. The description of these life circumstances add important features to the understanding of the individual ways both schools have taken in the development of their annual festivals.

I then proceed to illustrate the development of new culturally appropriate festivals in both schools, followed by a description of the festivals themselves, as they are celebrated in each school time wise, their ritual celebratory elements and the inherent motives of each festival. I supplement these investigations by school specific elements that emerged during the evaluation.

The order of the presentation of the schools, first Kusi Kawsay in Peru and then Nairobi Waldorf School in Kenya does not represent any preference. It corresponds to the order of my visits in those schools. Kusi Kawsay I visited in July-August 2014 and Nairobi Waldorf School in November-December 2014.

4.2 Kusi Kawsay

4.2.1 Cultural-historical background

Kusi Kawsay (Qechua for Happy Life) Waldorf school in Pisac, Peru was established in 2007. The initiative grew out of a group of Andean Indigenous musicians, who already had been working together for 19 years. They had studied and recognized the devastating influence that Spanish colonialism and thereafter the Catholic Church had had on the Andean culture, an influence which resulted in very low self-esteem within the local Indigenous population and a severe loss of feeling of dignity towards oneself and one's culture. During all those years this group of friends had provided encouraging projects to other Indigenous adults and children. Self-esteem and dignity, says Ester: "... are concepts that people around here don't know how to apply between each other. These are no common concepts, because many people don't even know they should have something like dignity". According to Daco the founding of the school responded to these negative social conditions:

The vision of this school is very valuable for this region of the world, also for other regions. But here it is not only a collective dream, it is the answer to an urgent necessity... it responds to a very hard reality, the reality of strong racism.

This racism that children and adults are still facing in contemporary state school and society, includes, according to all interviewees, the defaming of everything related to the Indigenous Andean culture. So when the own children of the members of this group grew to school age, the parents and future founders of the school were looking for a possibility to educate their children with awareness, knowledge and pride, of their own pre-Columbian history and culture (Ester). They looked for a respectful pedagogical method and thus found Waldorf pedagogy. With perseverance they got an experienced Peruvian Waldorf teacher to come and help them (Daco). They started out in a small state school, but when after one year the director changed, one example of the mentioned racism happened. The new director asked the Waldorf teacher:

It is very nice, all that you have achieved here, renovating rooms and bath rooms and everything. But why would you educate the local children to develop self-esteem and a sense of personal dignity? Who would then work the fields for us and who would clean our toilets?

Fidel tells this very dryly, but Daco when he spoke of this incident, described how he almost – once in a lifetime - beat up the director the next day. This was for him (and his friends) a

moment to start looking for alternatives. A time of heavy political struggle began with all sorts of problems, like mothers of the initiative having to go to jail for demonstrating in school and demanding better conditions in education etc. After a time of being hosted in another school, whose director was in favour of their initiative, problems started again, - this time with higher school authorities and so they finally were advised to start their own private school project. They chose to build the new school in the grounds of a founding family.

The school today has classes from kindergarten to the 9th grade with mainly Indigenous children, but also non-indigenous and international children are enrolled.

4.2.2 Life circumstances

As already mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, I will relate the specific school's life circumstances as additional ethnographic material for the understanding of the findings.

The way to school:

Before I leave the unpretentious hotel, where I am staying, I equip myself with some coca leaves, one I start to chew immediately, the others I put into the pocket to chew them a little later when the hike to the school gets really steep. Pisac is 3216 m above sea level and each physical effort is a *real* effort. The only natural remedy to help make these efforts and the height sickness supportable for a Gringo, are the coca leaves.

I pass small lanes with stone and adobe buildings, both built in traditional Andean manner. The sight of dark insides, parts of the walls substituted by pieces of corrugated iron and windows that let the wind pass through, hints at the poverty hidden behind. In a very small *tienda* (shop) I buy provisions for recess. An old hunched Indigenous woman is selling only a few basic groceries, not the least luxury like any type of sausage. When I greet passers-by I notice surprise, probably because a « gringo » is greeting them. The somewhat « sullen » seeming faces brighten up considerably, but the subservient look, that I notice in some of the faces, especially of elder people, doesn't disappear.

The closer I get to the centre of town, the more I notice the signs of tourism, Pisac being a favourite destination of esoteric tourism, because of its proximity to one of the very sacred places of the ancient Incas. Small hotels, craftsmen shops and cafés, advertisements at the walls, praising an upcoming esoteric event, people with backpacks mingled with the Indigenous passers-by, - those latter ones either lingering, obviously without work or

shuffling their way to work, the elder traditionally dressed women carrying cloths around their back, filled with little breads to sell in the streets or other goods (or babies!), young people dressed in American brand manner, operating their smartphones. I draw closer to the plaza, where the famous market, not only, but mainly for tourists will take place later. People are setting up their stalls, by putting together the wooden posts, covering them with thick white cloth to protect the goods against the strong sun. Having passed this beehive hustling, I start to ascend the stairs to the school. As I pass the entrance to the archaeological park, which 1000 m higher hosts one of the most sacred places of the Incas, I see children and youngsters hiking up to the school grounds, parents guiding their young children. All are faster than I. I have to take a moment to breathe every now and then, to manage the steep path up to the school grounds, approximately 120 m higher than town. I enjoy the tremendous look across the town of Pisac and part of the Sacred Valley, and then unexpectedly I discover a beautiful green humming bird, the symbol of the school Kusi Kawsay. There it is, feeding on one of the flowery bushes! All of a sudden a yell: „Profesora Vera! Profesora Vera!“ There – behind me - comes rushing Ruben, 6th grader, jumping up and hugging me with joy. He speaks amazing English, which he has learned with the tourists in the market, where he spends every free minute selling little clay flutes, produced by his parents. This activity is essential for the survival of his family. Ruben, an absolutely bright and grateful student, accompanies me to the school grounds, vibrant with joy of life, politely slowing down his speed. The school gate is wide open to take up everybody and only gets closed when it is clear that no late comer would want to get in.

The school grounds

The school is on the grounds of the archaeological park of the Inca sanctuary. To get there, I had to take a turn to the left, away from the steep stairs that lead up to the sanctuary, where I see other school children descending from the communities above and tourists climbing up into the other direction. I am entering through the massive wooden wings of the school gate, only to ascend a little more. Then, all of a sudden the view falls down onto the grounds of the school beneath. It lies there nestled into the mountainside with a fantastic view down across town, valley and up the mountains on the other side of the valley again. The little cabins, with thatched roofs (with modern plastic type of roofing underneath), built traditionally with adobe, form almost a circle, together with the ascending rocks of the mountains. It looks cosy and I feel invited to come down the wide stairs, made from natural stone. In the centre of the

roundish place between the cabins sits a big rock, the children's favourite place at break time. Every primary class is hosted in this circle and has a little cabin of its own. Secondary classes and kindergarten are both in separate levels, located aside in their own spaces, a little further up.

Behind the primary houses is the playground with an incredibly beautiful play castle, built from natural woods by native craftsmen. The pathways between the cabins and different locations are narrow, guiding through herbs and native flowers and bushes, across stones and between rocks. The cabins have unusually shaped windows, the bottom wider than the top, - also a very traditional manner of local Indigenous building. The houses do not have running water, there is only running water in the toilet and a type of garden faucet at one side of the central place. A barrel with water - and a little faucet - with a bowl placed underneath to catch the water, is sitting in front of each classroom. And: everything has to be carried up to the school, there is no possibility of a car driving up here.

Two impressions from classes

The morning has started. I am in the fourth grade and classes start with the traditional Steiner school morning verse, but adapted with a choice of words appropriate to the Andean Cosmovision. Then, the so-called Rhythmical Part, a typical element of Steiner school lessons, begins. After the class has recited some verses in Spanish and Quetchua, the local native language, the door opens and in come three members of the founder family. They bring along drums and flutes and start the musical section of this morning work. Some boys get the flutes and play along with the men and the women play the drum. Everybody is singing rhythmically in Quetchua. When the melody and words are clear, everybody starts to dance and stamp in a circle around the classroom in a very rhythmical and somewhat hypnotizing manner. Soon I find myself moving along. The music takes my body movements in, as if I would have done it all my life.

After the end of the Rhythmical Part, the cognitive study part starts. The fourth graders, for the first time, are studying local history and geography. The teacher talks about the different stages of pre-Incan development. The blackboard and the children's workbooks start to be filled with beautiful drawings of each ancient culture's typical art work. The spoken language is Spanish, but the teacher is managing to communicate with students from a village high up in the mountains (4000m high), that only speak Quetchua, and also the tourist child who only

speaks English. The children's cheeks are red and their eyes are glowing with interest. In the school's quest for the own cultural roots they feel valued and develop a sound self-esteem, which is not self-evident in this part of Peru, as we will see.

Breaktime

Usually all the teachers are outside, chatting with each other or with the children, drinking some tea and eating a snack. Today I can't see anybody. Everybody has disappeared and I walk around the places where all the children are playing peacefully, running around, climbing, jumping, chatting, sharing secrets like in any school I have been at. A special native toy attracts my attention. From a two meter high wooden post, a rope is dangling with a heavy feather bush at its end. A row of children is lined up and two are standing at each side of the post, each trying to hurl the feather bush around the post so that it will wind up totally. The opponent is trying to catch it and do the same thing. The one who manages to get it all wound up around the post, without the other one catching it, is the winner. The loser has to make way for the next child waiting in line and returns to the end of the file, where everybody is waiting peacefully. No discussions, no arguments, everybody just enjoying the playing.

Some first graders come running towards me, asking if I could tell them a fairytale. They are playing 'king' and 'princess'. As I hear later, the teachers are not supposed to tell fairytales because of their Non-Andean contents.

The riddle why all the teachers have disappeared soon is solved. I too am invited to come to the administrative cabin. It is a colleague's birthday and there is cake and beverages and birthday singing which goes on for some minutes. When everybody returns to the playgrounds, there are no complaints about fights, no tears, and no signs of any problems.

This livelihood during break time, combined with very peaceful play is something I have not experienced yet in other schools, and it makes me wonder what makes the place so special, so that the children do not seem to be fighting at all.

The evenings

Each night the pedagogical director comes to my room to work on the school curriculum. She has put a tremendous work in the reconceptualization of all contents of Waldorf curriculum class one to six in consonance with the Andean Cosmovision. She adopted what did not interfere with the Andean Cosmovision and the local life-circumstances and transformed what had to be transformed. According to my own experiences she had fulfilled this goal in a very

convincing and also individual manner. Our common task now is to go through it and see if I would see major problems in that. Thinking about adapting Waldorf contents to the Andean local spirit is a productive and also nice way to spend the hotel nights.

The experienced festival – The Offering to Mother Earth

An old *abuelo* (grandfather) is sitting on the ground in the central place between the cabins. The school community is sitting on the ascending stone stairs in front of him, looking and listening in expectant silence, the whole picture reminding me of an ancient Greek amphitheatre. The old man puts a wooden cloth on the ground in front of him and folds it together in a ritualistic manner: from all four directions. Then he holds the folded cloth in front of his face. With deep reverence, he breathes into it three times. After that the cloth wanders from one person to the next, each one again breathing into it consciously three times. Each breath is connected with a good wish. Many wishes that way are adding up, wishes and good thoughts for *Alpamama* (Mother Earth as part of the universe) and for the houses on it, right here, the school Kusi Kawsay.

It is August and we are in winter in Peru. The *campesinos* (peasants) are contemplating the coming time of sowing. With deep empathy, they sense what they experience as the neediness of *Alpamama*, who gave so much to them during the last year: fruits, vegetables and other gifts. They sense how much *Alpamama* seems to have given away its strength and vital energy. The sun seems to have gone far away from *Alpamama* and cannot warm it sufficiently. So the people feel they have to help the sun to prepare for the next sowing and growing period. This is what they strive for with that old ritual, called *Ofrenda a la Alpamama* (offering to Mother Earth).

After the cloth has been returned to the *abuelo*, he places it on the ground and folds it apart in the same manner as at the beginning, the four corners of the cloth pointing in four directions. On one hand of the cloth is a pile of leaves from the traditional healing plant of the Inka, the coca. On the other side is a big heap of little parcels, wrapped in colourful paper. At the head of the cloth are two mugs with the traditional beverages from Peru.

Now the second part of the ritual starts. One after the other each participant silently walks up to the heap of coca leaves, chooses the three most beautiful ones one can find, arranges them fan-shaped in both hands and proceeds over to the other side of the old man. Again the participant breathes three good wishes for *Alpamama* into the leaves. Then one hands them

over to the old man, who now arranges them with great carefulness onto the cloth, in growing circles, like a mandala. This goes on with every participant from the smallest kindergarten child to the students, parents and teachers. Again and again he opens one of the small packages and arranges the contents equally careful on the leaves. In this way slowly and solemnly a more and more complex mandala is appearing with ingredients of everything that directly or indirectly has been derived from Mother Earth; seeds and other grains, noodles, fruits, flowers, wool, threads, dyes, stones and minerals, little glittering plastic stars representing the stars in the universe, even copied notes (currency) are being placed neatly into the mandala. And every now and then drops of the beverages are being sprayed over all of it.

After everybody is finished presenting the coca leaves and after the contents of all small packages are included into the mandala, the cloth is folded carefully and tied with a special ribbon. Now the grandfather will go to a special place in the mountains to burn the wrapped offering. Its content with its manifold good thoughts and wishes for *Alpamama*, so one of the founders tells the children, will go as smoke to the breath of Mother Earth, - the air, and as ashes directly back to the earth, for her to develop new strength for the upcoming new cultivation season.

4.2.3 Annual Festivals in Kusi Kawsay

Introduction

For the selection of the interviewees, I was given advice by the pedagogical director of the school. I interviewed two of the founders, who are involved in teaching and, as directors, are guiding the school community's path of adapting the Andean Cosmovision to school life. The third interviewee was the most experienced Waldorf teacher in the school, who is working with the directors (founders) to bring contents in line with the principles of Waldorf pedagogy.

General impulse for and process of development

The school's developmental process (see 4.1.1) led to a growing awareness of the founders, that part of the Waldorf elements, that had entered school life, were quite Eurocentric and that not all of them complied with the *Andean Cosmovision* and with the life circumstances in the Andes. Fidel describes:

The Waldorf teacher, we had hired, took responsibility for everything and

everybody was trusting in her, but because she wasn't from here, she didn't know about the beauties of the culture here, or better she knew about them, but didn't know how to apply them.

According to Fidel it was hard for this teacher to include the Andean contents into the curriculum. Moreover Fidel feels that it was difficult for her to convey the principles of Waldorf education in such a way that the teachers would have been able to achieve this themselves: "She showed us the fish, but didn't teach us how to do the fishing" (Fidel). So the association (directors and Indigenous teachers) had to start the difficult and tedious work of developing a specific Andean curriculum that would include Waldorf principles, a process that has not come at its end yet. Fidel expresses the questions that had arisen:

What do we want? What are the objectives of our school? Yes, we want to be a Waldorf school, very good... but do we want to be the same as an occidental Waldorf school? Or do we want to revalue our culture?

The process of bringing into consonance Waldorf principles and Andean Cosmovision started around the parting of this first - European oriented - Waldorf teacher.

Especially the celebration of annual festivals had been strongly oriented on European Christian festivals, so they had to be totally reconceptualized. A very special role, in this process of reconceptualization of festivals, was played by the Andean agricultural calendar.

The Andean agricultural calendar

Daco, politically very conscious, describes how in the process of colonisation, great parts of the rich agricultural traditions in the Andes had been destroyed. On the one hand, the manifold ways of growing different comestible plants – according to Daco - had been wiped out to be replaced by monocultures, which serve the globalised agricultural industry. On the other hand, the attitude of deep reverence towards Pachamama - with all the related rituals throughout the year - had been attacked by the church, depicting them as heresy, and "... trying to convince these people, in the name of the (Christian) God, that their way of life is bad, - people, who live peacefully even without police!" (Daco). So one of the goals of the Kusi Kawsay founders, was to restore their people's relationship with Mother Earth and the Universe (Pachamama). They went to the Indigenous comunidades (communities) further up in the heights of the surrounding mountains (over 4000 m). These still hadn't been touched that dramatically by church and contemporary society and – talking to the old people there – they collected and reactivated the old agricultural festivals and rituals that were connected to

the year's seasons. Ester relates that in ancient times, there had existed different stellar calendars in the Andean Cosmvision, and these rituals were able to be restored with the help of the old people in the communities and all belonged to the solar oriented agricultural calendar. Daco mentions the clear will to reactivate this calendar, which in the village of Pisac, was not very much known any more: "For us it was a strong goal to activate and practice the calendar as a little community, while taking away all the colonial varnish, taking away the saints, calling them by their names like Pukllay..." And Ester highlights the relationship of the agricultural calendar to school life: "Afterwards we had to try and adapt it in a pedagogical way". They began to always celebrate the festivals outside the school with the founders and with those teachers who wished to, and then for one day they came to the school and celebrated the same festival in a pedagogically adequate way with the children. The kindergarten celebrates the festivals in the same way as the school, sometimes together with the school children, sometimes secluded, but with the same elements. Fidel tells how the class teachers daily prepare the festival during the weeks prior to the festival. They dedicate one part of the classes, - the Waldorf typical *Rhythmical Part* - to the upcoming festival, reciting specific verses, singing related songs and practising rhythmical exercises that help the children to experience an emotional connection with the specific festival. At the festival itself the teachers select a central motive of the festival and talk to the children about it in an age appropriate manner. Ester specifies, "Deepening the festivals, we had to go through a process to adapt these dates to a pedagogical language, to a pedagogical function."

There are also some very strong values connected with the celebration of the rituals of the agricultural calendar. I will refer to these later in this chapter.

To understand the festivals, as a first step, only the summarizing words of Fidel are important: "Celebrating the agricultural calendar means that every month we celebrate an ancestral period." However, when subjects related to the more supersensory or spiritual areas of Andean Agricultural Calendar were addressed, Ester commented: "I don't know much about the invisible, although it must be there, since there is for example electricity."

There are seven festivals/rituals being celebrated in twelve months, they are related to the ancestral periods' or to the seasons' agricultural activities and natural conditions. According to Ester, there are two seasons in the Andes of Peru: the season with rain (November – March) and the season without rain (April – October).

Pukllay (Play)

Time

The months of January, February and March belong to the season of rain, during which Pukllay is being celebrated. In Kusi Kawsay they celebrate Pukllay in March, when the school year starts again. The rains are getting less, leaving a lush, flourishing landscape with manifold shades of green in the fields, which are cultivated with different plants and are building a beautiful *poncho* like pattern, as Ester explains. She continues: “We celebrate the fertility of everything”. There is an abundance of vegetables and fruits around and animals are giving birth to their little ones.

Celebration

The translation of Pukllay would be “play” or “game”. Fidel: “The festival of Pukllay is the celebration of love, fertility, the festival of play, of falling in love and it is the festival of joy.” In some old *comunidades*, even today, these months are the time of the year, when people fall in love and are officially allowed to court. The courting is being celebrated with dancing, and those who dance with each other within the circle of everybody, are publicly declaring their connection. One of the typical Pukllay dances is an imitation of the courting dances of a specific type of ducks that live high up in some Andean Lakes. The uniqueness of these ducks is that they live a whole life as a couple and when one dies, the other one commits suicide (Ester). There are other dances, lots of music and good food, coming together and having a good time. According to Ester, the music and the instruments, as well as the songs are different from the time without rain and the clothes are especially colourful.

In the school, teachers and children appear with traditional clothes and flowers. They dance these typical dances forming a big circle, they have a good time and share food and music and the traditional Pukllay songs.

Motives

The main motives of Pukllay are the celebration of abundance and fertility of life, and as Daco puts it: “... the good living... the life with love, in which it’s not quantity that reigns, but quality. Quality to have time to meet each other...”. Part of celebrating life, fertility and love - according to Ester - is, to speak with the young people about family planning:

This is how life is, this is how sexuality functions, this is the woman, the man and beautiful their coming together, but from it *wawas* (Quechua for babies) are born.

And if *wawas* are born your life as a single person will end.

Ester describes that in old times these conversations were not necessary and not usual, but that in contemporary society they are a necessity.

Cosecha (Harvest)

Time

Celebrated in April, it is celebrated in the period of fall. The change of climate from rains to dryness helps to harvest the abundance of vegetables, grains and fruits that have grown during the lush time of rains.

Celebration

The children all have their patches in the school grounds, where they have grown vegetables, corn and fruits during the times of the rains. In the days of harvest, they gather the fruits in their patch, accompanied by the adults who wander around the compound and play music. A common meal is prepared and shared. There are jokes and joy, accompanying the day. The music instruments that are being used at that time of year, are instruments that imitate the wind, thus helping the wind to blow away the clouds, which could bring rain and thus prevent the corn to dry after the harvest.

Motives

The teachers talk to the children about “the significance of food and where it comes from. We celebrate it in a simple way”, says Ester. Like in other moments the motive of gratefulness to the earth is appearing in the interviewees’ descriptions.

Chakana (Southern Cross)

Time

The time of celebrating the constellation of the Southern Cross is the 3rd of May, a very important date for the Andean culture, which according to Daco “has been robbed by the Catholic Church” and transformed into the “Day of the Cross”. It also is the birthday of the school.

Celebration

The community of adults goes high up into the mountains to observe the Southern Cross, to play their musical instruments and to dance.

For the school celebration, the children are invited to come to the school grounds at 6pm. Fidel relates, that every class with their teachers, for that occasion has prepared a presentation *for the Chakana*. After their presentations, everybody looks up to the sky and one of the directors explains where the Southern Cross can be found. Afterwards there are hot drinks, made from local grains and the teachers have some humorous presentations for the families. Ester: "There's a diverse beautiful program for the night." Music and dancing in the night are again festive elements.

Motives

The Southern Cross always was of special importance for the Andean people. Ester relates:

This constellation was important for us since the existence of the first human beings, who lived in this part of the world. They observed it because they lived in a time without TV, without computers. The best spectacle of the day was the night sky, better than the day...

Ester also relates the mathematical-geometrical relations in this constellation, which she uses for her classes. I feel a sense of awe towards the hidden secrets of the night sky and what it stands for.

Inti Raimy (Winter Solstice)

Time

It is celebrated in midwinter time between 19th and 22nd /23rd of June, the coldest time of the year, the time of the shortest days. To the local people the sun seems to be very far away.

Celebration

Inti Raimy is celebrated with traditional clothes, delicious food, dancing and a bonfire. Indigenous people from many other places are invited to share this important festival, people from other local *comunidades*, but also people from New Mexico, Venezuela, US and Canada. In the local understanding, the sun is now far away, small and weak and the "little sun, the baby sun" (Daco) has to be nurtured and is celebrated that way. Fidel describes how in the morning of the solstice night itself, everybody is outside while the sun is rising, greeting the first rays of sun and wishing each other "Happy New Andean Year!"

On one of the four days of celebration, all participants go to the school and perform, for the children, the dances they brought from their (far away) places. The children arrange an exhibit

of their works for the visitors. In the classrooms, the teachers tell the children about the role of the sun for life on earth.

Motives

Daco describes how their little community is trying to clean this important Andean festival from colonialist, religious and also materialistic contemporary influences. “We are making a thing, which is real, which celebrates this natural act of the sun being a lot further away and feeling cold.” The rituals, which consist of dancing a whole night and the bonfire, are meant to warm and nurture the little baby sun. Ester: “We are warming the sun with the bonfire and dancing, it is a form of nourishing him and giving back to him...”. Again the motives of reverence, this time towards the sun and gratefulness are shining through, also the motive of *ayni* (reciprocity). This last one will be explained later. Fidel tells, that in the Andean Cosmvision, those beings who are giving to others are considered God-like. So Inti Raimy makes humans God-like, because now, they are giving to the sun (Fidel).

Ofrenda a la Alpamama (Gift to Mother Earth)

Time

It is celebrated in August shortly before the sowing and planting of new plants begins.

Celebration

I have described the way how it is celebrated in school in a very detailed manner in 4.1.2 *The experienced festival*. It is being celebrated in pretty much the same way in homes and places all over Peru, nowadays even in Lima (according to Ester) and all over the Andean world.

Motives

Burnt traces of ample products of the earth are given back to the earth, in a time when the earth is barren and tired from last year’s work and has lost all its strength, according to the local Indigenous understanding. “It is a little bit like a devolution to Mother Earth, reciprocity... You gave me nourishment when I needed it and wasn’t able to get it myself... now that you aren’t able yourself - I nourish you” (Ester). In this festive ritual *ayni* (reciprocity) is directed towards the barren earth.

Tarpuy (Sowing)

Time

The time of celebration is September, springtime in the Andes. It is the time before the rains start, the rain being essential for the growth of plants.

Celebration

It is again celebrated in the grounds of the school, similar to the harvest, but more refined and lengthier. The classes, during the previous days, prepare their patches of garden. Fidel specifies: "One day we water the earth, one day we turn it, and one day we manure it." On the day of the celebration itself, many old people from the *comunidades* come down to the school and they will ritually bless the seeds of the children and teachers. Then the children with the help of the adults put the seeds into the prepared ground. Fidel: "Three seeds go into each little hole: one for drying up, one for decaying and one for growing." The adults are wandering around the compound, playing music to enhance the festiveness of the occasion. There is a little food and also joy, fun and playing.

Motives

Reverence for the earth, who will be growing its gifts for the other living beings is emerging, but also joy and sharing within the community.

Los Machulas (The Ancients)

Time

Celebrated in November it is the time in which the rains have already begun, but still haven't reached their full strength. It is the time of remembering the dead ancestors.

Celebration

The celebration is geared towards inviting the ancestors. Those ancestors are responsible for the rains and for making them develop their full capacity (Fidel). The ancestors are also invited to share the festivities with the offspring (Fidel). The clothes worn on this occasion are of a special type, unique in comparison to the costumes of other festivals. They wear masks and dance with twisted sticks (Daco). At home, tables with food are prepared, possibly with the favourite food of a deceased family member. Ester: "In the Andes the dead are alive and during these days they come out of the earth to share life with us. There is food and dances to tell them to come out." The adults go to the mountains to special places, where they suppose

that the ancient people live and there they dance for a long time, rhythmically knocking on the ground to wake up the ancestors and make them come out (Fidel).

In the school the adults dance with the children the same dances with the twisted sticks. Ester: “It is also the time to talk to the students about being grateful towards the parents and showing respect towards elder people”. They also relate to the children how they will grow up and be old one day and will be shown respect by the younger ones.

Motives

This celebration reaches deep into mythology. It is far more than reverence towards one’s own ancestors. The related consciousness includes the very beginning of the human beings living in the Andes. Daco describes the mythological details, which passed down, that the first beings were giants with the minds of children, who only lived under the light of the moon.

Daco tells:

Then one day the sun came out and all of them became blind and they looked for refuge in the holes of the earth, where they disappeared. So later, the second, smaller mankind came out of these holes. The first beings who had disappeared in the depth of the earth, enlivened the plants, the lakes, the mountains... everything. For this reason everything is alive... can listen... can feel sad or joyful...”

Daco describes, that with the type of clothes and masks, they wear on this occasion, they imitate and invite at the same time those mythological beings and they are also showing gratefulness, respect and reverence towards them.

Completion of the cycle

Because of the long summer holidays, the Summer Solstice in December is not celebrated in school, only in the directors’ community and with their friends.

4.2.4 The development of annual festivals at Kusi Kawsay - a process of pedagogical integration of Andean values

A fundamental pillar of Kusi Kawsay education is the conscious integration of central values of the Andean Cosmovision into the pedagogical path towards a festival (Fidel). The teachers prepare this with the children. During the occasions of the festivals themselves, there always is a space where these values will again be directly addressed.

Ayni

Ester talked a lot about this central Andean value. All interviewees explained, somehow ambivalently, that reciprocity would be a possible translation for the Quechua concept of *ayni*. However especially Ester outlines extensively that it is more complicated: “Reciprocity means I receive ... and I give back. *Ayni* goes a little bit beyond: I give although I don’t receive.” She explains, that the concept reciprocity is a kind of intellectual process while *ayni* is like breathing: “I receive (*breathes in*).... I give (*breathes out*). You might call it a kind of distributive reciprocity.” Ester depicts that it is something you do not think about. On the other hand she explains the inherent contradictions of this concept. On one side *ayni* is an “instinct to share”, on the other hand it is the one single *law* in the Andean society. *Ayni* includes a giving and taking process between humans and all of nature and the universe. It is *ayni* that is consciously celebrated in many festivals and lives in the manner of treating nature. Humans receive from nature in harvest time and give back to Mother Earth when she needs it (Ofrenda a la Alpamama) or they receive from the sun when it is strong and give back to the sun (Inti Raimy) in the time when it is neediest in the Andean understanding, - two examples. Ester claims that *ayni* might be the most important value in Andean society.

Gratitude

It has become apparent that an attitude that strongly is present in Andean rituals and festivals, is gratefulness. Ester connects it with two more important values, - respect and love:

This is fundamental: gratitude! If there is gratitude, there will be respect, there will be love, everything! If there is no gratefulness: difficult ... difficult! It will be difficult to achieve other things... gratitude for everything, for waking up in the morning, even for sadness...

Sadness is incentive for growth, she explains and growth, not only in plant life, but also in the human sense, is important in the Andean values landscape.

Respect

In the Andean Cosmivision, there does not exist separation. Everything is connected, which is why a friend is called brother, explains Daco. The universe is like a big family, he adds and goes into further detail:

We don’t understand ourselves as isolated but absolutely interdependent and interrelational. Here the paradigm of freedom doesn’t make sense. It is nice to be dependent. I depend on you, on the river, the air, my neighbour, my mother, my

brother, like others depend on me.

He continues by describing this interdependence as a field in which we help each other to grow. We even raise each other in a metaphorical sense by “cultivating human relations. And for this human cultivation, Daco continues, we need values like respect.

For Fidel respect is the most central value in the Andean Cosmovision and in the education of the students and the celebration of the festivals:

To understand the Andean world, if you want to put it into one word: it is the respect. The respect towards myself, the respect towards the others, the respect towards the plants, the earth, the mountains, the sky, the respect towards everything I encounter in my path.

This attitude of gratitude and respect makes it impossible for those who live with it, to do any harm neither to beings in nature nor to human beings.

Courage, dignity and self-esteem create free thinkers

The consciousness about values, which Kusi Kawsay teachers are integrating in the celebration of festivals and rituals of the Andean calendar, goes even further. Ester declares that it would be easier for parents and students to take the conventional way of state schooling. As mentioned before, in Pisac the consciousness of (and respect for) living the Andean Cosmovision largely has disappeared. The school Kusi Kawsay, in the population of Pisac, is considered to be an outsider school of some special people (field notes). Ester relates that many students are not forced by their parents to go to this school, but want to go to Kusi Kawsay. She acknowledges the courage that it takes some students in the beginning and continues to describe how this courage leads to positive experiences of self. Ultimately courage and this positive experience result in self-esteem and a feeling of dignity, a central pedagogical goal of Kusi Kawsay. Daco unveils the process from another angle, explaining how it ends up in the children becoming free thinkers, as opposed to other Pisac Indigenous citizens:

And as a result of having learned to know personal respect in school, they will experience a very strong centre of dignity within themselves - in a society, in which they basically are not respected. They won't accept being denied respect in their life, in whatever they will be doing. They will be leaders in a society where they have made you get used to shut up and accept everything during centuries. I don't really know what they will do, but I know that they will be free thinkers.

But, as we will see, it is not only respect and resulting self-esteem that help the students of Kusi Kawsay to develop their capacities of free thinking.

Observing nature as another way to free thinking

Ester elaborates the significance of the Andean agricultural calendar in comparison to the Gregorian calendar. The agricultural calendar lets people free, so she feels, and she justifies this as follows: "... because it is only describing what is existing and going on in nature. There are no inventions, we don't promote anything like the other calendars promote f.e. St. John. We want something neutral". Of course somebody could reproach that this is not neutral, that it is Andean, says Ester, but then she points to the universality of the Andean Cosmvision and its correlation to other Indigenous currents.

"The Andean" is universal like the Celts or the Indigenous Peoples in Australia or South Africa. Those are the same things, they are talking about the same. So we are not promoting an Andean religion. We only say: observe everything in nature! Look how it works: it is the same as we humans, no? It throbs and pulsates and because it is alive, it can die.

Because nature is alive, humans have to care for it, Ester goes on and quotes Daco, who once depicted Kusi Kawsay's ecological attitude: "In Kusi Kawsay we don't want an ecological attitude out of fear of losing our big supermarket. We want to have an ecological attitude out of love for the earth."

Love and caring for the earth includes –as mentioned- to get close to its phenomena by close observation. This observation of natural phenomena leads the students to "what really is" (Ester) and thus – at least partially – on a very direct way to free thinking.

And - concludes Ester; "If the students would come here now, they wouldn't talk to you about a thesis related to Pachamama or Father Sun, but they end up with spirituality in their own manner. We are cultivating seeds, aren't we?"

All three interviewees mention this one aspect of the Kusi Kawsay school's educational goals: it is central to them, not to educate the students to be followers, but to be curious and free to explore the world and with time come to own conclusions, free from religion and possibly even free from, but proud of, their Andean heritage.

4.3 Nairobi Waldorf School

4.3.1 Cultural-historical background

According to the interviewed teachers, the history of Nairobi Waldorf School began in another part of the city, Mbagathi, where the - still existing - Rudolf Steiner School was founded by Germans as a project especially for Massai children and other needy children. Out of this school developed the Kileleshwa Kindergarten close to the wealthy quarter of Karen, as a result of many Karen and nearby parents' wish not to have to travel that far to Rudolf Steiner School. When there were enough parents in this kindergarten who really desired a Waldorf school in Karen itself, one parent gave her hotel to be used as a school. This school was then called the Nairobi Waldorf School. The school presently is located at this place in Karen and includes a kindergarten on the campus itself and also still the Kileleshwa kindergarten outside the campus. The parents and students of the present Nairobi Waldorf School are a reflection of the many different cultures that live in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, - foreigners and Kenyans. One teacher describes the school as rich in colours of cultures, religions, tribes and skin:

I remember a time where every class had every continent represented within a group of children, but if we look at the school now, then every religion, culture, background *and* the African tribes, Kenyan tribes, at least 15 of the 42 Kenyan tribes are represented in the school. So even with the political situation, where people are divided on a tribal basis, in this school they're so mixed up, that if we tried to follow two streams, I wouldn't even see, which streams this could be. And it's also a lot of mixed marriage children from different cultures, so even ...gosh.. It's a mix, it's a real rainbow school. I would call it the „Nairobi Rainbow Waldorf school“.

I can only support this statement, because during my three weeks there I experienced those many “colours”, but never found out, what I later discovered in the books: that Kenya not only has to deal with these many cultures and religions present in the country, partly remnants from colonialist times, but even more with strong tribal rivalries (see 1.5.2 Kenya).

A look into the question of racism at Nairobi Waldorf School

Outside of the school, I did not encounter direct racism. What I realized was that the considerable gap between very poor people and very rich people is not a question of colour of skin. I was told that there are many extremely rich black people living in Nairobi and also -not many- but poor white people. Noticing and experiencing many related contradictions outside

of school, for me as a European arose the question of how, in a school in Africa, with such a multicultural background the school community would deal with the subject of possible racism. In more informal conversations, I realized that questions of racism were not a controversial issue to the Nairobi Waldorf School teachers. However in a few conversations, I noticed that for some teachers, racism as a fruit of colonialism, was a subliminal issue (field diary). Although all Nairobi Waldorf School teachers (except one) have coloured or dark skin, I as a pedagogical colleague could not sense any demeaning, disrespectful behaviour of (white or Asian) students towards their teachers. They seemed to love their teachers, but – according to some stories I was told in such an informal frame, this has not always been like that. One kindergarten teacher told me, how ten years ago, a white child yelled at her: “You’re black, you cannot tell me anything...” One class teacher, who only had joined the school recently, said: “I didn’t know, if I would be able to handle this. I have never before taught white children.” But she experienced age appropriate (according to Waldorf educational standards) unconditional love from her students. Moreover the parents with lighter skin seemed to treat the darker skin teachers with the normal respect towards teachers, including the typical critical remarks that teachers nowadays encounter everywhere.

4.3.2 Life circumstances

As already mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, I will describe the specific school’s broader life circumstances and add additional ethnographic material to provide a better understanding of the findings.

The way to school:

I get into the car of the family where I live. The young gatekeeper opens the massive locked iron gate that shields the house from criminals. Then he locks it again behind us. Down a well kept small mud road we drive towards the next iron gate. It is not locked, but its doors are closed and have to be opened and closed by ourselves. A small asphalt road takes us up and we follow it about one kilometer to a barrier, where a small group of Kenyan guards watch passers-by all day and night. After a short visual inspection of the people inside our car, they open the barrier manually and let us pass. The father, driving the car, comments that this is meant to guard against terrorist or criminal attacks, but that it is obvious that those people would just scatter if there would be a serious attack. The barrier itself would break like a match, if a car would drive violently through.

Now we come to the big roads bringing us closer to the school. Thick traffic, the main streets obstructed mainly by the absolutely crowded van like little public transportation buses, honking... While slowly getting ahead I watch the roadside. No asphalt, but ditches to collect the rain, in between the ditches and the asphalt there are small dirt paths, trodden by hundreds of passers-by, who cannot afford the cheap public transportation and hurry to their jobs. Some are dressed up business like in black suits or formal clothes, others wear the colourful African robes, and then there are the Massai herdsmen, wrapped in red cloths, walking slowly behind their bony cows that try to grab some food from the road side grass and bushes. I admire the skill with which the people are walking those mud paths, reaching their jobs without the clothes being dirty with the red clay earth, which is either sticky when it rains or very dusty when it doesn't. At some places I see little stands in the mud where simple breakfasts are served to the passers-by. Parts of the streets are lined with plants and flower pots or furniture that is to be sold to the wealthier commuters, living in the very rich areas and driving by with the car.

Finally we reach the road to school. Now we enter one of the most luxurious quarters of Nairobi. Big properties with huge shiny mansions in park like surroundings, gorgeous gardens with majestic trees and colourful flowers. Bird life loves these surroundings, so the air is filled with chirping.

When we come towards the school grounds, we see big black and white striped iron barrels, lined up in a double curve in front of the massive iron gate. Along the wall shielding the school ground is a wide ditch. The father explains to me that their function is to prevent terrorists from violently breaking through the walls.

Now we have to pass through the barrels' pathway to the gate where two very friendly guards check every car. They are not armed with modern/gunpowder weapons, but with bows and poisonous arrows, as I am told later.

The school grounds

The first impression is its depth and breadth. Lawns with elephant grass, broad dirt lanes for the cars to drive on, lined by beautiful trees, tall children's' swings and - hidden in between trees and bushes - scattered in different locations on the site, I detect the little cabins for the primary classes, all with a small staircase and a porch in front. The kindergarten has a big separate area of its own. The connecting paths in between the houses are partly marked by

nature stone tiles, partly marked in the dirt by many children's' and teachers' feet. High bush like lilies build patches of plant life, which the smaller children like to hide in. Towards the end of the school grounds a big, formerly white tent, now dyed by wind and weather, attracts the eye. This is where daily lunch is taken by all the students and teachers. It is also the space, where all the school gatherings and the festivals take place, substituting at the same time what in richer schools would be the canteen and the assembly hall.

Next to the office building there is the kitchen, a small building where quite a few cooks are preparing lunch for at least one hundred hungry mouths a day. A big part of the food is being cooked outside on a type of fire place, where also the water for doing the laundry and the dishes is being heated. It is a central meeting place for all of the helpers of the school that work maintaining the houses and the grounds and guarding the entrance. I see women wiping the floor of the classes twice a day because of the very sticky (wet) or dusty (dry) red clay earth. When it is raining everybody walks around the grounds with rubber boots that are taken off when going inside.

Break time

What a colourful mix of all shades of skins I can see. From British pale- and blondness over all shades of light until deep brown, until almost black children's' faces, even some Indian and Japanese children, all gleaming with joy and running, playing with each other, enjoying the vast grounds, where they are allowed to move along totally free. Some have gathered together heaps of moist clayey red mud, forming balls of it and throwing them at each other. I tell them about snow balls and snow men and soon they start to make a 'mud snowman'.

Six grade students have organised their break sale with all sorts of healthy (and some unhealthy) little snacks. The gains are supposed to go to a wildlife protection project.

Then all of a sudden loud and excited screams can be heard from one corner of the school. I walk to the kindergarten area where the joyous screeching is coming from. I arrive just right to see a monkey running all along the table on one of the kindergarten groups' porch. The fast animal looks around and snatches some remnants of breakfast. The children are overly happy and yell and scream at him: „Monkey! Monkey!“ The monkey runs away, giving the impression of making a little show out of it for the children. And really, he does not go away far. He just climbs up the next tree, high enough to be safe from the children, (and the children safe from him) but seemingly close enough to still be able to communicate with

them. Looking down at them majestically, he starts to enjoy the snatched fruit. The children gather underneath and watch glowingly.

Two class room impressions

I visit the first grade with their teacher and am amazed how well structured the morning rituals work. This is a special achievement for class one and their teacher, at this point of the year. The children know exactly what the teacher wants and move along in a well defined, but diversified structure, sometimes on the chairs, then sitting on the table, and so on. Then they go to the circle place, where they all gather in a circle for all sorts of rhythmical counting and singing games, with the teacher's intent of stabilizing their body management, thus enhancing the learning process. The best part is where all those multicoloured children practise for the upcoming festival. I don't understand, because they speak and sing in Kiswahili, but I can see that they are imitating agricultural life in one verse and telling about African wildlife in the other. Now, I finally know where the word « Simba » from my childhood for lion came from, meaning 'lion' in Kiswahili.

I also am able to visit the second grade. This class is an exception in the school with almost all coloured children and only one Italian boy amongst them. The teacher is a drumming expert and this is the main impression of this class' Rhythmical Part. Everything they do, with and without drums is rhythmical, easily coming from the teacher's expertise and easily taken up by the children's' natural abilities, to dance and move rhythmically. The little Italian boy moves along without being conscious of the fact that it seems to be much more difficult for him as a European to pick up the complicated sequences. All sorts of counting and multiplication table games are combined with these African movements and rhythms, thus supposed to help the children with cognitive learning via bodily agility.

The experienced festival – The Festival of Light

At the beginning of December in Nairobi, we are in summer time, but what I experience does not apply to our typical European expectation of African summer. November and beginning of December is the time of the short rains. It is pretty cool outside, the soaring heat – so I am told – will come in January.

It is the evening of the Festival of Light. People are streaming along the pathways, guided to the tent by little lanterns with candles. The rains have stopped for the moment. The tent is decorated beautifully with white veils and many handmade foil stars, swaying from the tent's

roof in the light evening breeze. Spotlights are accenting the important spaces, some stars and the place of the performance of the children in the centre.

Every year the teachers look anew for a multicultural motive for this festival, a motive which enables the teachers with their classes to include all main religions and cultural traditions, not only European or African ones. There have been Muslim and African stories, building the background of the event. This year they decided on an Irish story, depicting a major part of the life of the Irish national hero, Patrick.

The presentations start late, because of some children arriving late due to the heavy traffic congestion in Nairobi's streets. After more than half an hour delay, which does not seem to preoccupy anybody, one class after the other quietly enters the festive tent, starting with the upper 7th grade and ending with class one. Students and teachers are dressed in clothes that mirror one of the cultures, tribes or religions of the school's parent body. We see the 7th grade in Indian clothes, the 6th all dressed up fancy, mirroring the British, the 5th in Muslim clothes and the lower grades in various African robes. The story of this year's Festival of Light unfolds, after the introducing play of three traditional African musicians. It is told by a story teller, who is also a colleague at the school, the only white teacher of Nairobi Waldorf school. In between the various parts of the legend, each class does one or two presentations, highlighting and illustrating it with dancing, music, singing and recitations, touching various aspects of Jewish and Asian religions as well as Christian and African ones. The teachers do a presentation too, a polyphonic song, proudly "conducted" by a boy from class 2, who is one of the more challenging children of this class. At certain adequate points everybody gets up and sings songs together, famous Christmas songs and others, more summer like songs. Almost the end of the presentation is a Muslim song, performed by all students and teachers, conducted by a Muslim teacher from the second Waldorf school in Nairobi, the Rudolf Steiner School.

At the end of the whole event in the tent, a buffet is waiting outside in the dark and the night ends with eating and chatting of everybody.

4.3.3 Annual festivals in Nairobi Waldorf School

Introduction

After I had been in Nairobi Waldorf School for a while I realized, - what I had not known before -, that the school and the kindergarten are celebrating different festivals with the

exception of the Festival of Light. So I subsequently interviewed two teachers of the school and one kindergarten teacher.

The two school teachers I interviewed belong to the most experienced teachers of Nairobi Waldorf School, both having been at the school since the time when the transition process from European to Kenyan teachers slowly developed. They both consciously had experienced the time in which the very European shaped way of celebrating annual festivals was questioned, and the search for new forms for the festivals and partly also for new contents of festivals started.

General impulse for and process of development of different festival forms

When Nairobi Waldorf School began to grow and the Kenyan teachers entered into the above mentioned transition process, they realized how diverse the school community was, with regard to cultural and religious backgrounds. This awareness resulted in the concern of how to include all these different people so that everybody would feel well integrated. Peter stated;

As the school began to grow, we quickly realized that we were more and more attracting a very diverse group of people, who came in with a lot of different traditions, a lot of different cultural practises, a lot of different religious beliefs, and so we had to find a way to accommodate all of these people and still not to loose the identity of a Waldorf school. And so, as much as the question began to exist in the parent body, it was also beginning to exist in the teacher body.

The identity as a Waldorf school was a concern but even more the integrative aspect. Mary provides insight into the questions of that time as follows, - accentuating the parents' concerns:

It began – I think the same year I joined the school, the parents felt - you know we were very diverse already - ... even from the beginning we had Indians, we had Americans, we had Germans, we had Africans, so it was already very diverse and they felt: What is it, that is going to bring us together to unify us, what *one* thing can we do as a school to make us feel united, so that we can be able to reach every people, you know every culture and bring a feeling... of togetherness?

What the teacher puts into the concept of “togetherness”, can be seen as an imaginative description of the above mentioned central impulse for the development of new ways of celebrating annual festivals of Nairobi Waldorf School's community of teachers and parents, as we will see in the following findings.

This impulse initiated a process to search for motives, rituals, and manners; which took place in conversations between teachers and parents. This will be described in more detail after the presentation of the festivals.

Festival of Light

Time

It is celebrated at the beginning of December in the evening of the last Thursday or Friday before school closes for holidays.

Celebration

Every year, so the teachers told me, they look anew for a multicultural or multi-religious motive for this festival, a motive which enables the teachers with their classes to include all main religions and cultural traditions of the parent body, not only European or African ones, to create an atmosphere in which everybody feels welcome and integrated, as mentioned above. This motive is displayed in a presentation in which all school (and kindergarten) children are involved. The presentation follows a storyline, which is new every year and displayed in an artistic manner, like a theatre or storytelling with artistic contributions from each class.

Motives

The light is the background motive of this festival, as the name says. It is representative for the main celebrations of the four world religions that are present in the school's parent body. All the central festivals of those four main religions (Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity) are - as Peter describes - "a celebration that turns a dark moment into light". The interviewee names these festivals: Divali, Eid al-Fitr, Hannukkah, and Christmas.

Easter Brunch

Time

The actual Easter Brunch takes place during Friday of the last week before the Easter holidays, but it is prepared in a special way already during this whole previous week. The week after the Easter Brunch, the first week of the Easter Holidays is always the Christian Holy Week.

Celebration

From Monday till Thursday before the actual celebration, the children go through a process of fasting in school by having reduced the amount of food at lunch time. Also the parents are asked to only send very small snacks for recess.

On Friday, the last school day, the actual Easter Brunch takes place in a big celebration, in which the parents are not involved. It is lovingly being prepared by everybody, students, teachers and kitchen staff. It is, describes Mary:

a huge breakfast for the whole school. And what we do, we pair up classes and each class prepares a *beautiful* table for the other class. They bring in things that they can, to make this nice, beautiful table for the other class and then they prepare cards, cards with nice words for each of the children in the other classes, they prepare foods at home, their own traditional foods ... and then the school prepares something and that is all brought to the table and we have a beautiful celebration together.

The 'beautiful celebration together' includes everybody on the campus: not only students and teachers, but also the guards, the cleaning people, the cooks and the laundry women, just everybody. There is a story, songs are being sung together and then everybody enjoys the meal together. The money that the cooks save in the kitchen during these days is being donated to a worthy cause afterwards and the children are conscious of this.

Motives

There are three outstanding motives for this celebration mentioned by the interviewees. Peter especially emphasizes the importance of the fasting as a process of learning to deny oneself things: "You can do without those things for a week and then you come back after you've gone through that process of denying yourself and then even as you deny yourself you find a way to give to others." Already the second motive is being alluded to: the giving to others in the process of fasting as well as in preparing the Easter Brunch. Then Peter highlights this giving aspect even more:

So it is activity really of denying oneself and then being able to give... giving to others. Because what we also do is part of what we save, part of what the school saves out of them not having food is then donated to a worthy cause. It's donated to a lady institute or something like the refugee project. So we really are trying to teach them this aspect of giving and sharing.

And this aspect of sharing is the third central motive of the Easter Brunch. It is a moment in which appreciation and acknowledgement of the presence of every single person can happen.

We share a meal , the staff and the children, this is one meal brings us together , the askaris (*the guards, Kiswahili*), the grounds men, the drivers, the teachers, we sit together, we meet... it's the only meal we actually get to eat all of us together The kindness, the loving, the appreciating, the noticing, even that person who opens the gate... „Have you noticed that these people are actually very important to us. Who are they? Do you say “Good morning” to them?” ... It's not: there *they* are and here *we* are. So it's *all of us together*. We are one *We*.

As Mary that vividly describes, a strong community feeling is developing out of this experience, a community feeling that lives throughout the year.

Festival of Courage

Time

The Festival of Courage is celebrated in September after coming back from the long winter holidays. It has developed out of the European Christian festival of Michaelmas which is celebrated the 29th of September.

Celebration

The celebration takes place in the whole of the school grounds, but first the students hear the story of St. George and the dragon. Quite a few challenging stages have previously been arranged, where then the children have to go through. They find various activities that make them struggle with their feelings of reluctance, often even of anxiety and make them activate their individual willpower to possibly overcome those inner hindrances. Mary tells excited:

All the teachers are involved, all the children are involved... we have many activities, we jump through the fire to show that we are very courageous, we go through dark tunnels, and you know it's very interesting – some children cannot do this. And those, who can, feel „Wow, I have achieved it!!!”.

The activities are manifold and include such things as, balancing on wooden poles or letting oneself fall blind folded backwards from a table onto a mattress. According to the age of the children, the challenges might be insuperable in the first grades and then year by year, they get easier to tackle. It is a festival always very much longed for by the children.

Motives

The celebration of courage strengthens the child's willpower and willingness to work on overcoming obstacles, anxieties, hindrances. Thus it is fortifying the child's self-confidence year by year, teaching them that hindrances can be overcome by developing courage and perseverance, as Peter describes.

4.3.4 The development of annual festivals at Nairobi Waldorf School as a continuous search for deeper understanding

Aspects of the development of the Festival of Light

It has already been described here, how the teachers developed the background motive of the Festival of Light, - *light* being a common quality of the central festivals of the four world religions present at the school (see 4.2.3, Festival of Light). It is very interesting however to look a little closer at how the teachers transferred this mere idea of 'celebrating light' into festival reality. This was not easy, as one interviewee describes:

In all celebrations, if you look at them, there's a lot of light involved. And I think when we discovered that, we thought we had found the key. We said 'why don't we have a festival then that celebrates light?' Now the biggest task was – how *do* you celebrate light?

When discussing this question, it soon became clear to the teachers, that light can only be celebrated, if it somehow comes out of darkness. It needs the contrast of darkness. So the Nairobi colleagues looked for ways to have the school community experience the light as evolving out of darkness. Peter emphasizes:

So you've come out of this dark place, then the light can be able to shine brightly. And so every play that we have made, every story that we have created for staging as a play, has had this process, where the story begins with a bit of a darkness... with a dark period and then gradually the story transforms into light that is then celebrated by everyone. And what we have tried to do for many years is, to try to make sure, that in every play that we have, there is a bit of every religion represented in there.

Mary gets into the process of how the representation of each religion in the festival in a true and authentic manner was aimed at by including the parents into the process:

We go to the parents who we feel could help us, 'cause our school grows every year and we have different cultures and different people joining us. We also reach the parents so that they can teach us how to celebrate the light from their culture.

Mary describes how in one Festival of Light, Hindu parents brought their own Hindu clothes and helped the teachers to put them on, so that they would look like real Hindus. Then those same Hindu parents presented Hindu Gods to the school community with statues etc as part of that year's Festival of Light.

The presentations through the years, their storylines also included - amongst others - a Muslim Festival of Light, an African fairytale, acted out in tribal costumes with African dances, but also a profound theatre, created and composed by a teacher of the school about a soul's experience of light in heaven and its journey to earth. I could sense the pride of the interviewees, when they related all these manifold ways of celebrating the Festival of Light. Cora describes the Festivals of Light as being surrounded by magic or as a cosmic experience which is so strong that she often had to cry in past such occasions. The following are quotes related to the overall experiences she has had in the Festivals of Light:

And that was beyond any religion, but you see the light in it, because I mean the children - gosh - the innocence they have, the ability to experience things in the present so much, is really the light, we would like for a better world, so to speak. That presence where we can see things as they are now in the moment! It brings this light of empathy... it creates light for a better world. So that was again very cosmic... cosmic is the word I'd like to use, yes...

To create presentations that facilitate such intense experiences in adults, there must be a previous process that reaches deep into transformative qualities.

Aspects of the development of the Easter Brunch

As portrayed every person of the whole staff of Nairobi Waldorf School is present in the Easter Brunch. It is a large staff, besides teachers and secretaries, because of the very specific, less technically refined and more dangerous life circumstances (terrorists and criminals) of the school. Not always everybody had been invited to participate in the Easter Brunch. To realize that everybody should be part of this celebration, was a process the teachers went through. It was a process of growing consciousness of including the "staff", emphasizes one interviewed teacher, which began:

...like three years ago, so we keep developing it, 'cause the staff thing ... was not from the beginning. We did our own celebrations and somebody said: „Hey! Wait a minute - how can we not bring in these people, when we are celebrating this light? To care for one another and be kind to each other... and bring *the* light into our school that we all want... We should also have a meal with these people.”

These words of Mary characterize an important feature of Nairobi Waldorf School's teachers' manner of going about their festivals. The teachers are in a process and every year they are pondering the way they celebrate their festivals and in this process they are open for new aspects and improvements of the celebrations. As one interviewee puts it a little amazed:

And I feel it is very unique, it is very unique that we celebrate these things and we make it different every year and we have activities every year and we embrace, for example people like you that are visiting and can bring in new ideas.

Although all three interviewed teachers related in a very clear way the general structure of the school's / kindergarten's annual festivals, I always sensed this fresh openness to the possibility of improving, not out of mere spontaneity, but out of new processes of considerations and resulting insights.

4.3.5 Festivals in the kindergarten

Introduction

All the following findings, relating to the kindergarten festivals of Nairobi Waldorf School, stem from the interview with a very experienced African kindergarten teacher, who had been in the school only for little time, before the process of the development of new forms for festivals started. Cora states: "So I was also *very* awake to this new education and it's very clear... that this was such an exciting process and to grow together with the school also." In the course of the interview it became obvious, that the newness to the school and its pedagogy and the difference of its approach was so impressive to the interviewee that almost all details were vividly remembered, which explains her detailed depiction of many aspects of the festivals. She also keeps pondering them anew every year in their cyclical appearance.

General impulse for and process of development

The school's and the kindergarten's motive for and process of development of the festivals were the same in the case of the Festival of Light.

However the motive for and development of the other festivals in the kindergarten were, according to the interviewee quite different from the school's festivals.

Cora explained how it all began with a proficient Australian Waldorf teacher, who came as a teacher to Nairobi Waldorf School in 2003, mentoring there the African Waldorf kindergarten teachers. Coming from Australia, which also, like Nairobi, is situated in the Southern hemisphere, where they already had developed different festivals, she experienced an

inconsistency in the way the Nairobi kindergarten teachers were celebrating the festivals. The inconsistency for this Australian teacher's perception resulted out of the festivals' European rituals and ways, how and what they were celebrating in comparison to the phenomenon, which at the same time could be observed outside, - in the surrounding African nature. As an example, Cora described how strange it seemed to the Australian teacher that in the midst of summer (December), they were artificially darkening a room, to celebrate the Advent Spiral like in Europe, also using pine tree branches, which had to really be looked for, because the pine is not a native Kenyan tree. They had to find apples which don't grow in Africa and had to be bought expensively, etc. When the Australian teacher asked, why they were doing it this way, the teachers related to the role models of the previous European teachers, saying: "That's how X used to do it."

Sensing a pedagogical need to align seasonal nature experiences of the young child with their kindergarten festival experiences, this Australian teacher started a process of developing new festivals with the kindergarten teachers. It was based on intensive observation of nature and consequent discoveries of motives for the festivals out of these observations. I will describe this process more in detail later, but will for the nature aspect always include a description of what is occurring in nature in Nairobi at the respective time in the listing of the festivals, their celebrations and motives.

Festival of Light

The exception to the rule of separate kindergarten festivals is the Festival of Light – with presentations of the children as a gift to the parents and a meal afterwards. Length, time of day (forenoon) and the unfolding story are selected on a level, that to the teachers seems adequate for small children, but, according to Cora, they are elected with the same motives in the background that were previously described for the school's festival.

Rainbow Festival

Time/season and nature

The Rainbow Festival is celebrated at the beginning of April, which in Nairobi is the time of the "Long rains". These long rains bring a huge relief to nature's heavy dryness during the months of January and February (summer), when nature and its living beings suffer from the soaring heat, which draws all their life energy. Even business life is slowed down considerably. The long rains are expected desperately and they return life, not only to the

plants. During the interviewee's description of January, February and parts of March, I could fathom what a big relief for the Nairobians the arrival of the "Long Rains" is.

The stinging sun now hides behind heavy clouds, and pouring rains with lots of shadow characterise this season. The sun only comes out for short moments during the day, but then immediately colourful rainbows are visible. "In this time, because there's so much shadow, as soon as the sun appears with the water then *rainbows* !!! immediately... so many rainbows with this heavy rain!" During the period of the "Long rains", no rays of sun can be perceived without the presence of these colourful rainbows.

Celebration

The celebration takes place in the garden with dancing and playing. The teacher joyfully describes the vivid picture. Shimmering water/soap bubbles are being blown into the air and colourful streamers (sandfilled clothballs with long tails) are being thrown high up. Everybody is dressed in colourful clothes, is happy and playful and enjoys the festival.

Motives

The relief after the long and heavy period of dryness is being celebrated, - time to be happy and outgoing. Cora explained it, as - on a deeper level - being a different type of death and resurrection experience. "So it's again a different kind of death and resurrection. I mean everything has died with the sun and then the rains come and life appears." In a later point of the interview she adds, that it is an experience, which they are celebrating in the Rainbow Festival that is broader than any connection to Christian religion (Easter), something which Hindus, Moslems, Jews and even atheists can fathom.

Lantern Festival

Time/season and nature

It happens in June, which is winter in Nairobi, one week before the Shambani Festival. It is grey and cold outside.

Celebration

The children, also those of first and second grade, manufacture lanterns of paper or glass, "whatever is available", explains the teacher. With these lanterns, one night they take a walk through the vast school gardens, where only little light from the city enters. After that, there is singing at a big bonfire. The celebration, according to the teacher, is similar to the European

Lantern Walk in November. The teacher speaks about the impressive impact on the city children of experiencing such intense darkness outside, which they can hardly experience elsewhere.

Motives

The teacher describes it shortly as bringing light into the darkness. She almost forgot to mention this festival.

Shambani Festival

Time/season and nature

Celebrated at the beginning of July, shortly after the end of the “Long rains”, it occurs in the darkest time of the year. It is cold and grey outside (winter). After the long wet period the garden is still abundant with vegetables, but the teacher expresses, that already one can watch a certain withdrawing of the biologically active forces without rain.

Shambani is the ‘garden’ in Kiswahili, now with the long rains vegetables grow very, very well, that’s the root vegetables, the leaf vegetables... and we do gardening with the children, starting with the long rains, and then at the end... shortly after the long rains, which is beginning of July, we have this festival,

explains Cora. It is harvest time, - harvest in a double sense, as will be seen.

Celebration

According to the interviewee there are the two parts to this celebration that developed out of the harvest motive: the farewell of the children that will enter school after the winter holidays and the harvest of the vegetables in the garden. “One day before the Shambani Festival is this ritual for the children, we call it the transition farewell, but it’s part of.. it’s building up to the Shambani,” she explains. So the transition farewell takes place the day before the harvest of the vegetables. In the past there have been two ways of celebrating the future first graders’ transition to school. The teacher relates one manner:

The children walk the spiral made with straw, cloth and stars and there are places to place their candles and they’re going into the spiral, one at a time with a verse and they take the light out again to represent going out into primary school.

The other possibility is for the child to light a candle, put it in a wooden boat which it has carved throughout the year and then set it into a bowl of water to sail off to other shores.

The next day the harvesting of the vegetables take place. After harvesting them fresh from the garden, the vegetables are being cut and put into a big pot. They are cooked to a good soup and the meal is shared together with the parents.

Motives

Cora again uses a picture, relating that transition to school is a process of taking one's light and bringing it to a new place to shine. Harvesting the vegetables, cooking and eating them, has always been a central motive in African society, especially the pot being a central motive, as the interviewee relates.

Flower Festival

Time/season and nature

The Flower Festival is celebrated in October, when the 'Short rains' begin. The cold and greyness of winter passes and with the first rains - and lots of sun in between - flowers begin to blossom. Especially the purple Jacaranda trees are covered with flowers and shed carpets of blossoms onto the school grounds. Concluding from her vivid descriptions, the teacher really enjoys this season and paints a picture with words: how there is humming in the air, bees are sucking nectar, birds are chirping and butterflies fly around the blossoming plants.

Celebration

The celebration takes place partly inside the classrooms with baking and the crafting of objects that have to do with flowers, birds ect. The other half of the celebration takes place outside with a ring of flowers on the ground, dancing with and around the flowers, making garlands with them and wearing them. The interviewee spoke of the recent past (2014,) when as a result of a massive terrorist threat to the school, they had to build high walls around the grounds as a protection against possible attacks. So in the flower festival they then planted flowers (creepers) to grow at the walls and cover them in the future.

Motives

Taking from or giving to (in 2014) the flowers, this is how Cora describes the motive for this festival. I also perceive a sense of gratefulness in the description.

4.3.6 Nature observation and the unfolding of festival motives in the two Nairobi Waldorf School kindergardens

I now want to provide more specific insight into the Nairobi Waldorf kindergarten teachers' process of development of non-European festivals, as the interviewed teacher has related it. She described the beginning of the process as having developed out of the teachers' naive handling of the "inherited" European festivals and the Australian teacher's reaction to it. She started with asking the Nairobi teachers to observe nature, to observe everything in nature very closely and to write down every observation. The teachers at that point did not have the faintest idea of the ultimate purpose of this nature observation process, but for two years they faithfully kept going with observations, writing down and exchanging their experiences in the weekly pedagogical meetings. There were a lot of surprises in this process, as Cora describes enthusiastically:

I really had lived in this environment since I was born, I had lived in Kenya... but I had never noticed what happens when it rains. Yes, I knew the rains come in March. But I'd never known what *really* happened.

Cora supposes, that the fact of not being aware of the purpose of the whole process, added to its authenticity: "I guess if we had known 'Now we're observing, so that we will change the festivals...', it would probably have been very different." Because when the moment came in which the mentoring teacher asked WHY they were celebrating European/Christian festivals, the teachers were unprejudiced and then the search for a different approach really seemed the right thing to do. The mentoring teacher asked, could there be relevant motives to be found in nature's seasonal phenomena that would give the children something like an "Easter experience"? The interviewee describes, what happened at that phase of the process as a very special moment: the understanding and insights just 'jumping out' of the teachers' compilation of the results of their observations in nature:

And now when it came to taking it from looking and writing to the next step:
- what can we do with that in terms of the children and something to celebrate?
...it was like a magic, it was really jumping out of the page.

With relation to a new form of celebrating what until this moment had been called Easter time, the teacher depicts, - it was one motive which immediately "jumped out" of their observations: the rainbows. The next step was the question, how could the rainbows celebrated? This seemed to be obvious to the teachers: "So, when it was the rainbow time, it

was very clear, it was the rainbow, so what can we do with this and the colours? I mean rainbow and colour are inseparable, so we celebrated the colour”. Out of this insight the teachers developed the above described form of the joy- and colourful Rainbow Festival. The process of finding motives for celebrating the other seasonal festivals, according to Cora, was similar and led to the above described various forms and motives of the other festivals.

4.3.7 Transcending nature observations

At that point of the interview a question arose out of a remark, Cora had made. When describing nature and her personal experiences during the soaring summer heat and also the great relief which the ‘Long rains’ bring, she had called it an experience of ‘death and resurrection’. The question was: did the observers’ Christian bias affect the observations made? And if so, to what extent? Did they have in mind “the more overarching motives of the festivals like the birth of the light, like death and ascension, that type of thing?” as it was formulated by the researcher in the interview. The spontaneous answer of Cora was: “It just came out of nature.” As already mentioned, she had earlier described it as a “kind of magic”, that made motives for the festivals “jump out” of their nature observations. She then also had specified that it only happened, when the group of teachers started to *reflect* on the natural phenomena they had observed. “So, it’s on reflecting on our observations.” It is not occurring without the meta-level of reflection. The interview was continued, asking if she sees any relation between what she “saw in nature and some spiritual, some transformational aspects”. She took a very long silent break, to think before answering and then first of all stated, that this is “a very interesting question”. She then declared that she sees such a relation. To exemplify this she again used aspects of her favourite, the Rainbow Festival:

If – say - we look at the Rainbow Festival, which I like very much, yes, it’s nature behaving in this way, but we, being spiritual beings on earth..., what nature is experiencing is mirrored in us. So this thirst and heat and dryness and death in January, we have it also, we can relate to it in a spiritual way.

Cora then characterizes how heat and dryness affect the mood of people, mostly in an unconscious manner, declaring that one could leave it at that, but that it could also be taken to a different level, a level where a feeling of inner connection is rising:

... we can take it to a soul level, to a higher level... but it takes the will of a person to want to transform it... with the human will and awareness we can lift it then to these other levels, where we can find things that connect us...

Out of this connection the person can find, so she envisions, the manner to transform inner experiences, related to outer nature phenomena, into ways of a balanced dealing with these experiences. If necessary the person can even draw ideas out of it for healing. The example she uses also stems from the rainbow season of the long rains:

What does it mean when someone is dry? Should we water them? And what does watering them mean? Giving them colour?.. Like the rainbows?.. Then what is colour? Is it the sharing or the warmth of speaking to another person, listening to another person? So... it's ... it's *very* connected.

She still is struggling for words to express herself, her eyes wandering around in what seems like something very distant and her face expresses awe and wonder. But the process she has been describing has gone from nature experience to personal mood to a search for concepts to an experience of connectedness, wholeness, which seems to be resulting out of this path.

Referring to this higher level to which “human will and awareness” can take the prime experiences, she now enters an overarching field, the sphere of overcoming separating religious and social boundaries, with the possibility of unifying the individual strength. She again uses the experience of “death and resurrection”:

... it's not *only* a resurrection, so we could take it as “only a resurrection”... it's Christ, he has died for our sins, he is resurrecting... And then the Muslim is feeling „What are you telling me about Jesus Christ? To me he's a prophet.“ *Or* we could look at these rainbows and the colours and what colour means ... on a personal level, on a spiritual level, meeting this other person... you bring your strength, I bring my strength, your strength is a different colour, my strength is a different colour... and then we put it together and then - whether you are Muslim or Christian, Luo, Kikuyu... (*Kenyan tribes*) - we all have strengths, we all have weaknesses, we are not divided but we are united.

Now it becomes clear what she means with “higher level”: the concept of colour becomes a metaphor that she uses to transcend nature observations and related personal experience to an experience of oneness. She explains that in this context spirituality reaches beyond religion, tribes and “all these physical differences”. It is uniting people, transiting everything, as she substantiates, but she doesn't want to use the word “God” for it, to not exclude atheists. And then she questions her own concept of magic, trying to find deeper concepts to describe the indescribable: “... if I say magic, then it sounds like black magic, so it's something that brings awe and wonder and reverence ... unites... brings together...”. With these contemplations the

interview ended. They once again exemplified the path that the interviewee described of transcending natural observations, reaching from natural observations and natural experiences to going through specifically related personal moods, then searching for concepts, culminating in an experience of a type of universal connectedness and wholeness.

4.3.8 Difference and similarities between kindergartens' and school's development of new festivals at Nairobi Waldorf School

Kindergarten and school teachers underwent a continuous process of generating new festivals. Both, kindergarten and school teachers did this and keep doing this in a continuous process of openness. This process of searching in the two kindergartens is related to the surrounding nature and its phenomena. In the school it is related to the school's present social life. In both cases seem to occur a type of conscious union or merging with a surrounding condition.

4.4 Summary

In this chapter I answered the first research question by displaying the new forms of festivals that the Kusi Kawsay and Nairobi Waldorf School have developed. The festivals in Nairobi Waldorf School are new in relation to overcoming traditional Christian oriented Waldorf festivals and developing own forms either out of nature observation or out of responding to the social needs of the community. The festivals in Kusi Kawsay are new in relation to what types of festivals are known in Western oriented or European Waldorf schools. However, in a true sense they are antique festivals drawing on ancient Andean wisdom and agricultural rituals. I have also illustrated answering aspects for the second research question, concerning the understanding of the teachers of the two schools about the cultural and / or spiritual background of these festivals. In this area Kusi Kawsay is more geared towards caring for a sustainable and respectful relation with nature, as well as enlivening values and pride in the ancient tradition, free thinking and resulting self-esteem whereas Nairobi Waldorf School is aiming at integration of the multi-religious parenthood and students of their rainbow school, while the kindergarten teachers are celebrating their festivals out of an intense relation with nature. In both cases the background of the festivals, as the teachers illustrate them, is profound and connected with a series of values and metaphors that will be further investigated in the 'Discussion' thus preparing the answer to the third and fourth research questions.

5. Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will present a discussion of my findings in the field (in Kusi Kawsay, Peru and in Nairobi Waldorf School in Kenya). As I investigated these two schools, a major part of the discussion will be a comparative analysis of the two schools, thereby drawing upon concepts of my literature review that were salient in understanding my findings. They will be interpreted and interconnected aiming at understanding the third and fourth research question.

From the comparative analysis it will become clear, that the two schools in many respects are very different. However, I will also demonstrate that they share a similar history of colonialism, as well as traditional Eurocentric Waldorf features that had to be overcome. This process reminds one of a political process which Dei (2010) calls 'conceptual decolonization'. The use of similar concepts from Indigenous knowledge adds to clarity in preparing the answer to the fourth research question. Both schools also share central values in their process of festival creation, stances that have in common a 'universal' meta-level, which also will be recorded. The question of 'liberation' from colonialism and from Waldorf tradition and the values chapter give answers to the third research question:

Which salient factors have appeared in the schools' festival creation?

An evaluation of the schools' experiences with festival creation, connected with paramount theoretical considerations related to festival creation, as well as some aspects of the above mentioned meta-level of values and liberation contribute to answer my fourth sub-question:

What concepts could a non-European or a religiously diverse Waldorf school use to develop annual festivals in relation to its local situation?

5.2 Cultural-historical background

This subchapter will provide insight into the extent in which the specific development of the two schools, Kusi Kawsay and Nairobi Waldorf School was influenced by local history and its colonialism. The creation of Waldorf schools, situated in places remote from Europe, in the past in many cases were associated with strong influences from the central-European Waldorf movement. Those influences displayed a certain inherent ambivalence. They were

necessary for transmitting the basics of the Waldorf principles, but often did not contribute to develop the capabilities of the local professionals to detect and transfer mere Waldorf traditions. The concept of 'Eurocentrism' will be applied to understand this phenomenon. "She showed us the fish, but didn't teach us how to do the fishing", as Fidel said about this situation. Wiredu (1995) and Dei (2010) use the concept of 'conceptual decolonization' for liberating concepts from their Western weight of logic and reason as acknowledged criteria for interpreting the world. So to what degree has Eurocentric thinking effected these schools and were the processes of conceptual decolonisation necessary? This subject area with the questions of Eurocentrism and conceptual decolonization will be treated to provide aspects for other Waldorf schools to detect and overcome traces of Waldorf eurocentrism.

5.2.1 Influences of colonialism

In both schools the various influences of European colonialism have been socializing factors for the surrounding society, in which the school was founded. The question is how far it has influenced the founding of the schools themselves. The findings show that currently, colonialism and its effects on contemporary society, including its effects on school life, is a more (in case of Kusi Kawsay) or less (in case of Nairobi Waldorf School) conscious issue in school life.

When I related to the subject in conversations, the teachers of Nairobi Waldorf School did not seem to be so much aware that there might be colonialist influences in their everyday Waldorf school life, at least they did not talk about it extensively. But I as a researcher seemed to experience it especially in issues around racism and around the huge differences between rich and poor population (not identical with white and black) in the life outside of the school, whereas the influences of colonialism were not as openly perceptible in Nairobi Waldorf School itself, given that I adopt the stance of the founders of Kusi Kawsay, who see racism as a direct result of colonialism. The question of the Nairobi Waldorf School parenthood has to be assessed, a parenthood with comparatively comfortable living standards and with quite a few international parents working at banks, embassies and in other leading positions, whites as well as coloured parents. Kusi Kawsay in comparison has mainly Indigenous parents and students. The few international parents in Kusi Kawsay that I met were Europeans or inhabitants from other South-American countries, who stay in Pisac because of its reputation of being a high-energy esoteric place. The parenthood of Kusi Kawsay is mainly Indigenous

and very aware of the school's issue of overcoming Eurocentric colonialist influences in the sense of Hart's (2010) displaced Indigenous concepts which have to be recovered.

The question of Nairobi Waldorf School's relation to colonialism can be illuminated from two angles. Racism is not a subject that would be talked about in the school community. And although in Kusi Kawsay there are no similar parents as the multicultural parenthood of Nairobi Waldorf School, these cannot be considered a remnant of colonialist times; the school's parenthood is more a reflection of a contemporary capital in a globalized world with banks and embassies, enterprises and NGOs. However, the perspective of looking at the history of the general Kenyan school system and the failure of implanting Kiswahili as an official state and school language, presents a different picture (Mule, 1999). This historical development signified the 'victory' of a Western Knowledge system over an Indigenous one (Dei, 2010; Maurial, 1999). In this sense Nairobi Waldorf School in the curricular question nevertheless reflects colonialism's heritage. The curriculum is clearly oriented in a European Knowledge system (Waldorf). The local language, Kiswahili which many parents and especially grandparents, even teachers are speaking at home, is taught in the curricular place as a foreign language, like Quetchua is taught in Kusi Kawsay. So summarizing this question of colonialist influences on Nairobi Waldorf School's school development one has to state that there is this one area where remnants of colonialism are apparent in Nairobi Waldorf School. An extension of the Eurocentrism concept to European Waldorf influences would pose the question whether, in which areas and subjects and also to which degree the curricular concepts of Waldorf pedagogy are broad and encompassing enough to include the local learner's worlds, a question that Boland (2014b) raised.

Regarding colonialist influences in Kusi Kawsay, the picture is more coherent. As became clear in the interviews, the founding of the Kusi Kawsay school was directly geared towards overcoming the colonialist influences of low self-esteem and devaluation of the Andean culture, and as such was founded as a result of colonial influences.

To sum it up: as far as colonialist influences in the political sense are concerned both schools are affected, Kusi Kawsay stronger, Nairobi Waldorf School only in the Kiswahili issue. This had to be layed out to facilitate a distinction of historical colonialist influences from Waldorf influences that also might be considered colonialist (and in a certain sense are). In that sense both schools seem to be affected in a similar way by the type of 'Waldorf Eurocentrism' that resulted in the use of European Waldorf festivals.

5.2.2 `Waldorf Eurocentrism` and liberation

As in many other cases Nairobi Waldorf School's foundation had a direct European origin (in this case German). There even has been written a book in German about this founding process which was supported financially from Germany (Wutte, 2009). It mirrors the idealism that the founders put into this process. This idealism however, is a double-edged sword. However without this sword would exist no Nairobi Waldorf School with happy children and parents, offering a holistic alternative to the rather intellectual and Western knowledge oriented school system (field diary).

But this idealism was combined with a strong sense of mission (Wutte, 2009) and resulted in contents, structures and festivals of school life which very strongly resembled German Waldorf schools. It took some steps to grow awareness and self-confidence for the teachers of the school to liberate themselves from these influences that might as well be called Waldorf Eurocentrism, in Morrow's (2009) sense of the demand for the universal validity of Western understanding of philosophy, science and values. Is there a validity being claimed for the universally applicable mode of all contents and forms of Waldorf pedagogy everywhere in the world? In which areas would such a universality be adequate? Which concepts could really be claimed to be universal? Waldorf researchers are working with this issue in their every day teacher's lives.

Ultimately, as far as I understood, this liberation process of the teachers of Nairobi Waldorf School only was possible, after the European teachers had left the school. A related question has to be asked using Boland's (2014b, p.1) picture of "sticking wings on a caterpillar and calling it a butterfly". Has Nairobi Waldorf School succeeded in transforming the principles of Waldorf education and the contents of its pedagogy to a careful local contextualization or is it still `sticking wings on a caterpillar`? I dare say that in the case of the Nairobi Waldorf School kindergartens, in the process of developing their festivals out of these intense processes of nature observation, a careful local contextualization has occurred. One might suggest that the same happened in the school's very considerate contextualization of the festivals to the local social conditions.

In Kusi Kawsay the liberation from Eurocentric Waldorf impulses arose around the time of the leaving of the first experienced Waldorf teacher. Although she was Peruvian she was very European oriented and introduced structures, European contents and festivals, similar to the

process in Nairobi. After having overcome the first struggles concerned with finding a location for the school, the founders were able to concentrate on questions around the contents and structures. They started investigations of how to adapt the structures of Andean Cosmovision to the principles of Waldorf education or vice versa and made clear decisions. For example; they decided that no European fairytales or stories should be told to the children. They had strong sensations about those pictures, like kings and princesses, being very European and quite colonialist. With this decision, they gained a certain freedom in relation to the principles of Andean Cosmovision, which they experience as non-hierarchical (everything is connected in reciprocity/ayni). However, until they will have managed to investigate local stories with the ancients in the *comunidades* they cannot use this important educational instrument and the children are suffering a little, especially the small ones (see Findings, Breaktime). With regards to the curriculum, they also did a lot of work reconceptualising the whole 1st-6th class Waldorf curriculum by bringing it into unison with the principles of Andean Cosmovision (see Findings, 'The evenings'). According to Maurial (1999) the schooling of Andean people via a foreign curriculum did not, as expected, lead the Andean people to progress and success. This might be due to the partly difficult agricultural conditions, but more likely it is due to the distinct Western logic and ratio related knowledge. So the adaption and partly transformation of the Waldorf curriculum to Kusi Kawsay values fulfilled a hidden need. In this respect they also have been liberated from traditional Eurocentric Waldorf contents, replacing them with, what to the pedagogical director seemed, adequate Andean contents. Such liberation processes can again be investigated with the concepts of 'conceptual decolonization' and 'careful local contextualization'. The Kusi Kawsay liberation from Waldorf traditions, which was relatively easy for them because they had not been so emerged in the principles of Waldorf education and Anthroposophy before, in a certain sense could be called conceptual decolonization. The Waldorf concepts were decolonized, liberated in many cases from traditional sacrosanct connotations (like the fairytales) and transformed (or not transformed in the fairytale case) into local motives. Careful local contextualization is an epistemological issue and takes its time. As a stance, it struggles to overcome the reductionist approach of only acknowledging Western oriented concepts of logic, reason, rationality (Dei, 2010). Yet, a problem appears: the Kusi Kawsay founders went about this liberation process of conceptual decolonisation with their educational socialization of having been exposed to and adapted to Western Knowledge systems. It can be asked, if even their somewhat revolutionary attitude towards the local

conditions of a mainly Western oriented society, with the result of the founding of the school, is a result of this Western knowledge critical thinking. The same question can be raised with regard to the fairy tale issue. And then: could they overcome their ambivalence towards the spiritual aspects of their own Cosmvision, possibly created by their educational exposure to Western logic and rationale, via deeper involvement with Steiner's (1985) concept of 'thinking with the cycle of the year'?

5.2.3 And the festivals?

The development of different forms of festivals in Kusi Kawsay and Nairobi Waldorf School was centrally related to both schools' history. In Kusi Kawsay it was a strong expression of liberation from colonialist-Catholic influences. Rist (1999, p.201) illustrates in relation to the way the contemporary festivals in Andean society are celebrated: "Underneath their catholic cosmetics, the festivals still maintain a great part of their original sense". Kusi Kawsay is recovering the festivals and taking away the cosmetics. The school's process of festival creation was possible because of the liberation from Waldorf traditions and to an equal part due to the founders' rediscovery of the Andean agricultural calendar.

The related awareness within the Nairobi Waldorf School community slowly rose after the European teachers had left and the school kept celebrating European-Christian festivals. Thus the process of reconceptualization began. In the case of Kusi Kawsay; it is salient that they are undergoing a process of decolonization related to the revaluation of Andean Cosmvision in society and a process of reconceptualization in Waldorf curriculum and festivals (as part of the curriculum). But I see a similar stance in what happened and still is happening in Nairobi Waldorf School concerning the liberation from Waldorf traditions, a process which would be healthy for quite a few European Waldorf schools also, in the sense of what is developing around the impulse of intercultural Waldorf schools (Brater et al 2007).

5.3 Rituals and Festivals

This subchapter will treat the impact that rituals can have on the social life of communities and the significance of rituals in both investigated schools, Kusi Kawsay and Nairobi Waldorf School. It categorizes school specific, but also paramount values and metaphors that emerged in the interviews.

5.3.1 Community

Both, sociologists (Homann, 2004; Maurer, 2004) and ritual theorists (Durkheim, 2013; Quantz, 1999) argue that rituals and festivals have a significant impact on the participating communities. They claim that rituals and festivals are important for communities, because the social experiences of festivals contribute to and reinforce social life. This experience creates feelings of solidarity within the participants of a festival and is essential for maintaining the social order in a group or society (Durkheim, 2013; Homann, 2004; Maurer, 2004; Quantz, 1999). In Indigenous knowledge, the significance and scope of rituals is broadened even further and encompasses not only humans, but also animals and spiritual entities that come together and celebrate rituals for *mutual* help and support (Bolin, 1999; Hart, 2010).

A look into the community experiences of the investigated schools again presents differences, but also similarities. Both schools are celebrating 'community' in festivals and rituals and both schools welcome strangers as positively contributing to their communal life, making them part of their festival celebrations like an equal member of the community. Both schools define themselves to a certain degree via their festival celebration, thus enhancing the communal spirit that Maurer (2004) and other authors speak about. However there are differences.

In the case of the Kusi Kawsay the above mentioned aspect of rituals' significance for building of a community in a self defining sense (Maurer, 2004) is very salient. Maurer argues that communities can use festival celebration not only for maintaining social bonds, but also to define themselves and their values. In this sense Kusi Kawsay clearly defines itself as an Andean community with the related values. The members use the ritualistic elements of the agricultural celebrations to transmit values to the children. Festivals are mostly related to the agricultural calendar in the Andean world (Rist, 1999) and Kusi Kawsay's value education presents a common Andean procedure. Huaman & Valdiviezo (2014) describe that the work in the chakra (field) is the place where children are not only being taught abilities but also values, because "the space demands respect, conscientiousness and reciprocity" (Huaman & Valdiviezo, 2012, p. 80). Kusi Kawsay thus uses festivals not only to reinforce the revaluation of the Andean Cosmivision within their community, but also to delimit themselves from other Andean population groups that look rather suspiciously at the Kusi Kawsay school and their founders who do not adapt so much to the demands of modern society, and its demeaning posture towards the Andean heritage and work in the chakra (field). This Kusi

Kawsay experience coincides with the research results of Huaman & Valdiviezo (2012) who describe a devaluation of Peruvian Indigenous farm life due to the influences of colonialism. This context once again sheds light on Daco's consideration within the interview about having to develop courage to study in Kusi Kawsay school.

Nairobi Waldorf School has a multicultural community with a variety of world views and cultures which defines itself in the search for a careful and conscious integration of all these different ethnical and religious backgrounds. Simply said they are in search of their specific communal values, one of which Mary called 'togetherness'. Developing their particular festivals they underwent different paths. The school clearly searched for ways to transform existent Christian annual festivals by using more universal metaphors, like they kept the traditional Waldorf Michaelmas motive of courage in the transition process. They then called this celebration the Festival of Courage. Hilbers (2006) emphasizes the healing aspect of annual festivals, which as she holds, are mainly religious festivals. There is no doubt that the Nairobi Waldorf School Festival of Courage displays socially healing features, 'healing' in the sense of helping the children to overcome their anxieties (Peter). In that context Hilbers also speaks about the emotionally stabilizing aspects, which likewise can be found in this Nairobi Waldorf School festival (Mary). But has Nairobi Waldorf School in this case overcome the Christian religious background? Or in what sense have they overcome it? And would it be important to overcome it? Would they gain anything? All these questions equally apply to the Easter Brunch in which motives of 'fasting' and 'sharing a meal' have not really moved beyond the religious implications of the Holy Week. I could not get a clear picture if this was purposeful in Nairobi Waldorf School festival creation process, but when evaluating it, I came to the conclusion, that the teachers must have wanted to transform the religious motives into something 'universal' but not relinquish the underlying Christian background. That poses important questions, which I will refer to in the Conclusion.

It is different in the Nairobi Waldorf School kindergarten festivals. Cora spoke about the Rainbow Festival, which is celebrated around the time of the Easter Brunch. When she described the seasonal rains bringing relief after months of soaring heat, she spoke about an experience of "death and resurrection". When I asked Cora about the implications of the Rainbow Festival, if they were related to Easter, she related that the motive "...just came out of nature." Maurer (2004) states that mankind has added a factor of culture to the dependency of nature by creating annual or as he calls them 'cyclical' festivals. In the Nairobi Waldorf

School's newly developed festivals, I definitely sense an element of overcoming the dependency on nature, simply by taking a step from the traditional via communal contemplating/observation processes to the development of new motives for their festivals.

It came as a surprise to me, that a common feature of both schools' self-definition is that at least one interviewee from each school mentioned explicitly, or in an inherent manner, the concept of 'universality' as an important result or ingredient of their world view and related communal processes of celebrating or creating festivals (Ester, Kusi Kawsay; Cora, Nairobi Waldorf School).

As a researcher, I strongly experienced the specific feeling and conception of community in both schools. In Nairobi Waldorf School, I was welcomed and consciously integrated by cordial people as another contributor to the colourful *rainbow school* (Cora), but sensed the forces the teachers of Nairobi Waldorf School have to put into their integrating efforts not only specifically with me, but on all levels of school life. In the Kusi Kawsay school, I was welcomed by equally cordial people and consciously integrated as a foreigner, but specialist in Waldorf education and as a researcher. Right from the first moment, people were explaining the concepts of Andean Cosmovision and helped me to understand this first sight of a very different world. The experience of the impact of community life on me as a researcher was equally positive and strong in both schools. In the festivals themselves, I was able to feel identified with the community as well in Kusi Kawsay as in Nairobi Waldorf School. This capacity to make participants merge with the community is one feature that Maurer (2004) attributes to festivals, to that type of festivals which Cameron (2004) calls 'festivals of belief' or 'sacred festivals'. I would place the festivals of both schools into this category because of their strong relation with values and different levels of meaning, which will be demonstrated in the following chapters.

5.3.2 Values and metaphors

When describing their festivals, the interviewees invoked a considerable amount of values and metaphors. The interviewees of Kusi Kawsay consistently declared value education as a central educational concern of their school. The values they spoke about were all taken from the Andean Cosmovision except one (free thinking). In Nairobi Waldorf School the interviewees also connected festival celebration with value education, but less focused. Some of the values mentioned in the Nairobi Waldorf School interviews were a result of the actual

process of reconceptualization during the development of festivals itself, some had been part of Nairobi Waldorf School concepts before (courage, moderation) as far as I could understand. For the latter ones, the Nairobi Waldorf School teachers searched related experiences through which the children could get in touch with these values. A basic difference between the schools is that Kusi Kawsay teachers explicitly speak with the children about these values before and during the festivals, whereas Nairobi Waldorf School teachers confine to let the children experience themselves, without talking about it more than maybe in a related metaphoric story. I suppose the reason for this might be the typical Waldorf educational trust into the child's ability to digest and transform a strong experience with metaphorical content into an age-adequate image, which will unfold its effect when needed.

School encompassing values:

Reciprocity/ Ayni in Quetchua

Bolin (1998, p. 43) characterizes reciprocity as a very basic and central expression of the Andean Cosmivision and life: "... reciprocity, the hallmark of Andean Life ... offering and asking, giving and taking...", whereas Hart (2010) goes beyond and describes it as a central quality of all the Indigenous knowledge systems, so it does not come as a surprise to find reciprocity as a central value in both schools, although there is no direct inner connection visible between Indigenous knowledge and Nairobi Waldorf School.

Ayni is one of the most essential values of the Andean Cosmivision. Ester characterizes it as maybe being its most central value and Daco speaks about a multifaceted and complex concept. Reciprocity is the basis of *every Kusi Kawsay festival* as it is the basis of the way how nature is being treated and all festivals have an agricultural connection. It is like a second nature of Andean people, but at the same time it works like the only law in Andean society (Ester).

Reciprocity is a concept that the Nairobi Waldorf School community consciously celebrates in the sharing of the *Easter Brunch*. The children are preparing the food, the tables, written cards with nice words for another class, the school kitchen is likewise preparing something. Not only teachers, but all members of the staff are included. In this case the teachers bring to the consciousness of the children how much the school community owes to these busy helpers, and how important it is to always be nice and considerate with them (Mary).

Courage and perseverance

According to Daco of Kusi Kawsay it is an attitude that the children learn just via being in the school. The school is considered not only to be different but also to be a little 'strange'. So going to this school is connected with inner perseverance and with the courage to be different.

The Nairobi Waldorf School Festival of Courage in September is an occasion that the children are looking very much forward to because of the real exciting challenges of courage that the teachers provide for the children as the main part of this festival (Mary). Starting those challenges in the first grade and participating every subsequent year, the children are experiencing a sustainable increase in self-esteem once they succeed in challenges they were afraid to tackle in the past year (Peter).

Reverence and gratefulness

Both schools' festivals are pervaded by feelings of gratefulness and reverence towards nature. Bolin (1998) speaks about a sacred sphere that participants enter in the Andean festivals, also via reverence and gratefulness.

In Kusi Kawsay those two values pervade every festival, often in a quite personalized manner with regard to Pachamama (universe) and Alpamama (Mother Earth). "If there is no gratefulness: difficult ... difficult!" (Ester).

In Nairobi Waldorf School this value is especially strong in the kindergartens where the teachers have developed festivals out of an intensive process of nature observation. A specific example of a celebration of gratefulness is the Festival of Flowers in the kindergarten. It is interesting that gratefulness in Nairobi Waldorf School appears in a nature related festival also. It points to an inherent connection between nature and experienced gratefulness.

Respect

According to Quantz (1999) a ritual is closely connected to respect, and the circumstance that rituals evoke respect brings them close to what Durkheim (2013) describes as a sacred sphere related to all rituals. As a value it permeates explicitly the Kusi Kawsay festivals and perceptibly the descriptions of Nairobi Waldorf School interviewees.

According to Fidel, respect is the most central value in Andean Cosmovision: "...the respect towards myself, the respect towards the others ... towards everything I encounter in my path".

Respect permeates all the other values and is demonstrated in every festivity again towards Alpamama with its nature and towards Pachamama.

Respect is a value that was not explicitly mentioned by the Nairobi Waldorf School interviewees, but it was a stance that I could feel inherent in the whole social atmosphere of welcoming the mutual social differences, even appreciating them until celebrating them in the Festival of Light.

Unique values / metaphors of each school

Work in the chakra (field) according to some authors (Bolin, 1998; Rist, 1999) is an activity that is so central in the Andean Indigenous life, that in my perception it has the significance of a value itself. At any rate the interviewees describe how they use it in school for teaching values.

Joy of life and its sharing are conscious values also. The school is even named according to this value. Kusi Kawsay means the *Happy Life* and the interviewees referred to this value when they translated the school's name.

Free thinking came as a surprise to me, when it was mentioned as an important pedagogical value and goal by Ester and Daco from Kusi Kawsay. According to those two, it developed out of a close observation of nature, that means out of that "what really IS" (Ester) and out of being educated with a sense of dignity and self-esteem (Daco). I understand observing "what really is" as a process of objectifying and overcoming personal assumptions. Rist et. al. (1999) in his portrait of the main concepts of Andean Cosmovision relates as one of the central concepts the experience of *Pachankiri*, being an independent person. It comes a little close to but still is not identical with free thinking. It was an interesting finding for me, to realize that independence and in Kusi Kawsay free thinking are desired cultural achievements in Andean society.

Light is a concept that appears in the Nairobi Waldorf School interviews not only in connection with the Festival of Light. In the school's proper linguistic use, the term 'light', according to Rappaport's (1999) classification, is being elevated from the low-order meaning of pure description to the middle-order meaning of becoming meaningful. I claim that this meaningfulness is desirable for the school life and gives the word 'light' the significance of a value. 'Light' in this sense is being described in contrast to the experience of darkness in the kindergarten's Lantern Walk. When it is used for the name of Festival of Light, it even goes beyond that level. It now serves as a metaphor for the central experience in the most

important festivals of the four world religions, present in the school community and named in the findings. Metaphors in Rappaport's classification are enriching the experience of the world into a more encompassing sphere and belong to the high-level order. Transgressing the borders of an individual's consciousness it can even lead to a numinous experience that, according to Rappaport (1999), in its range can include the cosmos. This has happened in Nairobi Waldorf School, at least to Cora who describes some of her experiences in the Festival of Light as an experience of cosmic quality: "...it creates light for a better world... cosmic is the word I would like to use for it..." Assessment of the use 'Light' in connection with Nairobi Waldorf School festival creation and performance points to a twofold quality: that of 'Light' being a meaningful value, in school life worth striving for and a metaphor, in Rappaport's sense of enabling a "unification of self with other" (Rappaport, 2013, p. 71). Togetherness is a concept that Mary from Nairobi Waldorf School used in connection with the search of conceptual and structural possibilities for celebrating new festivals and the inclusion of parents into this process. She also experiences togetherness in the Easter Brunch. And it speaks out of Peter's words, when he describes that the process of festival creation had to do with overcoming separating religious and social boundaries to instead unify strength. In the week before the Easter Brunch, the students experience another value. By eating a bit less in school and thus saving money which is given to worthy causes, they experience moderation. Although one would suppose that living in Africa, the children should be used to moderation, it is clear that the children of this school mostly come from relatively wealthy homes. So eating less and consciously renouncing food must be quite an experience for them. Together with the experience of giving to others it becomes gratifying.

Summary

Values and metaphors are permeating the festivals and rituals of Kusi Kawsay and Nairobi Waldorf School, both in the process of their creation and their festive performances. There are common values to be found, present in the value system of both schools, values that reach towards the most developed social endeavours of humans' community life. Durkheim's (2013) claim that via rituals communities enter a sacred realm can be understood if one considers all these values to be inherent in the schools' festivals. Grimes (2014) supports this by illustrating that experiencing values in a ritual or festive performance can cause feelings that are strong enough to be labelled sacred, religious or spiritual.

In the case of both schools, the more individual, school specific, values can be understood as utterances, needs, or expressions of the particular natural and cultural surrounding such as in the case of Kusi Kawsay: the *work in the chakra* (specifically its revaluation) and the translation of the school's name *Happy Life*. It comprises more of that attitude which Morrow (2009) called *careful local contextualization*, a stance which supports the respect for local life worlds more than a general acceptance of all utterances of Indigenous knowledge. In Morrow's sense, the values and metaphors can be fathomed as objectives of working with the local conditions such as in the case of Nairobi Waldorf School the *Light, togetherness, moderation*. And in this sense some values can be understood as wanting to overcome the local conditions, like in the case of Kusi Kawsay the educational goal of *free thinking*.

5.4 Dialogue

This chapter aims at displaying the interconnectedness of concepts that have turned out to occupy a central position in the findings of this research. The 'Relationship with nature' is probed in its various aspects in both schools. It is also related to concepts from Ritual Theory and Indigenous knowledge. Descriptions of Rudolf Steiner are discussed to enhance and complement those findings where the inquiry reaches deeper into the experience of 'Connectedness' and then into its highest form, the experience of 'The Sacred', which I claim can be understood as a form of 'dialogue'.

5.4.1 Relationship with nature

One outstanding feature of Indigenous knowledge is, according to some authors (Huaman&Valdiviezo, 2012; Maurial, 1999; Rist, 1999), the relationship of the people with nature. "There is no fundamental separation between material, social, and spiritual phenomena", says Rist (2011, p. 12), a context which implies that there is no separation between people and nature either. This idea can be applied for considerations about both schools. In the case of Kusi Kawsay, it is well justified because of Kusi Kawsay's founding impulse of revaluation of Andean Cosmovision. In the case of Nairobi Waldorf School, the pre-colonial history of Kenya supports the use of concepts from Indigenous knowledge because of the described colonial influences which reach far into Kenyan independence and concern the use of Kiswahili in school. The question is; in what way has this original relation to nature transformed in the multicultural "Rainbow school" (Cora) Nairobi Waldorf School?

In the Nairobi Waldorf School, the relation with nature has to be distinguished between the primary school and kindergarten. The Nairobi Waldorf primary school's approach to festival development did not include nature observation nor did it present any other relation between the festivals and nature. The teachers developed the motives for the festivals out of a transformation process of the traditional festivals. However, in the creation of Nairobi Waldorf School kindergarten's festivals' and their performances, nature played and still plays a relevant role. As presented in the findings, the new festivals in the two Nairobi Waldorf School kindergartens developed out of a two year long consequent process of nature observation. In that case Steiner's concept of thinking within the cycle of the year has successfully been applied: nature observation, however performed without conscious purpose. Then, in the next step, resulted the "jumping out" of motives that Cora described so vividly. It was a result of this two year long observational process. Applying Rappaport's (2013) classification of levels of meaning to this context leads to the following considerations: nature observation in a first step signifies classifying visible phenomena and describing these phenomena. So for two years, just observing and describing nature, as related in the findings (4.3.6), the teachers moved in the level of low-order meaning. In the second step, when the Australian teacher, who was guiding this process, asked for motives that could be used for more locally adequate festivals, the motives "jumped out" (Cora): observed nature phenomena now developed significance, the middle-order meaning was reached. But there is a third stage to be reached and it also happened in Nairobi Waldorf School.

In the interview with Cora, she described the stages that underwent the kindergarten teachers. When observing nature, she started to notice what "really happened", a coincidence with Kusi Kawsay's experience of "what really *is*" (Ester). She was amazed, because she had lived in that nature since childhood and had never been aware of the phenomena. However, interpreting it with Rappaport's concept of levels of meaning, she still moved in the experience of low-order meaning, because the experience of meaningfulness had not yet appeared. But she described that in the next step, in the process of reflecting about the phenomena with the other colleagues, these phenomena were lifted to a different level, to a level where a sensation of inner meaningful connection was rising, a sensation which is related to what Rappaport describes as middle-order meaning. And then, by a wilful process, so she says, she transformed the experience of *rainbow* and the motive of *colour* which meaningfully had jumped out to an experience of oneness and connectedness of universal character. "Or we could look at these rainbows and the colours and what colour means ... on a

personal level, on a spiritual level... we are not divided but we are united” (Cora). These are the features of a high-order meaning experience of identification and numinous union (Rappaport, 2013).

Kusi Kawsay’s relationship with nature is trying to reach back to Andean Cosmivision and its close relation with nature, this original state of no separation between beings (Rist, 2011). However, in the interviews it became clear that two of the interviewees preferred to speak about *those* concepts and values from Andean Cosmivision that were not related to the ‘invisible’ or what Hart (2010) calls ‘spiritual’ aspects of nature beings. An example is, when Daco referred to mythology when he explained the *Machulas* (mythological ancient people). On the one hand he explained the rituals that are being held for the machulas (dancing and tapping on the ground to lure them out of the earth’s depths) as if he would consider them real, on the other hand he explained them to be mythological beings who only were able to live under the light of the moon, whereas the contemporary humans can live under the sun. Rappaport (2013) explains this phenomenon as being a problem of representatives of naïve scientism and naïve rationalism who eschew transcending low-order meaning to discovering meaningfulness of phenomena or participation in a high-order meaning experience. Battiste (2010, p. 16), when speaking about Eurocentrism and the dominance of Western Knowledge systems describes this tension, that Daco is experiencing: “Today, Indigenous peoples around the world continue to feel the tensions created by a Eurocentric educational system that has taught them not to trust Indigenous knowledge, but to rely on science and technology for tools for their future”. Ester expressed this ambivalence when she was asked about the more spiritual aspects of the Andean Agricultural Calendar. She explained that she does not know “anything about the invisible, although it must be there, since there is electricity.” It is salient that in this ambivalence, which the Andean Agricultural Calendar actually must present to her in this respect, she helps herself with an image of electricity, taken out of Western natural sciences. According to Battiste (2010) the solution to this epistemological problem would consist in unlearning Eurocentric superiority and reconceptualising the notion ‘knowledge’. In the case of nature observation the Kusi Kawsay people are getting pretty close to that. Ester claims that nature observation, with the help of the Agricultural Calendar leads to seeing “what really *is*” and then, as a result, to a state of independent judgement or free thinking. Steiner (1985) calls for overcoming the abstract perception of nature to reach a new, more tangible, relation with nature through its observation during the seasons. He even connects

that with “a sound paganism” (Steiner, 1980b, p.89). The related activity he calls “thinking with the cycle of the year” (Steiner, 1985, p.40). The coincidence of Kusi Kawsay’s path of reaching a capability of free thinking via nature observation (Ester), and Steiner’s claim for thinking with the cycle of the year shows a notable affinity, which might lead to the question if there exists a relationship between nature observation, thinking and freedom. Connecting the processes, the Kusi Kawsay school and the Nairobi Waldorf School kindergarten underwent, one can at least claim that in these two cases the combination of nature observation and Steiner’s (1985) concept of thinking with the cycle of the year, although performed unconsciously by the teachers of both schools, led to the freedom to develop non-traditional festivals.

5.4.2 Interconnectedness and the Sacred

Interconnectedness is a concept that permeates theories and experiences in this thesis in different places. When Turner (1987) further conceptualizes Van Gennep’s (1960) transitional stages, he emphasizes the second, emotionally most chaotic transitional stage, calling it liminality. He describes how out of this stage of total limbo another state of consciousness is developed which he calls *communitas*. *Communitas* signifies a feeling of encompassing social connectedness, as a result of an existential transition ritual in which all social hierarchies are dissolved, a type of communal numinous experience. In Ritual Theory interconnectedness is also met when Rappaport (2013) develops his different ‘levels of meaning’: High-order meaning experiences grow out of participation, and in their more elevated forms they reach into feelings of connectedness and unity which can include the whole universe, an example would be Cora’s description of her “cosmic” experiences in one year’s Festival of Light.

(Inter-)Connectedness is a concept that also permeates almost all illustrations of the features of Indigenous knowledge. Rist (2011) describes that there is no separation between the material, social and spiritual spheres of life in Andean Cosmovision. It is common to all Indigenous knowledge systems that all elements of their respective world views are intertwined and connected (Hart, 2010; Kawano, 2011; Martin, 2008). Hart differentiates between the experience of connectedness of a group and that of a single person, illustrating that discoveries of inner space can occur in such moments. Moments such as these enable experiences that go beyond the visible to the forces that initiate growth in living beings.

Steiner's (1985) descriptions of the different stages of consciousness of people in ancient cultures are quite similar to Hart's (2010) description of inner space discoveries. Steiner maintains that people in ancient times were not so much perceiving outer shapes but, more dream-like, were perceiving life forces. Berman (1981) uses the concept when he speaks about *participative* consciousness, to which Rappaport (2013) refers as the level of high-order meaning. Participation was Rappaport's feature for reaching a high-order meaning. Daco of Kusi Kawsay describes that in the Andean world there is not any separation, everything is connected: "We don't understand ourselves as isolated but absolutely interdependent and inter-relational. Here the paradigm of freedom doesn't make sense." He describes this interdependence as a desirable state. This presents an interesting paradoxon. How can, on the one side, interdependence and no freedom be proclaimed and on the other hand, educating the students to be free thinkers present a pedagogical goal? Hart's (2010) concept of inner space discoveries can help to unify this seeming discrepancy. Isn't it a similar process when in Indigenous societies a person experiences connectedness with the whole surrounding and at the same time can reach inner space discoveries as an individual? Also Steiner's (1985) concept of thinking with the cycle of the year, which according to him will lead to a new connection with nature, includes the polarity of (thinking) activity of an individual and connectedness with an encompassing sphere. In Steiner's case, it is an activity that starts in the individual. It starts as a thinking process which is geared towards connection with nature and its seasons and thus leads to a state of interconnectedness. In Hart's case of inner space discoveries, the process is initiated as a result of first experiencing interconnectedness, leading from an encompassing to an individual experience. So seemingly there are two processes with contrariwise directions. What might seem like a paradox loses its contradiction when thought together in time and space as two perspectives on the same state of encompassing connected consciousness.

All these considerations seem to ultimately touch a state that Durkheim (2013) called 'the sacred'. It seems as though ritual and festival performances and their creation, as well as experiences within Indigenous knowledge systems can lead to a state of connectedness that touches something that Cora did not want to call God, out of respect for the atheists in her school community. Conscious of the very different implications of the concept spirituality, she still uses it to describe a stage of awe, wonder, reverence and connectedness. Grimes (2014) also points to this sphere in relation to rituals: feelings can get so strong that

participants describe them with adjectives like sacred, religious and spiritual. At this point, it has to be added that the concept spirituality is known to be a manifold concept, but in spite of this fact, it is being used and discussed also in the academy as for example Dei, coming from African Indigenous knowledge, claims that “the spiritual is a valid way of knowing” (Dei, 2010, p.7) and is “beyond dualities, beyond the physical and material” (Dei, 2010, p. 7). Cora’s illustration of a stage of awe, wonder, reverence and connectedness coincides with this. Kawano (2011) doubts the possibility that the depths of spiritual experiences within Indigenous knowledge systems can be fathomed, which would support a more uninhibited academic use of the notion spirituality. And although at other places Dei (2010) is defining the concept a little more, his words still stay broad and encompassing. Maybe Dei’s open use of the concept is one move into overcoming Eurocentric scientific limitations which seem to maintain that spirituality is too broad a notion to be used without a specific definition.

5.5 Aspects for Festival Creation

This chapter will discuss and clarify prominent aspects and processes for festival creation which emerged out of the chosen literature and out of the individual results of my findings in the two schools, Kusi Kawsay and Nairobi Waldorf School.

5.5.1 Steiner’s understanding of the Christ impulse and its significance for Waldorf Festival Creation

In what is being called the ‘Breathing-Cycle’, the lectures mainly used for this thesis, Steiner (1985) transmits an approach to the Christ-impulse which is detached from any tincture or connection with most classical religious or ecclesiastic concepts. According to Steiner, Christ is a high spiritual being who has been connected with the Earth ever since its coming into existence, but has intensified this connection to a permeation of the earth itself. Thus, Steiner (1985) describes, this spiritual being is now connected with all of the earth’s spheres, seeing his essence in a constant earthly breathing process, related to the seasons and globally encompassing both hemispheres and the cosmos. For Steiner, Christ is a cosmic being, transcending religious connotations and essential for the earth’s welfare. This cannot, in my view, imply a real need for individuals to belong to a church or consider oneself a Christian, or even be aware of the Christ occurrences. It implies, I suggest, what the Intercultural Waldorf School in Mannheim strives to put into praxis, “... the attitude of true philanthropy, the endeavour to understand the other, the struggle for tolerance” (Brater et al, 2007, p. 237).

It includes atheists as well as people from other religious belief systems. Boland (mail from 13/4/2015) uses the concept supra-religious to describe this context. For me this leads to the following considerations:

Waldorf schools were founded in Europe with a European cultural and Christian background (Hemleben, 1963). The education's main feature is the curriculum which adapts contents to the psychological necessities of the child's age-related developmental steps within her or his natural environment (Stehlik, 2008). There is a consciousness in the Western Waldorf movement about the importance of the Christ-being for the world (Hemleben, 1963). But how far does this specific consciousness have to form a prerequisite for every Waldorf school? Is it justified to ask, as in the case of the Inter-cultural Waldorf School in Mannheim, Germany, whether a school with an inter-cultural approach is corresponding well with the "Christian foundation of Waldorf education"? (Brater et al, 2007, p.235). Or is it rather the attitude that defines a Waldorf school? This attitude that, again, Brater et al (2007, p. 235) describe with the words: "With the Christian element never was meant something confessional, but the attitude of true philanthropy...". This attitude does not only pertain to the Inter-cultural Waldorf School in Mannheim, Germany, but also to the primary school of Nairobi Waldorf School and its festival creation processes and festival performances. To exemplify this attitude of philanthropy and tolerance in Nairobi Waldorf School, the moment of one year's Easter Brunch preparation can be remembered with Mary's description of someone suddenly realizing: "How can we not bring in these people, when we are celebrating this light? To care for one another and be kind to each other... and bring *the* light into our school that we all want..." That was the moment when Nairobi Waldorf School teachers decided to include the kitchen and cleaning staff and the guards in uniforms into their celebration of Easter Brunch. This decision brought in that sense of tolerance and empathy, Brater et al (2007) spoke about which Mary formulated that way: "...meeting this other person... you bring your strength, I bring my strength, your strength is a different colour, my strength is a different colour... and then we put it together and then - whether you are Muslim or Christian, Luo, Kikuyu ... (*Kenyan tribes*) - we all have strengths, we all have weaknesses, we are not divided but we are united".

Another essential aspect has to be added. Given Steiner's (1985) description of the Christ-being at work in a globally and cosmic encompassing manner, then the question is if this Being is not especially sensitive to a place where a deep connection to nature's breathing

processes is being striven for. This search for connection with the cycle of the year, with the earth's breathing processes is characteristic for Nairobi Waldorf School kindergarten and for Kusi Kawsay. How would a Being feel when it is perceived in such dedicated way, as it occurred in Nairobi Waldorf School kindergartens nature observation processes and in Kusi Kawsay's festivals? Moreover Kusi Kawsay's ecological attitude has to be mentioned: "In Kusi Kawsay we don't want an ecological attitude out of fear of losing ... We want to have an ecological attitude out of love for the earth" (Daco).

I did not directly speak with the interviewees of both schools about this question. I eschewed to touch the subject because of what I deemed to be cultural tactfulness. It appeared to be especially justified in Kusi Kawsay, considering the teachers' attitude towards every religious subject. For them, such considerations still are associated with the history of the Catholic Church in Peru which strongly belittled and still belittles Indigenous Andean knowledge and was: "... trying to convince these people, in the name of the (Christian) God, that their way of life is bad, - people, who live peacefully even without police!!!" (Daco). I had the impression that it will take some time and also slow processes of conversation to relate the difference between the deeds of the Catholic Church towards the Andean background of the people, and what could be a concept like that of a cosmic Christ who breathes in nature's cycle of the year. To mention the question of a Waldorf school being a Christian school, in Kusi Kawsay would have opened an abyss. As far as Nairobi Waldorf School is concerned, the subject is not that sensitive since the Kenyan society is very religious and seems to enjoy their religiousness. But the endeavour of the school and kindergarten to find new festivals also made them sensitive; they are very aware of their multi-religious school community and thus one specific religion was not a topic in our conversations nor was the topic of Steiner's concept of the cosmic Christ.

So I claim that it is possible and in the case of Waldorf schools in non-Christian or multi-religious surroundings even necessary to develop annual festivals without relying on Christian tradition. In the case of Waldorf schools in more Christian oriented surroundings it might, in many places, also be essential to get into similar considerations because of the growing cultural and religious mixture of populations in contemporary global societies, in Europe as well as in other continents.

5.5.2 Dialogical approach in processes of festival creation

The concept of dialogical approach is the main concept of Majores' (2009) master thesis about festival creation processes in Michael Oak Waldorf School, Cape Town, South Africa. It also emerges as one of the most central concepts out of this research's findings, as well in literature as in the findings and stands for encompassing methodological possibilities in festival creation. This subchapter will discuss this and thus approach an answer to the fourth research question:

What concepts and processes could a non-European or religiously diverse Waldorf school use to develop annual festivals in relation to its local settings?

Dialogue means an exchange in which listening and contemplating what is being heard alternates with sharing own contributions to the dialogue. The motive of dialogue in a direct and in a metaphorical sense appeared in a fairly large share of the used literature and research findings, to which pertain especially those motives related to interconnectedness. 'Dialogical approach' also is the concept that is adequate to describe Michael Oak Waldorf School's approach to festival creation. Both, in Kusi Kawsay and in Nairobi Waldorf School, dialogue is the basis of their processes of festival creation. However, their specific dialogical approaches encompass different spheres. Ritualization is the notion that Bell (1997) and Grimes (2014) use for the process of creation of rituals and festivals.

Dialogical approach as an essential feature of the relationship with nature

It has been pointed out that Kusi Kawsay's and Nairobi Waldorf School kindergarten's festival creation processes are based on nature observation processes.

In the case of Kusi Kawsay this nature observation is based on a close observation according to the Andean Calendar, an observation of phenomena, of "what really *is*" (Ester). It is also based on a sustainable reciprocal relationship between all systems of the Andean world. This relationship is maintained via a festive ritualistic exchange (Bolin, 1998; Hart, 2010). Andean rituals and festivals are geared towards cultivating, in a ritualistic manner, this relationship of mutual giving and listening to what comes back as an answer (Bolin, 1998). Such attitudes constitute, according to Steiner (1985) an ancient way of living the relationship with nature. To exemplify this: in Kusi Kawsay in the Pukllay festival, the traditional duck dance is an important part of the festival, according to Ester an imitation of the courting dance of very faithful ducks, living as couples and committing suicide when the other one dies. According

to Steiner (1985), in the ancient mysteries people lived their interconnectedness with nature in rituals, mirroring nature experiences, including a further phase of listening to what came back from nature. In both cases the dialogical motive is salient and interrelated. The observational part can be equated with the listening part of a dialogue. The Nairobi Waldorf School kindergarten's approach of observing nature also implies a dialogical approach. The process of teachers observing nature and faithfully describing its phenomena, contains the quality of listening. The answer to this receiving attitude came when the question concerning possible motives for festival creation was posed.

And now when it came to taking it from looking and writing to the next step: what can we do with that in terms of the children and something to celebrate?...it was like a magic, it was really jumping out of the page (Cora).

The thinking process presented the listening activity and led to an answer in which observed phenomena became meaningful and were used as metaphors for celebrations. The motive of reciprocity in Nairobi Waldorf School is not as salient as in the case of Kusi Kawsay, but still exists in some festivals, like the Flower Festival or the Shambani Festival when the children with the teachers harvest the carefully planted and cared for vegetables from the garden.

To sum it up: Kusi Kawsay's dialogical approach in festival creation and celebration is geared to an ongoing and all spheres of life encompassing dialogue with nature. Nairobi Waldorf School kindergarten's dialogical approach of festival creation and celebration also originates from this area and can still undergo slight changes as was visible in 2014 celebration of the Flower Festival in which, as related in the findings, flowers were planted to cover the new and barren protective walls that shield the compound of Kileleshwa kindergarten against violent attacks.

Dialogical approach in Nairobi Waldorf School as compared to Michael Oak Waldorf School (Cape Town, South Africa)

As became clear in the findings, Nairobi Waldorf School developed new festivals out of social necessities of the school community and out of processes within the community of teachers as well. Equally important were the related processes of communication with the parents as part of festival creation. The teachers talked positively about this process of conversations and inclusion of parents to find motives for and ways of transforming the festivals. This process is described by the interviewees as an ongoing process in Nairobi Waldorf School that includes the development of new aspects or ideas like the inclusion of

the staff in the Easter Brunch. So it becomes clear that the Nairobi Waldorf primary School's dialogical approach is directed towards the community. Myerhoff, as quoted by Bell, (1997) illustrates how such an ongoing process of evaluation and adequate change can enhance the sense of identity and unity in a community. This relates very much to the processes that the teachers in Michael Oak, Cape Town, South Africa underwent and still undergo to create the way they celebrate their festivals (Majores, 2009). While the motive that was used in Nairobi Waldorf School for the search of new forms of and contents for the celebration of festivals was named "togetherness" (Mary), in Michael Oak Waldorf School it was called a search for "basic, universal meanings to the festivals ... relevant to all humans regardless of religion" (Majores, 2009, p.82). Ultimately that can be regarded as different words for the same values. The path to finding these forms and contents had turned out to be a complicated process of negotiation between conflicting sides and opinions. But instead of giving up the idea, the teachers of the school became aware of the great increase of social quality they were experiencing and decided to go through the same process of dialogue with every festival again. Bell (1997) emphasizes: "Rituals do not build community by simply expressing sentiments of collective harmony; they do it by channelling conflict ... and ...forging images by which the participants can think of themselves as an embracing unity" (Bell, 1997, p. 235).

I would also define the process of integration of all the different stances and opinions as a dialogical approach, and Michael Oak teachers describe it as equally important as the final outcome of the festivals, in some moments even more fulfilling. The quality of such an ongoing process of festival creation is very specifically addressed by Grimes (2014) who points to the sphere of birth of new ideas in ritualization as "a process, a quality of nascence or emergence" (Grimes, 2014, p. 193). Such moments of emergence might, I suppose, be the rewarding experiences that keep teachers in Nairobi Waldorf School and Michael Oak Waldorf School continuing with the described socially challenging process.

5.5.3 Practical considerations for festival creation...

In schools with more European/Western affinity

The practical experiences of Nairobi Waldorf School and Michael Oak Waldorf School show that there are several decisions for a school to be made before the process of festival creation or re-conceptualization can start. The teachers have to consciously decide that they *want* to overcome their orientation in traditional European and / or Christian oriented Waldorf festivals. This decision making process is what I call *conceptual decolonisation*. It is not an

easy decision to take because a school has to leave the relatively safe traditional concepts that the school community is maybe used to. It means investment of time which not only in the Michael Oak Waldorf School and the Nairobi Waldorf School is scarce. For some teachers it might also be a question of respect for the shoulders of the Waldorf 'giants' that we stand on (Boland, 2014a). Once the discussion about all these aspects have come to a more or less unanimous decision, the next question to be considered and decided upon will be; if it is the combined teaching staff of the school or a group of delegates who will continue with this process, and if in the latter case their responsibility for conducting the process includes final decisions or a need for final consultations with their colleagues. Another question is *involvement of parents*. In the Nairobi Waldorf School, the parents were included in considerations and practical occasions, like it is described in the example of the Festival of Light with Hindu emphasis. Are the parents involved in the beginning, in content-wise helping with preparation of specific festive performances or are they not included at all? Then it needs to be negotiated if the school wants to take the path of *nature observation* as the basis of festival creation, a process that will take at least two years to really be true and sustainable. But maybe the colleagues prefer to work with *transformation of the motives of existing festivals* like Nairobi Waldorf School primary school did. At any rate it is obvious that what Majores (2009) calls the *dialogical approach* permeates every moment of this process. It will take a lot of negotiation and patience and will include many moments of "the tension of ... opposing forces, re-negotiating and re-creating each festival ..., instead of relying on set patterns of past festival enactments" (Majores, 2009, p.154). Especially relevant for those Waldorf schools in the Southern hemisphere that want to keep the Christian motives in their annual festivals is the question of relating the Christian festivals to the seasons, a question out of Steiner's 'Breathing cycle'.

Another possibility is to enhance the difficulties of negotiation to an enriching process that strengthens the community's social capabilities, like they decided to proceed in Michael Oak Waldorf School: "The teachers have chosen to remain within the tension of those opposing forces, re-negotiating and re-creating each festival each season, instead of relying on set patterns of past festival enactments" (Majores, 2009, p.154). This process ultimately was so rewarding to the teachers that they decided to keep applying it in the future.

In schools with non-European and non-Christian background

For schools like Kusi Kawsay in Peru, or for example the many schools that are sprouting in Asian countries, the decision making process, according to the experiences of Kusi Kawsay, might not be that tedious, especially if there is no strong influence from European (oriented) founders. Once the decision has been made to overcome possible European influences, if there are any at all, then the teachers can start to freely investigate for motives out of their own culture like Kusi Kawsay did. Of course they could also start with nature observation processes: either it is inherent as part of their culture like in Kusi Kawsay or they would have to start the type of process that Nairobi Waldorf School kindergarten underwent.

To sum this up: festival creation is not something a school can do quickly and without severe investigations into motives they want to follow and clear related decisions. Tang (2010) describes how Waldorf schools in Taiwan try to find a synthesis between seasonal festivals, European Christian festivals and local festivals. He experiences the school year as being overburdened with too many festivals that have to be celebrated during the year.

I claim that in Waldorf festival creation the willingness to get into a dialogical approach and negotiating possibilities in a tolerant and encompassing manner, has to go along with clear decisions about the path that a school wants to take. This path has to be followed to arrive at clearly structured forms and contents that are as well a valid contribution to the pedagogical work of the teachers as to the school's community life. It takes courage to leave traditional forms and discover the essence of empathy and tolerance in the sense of the Intercultural Waldorf School's (Mannheim, Germany) interpretation of the Christian features of Waldorf education.

6. Conclusion

The study

The purpose of this ethnographic study was to find out which festival forms two Waldorf schools in multi-religious or non-Christian cultural surroundings could develop. It also aimed at suggestions for concepts and processes for future festival creation processes in other schools in similar situations. In seeking to provide such suggestions and to understand the context of the two schools, the study investigated the following research questions:

Which forms of celebrations have the two schools developed?

How do the teachers understand the cultural/spiritual background of these festivals?

Which salient factors have appeared in the schools' festival creation?

What concepts and processes could a non-European or religiously diverse Waldorf school use to develop annual festivals in relation to its local settings?

To answer these questions two Waldorf schools were visited, in Peru (two weeks) and Kenya (three weeks). Kusi Kawsay in Pisac in the Sacred Valley of the Incas was founded by Indigenous people. The school aims at providing the students with a sound pride in their ancient culture of Andean Cosmivision and a resulting sense of self-esteem in a society in which every Indigenous feature is demeaned. Nairobi Waldorf School in Kenya was originally founded by Europeans and is today governed exclusively by Kenyan teachers. It serves a multi-cultural and multi-religious "rainbow-coloured" upper middle class and above parenthood, with the special feature of integrating the parents into school development processes like festival creation. The investigated literature included ritual theory, Indigenous knowledge, anthroposophical background (Rudolf Steiner's 'Breathing Cycle' GA 223) and other authors) and presented findings from researchers that previously had investigated similar topics and questions in the international Waldorf movement.

Qualitative research uses a reflexive approach born out of the ontological stance that reality is fluid and dependent on changing conditions of the individual and a community. The applied ethnological research methods delved into the social-historical conditions of the participating schools and the teachers' understanding of their schools' festival creation processes. This study used the methods of participant-observation, qualitative interviewing (semi-structured) and a field diary. Analytical methods included several steps of coding and categorizing.

Findings

The findings related to the first two research questions (the forms of non-European oriented festivals, and what the teachers explained about their development and background) were manifold. The festivals developed in Kusi Kawsay are thoroughly different to the festivals celebrated traditionally in a European oriented Waldorf school. Kusi Kawsay celebrates antique Andean festivals which the teachers have recuperated, drawing on the ancient wisdom and agricultural rituals of the Andean agricultural calendar. Typical features of their festivals are a strong relation with nature, conscious value education and the goal to educate the students to free thinking.

The festivals in Nairobi Waldorf School are new, in so far as they were developed out of transforming traditional Christian oriented Waldorf festivals and developing new contents and forms, either out of elaborate processes of nature observation (kindergarten) or, out of listening and responding to the social needs of the multi-cultural and multi-religious school community (primary school). In both cases the background of the festivals, as the teachers illustrated them, is profound and connected with a series of values and metaphors. As a characteristic feature of Festival creation in Nairobi Waldorf School could be described an ongoing search for deeper meaning of the festivals.

Some of the schools' values are the same in both schools, like 'reciprocity' or 'courage', some are individual like 'free thinking' in Kusi Kawsay or 'togetherness' in Nairobi Waldorf School, reflecting the differences of the schools' social conditions and needs. The details of the answers to the first and second research questions can be found in the Findings chapter, where all celebrated festivals with relevant aspects of ritualistic forms and season of celebration, as well as the background considerations and motives the teachers are associating with them, are depicted.

Aspects for answering the *third and fourth research questions* were mainly sought in the Discussion chapter. The salient finding in both schools was the strong correlation of festivals and values. The value education with the children, as part of the celebration of festivals, is a conscious and direct one in Kusi Kawsay and an indirect one in Nairobi Waldorf School. In both schools, the process of festival creation itself was permeated by values. Developing and celebrating them, both schools apparently experience an increased sense of identification within the community, a circumstance which has been described by authors mentioned in the Literature Review. In the case of Kusi Kawsay, this identification comprises the specific

Andean orientation, centred around and celebrating a close and reciprocal relationship with nature. In the case of Nairobi Waldorf School, it is centred around the efforts to achieve multi-cultural and multi-religious inclusiveness, culminating in the Festival of Light, where each year a new way of celebrating is found, focused around the motive of light and consciously integrating elements of each of the four world religions present in the school; Jewish, Hindu, Christian and Islamic elements are part of the childrens' festive presentations. Salient to answering the third and fourth research question was the similarity between Kusi Kawsay's and the Nairobi Waldorf School kindergarten's approach to festival creation in using nature observation as a main focus. Outstanding was one Nairobi teacher's description of the proceedings and relating experiences of nature observation as the central part of festival creation, which started with describing 'what really happened' and ended after two years with the motives 'jumping out' of the observation records.

The *fourth research question* probed concepts and processes from which one could develop relevant suggestions for possible festival creation procedures in other non-European or religiously diverse schools. Important for festival creation is a previous willingness of overcoming Eurocentric Waldorf traditions, a process that in both schools started around the time of the leaving of the European (oriented) teachers. Then a process of careful local contextualization can begin, a process of the school's very individual search for the right path, in accordance with and respect for its local conditions.

Two such paths or methods of festival creation emerged out of the findings of Kusi Kawsay and Nairobi Waldorf School, as well as out of the research done by Majores (2009) about festival creation processes in Michael Oak Waldorf School, Cape Town. One is a process of close *nature observation* during at least two years, a process which coincides with what Rudolf Steiner claimed to be a necessary path of contemporary renovation of festivals, calling it *thinking with the cycle of the year*.

The other path is a social one: the *conscious integration of all multi-cultural and religiously diverse members of the school community into a related transformation of traditional festivals*. Both concepts need an attitude that can be referred to as dialogical approach either with nature or with the school community. I suggest that this dialogical approach is a central prerequisite for and the basis of each successful process of festival creation or transformation in Waldorf schools.

Two questions emerged out of the findings which would offer opportunities for further research:

What are the advantages and disadvantages of a direct/indirect value education in celebration of festivals?

What would be the possibilities for mutual dialogue and enrichment between the Waldorf and the Indigenous knowledge movement?

Limitations of the study and recommendation for another research area:

Since this is a Qualitative study, the findings cannot be generalized. The social conditions in other schools might be very different. The study can only provide insight and knowledge as to how two schools have proceeded with festival creation. Experiences of other schools with possible other ways of festival creation would enhance the picture and the richness of knowledge about the inquired topic.

Another limitation of the study is related to the topic of Waldorf education being a Christian education, as it was raised in connection with the experiences of the Intercultural Waldorf School in Mannheim, Germany. Festivals can be, and in the past in Waldorf schools often have been, an expression of Christian orientation. Where does this concept originate? In what sense does it have to be understood? What has Rudolf Steiner really said and in what connection? These questions have only been touched and not been investigated thoroughly. They would have far exceeded the range and possibility of this study. They would offer a broad field for possible future investigations. This would supplement the findings of this and other related studies with valuable aspects for the important process of festival creation in non-European and religiously diverse local settings, using a dialogical approach together with respect for local life worlds.

References

- Anderson, A. (1993). *Living a Spiritual Year: Seasonal Festivals in Northern and Southern Hemispheres*. Hudson, NY: Anthroposophic Press.
- Battiste, M. (2010). Nourishing the Learning Spirit. *Education Canada* 50(1) 14-18. Canadian Education Association.
- Bell, C. (1997). *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*. Oxford: University Press
- Berman, M. (1981). *The Reenchantment of the World*. London: Cornell University Press
- Berman, B. (1990). *Control and Crisis in Colonial Kenya: The Dialectic of Domination*. London: James Currey.
- Bloomberg, L. & Volpe, M. (2012). *Completing your Qualitative Dissertation: A Roadmap From Beginning to End*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Boillat, S., Serrano, E., Rist, S., Berkes, F. (2012). The Importance of Place Names in the Search for Ecosystem-Like Concepts in Indigenous Societies: An Example from the Bolivian Andes. *Environmental Management* 51(3), 663-678.
- Boland, N. (2014a). *Steiner Education: An Impulse for the Future?* Key note at the Steiner High School Teachers Conference in July 2014, Noosa, Australia
- Boland, N. (2014b). Sticking Wings on a Caterpillar? *Journal of Waldorf/Rudolf Steiner Education*, 16(2), 8-9
- Boland, N. (2014c). *Strong synergies between Steiner and Te Ao Māori* (Application to Ministry of Education to open a partnership school kura hourua). Auckland, New Zealand: Manukau Urban Māori Association.
- Bolin, I. (1998). *Rituals of Respect: The Secret of Survival in the High Peruvian Andes*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Bollinger, A. (1979). *So bauten die Inka*. Schriftenreihe des Institutes für Lateinamerikaforschung an der Hochschule St. Gallen, Bd.1. Zürich: Rüegger.
- Brater, M.; Hemmer-Schanze, C.; Schmelzer, A. (2007). *Schule ist bunt*. Stuttgart: Freies Geistesleben.
- Brinkmann, S. (2013). *Qualitative Interviewing: Understanding Qualitative Research*. Oxford: University Press.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: University Press.

- Cameron, N. (2004). *New Alignments in Ritual, Ceremony and Celebration* (Master Thesis, Griffith University, Australia)
- Capel, E. (1991). *Celebrating Festivals around the World*. London: Temple Lodge
- Dei, S. (2002). Spiritual Knowing and Transformative Learning. In E. O'Sullivan, A. Morrell, M. O'Connor (Ed.), *Expanding the Boundaries of Transformative Learning: Essays on Theory and Praxis* (pp. 121-133). New York: Palgrave.
- Dei, S. (2010). *Teaching Africa*. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.
- Durkheim, Emile. (2013). *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life: A Study in Religious Sociology*. www.forgottenbooks.com.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books
- Grimes, R. (2014). *The Craft of Ritual Studies*. Oxford: University Press.
- Hart, M.A. (2010). Indigenous Worldviews, Knowledge, and Research: The Development of an Indigenous Research Paradigm. *Journal of Indigenous Voices in Social Work* 1(1), 1-16.
- Hemleben, J. (1963). *Rudolf Steiner: In Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten*. Reinbek: Rowohlt.
- Hilbers, J. (2006). *Celebrations for Personal and Collective Health and Wellbeing*. Doctoral thesis, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia.
- Homann, H. (2004). Soziologische Ansätze einer Theorie des Festes. In M. Maurer (Ed.), *Das Fest* (95-113). Köln, Germany: Böhlau.
- Horsthemke, K. (2008). The Idea of Indigenous knowledge. *Archeologies: Journal of the World Archeological Congress*, 4(1), 129-143.
- Huaman, E.S. & Valdiviezo, L.A. (2012). Indigenous knowledge and education from the Quechua community to school: beyond the formal/nonformal dichotomy. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 27(1) 65-87.
- Hudson, B. (2003). Approaching educational research from the tradition of critical-constructive Didaktik. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 11(2), 173-187.
- Kawano, Y. (2011). Spirituality and Indigenous knowledges: Study of Kototama and Decolonization in the School System. In N.Wane, E. Manyimo, E. Ritskes (Ed.). *Spirituality, Education & Society* (pp. 97-110). Rotterdam & Boston: Sense Publishers.
- Kvale, S. (1994). Ten Standard Objections to Qualitative Research Interviews. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 25(2) 147-173.

- Kvale, S. (2006). Dominance through Interviews and Dialogues. *Qualitative Inquiry* 12(3) 480-500.
- Majoros, E. (2009). *Co-Creating at the Threshold: A Dialogical Approach to Festival Planning at a Cape Town Waldorf School*. Master Thesis, University of Cape Town, South Africa.
- Martin, D. (2008). Maat and Order in African Cosmology: A Conceptual Tool for Understanding Indigenous knowledge. *Journal of Black Studies*, 38(6) 951-967.
- Maurer, M. (2004). Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des Festes. In M. Maurer (Ed.), *Das Fest*, 19 – 54. Köln, Germany: Böhlau.
- Maurial, M. (1999). Indigenous knowledge and Schooling: A Continuum Between Conflict and Dialogue. In L.M. Semali & J.L. Kincheloe (Ed.), *What is Indigenous knowledge* (pp. 59-77). New York: Falmer Press.
- Merriam, S. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Morrow, R.A. (2009). Habermas, Eurocentrism and Education: The Indigenous knowledge Debate. In M.Murphy & T.Fleming (Ed.), *Habermas, Critical Theory and Education* (pp. 63-77). London and New York: Routledge.
- Murchison, J. (2010). *Ethnographic Essentials: Designing, Conducting, and Presenting your Research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Olojede, F. (2014). Storytelling as an Indigenous Resource in the Interpretation of Old Testament Ethics and Religion. *Scriptura* 113(2014), 1-9.
- Oucho, J. (2002). *Undercurrents of ethnic conflicts in Kenya*. Boston: Brill.
- Parsons, J. & Beauchamp, L. (2012) Ways of Knowing. In J. Parsons (Ed.), *From Knowledge to Action: Shaping the Future of Curriculum Development in Alberta*. Alberta, Canada: Government.
- Ponterotto, J. (2006). Brief notes on the Origins, Evolution, and Meaning of the Qualitative Research Concept “Thick description”. *The Qualitative Report* (11)3, 538-549.
- Quantz, R. (1999). School Ritual as Performance: a Reconstruction of Durkheim’s and Turner’s Uses of Ritual. *Educational Theory*, 49/4, 493-513
- Rappaport, R. (1999). *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Reindel, M. (2014). Transecta Andina: Estudios de interregionalidad y verticalidad en los Andes del sur del Perú. *Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos* (online).
- Rist, S., Boillat, S., Gerritsen, P.R.W., Schneider, F., Mathez-Stiefel, S., Tapia, N. (2011). Endogenous Knowledge: Implications for Sustainable Development.

- Research for Sustainable Development: Foundations, Experiences and Perspectives*, 119-146.
- Rist, S., San Martín, J., Tapia, N. (2000). *Cosmovisión Indígena y Desarrollo Autosostenible. Comida para el Pensamiento: Visiones antiguas y experiencias de la gente rural*. Cochabamba, Bolivia: Compas-Agruco. 197-210.
- Schimpf-Herken, I. (1979). *Erziehung zur Befreiung*. Berlin: Sozialpolitischer Verlag SPV
- Semali, L.M., Kincheloe, J.L. (1999) What is Indigenous Knowledge and why should we study it? In L.M. Semali & J.L. Kincheloe (Ed.), *What is Indigenous knowledge* (pp. 3-58). New York: Falmer Press.
- Stehlik, T. (2008). Thinking, Feeling and Willing: How Waldorf Schools Provide a Creative Pedagogy That Nurtures and Develops Imagination. In T. Leonard, P. Willis (Ed.), *Pedagogies of the Imagination*. Springer Science and Business Media.
- Steiner, R. (1980a). *Die soziale Frage als Bewusstseinsfrage (GA 189)*. Dornach, Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag.
- Steiner, R. (1980b). *Vergangenheits- und Zukunftsimpulse im sozialen Geschehen (GA 190)*. Dornach, Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag.
- Steiner, R. (1985). *Der Jahreskreislauf als Atmungsvorgang der Erde und die vier grossen Festeszeiten (GA 223)*. Dornach, Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag.
- Steiner, R. (1988). *Menschenwesen, Menschenschicksal und Weltentwicklung (GA 226)*. Dornach, Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag.
- Steiner, R. (1992). *Die menschliche Seele in ihrem Zusammenhang mit göttl.-geistigen Individualitäten: Die Verinnerlichung der Jahresfeste (GA 224)*. Dornach, Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag.
- Steiner, R. (1996). *Bausteine zu einer Erkenntnis des Mysteriums von Golgatha (GA 175)*. Dornach, Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag.
- Steiner, R. (2000). *Mein Lebensgang (GA 28)*. Dornach, Schweiz: Rudolf Steiner Verlag.
- Suwelack, G. (1975). *Das neue Zwiegespräch mit dem Geist der Erde: Jahreszeiten und Jahresfeste auf der Süd-Halbkugel der Erde*. Sao Paulo: Associação Pedagógica Rudolf Steiner.
- Tang, K. (2010). *Kulturübergreifende Waldorfpädagogik, Anspruch und Wirklichkeit - am Beispiel der Waldorfschulen in Taiwan* (Doctoral thesis, University of Würzburg, Germany).
- Turner, V. (1987). Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites of Passage. In L.C.

- Mahdi, S. Foster & M. Little. *Betwixt & Between: Patterns of Masculine And Feminine Initiation* (pp. 3-23). La Salle, Illinois: Open Court.
- Turner, V. (2013). Liminalität und Communitas. In A. Belliger & D.J. Krieger. *Ritualtheorien* (pp. 247-260). Wiesbaden: Springer.
- Urton, G. (2011). Tying the Archive in knots, or: Dying to get into the Archive in Ancient Peru. *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 32(1), 5-20.
- Van Dijk, L. (2004). *Die Geschichte Afrikas*. Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag.
- Van Gennep, A. (1960). *The Rites of Passage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wanjiru Njoroge, M. & Njoroge Kirori, G. (2014). Ethnocentrism: Significance and effects on Kenyan society. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 8(9), 356-367.
- Wiechert, C. & Barz, H. (2013). Waldorfpädagogik weltweit – Ein Gespräch mit Christof Wiechert zur Situation der Waldorflehrerbildung auf den Kontinenten. In H. Barz (Ed.), *Unterrichten an Waldorfschulen* (257-278). Wiesbaden: Springer.
- Willey, G.R. (1962). The Early Great Styles and the Rise of the Pre-Columbian Civilizations. *American Anthropologist*, 64, 1-14.
- Willmann, C. (2014). Religiöse Erziehung an Waldorfschulen in nichtchristlichem Kontext: Zugänge an Schulen in Ägypten und Israel. *RoSE-Research on Steiner Education*. 5/Special Issue 2014. ISSN 1891-6511 (online).
- Wiredu, K. (2002). Conceptual decolonization as an imperative in contemporary African philosophy : some personal reflections », *Rue Descartes* 2/2002 (36) , 53-64.
- Wutte, I. (2009). *Ein leiser Ruf aus Afrika: Mein Leben für die Kinder in Kenia*. Stuttgart: Freies Geistesleben.
- Yunkaporta, T., McGinty, S. (2009). Reclaiming Aboriginal Knowledge at the Cultural Interface. *The Australian Educational Researcher* 36(2).