



Exploratory Symposium on Economics

Economics Faculty
(later Conference)
Report of the 1st Annual Meeting

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Report of the 1st Annual Meeting

This meeting was held at the Goetheanum in Dornach (Basel), Switzerland, 15-16 September 2002.

Meeting during the 15th and 16th of September 2002, a dozen members of the School considered the relationship of the School of Spiritual Science to modern economics and whether there needed to be a more conscious interface in the form of a 'faculty of economics'.

Quite what this might mean and whether it was appropriate to further such an idea was the subject of quiet and sustained listening by the group – listening to what each had to say on the subject, listening to their various impulses in connection with modern economic life, and listening to what the spiritual world was trying to say.

Much ground was covered, ranging from questions of methodology and the link to the nineteen Lessons of the First Class, to fundamental issues in mainstream economics, such as the problem facing pensions, the power of the invisible hand image, and the role of monetary economics – a broad field concerned with banking, money flows, monetary policy and exchange rate theory. The relationship to the Lessons was crucial for the clear answer it gave concerning the esoteric foundation of spiritual scientific economics. The question was also asked how can today's problems be understood in terms of Steiner's indications, assuming the latter have continued relevance, and how, indeed, would our own affairs look in the light of all this? Of particular importance is the need to understand how the three kinds of money manifest today.

The meeting began with listening to each of the participants' expectations and deeper concerns. From this we built the road as we travelled, journey's end being the idea of creating a database detailing the past, present, and intended work of those members of the School who chose to sign up for the faculty. In this way, the faculty would be a same-status circle of active members of the School without a committee to direct it, creating the database being a matter of coordination. The database would, however, also provide a picture of how the School in this active sense was interfaced with modern economic life. Such picture forming would be both a way to share what we were severally engaged in and to see what was needed.

At the end, we asked each in turn how his or her situation would be affected by the presence of such a faculty. The meeting took no decisions, but sought to form an image of the situation. An important note was struck when one participant said he felt it would make a great difference to know that there was a home for economics within the Goetheanum. The gathering then adjourned with the thought that Paul Mackay would take account of what had taken place and if he felt it appropriate encourage further steps in making such a faculty a reality.