

Economics Conference of the Goetheanum

Part of the Social Sciences Section of the School of Spiritual Science

Newsletter | June 2016

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Dear Colleagues,

Many people in the anthroposophical movement strive to understand and practice Rudolf Steiner's economics. Within the Social Sciences Section, it is surprising and even disturbing to me how often I come across things written or said about associative economics or in the name of Rudolf Steiner that just don't fit the image I have that has been built over the years thanks to the collegial research within the Economics Conference. For example, the soon to be held Swiss vote on basic unconditional income. Or the recent reference to Rudolf Steiner's economics course as one part of a whole in which the 'Rights Course' and the 'Cultural Course' are yet to be written¹, as if the Steiner's economics analysis omits the I-being that mitigates the duality this statement implies. The whole point of creating the Conference was to establish a locus within the School of Spiritual Science for precise research of the content of the Economics Course using the spiritual scientific methodology it advocates. As time marches ever closer to the centennial of those lectures, I wonder why views are so disparate and whether they can be bridged.

In this issue, there are various reports on efforts made by Economics Conference members to give associative economics practical effect. In all of them, the key is that steps are being taken and one hopes that they will create a path that can be followed toward a future worthy of humanity.

Finally, many people reading this are preparing for the Annual Meeting in June on the shores of the English Channel. Perhaps one day we will all meet in the same room! Until such an event, may our mutual work bring us ever closer to that which is recognizable by the Spirit of our time.

Sincerely,

Kim (Chotzen)
Editor

The Riddle of the Nerves ***Towards a True Understanding of Work***

Inner Aspects of Financial Literacy
15th Annual Meeting, 22 to 26 June 2016
Folkestone, England

Many of today's social problems, as also such 'solutions' to them as labour protection and unconditional basic income, have their origin in a wrong understanding of work, concerning which Rudolf Steiner said: 'No one ... can gain a right understanding of man's relation to work who builds his concepts ... upon the misguided distinction between sensory and motor nerves.' Antecedent, therefore, to any change in policy or practice regarding work and remuneration one needs to begin with a clear understanding of the nervous system, together with its analogous relationship with accounting. (This is also crucial to financial literacy, which this year is part of the whole event, rather than a single separate day.)

This year's Annual Meeting will therefore consider the problem of the 'double' nervous system in connection with money, accounting and the deeper nature and purpose of economic life. James Dyson, M.D. will present on *The Riddle of the Nerves*, Marc Desaulles on *Nerves and Money* and Christopher Houghton Budd on *The Economy as Muscle Being*.

Apology from Previous Issue *Theseus statue in Vienna*

A reader pointed out that the sculptor of the youth statue in Vienna was a National Socialist, Josef Mullner. The photo was included because of the archetypal image it affords of a youth gazing to the future. We appreciate being informed of its origins and in no way intended to offend. Sincerest apologies if we have done so!

¹ Section for the Social Sciences in North America, Spring 2016: Individual and Community Sovereignty, The Fundamental Social Law and the Power of Mutual Credit to Implement It, John Root, Jr.

Contributions always welcome!

An anecdote

Recently, I invited members to submit contributions (meaning articles) for the EC News and several people responded that they would gladly contribute and where could they send funds! We appreciate the generous spirit of such offers and invite anyone who wishes to make a financial contribution to contact economics@goetheanum.ch.

Suggested reading

Recommendation from the Editor

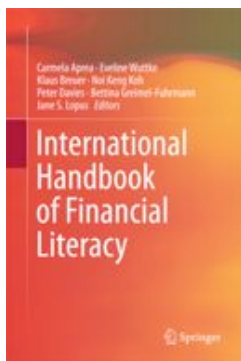
The paper *The Consequences of 'The Peace' for Economics – a study of economics since 1919* by Christopher Houghton Budd provides a very helpful context for understanding today's global landscape. It is also very relevant reading for the upcoming annual meeting. If interested in obtaining a copy, please contact economics@goetheanum.ch.

Various Projects

Submitted by Christopher Houghton Budd

New Publications

There is a strong tendency in our movement towards an 'alternative' approach to economics, rather than to become part of the 'mainstream' – both terms perhaps unfortunate. Or to describe Rudolf Steiner's work in economics as belonging to heterodox rather than orthodox; when what is needed is for associative economics to become the new orthodoxy, for economics to become predicated on the I, rather than defaulting to 'leftist' or Third Sector biases.



As part of such endeavours to weave the work of Rudolf Steiner and associative economic ideas into today's discourse, 2016 marks two new publications by Christopher Houghton Budd. Edited at Goethe University, Frankfurt, *'In the Shoes of Luca Pacioli – Double entry bookkeeping and financial literacy'* outlines a secondary school curriculum for teaching finance in schools, published by Springer, Berlin, in their *International Handbook of Financial Literacy* targeted on secondary schools worldwide. *Triple Governance – Hayek's Lost Thesis*, will be published by Palgrave Macmillan in a book focusing on Hayek's Nobel Prize work. The paper discusses the ideas for giving economic governance its own foundation as found in the writings of Hayek, Steiner and Churchill, and is part of the Mont Pelerin Society's outreach. Its main argument is that Hayek's first paper, never published and now lost, would have been akin to Rudolf Steiner's threefold analysis of society, both as applied to Austro-Hungary and in general 'threefold social order' terms. And that the prospect for revisiting that possibility may be with us anew.

Good Morning, Folkestone!

In Folkestone, England, the town's economic regeneration is being influenced by associative economic ideas. Its newly-opened Harbour Arm Project bases its rents on percentage of turnover, not over-capitalised real estate. *Talking Shop* is a weekly workshop for local traders and other interested people that has been backgrounded by the *Colours of Money* seminar and is based on regular sharing of accounts, with the idea of capitalising capacities, circulating, not preserving capital and mutual liquidity discussions. St Mary's Primary school is now writing up its experience of a fair trade module and shop project undertaken by its Year 6 (10-11 year-olds). The challenge will be to see if what they learned from producing goods, pricing them 'associatively' and then running a one-week shop (the profit of which, £300, is now a fund for the next Year 6), will stand them in good stead for their SATS test!

Stroud: Money Unveiled and Oxford: Barfield in Contemporary Contexts

Arthur Edwards

A one-day money workshop at Hawkwood in Stroud and a conference at Wolfson College, Oxford, celebrating contemporary perspectives on Owen Barfield, provided an opportunity to share an associative perspective with a public audience. The former was attended among others by two former City finance professionals who described the analysis as stimulating, inspiring and clear, while academics who participated in the latter seminar reported that hearing about the *Financial Inkling* resulted in feeling stimulated from 'a dozen different directions'. A chapter in a book on Barfield is being prepared on Owen Barfield's *Radical Monetary Analysis*.

No to Basic Income

23rd June sees the British voting in or out of the European Union (how about out for the time being and let's see what happens?) 5th June sees the Swiss voting yes or no to Unconditional Basic Income, a movement that claims its genesis in the work of Rudolf Steiner, though quite how is not easy to see. A slick and suggestive 'yes' campaign is being countered by a 'no' site, run by ex Waldorf student and now economist, Fionn Meier (<http://grundeinkommen-nein.ch>). He argues that, far from securing more freedom and solidarity, the expected outcomes of Unconditional Basic Income, it will reinforce the wrongly-structured economics of our time. It is not an income problem, but lack of access to credit on terms derived from the borrowewrs' use of capital not the profiteering of financial markets.

Subscribe to *Associate!*

Now in its 36th year, *Associate!* is the only journal directly on economic affairs from an associative point of view. Published bi-monthly, annual subscription £20 electronic, £30 hard copy (UK). It looks for examples of associative thinking and doing in the world at large, placing these alongside insights from Rudolf Steiner and others who are following up his work around the world. Subscriptions to cfae.biz/associate or 42 Old High Street, Folkestone, Kent CT20 1RN, England.

Rethinking the Financing of Education

Budapest, Hungary, October 2016

A seminar held in February with Christopher Houghton Budd in the Waldorf School of Kuznets in Budapest looked at the financing of education in practical terms but also against the background of the larger purpose of education in a threefold view of society and the role of Hungary in recent history. This will be followed up by a meeting in October, which will also touch on the folk soul and deeper tasks of Hungary. In similar vein, visits are planned to Bucharest, where EC participant Dan Botez lives and Nicholas Dodwell is a frequent visitor and colleague in link with Karlsruhe Waldorf School.

Economics Conference Country Representative

Is there a need?

The idea of country representatives has arisen as part of discussing how to convert the Economics Conference into a worldwide community that is aware of itself. The question was whether there needs to be some kind of consciousness point for the work of the Conference in the different countries, distinct from the treasurers who oversee the use of EC funds.

In particular, in the US, because of the fact that Kim Chotzen has worn the hat of worldwide administrator, treasurer for the EC Fund in the US and also representative for the US, it is clear that someone else should carry the representative role. Meg Freeling has been asked to consider whether she would resonate with such a role. This structural change could perhaps emerge in other countries as well. Dialogue is underway to discuss the topic.

Economics Conference Database

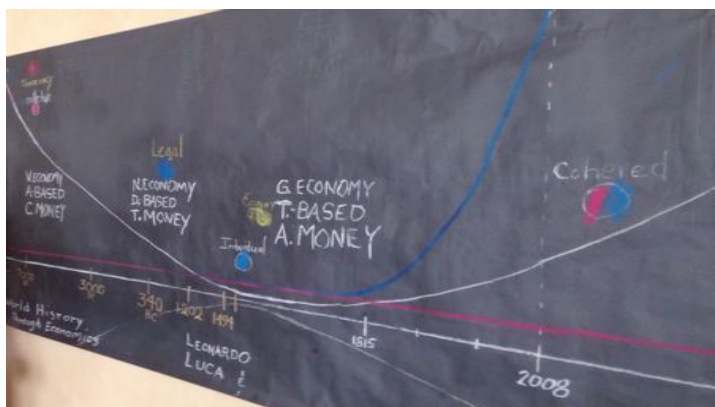
An update

Various contact lists have been organised into three current databases: *Participants* – individuals who are members of the Economics Conference and are therefore members of the School of Spiritual Science; *Attendees* – individuals who have attended an EC event, consented to be on its mailing list and are therefore familiar with anthroposophy on some level; *Enquirers* – individuals who have shown a general interest and/or have requested to be kept informed. (EC News is sent to Participants and Attendees.)

Economics Conference Research

Daniel Osmer

At the Associative Economics Café event on March 23, 2016 in Sebastopol, California, Daniel Osmer held a public event attended by thirty people at which he presented part of his research project, which recently received a grant from the Economics Conference Fund. He used a large black panel sketch (3' x 6') depicting various dates from the distant past to the future as a story telling device and explanatory tool for exploring economic concepts and significant historical moments. The 45-minute presentation began with the premise that civilization, economics and accounting all started simultaneously when human beings first initiated trade with each other, i.e. with the exchange of value. The new relationship of meeting each other's needs through trade sparked the development of human 'know-how'. Economic exchange and the increasing specialization of human activity became the primary evolutionary forces moving civilization.



Much of the material used was based on the first seven lectures of Rudolf Steiner's economics course of 1922, with 'exchange of value in the economic process' as the presentation's guiding theme. One economic concept from each of the seven lectures was chosen for deeper consideration through the use of color images, text and conversation. The descriptive approach used seeks to take into account the fluctuating and invisible nature of the economic process.

In the photo, a chronological sketch of significant moments and biographies is depicted from left to right along a line showing

a layered view of the development of society and the individual in relationship to the slowly evolving economic life and changing forms of money, from the 'First Settlements', Jericho and then Tepe Asiab (9,000 to 7,000 BCE), through the major 'Time of Transition' in northern Italy (12th to 15th century), up to today.

A New Training at L'Aubier

Dare to be Independent!

Anita Grandjean continues the planning and implementation of a new training in Switzerland for young people, based in anthroposophy and dedicated to fostering independence in thinking, feeling and deeds by building knowledge of the self and the world through practical experience at L'Aubier, training in financial literacy and entrepreneurship, and fundamental understanding of anthroposophy.

Waldorf Teachers: A Professional Development Pilot Project

Introducing a project – Meg Freeling

This project's premise is that Waldorf schools and teachers hold a unique key to the future and could develop a process whereby the Waldorf movement can keep the pace necessary to play the transformative role in the social organism intended for it by its founder, Rudolf Steiner. This process grows out of an overarching question the answer to which has two aspects: What is the world at large, what is the spirit of our age, and what is Rudolf Steiner himself asking Waldorf schools to become? And in that context, what is each Waldorf School's unique 'seed' and what is it opening into?

Money and Accounting

Teachers would engage in two short courses to understand and begin to practice Rudolf Steiner's picture of economics. One is an on-line course, "Money Unveiled" (see below) and the second is a weekend workshop, "The Colors of Money." Both courses, aiming to focus the will, would be given by Arthur Edwards, who specializes in helping people set up and track their own accounts.

Waldorf's 'Becoming' Dialogues

As a communication enhancement exercise, teachers would engage in the discipline of dialogue led by Meg Freeling, who has training and experience in both Waldorf education and dialogue, regarding the future of Waldorf schools.

If three schools were to apply themselves to this pilot project, the resulting study could greatly benefit other Waldorf schools and communities. Contact: meqfreeling@gmail.com

Economic Group Study Session Summary

Stan Whipple, El Sobrante, California

In April, four sessions focused on deepening our understanding of 'land' or better labelled 'nature' as that which encompasses all the elements and conditions of physical existence. In the Greek times, economics as a separate field of study began out of the recognition of the 'management of household' provisions sufficient for the whole living community – sourcing, gathering and storing the 'values' needed to have a prosperous life and support the physical existence of the living (including animals and plants). We confirmed that the conditions, factors and forces of the economic process are constantly in flux re-balancing. We know much about the needs and began to explore the 'want' aspect, which seems to drive the economic process into greed and excess. We also recognized that our 'needs' extend beyond the physical body but are still within the economic process. In May we will focus on 'capital' and deepen our understanding of the role of the individual in relation to the economic process. Contact: Stann Whipple, triform13@yahoo.com

Money Unveiled

Distance learning pilot program from Vivianne Sinclair

Can an associative approach to money and economics be taught and learned through interactive long distance conversations via telephone or a computer mic and online webinar presentations? An online project called *Money Unveiled* has been launched to explore these possibilities. 22 people from around the globe "met" virtually twice a month for three months to explore how to engage with money from an associative economic perspective in their lives, businesses, and communities – from paradigm to practice. Arthur Edwards led the presentations, conversations, and offered a complimentary individual consultation for each participant. Many expressed their gratitude and how the course gave them hope as they learned practical skills to implement their destiny tasks through new distinctions in bookkeeping, innovative business forms and creative possibilities for collaborative economic dynamics.

The content will be available in audio-visual format and will be re-offered soon as a distance learning program along with continued live (over the phone and web) interactive monthly mentoring sessions with Arthur. For more information about the curriculum, please contact Vivianne Sinclair viviannerael@gmail.com