GOETHEANUM COMMUNICATIONS

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**New horizons**

**Martina Maria Sam: Biographical study of Rudolf Steiner‘s Vienna years**

**Martina Maria Sam has completed the second part of her biography of Rudolf Steiner. Following on from ‘Childhood and Youth’ this volume focuses on the ‘Vienna Years’ with deeper experiences of contemporary culture and first public activities.**

Martina Maria Sam summarizes the period in Rudolf Steiner‘s life that follows on from the descriptions in her first volume (‘Childhood and Youth’) as follows, “As he takes up his work as a private tutor in 1884, Rudolf Steiner connects with the most varied circles, attending artistic-literary groups and frequenting the coffeehouses of Vienna. He gets to know poets, journalists, actors, theologians, politicians, musicians and theosophists, including Johannes Brahms, Victor Adler, Hermann Bahr, Arthur Schnitzler and Fercher von Steinwand.” In this second part of her biographical study, too, she tries to read, from numerous documents, essential “developmental gestures” in the life of the originator of Anthroposophy.

What characterizes Rudolf Steiner‘s time in Vienna is on the one hand his intense interest in the contemporary cultural life. He has formative encounters, including friendships with women such as Pauline Specht, the poet Marie Eugenie delle Grazie, and the later feminists Marie Lang and Rosa Mayreder. On the other hand it is the attempt in his publications to call attention, building on Goethe, to the fact that there are no boundaries to knowledge but that the spirit or inner essence of things can be directly experienced in the cognitive process.

Martina Maria Sam points out that, from 1888 onwards, one can detect signs of an inner change as Rudolf Steiner developed new interests “in visual arts, theatre and mysticism.” Outwardly this is apparent in contacts initiated by Friedrich Eckstein with the Viennese theosophists. Towards the end of his years in Vienna, new horizons open up for the young Rudolf Steiner. The volume closes with his leaving Vienna in order to take up a position as a co-worker at the Goethe Archives in Weimar in the autumn of 1890.

(2031 characters/SJ; English by Margot M. Saar)

**Book (in German)** Martina Maria Sam: Rudolf Steiner. Die Wiener Jahre, 536 pages, Verlag am Goetheanum, 50 Euros / 60 CHF

**Interview with Martina Maria Sam (in German)**dasgoetheanum.com/rudolf-steiner-in-wien

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