

Both Moons

Dr. Elisabeth Wäschenfelder, MA seit 2010

It is almost tradition by now that Professor emeritus Dr. Ulrich Aeschlimann, an expert in Wagenschein didactics, visits Ecole annually to give a professional development seminar to teachers. We had this pleasure again on January 26, 2018. This time the focus of the seminar was the published article by Martin Wagenschein entitled *Both Moons* (published in German only).¹

During his interesting lecture, Professor Aeschlimann introduced the text and the questions arising from it, which led to a stimulating discussion. According to Professor Aeschlimann, what Wagenschein meant with both moons was, on the one hand *the moon of the poet* and on the other, *the moon of the scientist*. The question as to which of the "two" moons was the "real" moon was meaningless according to Wagenschein, since, depending on the perspective taken, only individual aspects of the object in question become apparent. Physics deals only with the repeatable, objectively measurable aspects, while poetry deals with other aspects.

In the course of his lecture, Prof. Aeschlimann addressed the question to what extent it may be justified to explain the different approaches to phenomena by the fact that there are differing perspectives: the perspective of the humanities and the perspective of the natural sciences (and possibly that of the social sciences,) which share unbridgeable gaps of mutual non-understanding and disparagement.

Wagenschein's work tries to build a bridge between these varying perspectives. Aeschlimann, himself, criticized these divisions and suggested that various aspects be permitted, valued as equal and, wherever possible, that one's own point of view must be made accessible to others through explanations that are as easy to understand as possible. Prof. Aeschlimann then quoted Wagenschein²:

"Never should a schoolchild feel even in the slightest, even unconsciously, hints of bad conscience when they "still" see the moon as the friend of clouds and themselves walking across the firmament, or experience confusion by the learned talk that all this is "only appearance". The student should never feel divided, especially if once he or she pursues astronomical conclusions and demonstrations and yet - fortunately - can't resist exploring experiences, ideas, poems in which the moon is by no means perceived as a sphere with the mass of 'm' and the earth as a ball".

We are thankful for such a stimulating seminar and excitedly look forward to the next time!

¹ in: M.Wagenschein: Erinnerungen für morgen, S.154ff

² M.Wagenschein: Die beiden Monde. in: Erinnerungen für morgen, S.163