

*Since wars begin in the minds of men,  
it is in the minds of men that the defences of  
peace must be constructed.*

*Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO, 1945*

*The Angels work on a definite principle,  
namely, that in the future no human being is  
to find peace in the enjoyment of happiness  
if others beside him are unhappy.*

*Through the pictures they inculcate into  
the astral body their aim is that in future time  
every human being shall see in each and  
all of his fellow-men a hidden divinity.*

*Rudolf Steiner, The Work of the Angels In  
Man's Astral Body, GA182, 1918*



## **From the World Social Initiative Forum to the UNESCO/Waldorf Schools Network**

An invitation to the  
education for  
intercultural understanding,  
global citizenship and  
environmental actions

## FOREWORD

This year, we celebrate two important birthdays: one for the Threefold Social Organism movement and the other for the humanized pedagogy of Waldorf education. The year 2019 marks the 100th year of those movements that are deeply related to each other. Without one, the other would not have existed. The two movements work together to help create the culture of peace on earth! That was what Rudolf Steiner realized when analyzing the disasters of the First World War, which was a culmination of the materialistic world views from the preceding centuries.

The challenge given to Anthroposophists in the 21st Century is to deepen our understanding as well as to widen our horizon and to ally with other movements. Examples of the union can be found in the Alliance for Childhood, the European Alliance of Initiatives for Applied Anthroposophy (ELIANT), the World Social Initiative Forum or the UNESCO Associated Schools Network described in the following report. We must expand our vision and our actions. The Michaelic impulse uniting the individual core with the global challenges is much more than the Anthroposophic movement itself. Let us collaborate with one another, each one of us contributing to the challenge with his/her unique talents and gifts.

São Paulo, November, 2019

**Ute Craemer**

Founder, Monte Azul Community Association



# From the World Social Initiative Forum to the UNESCO / Waldorf Schools Network

An invitation to the education for intercultural understanding,  
global citizenship and environmental actions

Daisuke Onuki

Organizing Committee for the World Social Initiative Forum – 2018

## INTRODUCTION

The 4th World Social Initiative Forum was held in Japan in the spring of 2018. This five-day event took place in the temple complex of a Buddhist sect's headquarters and a publicly run youth center in the outskirts of snow-covered Mt. Fuji. Blessed by one of the most gorgeous cherry blossoms in recent years, it was attended by over 450 people coming from 15 countries and all different backgrounds: young and old, East and West, South and North, Anthroposophically oriented and those not at all so, those with immigrant backgrounds and those even unaware of the multiculturalism in Japan, students, educators, social workers, artists, Capoeirists, and many others.

The theme chosen for the occasion was "Knowing Self through Others: Empathy, a Path towards a Just and Fraternal Society". The issue of socio-economic, as well as cultural, marginalization in the world and in Japan was addressed. The important role of empathy in awakening the local community, the society and the world to the sense of brother-/sisterhood was emphasized. Different ways with which different cultures "embody" empathy were explored. In our modern times, when embodied experiences of meeting others are compromised both because of a kind of civilized aloofness and the availability of virtual technologies, it was so beautiful to see our participants spontaneously shake hands, kiss, hug, bow or give a Thai *wai*, respecting each other's cultures and eager to learn from them.

We believe that the World Social Initiative Forum in Japan turned out to be a particularly joyful encounter

of people. Even after a year and a half have passed, we keep asking, "What magic was that? What are we meant to pass on to coming Forums? What next-step actions are to be born out of the passionate joy shared by so many?" This short report of the Japan Forum is a summary of the event as well as an invitation to future Forums. It also presents a concrete proposal to the international Waldorf community to participate in the global network for peace, human rights and environmental consciousness through education. The movement is a call by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and is known by the name of UNESCO Associated Schools Network.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of Waldorf education as well as the social threefolding movement. They were the responses to the tragedy of World War I, and were the hope offered by Rudolf Steiner to the world. We believe that the centenary anniversary is an opportunity for reflection on the original intentions of the founder, as well as for the planning of the next 100 years. The organizers of the World Social Initiative Forum in Japan hope to contribute to the discussion by sharing our experiences.





## BACKGROUND

The World Social Initiative Forum is a gathering of individuals and grassroots social initiatives, some inspired by Anthroposophy and others guided by other spiritual principles, that meet regularly in the hope to create a just and fraternal society together. Many of the members work in poverty-stricken communities safeguarding childhood and empowering the oppressed, and others try to reduce socio-economic inequality and cultural marginalization in their societies. Challenges of the current global situation that urge community- and school-based responses, particularly those caused by environmental degradation, are the common concern and interest of the members.

The impulse to meet with each other and with other social movements outside the circle of Anthroposophy, in order to strengthen the network and learn from other projects, started to emerge among the pioneers in the late 1990s. They managed to hold regional forums in the early 2000s in Switzerland, U.S.A., Brazil, Argentina and South Africa. In 2015, the co-founders of the early forums, namely Truus Geraets and Ute Craemer, handed the project to the Section of Social Sciences at the Goetheanum. Since then, World Social Initiative Forums have been held in Switzerland (2015, 2018 and 2019), India (2016), Brazil (2017) and Japan (2018). This year the baton was passed to Egypt (2019).

A family in Monte Azul Favela (1988)



## THE TEAM

In Japan, the central members of the executive committee of the Forum, the front-line working group, were from a volunteer organization called CRI-Children's Resources International. The organization was founded in 1988 by myself, Daisuke Onuki, professor of international studies at Tokai University and organizing committee member of the Japan Forum. Originally a group of Japanese volunteers and supporters of Monte Azul Community Association, an Anthroposophically oriented social entity working in favelas of São Paulo City, the organization now has its main projects in Japan aimed at improving the quality of childhood in Brazilian and other immigrant communities.

Since the early 1990s, Japanese Brazilians have been making up for Japan's labor shortage and have formed very visible communities in rural provinces with industrial districts in Japan. As the former volunteers of Monte Azul return home, having learned to speak Portuguese and work with cultural differences, they find themselves needed and useful in helping build bridges between the Brazilian and local communities.

The organizers of the 2017 Forum in Brazil invited CRI to host the Forum the following year. They trusted the ability of CRI to do so as they had participated and played important roles in the international seminars and encounters organized by the group in Japan.

In 2006, CRI started what they call "multicultural camps". The event invites children and families, most of them with immigrant backgrounds, to spend three days together with Japanese children and young people. It is now carried out by "*Beijo Me Liga* (Kiss, Call Me)", a student group based in Tokai University. Since 2015, Tokai University and CRI have been



Biodanza in a multicultural camp (2010)

holding another multicultural event called "UNESCO Youth Seminar", whose objective is to discuss issues of global level importance while promoting exchange among students from Japanese and foreign (ethnic and international) high schools in Japan. Participating schools of the annual seminar include Waldorf and UNESCO-associated Japanese schools as well as Brazilian, Korean, Chinese, Muslim South Asian and other international schools in Japan.

The members of CRI felt prepared to work with the international character of the World Social Initiative Forum. They had experiences in organizing camps and seminars with more than 200 participants coming from different ethnic communities in Japan. They always prepare their events paying extra attention to participants' different needs, trying to lower the anxiety of meeting new people, avoiding cultural misunderstandings with each other, and creating a safe atmosphere for the expression of one's thoughts and feelings - in short, with *OMOI-YARI* and *KI-ZUKAI* (Japanese words both translated as empathetic and warm preoccupation with others). "Warmth" probably best describes their value in organizing their events. Little did they know that the World Social Initiative Forum would exceed their expectations. "Warmth" reached the level of "heat" with sky-ward momentum when over 450 people gathered in 2018.



Yearly report of the UNESCO youth seminar



A meeting with immigrant parents (2019)



## THE FORUM

One of the participants from Switzerland later wrote in his letter, “I have never experienced such an intergenerational, diverse, multicultural and multilingual group working together with such interest, respect, empathy and joy”. Indeed, we were. We were such a multicultural and multilingual group of people that we needed translation, with the help of incredibly devoted volunteer translators, in at least three languages: English, Japanese and Portuguese. The youth coming from immigrant backgrounds also played important roles in being spontaneous translators in small group discussions and conversations taking place in the corridor, cafeteria, dormitories, Buddhist temples and traditional bathhouses.



We started each day with Social Eurythmy to experience “I”, “You” and “We”. We discussed the importance of empathy in fostering solidarity across national borders, socio-economic divisions and cultural differences. We explored empathy’s different expressions in different cultures of the world. An almost endless list of Japanese synonyms of “empathetic preoccupation” was explained. Brazilian participants taught us their art of physically and mindfully being with each other in the present here and now. Participants with German or Swiss backgrounds reminded us of the importance of the

Self in experiencing that of the Other. We celebrated the diversity of the group and enjoyed learning from each other.

Many of the workshops were led by Anthroposophically oriented educators, artists and social activists, but many others were offered by people with other orientations. If Anthroposophy was new to many of the participants, particularly to the youth, so were Capoeira, Biodanza, bamboo art, Buddhism, and indigenous spirituality of Japan to others.

We were truly intergenerational. Some 50 students from Tokai University and the student group “*Beijo Me Liga*” took turns working as volunteers and participating in lectures and workshops. High school students joined the Forum from Waldorf, UNESCO-associated, ethnic and international schools. The same letter above wrote, “The younger people valued and wanted to learn from the older ones while also enjoying the presence of their young peers. The older people valued the interest of the younger ones, were happy to share their life’s lessons and were likewise interested in learning what lives in the hearts and minds of the younger people. Nobody thought they knew it all or had all the answers.”

## REFLECTIONS BY THE YOUTH

Below are some of the comments left by high school students in the evaluation sheet on the last day.

——— ...Rather than thinking, “Oh, I have to communicate”, what is important is to open up myself to accept others - with the Japanese or with others from abroad! That is what I learned in the Biodanza session and in small group discussion workshops.

——— The topics that the Forum dealt with were nothing new to me. What was new to me was to

learn that there existed ordinary adults that could take social issues seriously - in Japan or in the world. Being able to meet with other young people of my generation with different backgrounds was another gain to me...

—— What impressed me most was that the participants coming from different countries, languages and races, respected each other with total equality. The Capoeira workshop was a good example. As Capoeira requires us to look into the eyes and feel the breathing of each other, we became close to each other in an instant.

—— ...The Forum made me want to go to the places where the problems are. I want to hear from the people what they really want and need, and gain knowledge on what we can learn only when we really are there.





## CULTURAL MARGINALIZATION IN JAPAN

In the Japan Forum, much focus was given to the issue of “cultural marginalization”. It was a relevant topic not only to the participants coming from ethnic schools and communities spread across Japan, but also to those coming from Waldorf and alternative schools. In Japan, those schools that are based on non-traditional pedagogies are not recognized by the government as “schools” and are denied formal recognition of their diplomas or public funding. Sending children to such schools could mean breaking the Japanese law of compulsory education!

Non-Japanese families face an odd situation in this picture. The constitutional right to education has not been granted to foreign nationals - not only to the 1st, but also to the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th generation Koreans and others living in Japan. That means that a child with at least one non-Japanese nationality is not obligated to attend a formal school and therefore is free to choose foreign, alternative or home-schooling education.

"Lucky you!", some alternative school parents may think. But one must know that the situation invites educational negligence on a societal scale. According to the MEXT, the ministry responsible for education in Japan, possibly one in six immigrant children do not go to any school! Only 5,000 out of more than 120,000 immigrant children choose, or can afford to, attend a foreign school. According to MEXT, of those who attend public schools, more than 40% do not have enough Japanese proficiency to follow normal classes and require special help, which is often not available to them.

## LEGISLATIVE CAMPAIGNS

In the face of Japan's rigid educational policy, two of the seven Waldorf schools that exist in Japan,

have managed to gain formal recognition by the government as “schools” as well as public funding. They fought for their rights in the early 2000s together with other alternative schools and succeeded in convincing the government to acknowledge a handful of schools as “experimental schools”. Many of the participants of the World Forum in Japan were the veteran activists that fought that fight together.

The alternative schools' collective effort to demand the freedom in education continues to this day. The movement receives the attention of the society that is concerned with the rising number of children who do not adapt themselves to life in school: those once called “school refusers”. In 2018, the number of compulsory schooling age (Japanese) children not attending any school rose to the all-time high of 165,000. In other words, one in 184 elementary school children and one in 30 junior high students are not going to any school in Japan. In 2016, the alternative schools' alliance helped politicians pass a law, which symbolically, albeit not financially, guaranteed the right of all children to receive educational support even when they are not attending a school.

The one-size-fits-all educational policy is obviously not working in our time, and much less so for children with foreign backgrounds. The 2016 law states that its objective is to promote “educational opportunities, according to one's ability, of those not receiving enough general education in compulsory schooling age, *independent of their nationality or age* (Article 3).” While the law is worth being noted for mentioning “some” educational right of foreign nationals for the first time in Japan, it is far from guaranteeing their right to enter a public school when lacking proficiency in Japanese or being overaged - much less, the right to financial support when choosing a foreign school.



## LOOKING OVERSEAS

While the fight for the right to cultural freedom continues in Japan, some alternative schools are looking overseas. Since the 2000s, three of the “non-formal” Waldorf schools, as well as some others from other alternative education movements, have received recognition from a prestigious international entity: UNESCO. They have been officially registered in the UNESCO’s school network as “UNESCO Associated Schools”. They are not “schools” in Japan, but they are in the world!



A classroom in an ethnic/international school in Japan

In January 2016, the United Nations, with the unanimous support from governments of the world, launched a mega project called the “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”. As the meaning of this project with a historical importance unfolds in the field of education, and the role of UNESCO in it becomes clearer, the UNESCO’s school network project is turning out to be a surprisingly rich platform for discussing the social threefolding principles of Rudolf Steiner in a plain language understood by the world. The next chapter discusses how.



Discussing global issues in a UNESCO Youth Seminar

## UNESCO'S SCHOOL NETWORK

In 1953, UNESCO created a world network of schools called UNESCO Associated Schools (Project) Network (ASPnet). It now counts more than 11,000 registered member schools in 182 countries, including 26 or so Waldorf schools worldwide.

As explained by UNESCO, the objective of ASPnet is to contribute to “the laboratory function by pioneering innovative and creative pedagogies to translate global concepts into practices at the school level and to advance the transformation of education systems and policies.” Specific target actions could vary over time. Currently, participating schools of the network are urged to promote in their education the following themes;

- a. global citizenship and a culture of peace and non-violence,
- b. sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, and
- c. intercultural learning and the appreciation of cultural diversity and heritage.

UNESCO (2019)

*UNESCO Associated Schools Network:  
Guide for National Coordinators*

These themes are drawn directly from the SDGs' no.4 goal on education, specifically from its 7th target, which is to, “by 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.”

## SOCIAL THREEFOLDING

“Aren't these themes exactly the reflection of Rudolf Steiner's social threefolding theory?”, Kai Iruma, a Japanese Anthroposophist asks. Rudolf Steiner founded the social threefolding movement in the post-WWI tumult of Europe advocating for equality in political life, fraternity in economic life and freedom in cultural life. “*Citizenship* means that we recognize equal rights for all; *Sustainable development of economy* is possible only when we learn to be fraternal, and; *Appreciation of cultural diversity* means appreciation of freedom!” The Japanese Waldorf schools that joined the UNESCO's school network were no strangers to these themes and felt that they had knowledge and experiences on how to work on them. In fact, they did not have to change their curriculum or start new school activities at all in joining the network.

The first Waldorf School was opened in Germany in 1919, the same year as the social threefolding philosophy was made known to the world. “Waldorf education was born out of the sincere hope for peace in the aftermath of the First World War. It was a concrete attempt to bring life to freedom in education, and by doing so, to give organic life of the threefolding nature and bring health to society,” comments Masashi Sato, a long-time activist of freedom in education and an administrator of Yokohama Steiner School. “UNESCO was founded with a similar impulse as Waldorf education was started with -- only 26 years later after yet another world war. UNESCO's mission is to create a healthy and peaceful world. Waldorf education shares this ultimate goal”, affirms Atsuhiko Yoshida, a founding member of Japan Waldorf Schools Association and a board member of National Federation of UNESCO Associations in JAPAN.



## BUILDING PEACE

The Constitution of UNESCO famously states that “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.” In the minds, the hearts, the bodies and the wholeness of the human-being, must peace be constructed.

But how can that be achieved?

UNESCO Associated Schools Network proposes to do so by working on the appreciation of cultural diversity, human rights and environmental consciousness in education. From an Anthroposophical point of view, these central values are to be fostered through strengthening freedom in cultural life, equality in legal and political life and

fraternity in economic life of society. Waldorf schools strive to foster these values in different developmental stages of a child. Their insight is that these values, freedom, equality and fraternity, can develop as important elements of a child’s healthy development in early childhood, through primary education and in adolescence.

Waldorf schools in Kyoto and Yokohama have been important members of the UNESCO’s school network in Japan as they showcase their whole-school and whole-human approach. (A booklet on their approach is available in English.) The Waldorf schools, in turn, have been sensitized to the importance and urgency of the themes proposed by UNESCO. The union, which can be called a UNESCO-Waldorf alliance, turned out to be a perfect win-win relationship.



Yokohama Steiner School



Parzival School Centre in Karlsruhe  
(Photo: Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners)

### KNOWING SELF THROUGH OTHERS

This short report tried to summarize what happened in the World Social Initiative Forum held in Japan in 2018. We wish that it serves to assist future organizers of the Forum in preparing their events. We also hope that the report transmits the enthusiasm of the Forum community to its readers and encourages them to take part in it.

“Knowing Self through Others: Empathy, a Path towards a Just and Fraternal Society” was the theme of the Forum in Japan. We feel that the Japan Forum was able to offer participants an opportunity to do exactly that: to reflect on the Self through meeting the Otherness. It was a truly intergenerational and intercultural gathering of people coming from all backgrounds. We were blessed by the power of diversity!

With the power of the Self unleashed, and that happening the way it did, through empathy learned from immediate Others and extended toward the world and future generations, we felt, nothing would stop us from embarking on our collective journey towards a just and fraternal future of the world! Many months have passed since, and we are being reflective.



We need a structured mechanism for our journey to continue. One of the possibilities is to organize our efforts around the call of the United Nations and UNESCO as is already happening in Japan. We would like to conclude this report, therefore, by proposing to form a network of Waldorf schools and other like-minded educational institutions that are willing to respond to UNESCO’s invitation to the education for intercultural understanding, global citizenship and environmental actions. That is the conclusion we reached from the World Social Initiative Forum held in Japan in 2018 and our proposal to the post-centenary Waldorf community.

### CONCLUDING IMAGES

In 1918 in the aftermath of the First World War, Rudolf Steiner gave a lecture on “The Work of the Angels in Man’s Astral Body”, in which he showed an image of the future of humanity. He said that, “in the future no human being is to find peace in the enjoyment of happiness if others beside him are unhappy.” He also said that, “every human being shall see in each and all of his fellow-men a hidden divinity.”

In our globalizing world, where one lives growingly side by side with others who do not share the same religion, value or norms, nothing would serve as a common standard of moral other than one’s ability to feel the pain and joy of others. “No individual can be happy before the whole world becomes happy.” A contemporary of Rudolf Steiner’s, Kenji Miyazawa, a Japanese novelist and poet, a devout Buddhist and social activist, transmitted an almost identical image of humanity as Steiner’s. “In the new era the world is on its way to becoming a single consciousness and a living organism.”

For such a future, the Angels are in the working,



weaving “pictures” in our souls. What a beautiful image!

Rudolf Steiner, however, warned in the same lecture that for that transformation to take place we must be present in the process through our “wide-awake consciousness”. Otherwise, harmful and destructive results would await. One hundred years later today, we are still struggling to be awake through the most important concerns of our life.

The World Social Initiative Forum is, in a sense, a circle of people who, hand in hand, try to stay awake as they face important and urgent issues of the world. Transformation of the Self and the world is possible and is probably on its way already. We want to take part in the process in full consciousness. We want to work together with like-minded others and put our forces together. We want to, most of all, keep company with each other in our long journey toward a just and fraternal society.

November, 2019



In a garden behind UNESCO's headquarters hangs a sculpture of an angel half destroyed by the atomic bomb dropped in Nagasaki in 1945. It was salvaged from the wreckage of a Catholic cathedral where mass was being held at the time of the explosion.



Light and warmth (a painting on the wall of the Culture Center in Monte Azul Favela, a Brazilian shanty town): People of all colors join hands to form a circle around a common goal.



**4th World Social Initiative Forum Japan, 2018**

**Knowing Self through Others:  
Empathy, a Path towards a Just and Fraternal Society**

**Dates:** March 29-April 2, 2018

**Places:** Minobu-san University  
(Minobu, Yamanashi)

National CHUO Youth Friendship Center  
(Gotemba, Shizuoka)

**Organized by**

Organizing Committee for the World Social Initiative Forum - 2018

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CRI-Children's Resources International

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Biography Work Japan

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**Eurythmy Presentation with  
Buddhist Prayer**

Daiho Saito

Moka Tsunoda

Rieko Hata





## Plenary Lectures

*Welcome message from Buddhism*

Naoto Yoshikawa

*World Social Initiative Forum and projects worldwide*

Joan Sleigh

*Long term voluntary service as biographical event: Experiences of Friends of Waldorf Education*

Christian Grözinger /  
Christoph Herrmann

*Experiences of Monte Azul and trauma pedagogy*

Ute Craemer / Nelson Avella

*Dialogue between Buddhism and Anthroposophy*

Tankyo Iwama / Ute Craemer

*Transforming is possible!*

*Monte Azul, a shanty town turned into an international cultural center*

Ute Craemer

*Empathy, artificial intelligence and the future of humanity*

Nicanor Perlas

## Workshops

*Biodanza: Dance of life*

Yoshiko Uchida / Sanae Onuki

*Capoeira*

Wilson Lima / Mandela

*Phenomena-based science to understand the world around us*

Henry Saphir

*Old tales of Japan*

*Puppeteering and sprachgestaltung*

Sakae Kakuguchi

*Capoeira and Anthroposophy:*

*How inequality can positively transform the world*

Nelson Avella

*Mapamundi: A reflection on cultural diversity, global current affairs and the future*

Juan Facundo Bottero /  
Andrea de la Cruz

*The invisible relations are revealed! Eurythmy in social life*

Michitaka Seki

*Discussion on the nuclear accident and nuclear issues*

Saeko Uno

*Developing social altruism through life story*

Vanusa Coutinho /  
Regina Wrasse

*Empathy, Anthroposophy and societal threefolding in the age of artificial intelligence*

Nicanor Perlas

*Multi-cultural schools in South Africa and the need to develop empathy*

Joan Sleigh

*Diversity in education is for the future of humanity!: Exemplar efforts in Japan and in the world*

Daisuke Onuki

*Bamboo music and geometrical art*

Akio Hizume / Natsuki Matsumoto

*Art of bodily expression*

Moka Tsunoda / Yuko Urakami

*Trauma Care: Restoration of ego, art work of pastel drawing, massage, Bothmer exercise (spatial dynamics)*

Mayumi Takeuchi / Yuka Kobayashi /  
Fumiko Miyata / TENKO

*Growing self-awareness through meditative practice and inner development*

Joan Sleigh

*Deep discussion: Transforming is possible!*

Ute Craemer

*Social painting*

Yumiko Abe

*Biography work through body movements: What do you do in your 20s?*

Yuko Hibara / Kaori Akimoto





*We are peasants, very busy and the work is heavy*

*We want to find a path to live more happily and more fully*

*Our forebears lived that way more often than not*

*Based on the unity of the evidence of modern science, the experiments of truth seekers and the intuitions of our own, I want to argue that*

*No individual can be happy before the whole world becomes happy*

*The consciousness of the Self will gradually evolve out from the individual to the group, to society and to the universe*

*Isn't that the path the old saints took and taught?*

*In the new era the world is on its way to becoming a single consciousness and a living organism*

*Living rightly and strongly is to feel our galaxy in our Self and to behave accordingly*

*Let us seek true happiness of the world*

*Seeking a path is already a path in itself*

**Kenji Miyazawa,**  
*An Outline of the Essential Art of the Peasant, 1926*

