

Associate!

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Newsletter of the Economics Conference of the Goetheanum Part of the Social Sciences Section of the School of Spiritual Science

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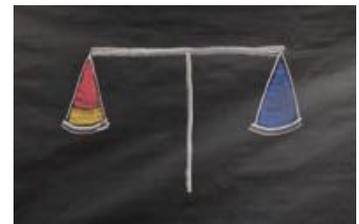
As modern constructs fall away before us, and along with them, their underlying formative principles, one can wonder, what will take their place? The way forward seems to be pointing to the fact that humanity is stuck on one side of a threshold and cannot perceive itself as the bridge between two worlds. What are these two worlds? One is seen, known, understood as 'materially real' – the realities around us which arguably are increasingly troubling without a reprieve in sight. The other can be imagined; what could be if...? What might be possible...? What would the rules be? The structures? The visions? It can hit us right between the eyes! Suddenly the future lies in what we will (or won't) create. What a heavy responsibility and yet what a hope-filled opportunity!

In the Economics Conference the world 'envisioned' is based on Rudolf Steiner's description of economic life *if* humanity understood a) that human society is a social *organism* – alive, moving, ever changing –and b) what could bring about health in that organism.

In his 2003 book *A Human Response to Globalisation*, Marc Desaulles makes an important distinction to help us navigate these two worlds when he speaks about two approaches to health:

To consider social life as an organism leads to the question of health and disease. Health means equilibrium, which by definition is an unstable state... It cannot therefore be a matter of miraculous remedies which provide cures for all time, just as there is no food which can satisfy one's hunger forever. ... the conception which has dominated science for three hundred years is that of 'pathogenesis' (from the Greek: origin of suffering.) This approach tries to know and master the factors which bring disease. Thus, most modern medicine is determined by the question: what causes disease and how can it be eliminated? In contrast, a new kind of research investigates the cause of health and thus puts the emphasis on 'salutogenesis' (from the Latin and Greek: origin of health)...i.e. what favors health and cure. For example, in the case of an epidemic, it does not ask what virus is causing the illness, but why do some people avoid catching the disease? The central question here is the ability to strengthen the human being when faced with a vector of disease, a problem, or a source of stress. In brief, how to learn to transform imbalance into new balance. In the social organism, we cannot ignore these two approaches. How, in spite of all our errors and all our excesses, can we bring the social organism into balance?¹

Can we imagine such a balance – the world as one healthy economy – and take steps toward creating it? Living 'as if' is not being in denial. It's having the courage to believe that ideas and thoughts are real and then acting accordingly. By doing so, we show, in fact, that we human beings *are* the only bridge between the two worlds – between what is and what could be.



Much that is written in this issue is of this kind – colleagues thinking and acting 'as if', creating the road to travel thereby, steadily inscribing good intent into the world's collective will. But can such 'small' steps be taken 'in time' to avert complete humanitarian breakdown? I have found, especially recently, that it can be both hopeful and mysterious to encounter the little 'miracles' that the world gives back as echoes, like 'breadcrumbs' along this road that encourage, even beckon for, the next steps. The future is indeed in our hands. This is the moment the good gods have been looking forward to from time immemorial. Now is our chance, maybe our second chance but hopefully not our last!

May good come of it.

Kim Chotzen
Administrator

¹ Desaulles, Marc, *A Human Response to Globalisation – Discovering Associative Economics*, Associative Economics Institute, Canterbury, England/Neuchatel, Switzerland, 2003.

19th Annual Meeting: Towards 2022 - Walking the talk of a One-World Economy

Rescheduled for 15 – 18 October 2020

Along with everyone in the world, our attempts have been to discern how to continue with our face to face research given today's unprecedented circumstances. Knowing that we most likely would not be able to meet in person at the Goetheanum as planned in June and also knowing that now, more than ever, the Economics Conference work must not wane but strengthen, those who had registered for or expressed interest in this year's 19th Annual Meeting were asked to suggest what research items should be considered; this as a way to seek from the periphery that which could inform the center. The input was compiled in a special publication and sent to Economics Conference Colleagues, attendees of recent annual meetings, and would-be registrants as a 'virtual meeting' document to be considered from June through September. We intend to do a follow-up mailing of responses in the fall in advance of the rescheduled October meeting.

The **Financial Literacy Day**, a joint project with the Pedagogical Section, was meanwhile also rescheduled and will take place as part of the delayed annual meeting. This colloquium will now take place on the **17th October 2020**.



OECD PISA / Youth Financial Literacy Assessment

Fionn Meier / Winterthur, Switzerland

On the 7th of May the results of the third OECD PISA Financial Literacy Assessment were released. Students aged fifteen from fourteen different countries had been 'tested' about their knowledge and understanding of money and transactions, planning and managing finances, risk and reward and the financial landscape.

The results were, simply stated, that there is still a lot to do. According to Prof. Annamaria Lusardi, who chairs the group of experts conducting these assessments, financial literacy enables today's youth to participate in social life. In her own words: "In the past, if people were not able to read and write they could not fully participate in society. Today we also need to be financially literate."²

In the field of promoting financial literacy Prof. Lusardi is a leading figure. She was appointed as the director of the Committee for Financial Education in Italy in 2017, advised the office of Financial Education of the U.S. Treasury after the financial crisis of 2008, and is the founder and academic director of the Global Financial Literacy Excellence Center (GFLEC).³

In her accompanying words to the release of the results, Prof. Lusardi uses the image of a storm that we are facing at the moment and which makes it more than ever necessary that everyone gets sailing lessons. In closing, she says: "It is like water in an ecosystem. We all need it to do well. It is not sustainable to have so little of it and to have distributed it so unequally. Let's make sure in particular that our youth has plenty of it."

And yet, what does it mean to be "financially literate"? What is the language that every fifteen-year-old student should be able to read and speak in order to participate in modern society? Unfortunately, those promoting financial literacy in the OECD context are not (yet?) aware that this language cannot be anything but double-entry bookkeeping. This language appeared during the Renaissance when the foundation of our modern economy was built. In those days, entrepreneurship was based on the individual (non-hereditary) use of capital and money as a means of perception, i.e. double-entry bookkeeping.

For additional reference, here is a link to a paper submitted to the OECD on the subject of youth financial literacy in 2018 by Fionn Meier and Christopher Houghton Budd:

https://economics.goetheanum.org/fileadmin/economics/Articles_and_Papers/ECPaper2018_CHB-FM_Money_is_Bookkeeping_OECD_PaperTemplated.pdf

Readers may find Stephen Vallus's review of Fionn Meier's book on *Money is Accounting* also of relevance and use:

https://economics.goetheanum.org/fileadmin/economics/Articles_and_Papers/SV_FM_Postmodern_Money_book_review_FINAL.pdf

² <http://www.oecd.org/finance/financial-education/launch-pisa-financial-literacy-results-2018.htm>

³ <https://gflec.org>

Willconomy

Oliver Braendli / Tokyo, Japan

Having made contact with us, we asked Oliver to write this piece to introduce his project. Oliver lives in Tokyo. It is interesting that he sees Steiner's ideas as ready for the world, or should that be vice versa?

Do you know of *Willconomy*? Almost all crises of our time have economic or financial roots. But almost no one really understands the economy. That's why we cannot come to real solutions. I want to change that with *Willconomy*.

My name is Oliver Braendli and I started to get interested in money and the economy when I was about 17 years old. "The Money Syndrome" and "The Experiment of Wörgl" were my starting points. I tried for many years to come to a clear understanding of monetary and economic phenomena. But I never arrived there to my full satisfaction. That changed when I accidentally came across Rudolf Steiner's lectures on economics. Suddenly the inconsistencies vanished and I was able to think about money and the economy – in connection with society – in such a way that everything made sense. Not only sense in terms of observing the past, but also in terms of what is emerging. This new economic thinking is the paradigm shift that has been long awaited, sought after and demanded by a large number of people especially since the financial crisis in 2008.

With *Willconomy* I want to help spread this new economic thinking in the world. To convince and bring together as many people as possible. If we can form a critical mass, we can bring our own economy to life: the *Willconomy*. An economy of willing.

By taking advantage of the new opportunities that information technology has brought to us, we can reach millions of people at the same time at virtually no cost.⁴ Another advantage is that video creation has become broadly available. Not only is it a very popular media format, but it also has the potential to visualize better the "flexible ideas" or "images" necessary to think economically. *Willconomy.com* therefore uses videos to advocate the new economic thinking.

But I didn't want to stop there. People often ask for specifics: "What will practically change? How is that supposed to work?" The new economic thinking should be more than just theory. I came up with the idea that a modified 'freelancer platform' could become a perfect practical application. It includes the educational approach and brings together those people willing to make a change. The concept and design for this project is ready to be implemented. The main innovative feature of the new platform will be the "true price". When posting a new product or service, the user will calculate the "true price" according to Rudolf Steiner's formula – and that will serve as the basis for negotiating the final price between seller and buyer. This project is full of opportunities and I invite you to follow my videos, where I present things in detail.

If you want to become a supporter of this project, then please go to my website where you can easily and safely donate money. Or, contact me at info@willconomy.com to explore other ways of collaboration! Thank you so much!

"Those who are merely devout, even devout in spiritual science, are just as much responsible for the catastrophes of the present time as the capitalists with their materialistic attitude and mentality; they are just as guilty as the capitalists, through the fact that they enclose spiritual-scientific truths within their own abstract limits and are not willing to permeate everyday reality with penetrating thoughts.

This fact has again and again induced me to tell you that the Anthroposophical movement should not be regarded as something which gives you the opportunity to listen to Sunday afternoon sermons, which caress the soul because they speak of an everlasting life, and so forth, but the Anthroposophical movement should be taken as a path which enables us to cope in a real, concrete way with the modern problems of life, the burning problems of the present. One of the first requirements is this: to understand from where we must set out, and that everything will be of no use whatever unless people find access to a really unprejudiced way of thinking."

Source: The Emancipation of the Economic Process from the Personal Element – The Separation of the Moral-Spiritual Life from the External Realities of Existence. Rudolf Steiner, Dornach, 1st February 1919. GA 188.

"Do not see me as an initiate – see me as your maths teacher..." – R. Steiner

From inside a notebook belonging to the late Tamara Slayton, dated St. John's 2001.

⁴ Really? – CHB.

Brazil: Intense Gatherings and Colors of Money Seminar

Daniel Havro / Curitiba, Brazil

Some participants left the III Latin American Economics Conference meeting in São Paulo (see January 2020 newsletter)⁵ – with a longing to know more about how their own daily business could benefit from Rudolf Steiner's contribution to economics. This led some members of two social and entrepreneurial projects started by EcoSocial members (*Trê* and *Parsifal21*) to ask me to coordinate a paid regular study group and to organize a Seminar on *Colors of Money* delivered by Christopher Houghton Budd.

We aimed to provide more than a new item for the client's toolkit as some of them might have expected. The idea was also to give a panorama of how associative economics is part of a broad process in humanity's and economics' long path. This, as awareness and support for initiatives that regard themselves as anthroposophically-based or oriented and use names like Parsifal.

The study group started with a series of introductory meetings around "What is associative economics and how it sees capital and the capitalization of initiatives" at a consulting company headquarters in Curitiba. The participants (an average of 15) are all from the *Parsifal21* project and after what they experienced in Christopher's seminar and now in the COVID-19 context they are thinking about how to organize eventual next steps with me.

The *Colors of Money* Seminar happened at Solar Ita Wegman Association, a Curative Education and Social Therapy institution that I manage in a small rural city near Curitiba, between January 27th and 29th. The majority of the 18 participants (counting myself as audience and translator at the same time) were *Parsifal21* members plus a *Trê* employee and a social therapist and woodworker from the local association. Considering the group expectation and composition, the final sessions were dedicated to reflections around *Parsifal21*'s structure and next steps. According to some of them, it was an intense experience that led to new reflections about what they want to achieve and the role of bookkeeping for every entrepreneur.⁶

The meals were prepared by a special team comprising a woman from the local neighborhood and a young man with disabilities who attends the association. They were led by Marihelen, a talented young cooking teacher who has just received a Youth Bond organized by me to finance a gastronomy training. (*Associate!* readers will receive more news about this bond in future editions.)

Another good surprise was to have Carlos Jaime Loch, a colleague who took part in some Economics Conference activities a few years ago, participating in a talk given by Christopher about the relationship between the School of Spiritual Science's sections, the Anthroposophical Society and the Anthroposophical Movement. Carlos lives in Curitiba and also took some time to have research conversations with Christopher on the work he has been doing to enable SMEs to become free of bank finance.

First in Campinas with Xavier Andrillon, then in Curitiba with me and in São Paulo with Lucia Sigolo, it was a productive time for conversations and alignment between the 'local' Economics Conference members and Christopher as Convenor concerning the next steps and meaning of associative economics in Brazil and Latin America regarding research, publications, events, and entrepreneurship. We hope the fruits of what was sown in those days can soon start to be shared in *Associate!*



⁵ https://economics.goetheanum.org/fileadmin/economics/Newsletters/ECN30_Associate__January_2020.pdf

⁶ Readers can get a sense of this work from visiting <https://bit.ly/3bhUINO>.

The Situation in Argentina

Alejandro Urtizberea / Mercedes, Argentina

This report of a project near Buenos Aires gives an insight into the great difficulties people face in Argentina to develop economic activities that are both free of IMF domination and the extremely unstable political life, which veers between populism and so-called free markets. Alejandro is responsible for a real estate and youth project two hours outside Buenos Aires.

In the context of the Two Johns Association, our colloquium has been busy. As part of translating Marc Desaulles's book "A Human Response to Globalization," (see reference under Latin American Publications) we have studied Chapters 1 to 6. In regard to Covid 19, we have considered the structure and properties of protein S and the dynamics of its propagation, along with Rudolf Steiner's comments on the Spanish flu.

Regarding the national social landscape, we are experiencing 'statisation' of the economy and control of production, the modification of labour laws during the health emergency, a program for emergency provincial financial, control on maximum prices, delivery of bonds to citizens, expansion of the monetary base, the creation of a Guarantee Fund for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, and prohibition of redundancies and suspensions for the duration of the health emergency.

Individually, there is social isolation, the prioritization of the use of technology, fear, uncertainty, the idea of 'self-sundering', changing habits, indebtedness, lack of work activity, depression and stress. On the positive side, there is a temporary reduction of negative environmental impacts.

How will social life recover? What of economic revival and financial restructuring? Given the bankruptcy of the prevailing thinking, what image of the human being might yet unfold? What image do we find in our own creations? Can we believe and trust one another? Can I believe and trust myself? What role will active willing play in any reconstruction? Can associative economics inspire right action?

In our own project, we face event cancellations. And since we don't have a certain picture, we can't reschedule dates. Nor can we draw up budgets, due to economic instability.

We are keeping in touch with our customers in order to maintain a commercial link, understand the impact of the current situation, establish shared outlooks on likely future scenarios, and generate agreements that allow us to restart the activity.

The Youth and Trade Fund has been suspended for the time being, as well as the courses to be taught at high school in nearby San Andrés de Giles. But we are in regular contact with the young people who attend YTF activities, while we figure out together what the future might hold.



Awakening to the Economic Signs of Our Time

Monthly Online meetings with Arthur Edwards

Vivianne Sinclair and Jane Johnson / USA

(Taken from a flier.)

An invitation

In an attempt to refine and examine our economic thinking from a variety of life situations, so we can support one another to act differently in each of our unique destiny situations, we, Vivianne Sinclair and Jane Johnson, invite you to join monthly meetings with special guest Arthur Edwards, associative economist and member of the Economics Conference of the Social Sciences Section of the Goetheanum.

Our Current Situation: Opportunity or Warning?

At this juncture in time, with economies around the world in crises, people's initiatives halted, and cash flow curtailed, many questions arise as to the underlying causes of the current worldwide socio-economic situation.

Crisis without End?

"In his economics course Rudolf Steiner outlined the challenges that would continue to face humanity if we continued with an outmoded economic thinking. He described what was needed to restore health and balance. His description is more relevant than ever but still insufficiently understood as to its hows and whys. He spoke of association, ageing capital, three kinds of money and capitalizing capacities ... but where are examples of these things to be found?"

In Our Hands

As the (current) crisis shows, humanity's economic thinking has failed: leaving in its wake wealth disparity, environmental destruction, unpayable debts, soulless work and a plethora of phenomena that all lead back to the money question. The responsibility for this does not stop with finance ministers and central bankers but is now in all our hands. How do we understand this and what do we do with it so that we can contribute to the solution rather than continuing to be part of the problem?

Our aim will be to foster a paradigm in which our thoughts, deeds and arrangements are informed by an associative understanding of the economic process. Then we can give effect to true pricing, investment can be based on capacities, and creative life can be funded. In this way the problems of poverty, illusory capital markets and materialistic culture can be addressed. If we continue on the road we are on, we will only have more of the same." – Arthur Edwards

Bring your Economic Life Questions and Experiences:

As we listen and respond to one another's questions, reflections and life situations we can help each other stay (become) awake and meet both opportunities and trials as our world rapidly changes on many fronts. Our meetings will be shaped to a large degree by what we bring to them. As we explore together we'll see what emerges from concepts and challenges to practices, aims, and reflections.

The meetings will take place monthly. For further information, please feel free to contact either Jane or Vivianne with questions or comments at connecting@weawakentogether.com



Local Stock Exchange

Anna Chotzen / Washington State, USA

In the first few weeks of the global upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, I grappled with how best to interact with and understand this strange new reality. But beyond all of the fear and uncertainty I felt, I found myself thinking about the possible opportunities presented by this unprecedented moment, which was giving me pause to re-evaluate our current mode of living and thinking. To this end, I tried to balance my obsessive reading of the daily news with long-form journalism, podcasts, lectures, and other media – both of the COVID moment and outside of it – that might provide me with a larger perspective of the current circumstances. In one article I read in *The New Yorker*, "The Spread: How pandemics shape human history," the author, Elizabeth Kolbert, paints a picture of how pandemics throughout history have shaped geopolitics, socio-economic structures, and possession of power – starting with the bubonic plague, which began in the ancient Egyptian city of Pelusium in 542. She concludes her essay by suggesting that, if we can draw any conclusions so far about COVID-19, "it seems safe to [predict] that it will become the subject of many histories of its own."⁷ This struck me. This virus is making its mark on our future, and as individuals living through this moment, perhaps we can too.

At some point in my search for thought-provoking content, a friend sent me a recorded lecture by Michael H. Shuman, given in 2007 at the Schumacher Center for a New Economics: "Local Stock Exchanges: The Next Wave of Community Economy Building." In brief, Shuman makes a case for the value – economically and socially – of investing in local communities. He begins his lecture by stating that, "...the basic requirement for local prosperity ... is an *entrepreneurial community*, a locale rooted in small businesses producing a diversity of competitive goods and services for local needs."⁸ While "buying locally" has become a mantra for modern living in many middle and upper-middle class communities across the U.S., Shuman points out that investing locally has been embraced by virtually no one. Fifty eight percent of the United States' G.D.P. in 2007 came from place-based businesses and institutions. Yet, by and large, we choose to remove our capital from our local communities, pouring it instead into Fortune 500 companies in order to chase the highest financial return. Shuman's point is that there is no infrastructure to facilitate local investing, and therefore no clear means for local entrepreneurs and investors to connect. But there *could* be, he suggests.

Shuman spoke of this in 2007, but listening to his ideas, I forgot that I was listening to a recording from thirteen years ago. To me, it seemed as relevant as ever. As someone whose career and avocation involve supporting small businesses (farmers, in particular), and who fervently believes that new economic structures are needed to reverse the glaring inequities in our society, I was captured by Shuman's ideas. I found myself wondering: What would communities look like if more local capital was circulating? Would Main Streets across America be revitalized, and start teeming with local business ventures, empowered entrepreneurs, and a fulfilled and respectably remunerated workforce? Would investors, who currently shy

⁷ The New Yorker, April 6th edition

⁸ <https://centerforneweconomics.org/publications/local-stock-exchanges-the-next-wave-of-community-economy-building/>

away from putting their capital into local projects, for fear of the risks and low financial rewards, actually be inspired by the new economic activity that their excess capital helped birth? And, perhaps least tangibly but most importantly, would this version of an entrepreneurial community weave a new social and economic fabric between all of us that was stronger than the one we currently have – one more resilient in moments of unexpected challenge, such as the one we find ourselves in now?

A few weeks after listening to Shuman's lecture, I received a check from the government for \$1,200 – the "Trump Bucks." In an attempt to curb the economic fallout of the pandemic, and purportedly to help those suffering financially from the situation, the U.S. Congress passed a \$2 trillion stimulus bill, which the President signed, to give economic relief to American citizens and businesses. Getting \$1,200 directly deposited to my bank account was a strange experience. I am one of the fortunate individuals whose work and livelihood have not been disrupted by this pandemic. So, rather than receiving the check as welcome relief, I saw it more as an undeserving windfall.

So, I got to thinking. Many Americans desperately needed this assistance, and I am grateful that they have gotten some financial relief, though I know many continue to struggle. Yet, for the privileged among us, who, like me, haven't lost our jobs, don't live paycheck to paycheck, and don't worry about how to support our families and put food on the table, this stimulus money may not be what is needed. It's certainly nice to get 'free' money, but if we don't really need it, could we do something else with it to have a greater impact? What if all of us who have an extra \$1,200 in our lives invested that money in our local communities, by investing either in existing local businesses or in new entrepreneurs who have been holding back from manifesting their visions because of lack of financing? This also would precipitate an economic stimulus, only in this case it would be one that would last.

Just as pandemics throughout history have shaped society in irreversible ways, COVID-19 will have its own legacy. Perhaps out of social isolation could emerge a brand-new form of social connection, one based on those of us with excess capital joining those of us with ideas to create a vibrant new economy in which no one is left behind. I'm pretty sure that all we need, really, is a group of people willing to try – and if all we have to potentially lose is a thousand dollars that we don't need anyway, isn't it worth the risk?



Stepping Reveals the Path

Meg Freeling Housing / Columbus, USA
Selling My House as if Something Else Mattered

What if I were to sell my house and find a suitable place to rent, freeing myself from what had become burdensome? I could take up some back-burner projects and face the future with more energy and interest. Hmm... Tentatively, I took the first steps. I invited a realtor to do a walk-through and give me feedback. I received helpful information but discovered the conventional realtor/client relationship was too restricting.

Meanwhile, I had been watching one of my neighbors, Jeff, build a fence and then repair a roof for another neighbor. I was impressed with his workmanship and his neighborliness. I asked him to do a walk-through of my house and tell me what was needed for it to become a true asset to the neighborhood. This was the beginning of an ongoing relationship that is still in progress. Jeff is an entrepreneur who has been transforming houses into practical and beautiful living spaces for over three decades. I discovered that he knows what he's doing, and what's more, he loves being free to do it.

We talked about a sale and saw that if we worked directly and candidly with one another (without a realtor in-between), we could agree on an interim arrangement that both financed my needs and freed him to be creative with the renovations. We would then settle up after the sale was complete. I was very moved by this gesture. After failing to get a construction loan for the needed renovations, he and his wife decided to dip into their retirement savings in order to fund it.

We mutually created and signed a written agreement that clarified contingencies, plus what he will do, what I will do, and how we will set the sale price and apportion what comes out free and clear at the end. We live in a desirable part of the city and finding a house for sale in this neighborhood has been a challenge for many. Jeff and I are both committed to meeting our costs for the improvements but keeping the price as reasonable as possible for the buyer. What unites us is a deep mutual respect and a high ideal for the future health of this neighborhood.

Economically, I recognize several principles that underlie our work together. From what I am learning about associative economics, Jeff and I are attempting to work out of the following:

- a. true price (based on what each needs in order to stay in business)
- b. lending to the person, not the asset (no collateralized lending)

- c. acting out of the principle that enough is enough (what is enough for each is unique to them)
- d. replacing egotism with selfless service (doing the work for the love of the deed, not to get rich)
- e. transparent accounts (see the realities each is working with)
- f. in economics, thoughts are things (whatever is thought becomes manifest in the physical world)
- g. the path forward shows up as each step is taken (the next action step emerges from the future)

I'm discovering that these principles have lived in each of us as part of being human. They have come to the fore in the doing of a project that we each deeply care about. The fact that we can work together on it, each contributing what is ours to contribute, means that we are learning how to work in association to bring about a greater good. In the context of meaningful work that truly serves, it is the process of *emergence out of the future* – that fascinates me most. What can grow out of this?

EC L'Aubier Research Meeting / February 2020

The Role of Corporations – Impressions by Kim Chotzen

I took part in this, the 7th Economics Conference seminar at L'Aubier on the topic: *The Role of Corporations: How do we understand them in the 21st century?* Here is a brief commentary. A fuller report will be available shortly.



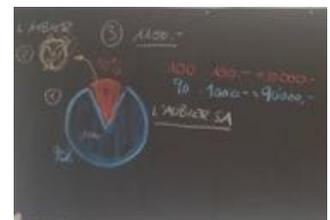
Why do we take up this question of the corporation now in history?

We began with Christopher's presentation of the long journey of the 'I-being's individuation (from 'beginning of mankind – East – to end of mankind – West') which led humanity to where one's own 'I' and every other 'I' will be financed by every individual on the planet. The corporation is the body or vehicle for this, to celebrate the 'I!' With this in mind, we should be able to pinpoint exactly where we are on the continuum of human evolution, the

essence being that we have not yet reached the end – as the neoliberal approach would have us believe.

The rest of the event was based on three presentations. Alexander Kuhl presented the work of the **Purpose Trust**, which he explained was created to "rein in psychopathic companies." It involves a foundation created to "protect the company from the entrepreneur selling out." This is done by the means of a 'Golden Share' to block 'immoral decisions.'⁹

Marc Desaulles began by saying that many of the challenges which Alex's initiative addresses also arose in the evolution of **L'Aubier**. It was interesting to note from Marc's description the way L'Aubier developed step-by-step and in the doing, evolving its structure through the process of asking and answering the question: How do we enable the 'I-being', who comes to earth and needs capital, through a legal form, to be celebrated instead of controlled? There is no existing legal structure that celebrates the 'I' (as entrepreneur) with capital. All forms exist to have power over the 'I' through the capital. He then described the path of taking on to do just that... Starting with no money, the obstacles encountered along the way were each approached with the fundamental question 'how can the entrepreneur be freed?'



EcoNaturasi, an Italian distribution company, developed along three motivating guidelines – to generate economic value to free spiritual work, to keep the mission, and to ensure that the next generation can work in organic agriculture. Its entrepreneur Fabio Brescacin also started with no money, received 15,000 Lira (in the 1970's) and from there built a network of 300 shops worth 200 million euro, with 400 million euro in revenue. The profits generated are used to buy land to provide for organic farmers and to fund a K-12 Waldorf school, including a course on agriculture. At the end of the seminar, Christopher 'informally' gave Fabio a 'right distribution award', recognizing the enterprise as a unique example of solving the problem of distribution, something Christopher has often referred to as the 'starting point in economics of farming.'

A question arose for me, which might be interesting to take up at another time. Michèle Grandjean Cordes of L'Aubier pointed out that profit distribution can also happen internally, such that in the end no profit whatsoever appears. How can these two types of 'distribution' be understood?

It was fascinating and inspiring to hear from these individuals and of their aims, journeys, and successes. In a world which is so often wondering what can be done, these might serve as beacons.

⁹ For more information see https://purpose-economy.org/content/uploads/purposebooklet_en.pdf



From the Admin Desk

Kim Chotzen

Recently, we contacted everyone on our email lists to confirm continued interest. How good it was to get such a quick and positive response from most of you! And it would be great to continue building this connection by receiving news from you in the various parts of the world.

There is a lot of pressure to automate and digitalize everything these days, but we prefer to maintain personal and manual handling of the email lists. As we do, we experience having a more direct connection with each person, even if our systems are a bit clunky! It is not so much a question of being luddites as of applying discretion at each possible step along modern technological pathways. In this way, the technology can be a friendly tool shaped by our use of it instead of vice versa.

In the process of reviewing our lists, we have further refined the distinction between Economics Conference Colleagues, Friends and Enquirers. The editorial policy of *Associate!* is to use language that befriends the lay and professional, as well as both those who are and are not familiar with anthroposophical terminology and hence the publication is sent to everyone on these lists. Even so, there are still terms used that may strike the average reader as odd, such as when 'the I-being' or 'the I' or 'the threshold' are referred to. I often struggle with how to represent such concepts in ways that elucidate modern concepts rather than estrange readers from a spiritual scientific (meaning scientific observation of non sense-perceptible phenomena) image of the human being in relationship to material life. That said, from time to time, there are mailings that are sent only to Colleagues, meaning those who stand unequivocally for the impulse behind Rudolf Steiner's *Economics Course* and who wish to represent this in their fields of endeavour.

The next issue of *Associate!* will be sent out at the end of September. Deadlines for submission of articles is September 15, 2020. (Note, we have decided to cap the page number at 12 from the next issue onwards in order to manage better the workload resulting from what seems to be a marked increase in the work of the Economics Conference.)

Sowing the Future / 40 Years of L'Aubier

Anita Grandjean

L'Aubier has just celebrated its 40th anniversary... an opportunity, at the end of a career, to look back on what was started 40 years ago! When we started, we thought we could change the world. We gave all of our forces, our energy, our time, in fact, our whole lives to that end. And now, as we turn around to look at our footsteps, what do we see? That everything is just worse! The world is caught in the grip of egoism. So we haven't succeeded in making the world better. But maybe it's world destiny to pass through these phases...

Even so I'm glad of what we have tried to do here at L'Aubier. I see these 40 years as a big field that has just been sown: nothing is visible, it has rained, the seeds have already gone into the ground. The birds have helped themselves and everything seems empty. Only the sower knows that he has thrown the grains of wheat and the only thing he has left to do is remain confident that the grain will grow. He is so sure of this result that he looks at his field with a smile on his face and waits. He looks after it, waters it if necessary, removes the weeds, and still he sees nothing, but he knows. And he has to wait a long time like that. And then one day...

...he sees a few tiny green stems protruding a few millimetres and he's not even surprised. He knew. Yes, he knew something would grow and because of that, tomorrow others will live.

Is there anything more beautiful to leave behind?



(The image is 'Sowing the Seed' by David Newblatt, Camphill Cairnlee, Aberdeen, Scotland. First published in England by Wynstones Press.)

Convenor's News

chb

Economics Conference in Latin America

It has troubled me that referring to the 'Latin American Economics Conference' meeting is not quite right, because it suggests Latin America (i.e. south of the USA) is an homogenous place, when in fact it comprises over 20 countries, the more major one of which is Portuguese-speaking, the rest Spanish-speaking.

By speaking instead of the work of the 'Economics Conference in Latin America', no homogeneity is implied or can, therefore, be expected. On the contrary one looks to the activities of individual colleagues, wherever they are located.

This also means there is no need for linguistic homogeneity in regional meetings or publications. Everyone can speak or write in his or her preferred language, with translation effected as needed or practicable. It also means that shorter seminal texts can be produced in several languages at the same time, but principally for the time being in English, German, Spanish and Portuguese, though it would be good to add French and Italian.

Steiner and Keynes in 2023

When Rudolf Steiner was giving his *Economics Course* in the (European) summer of 1922, John Maynard Keynes was writing the pamphlets that became his 1923 *A Tract on Monetary Reform*. The *Tract* deals in detail with the problems that resulted when, as Keynes put it, the gold standard had become a "barbarous relic". When, that is, humanity had entered the era of a single world economy, in which there can be no hegemon.

This is the same focus given by Rudolf Steiner when, midway into his lectures, he added discursive seminars. And so one can have the idea that Steiner and Keynes stood back-to-back, as it were, brothers in world economy, albeit not deliberately so.

From this idea stems another – that the western financial mind can find a connection to Rudolf Steiner's contribution to economics via Keynes and via the *Tract*. Further, that this connection can be 'activated' and made living today, one hundred years later.

Moreover, such a consideration would enable one to assess Rudolf Steiner's contribution from outside and so raise the bar as regards not only our own appreciation of his relevance, especially today, but also the professionalism and credibility with which one represents his ideas.

With these words, I would like to explore ways to give traction to this thesis. If anyone would like to join me in this project, please contact me: chb@christopherhoughtonbudd.com.

More on the Heart is not a Pump

The annual meeting in 2019 considered economic life in the context of the heart/lung relationship, something Rudolf Steiner pointed to as essential in order to come to a true understanding of social life. Of note in this connection is Dr. Branko Furst's recent webinar¹⁰ on this very topic – mechanise the heart and you mechanise society. It is quite outstanding for its plain scientific language and lack of in-house vocabulary, making its arguments all the more powerful.

This theme is also important in another respect. Steiner's threefold understanding of society grew out of his research into the threefold nature of the human being, which in its own right is thought by some to be a discovery of equal standing with William Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood (see 2019 18th Annual Meeting report).

Branko Furst has also written a very detailed (and very expensive!) book called, *The Heart and Circulation*, published by Springer, in which he has two chapters on the threefold make-up of the human organism. In chapter 24, p.337, he writes: "...the brain, surrounded by the CSF (cerebro-spinal fluid), is subject to upthrust with its weight reduced to about 50g." He wrote this unaware of this passage in the *Economics Course*:

"On its own the human brain weighs about 1,400 grammes. Were the weight of these 1,400 grammes to press on the veins and arteries, which are situated at the base of the skull, it would destroy and kill them. You could not live for a single moment if the human brain were pressing downward with its full 1,400 grammes. It is indeed a fortunate thing for the human being that the principle of Archimedes holds good. I mean, that every body loses as much of its weight in water as is the weight of the fluid which it displaces. If this is a heavy body, it loses as much of its weight in water as a body of water of equal size would weigh.

¹⁰ <https://cfae.us/courses/autonomous-movement-of-the-blood/>

The brain swims in the cerebro-spinal fluid, and thereby loses 1,380 grammes: for such is the weight of a body of cerebro-spinal fluid of the size of the human brain. The brain only presses downward on to the base of the skull with a weight of 20 grammes, and this weight it can bear. But if we now ask ourselves: What is the purpose of all this? Then we must answer that with a brain which was a mere ponderable mass, we could not think. We do not think with the heavy substance, but with the buoyancy. Substance must first lose its weight. Only then can we think. We think with that which flies away from the earth.”

So, now humanity faces yet another conundrum: Is the ‘net weight’ of the brain 20 or 50 grammes?!

Where’s the bar?

In recent months, various people have challenged me on the apparent absence of reference to the threefold social order in the work of the Economics Conference. I think this is a misperception, but also a misinterpretation of where we are now in human history. The following piece addresses this question and, in my view, disproves the ‘allegation’. But this raises the wider issue of where is the bar as regards entering into modern discourses on economics and Rudolf Steiner’s contribution to the discipline? It is all too easy to say ‘associative economics’ – a valid term in my view, but not one that I think Steiner himself used. His concern was to bring spiritual science to bear on economics, not to create a separate, parallel or ‘alternative’ set of ideas. In my discussions with people around the world, both within and without the anthroposophical movement, in lay and professional contexts, I make four considerations, which I thought I would share below in outline.

1. Rudolf Steiner gave a course on economics, different to, but as valid as any other economist might give. For Steiner was surely an economist of some note.
2. Steiner had a very clear and specific epistemology: economists should think neither inductively nor deductively, but descriptively. (Conversely, presumably, someone who does not achieve this method is not an economist!)
3. *Die Kernpunkte der sozialen Frage*, would have been better translated into English as ‘The Threefold Nature of Social Life’ because this takes one directly to the heart and basis of the book – Steiner’s thirty years of prior research, making him a sociologist of some note also.
4. *Die Kernpunkte* is as much an economic text as a sociological one. For example, Steiner’s analysis of Marxism and ‘the social question’, as it was called in those days and to which the original German title directly refers, concerning the relationship between capital and labour, is central. But the book has many other economic themes, not the least of which is exchange rates. None of these themes have lost their pertinence with the passage of the last one hundred years.

The Threefold Nature of Social Life

Christopher Houghton Budd / May 2020

In the anthroposophical movement, where alone the idea of a threefold social life exists, there are many who think this can be brought about by external actions of various kinds. But how real is this expectation? Below are some questions I have in regard to this critical theme.

In 1919, Rudolf Steiner published his (best-selling) book, *Die Kernpunkte der sozialen Frage (Cardinal Aspects of the Social Question)*. This has been variously translated into English – inter alia, *The Threefold State, The Threefold Commonwealth, Towards Social Renewal* – when it would have been far better to have opted for *The Threefold Nature of Social Life*, for that is a very clear statement regarding Rudolf Steiner’s place in the social sciences generally and sociology in particular.

One word that does *not* convey Steiner’s social analysis clearly is ‘threefolding’, which is not a good or even accurate translation of the original German. Threefolding is a gerund and so uncertain as to whether it is a noun or verb – a thing or an activity. In this case, it is also rendered hapless in the face of those who would burden it with a meaning it was neither designed for nor apt to be given. In contrast, ‘the threefold nature of social life’ is a description of what is, implying that its user directly perceives what is being referred to rather than relying on someone else’s perception (in this case, Rudolf Steiner’s). For this reason, it also does not lend itself to being used as a slogan or political rallying point, which was never Rudolf Steiner’s image or intention.¹¹ Admittedly, ‘the threefold nature of social life’ (rather than ‘threefold social order’) inhibits thinking in terms of abstractions and theories, requiring us to speak instead in terms of our own perceptions of this threefold nature in the social surroundings and institutions where we live. (Or do we think the threefold nature of social life is an invention of Rudolf Steiner?)

¹¹ See Rudolf Steiner’s many almost *en passant* comments in *The Art of Lecturing*, Mercury press, 1984 (GA 339)

The above 'quibbling' notwithstanding, the threefold nature of social life is hardly news. Plato had three groups – guardians, auxiliaries, and producers. The Middle Ages had three estates – clergy, nobles, peasants. Montesquieu sought the separation of Judiciary, Legislature, Executive. Even non-Marxists speak of upper, middle and lower classes.

Since Steiner's time, other threefold constructs have been created. The First, Second and Third Worlds – meaning white capitalism, communist regimes (especially the Soviet Union), and those (sometimes fictitious) countries that experienced twentieth century wars of national liberation, mainly former colonies of nineteenth century empires. Believing, after Woodrow Wilson, self-determination of all peoples to be a sacrosanct principle of the West, they sought to elect their own governments and re-appropriate their own resources, only turning to Marxism when this aim was frustrated by the erstwhile imperial powers, who to this day control the UN, for example. Then there is the threefold concept of business, government and civil society, imprecisely if not erroneously described by many 'threefolders' as a version of the economic, rights and spiritual spheres.

So... what is novel when Rudolf Steiner speaks of the three spheres? Firstly, not the spheres so much as their autonomy one from the another. The shift from monolith to differentiation, an effect of the 'I' outside displaced by the 'I' inside, emerging from the other side of the threshold to this.

Second, when we track the evolution of Steiner's efforts to give this fact the upper hand when designing modern social life – something that was not possible until 'now' (post 1879) – do we point to 1917 or 1919, to the Circle of Thirty (Dreisigger Kreis) or the first Waldorf School (but maybe not those since)? Or the Economics Course, where Steiner remarked that in four years four hundred had gone by? Or do we alight on the 1923/4 Refounding of the Anthroposophical Society, through which event and against all the odds Rudolf Steiner secured the fact of threefold society for all to see – if we would just open our eyes to what he did and refer less to what we think he did... or did not do?

What of our own lives and institutions and our own spiritual, political and economic actions? Do they evidence the threefold nature of social life? Do we participate in today's bi-party political systems thinking they would exist in a threefold society? Where do we place judges – in the spiritual or the rights life? And do we share Steiner's (negative) view of social democracy? Can the threefold nature of social life come to expression in the twofold, either/or constructs born of nineteenth century occultism, such as Left vs. Right, Capitalism vs. Communism, West vs. Islam, State vs. Market, Keynes vs. Hayek? Likewise, can the UN, WTO, WHO, World Bank and IMF – not to mention the EU – exist in a threefold 'space'?

More complex still. What of the West's point-blank refusal of Steiner's ideas and everything put in place since, beginning with the Treaty of Versailles? Surely, the purpose of such things is not to be found in high-sounding statements about them but in their occluding what Rudolf Steiner sought to bring attention to?

Which of today's local, national and global institutions and laws (even constitutions) would survive so-called 'threefolding'? What, if anything, would need to be put in their stead? How will the advocates of threefold change be heard or get published? Or be protected? Especially those who advocate Steiner's monetary ideas in the USA. Will they be spared the fate that some of those very same advocates suggest befell Lincoln and Kennedy?

Finally, what form would the three kinds of money take, such that today's financial system could be rebased? Or how (the same question) will the initiatives of those now incarnate and yet to come be financed so that they direct finance, not the reverse?

Some question my thesis that, because of Steiner's persistent and consistent expectation that the West has to repair the damage it is responsible for, one has to 'start' any external championing of the threefold nature of social life in the very domain where it is thought to be most absent – 'western' finance. Among many citations I could offer in support of this approach, I will end this 'think piece' with this one:

"When lecturing on economic conditions, the main point is that we speak directly from experience. If, in the spirit of the threefold organism, one speaks about economic relationships, one should not permit the belief to arise that there could even be such a thing as a theoretical political economy. Instead, one should limit the main discussion to describing cases taken from the economic life itself; either cases that one repeats, or cases that one construes how they should be or could be. But with the latter cases – saying how they should or could be – one must never neglect to speak out of economic experience. Actually, when lecturing on the economic life, one should speak in an epic style. Particularly, when presenting what is written in the *Kernpunkte*, one should speak as if one had no preconceived ideas at all concerning the economic life, and have no notions that this should be thus and so; instead, one should speak as if one were informed on all and everything by the facts themselves."¹²

¹² Ibid., p. 80.

Dissemination

chb

The image on p.9 could as well be on this page. Dissemination is a Latinate word for sowing seeds and so an apt way of describing the following website and publishing updates. But seeds also need to be set. And then they need rain, or at least a heavy dew, and the warmth and light of the sun. Above all, as Daniel Dunlop would have stressed, timing is key. If we are attentive, maybe all these things will find a way to combine into the opposite equivalent of a perfect storm.

Website

The aim of the website is to make the Economics Conference visible as the locus of a growing worldwide community of researchers who are sharing in the establishing of an associative understanding of economics predicated not only on Rudolf Steiner's *Economics Course* but also accounting.

With this in mind, the Economics Conference website has been reviewed and updated. The changes are subtle and there is still need for simplification. It remains embedded in the Social Sciences Section site (if one knows where to look for it!), as also in the overall Goetheanum site – even though the architecture of that site, if rearranged according to the suggestions below, would make Rudolf Steiner's Christmas Conference Deed visible for all:



Goetheanum > Society > School (Sections) > Building (Events/Visits)

Instead of, as currently:

Goetheanum/School of Spiritual Science > Events > Sections > Visits > Anthroposophical Society

New Papers

Part of the website concept is to provide an online resource for EC colleagues' papers, increasingly in several languages, perhaps eventually including links to authors' professional bios/websites. The following texts have recently been uploaded:

Postmodern Money, a review of Fionn Meier's book (see also p. 2). Stephen Vallus.

Viral Economics: A challenge to egotism? Christopher Houghton Budd.

COVID 19 – Global Health Crisis or Crisis of Global ideals? Mauricio Garay.

Coming soon:

Triple Governance (a German translation of Christopher Houghton Budd's paper on Hayek and Steiner, and the prospects for revisiting the end of the Austro-Hungarian empire.



Books

In addition to the 20 papers already on the Economics Conference website, Kim, Stephen Torr and myself have been busy coordinating 18 books under the *Associative Economics Worldwide* imprint, with a further 50 under *CHB/Collected Works*. Together they serve as a substantial archive which is the basis of a revamped online bookstore run by the *Centre for Associative Economics* under the direction of Stephen Torr (see his report below.)

CfAE Website gets a Make-over

Stephen Torr / England

The role of the Centre for Associative Economics has been redefined of late as a publication service in furtherance of associative economics generally and the contribution to economics of Rudolf Steiner in particular. Its publications have been reorganised under two imprints **Associative Economics Worldwide** and **CHB/Collected Works**. In general, and mostly edited by Christopher Houghton Budd, the *Associative Economics Worldwide* publications are the result of collaborative work by a variety of means by the authors concerned, many of whom are colleagues in the Economics Conference of the Goetheanum. The *CHB/Collected Works* publications are part of an archival project aimed at making available Christopher Houghton Budd's work from 1970 onwards, through which, as an entrepreneur and economic and monetary historian, his aim has been to introduce and include Rudolf Steiner's contribution in today's circumstances and discourses.

A new website is being finalised, built around an online bookstore, together with an archive of the **Journal for Associative Economics**, which began in May 1980 and was published under various titles until December 2015. It was edited and produced by Christopher Houghton Budd for much of that time, being joined in the later years by two colleagues, Arthur Edwards and myself.

The aim of this reworking is not to provide a mausoleum of ideas, but a curation in response to the questions of today, in the form of bespoke, accessible themed issues, to highlight areas of the material, with equal emphasis on the lay and professional reader, and a particular consideration of current practical applications.



Though I readily admit it is far easier to draw up the accounts of a client than it is to step into the fire of preparing them for oneself, my engagement in taking on this task grows out of twenty years' experience as an accountant, after the completion of a dual degree in Accounting and Economics before attending ***Step into Another World*** in 2003. Following on from the late D'Arcy Mackenzie, I then provided an accounting column in *Associate!* from 2008 until 2012, then again when the Journal was under my editorship from 2013 to 2015.¹³

I hope that, combined with the extended descriptions of the publications, this will help draw a wider audience to the website. Perhaps helping to orientate the potential individuals imagined by both Kim Chotzen and Christopher Houghton Budd at the end of the last issue of *Associate!* To this end the website has been kept clean and clear, reflecting the concepts and tone it aims to sound out into the world. The site will now be tested. An email will be sent out later this month by when, hopefully, it will have gone live.

Latin American Publications

Following my visit to Argentina and Brazil in January, a substantial translation programme is underway in Spanish and Portuguese, with various Economics Conference colleagues doing this work. Interestingly, in the Brazilian case, while the funds for this originated in Switzerland, the amount was 'sent' to Brazil by way of it being transferred to the account of the Brazilian Anthroposophical Society at the Goetheanum and a corresponding amount put into the EC Fund in Sao Paulo. Transcription, translation and editing rates have been agreed with Daniel Havro, Xavier Andrillon and Lucia Sigolo, with Daniel as overall editor, and local (i.e. Brazil) arrangements are being made for printing and distribution. The plan is to replicate this in Argentina, under the eyes of Mauricio Garay and Natalia Conti in Mendoza.

Of special note here is the recent completion of a Spanish version of Marc's book *A Human Response to Globalisation*, done by Liana Marocco de Urtizberea in Mercedes, Argentina. (She is about to embark on its twin, *The Metamorphosis of Capitalism* and is currently finalising *Asociativa Austral*, a Spanish language compendium of CHB's work in Spain and South America.

STOP PRESS !

Read all about it!

The jacket texts of two recent publications from each imprint (*CHB/Collected Works* and *Associative Economics Worldwide*) are reproduced below. They will be syndicated to various publications in the anthroposophical movement worldwide, as part of the dissemination work.



Seed Corn

The Economics of Farming
Christopher Houghton Budd

What is the true nature of farming economics? How can economics support and not undermine or determine the nature of farming? Not many economists ask these questions, still less policy-makers, so this book does so on their behalf, as it were.

The author's approach is underpinned by a childhood informed by the experiences he had on local farms, experiences kept alive by his subsequent work as a food distributor and economist. Backgrounded by his involvement in farming spanning over 60 years, in this collection of essays, articles and lectures Houghton Budd shares some of his concerns and insights and, indeed, policy suggestions. The style is more aphoristic than academic on account of the way the texts originated.

Seed Corn Review

Anne-Marie Fryer has a B.A. in business and economics, is an author, Waldorf teacher and biodynamic farming practitioner in rural Wisconsin, USA.

Seed Corn – The Economics of Farming, is a wonderful newly published collection of essays written by Christopher Houghton Budd. Every thinkable topic related to the economics of farming is addressed in a way that makes for an interesting and understandable read of what are, at times, rather complex phenomena. Christopher uses clear language sprinkled with relevant imaginative pictures and examples from everyday life. The essays can be read independently and span from the author's 50 years of interest in developing an approach to economics that befriends rather than undermines agriculture.

¹³ As a companion volume to D'Arcy's *Accountants' Corner*, a compendium of Stephen's contributions will also shortly be produced.

The book is not just for farmers. It is for everyone who eats and takes part in the economic process. These essays guide the reader in most elegant and non-dogmatic ways to create answers for him/herself to the question, "How can I best contribute to and strengthen the economic process as a whole, in a one-world economy?"

As a monetary and economic historian with a doctorate in central banking and life-long direct experience in farming and associative economics, Christopher has observed that most modern economic theories and practices arise out of self-centeredness. He points out that any attempt to understand, or better yet, transcend practically, the current stage of humanity's economic development depends entirely on our ability to detect selfishness within our own economic activities. One of the greatest tragedies of our times is that we fail to realize that getting rid of the 'ruling class' is not the answer because the problem instead lies in overcoming economic egotism. And to that he adds "equally tragic is it that capital has been connected in people's minds with selfishness, with which it inherently has nothing to do." And then, "The 'evils' of capitalism are only the consequences of egotism and lack of concerns for humanity as a whole. We ourselves, not other people, are the source of the world's ills. For it is in the way we conduct our economic life that our egotism is given the means to be destructive in the world. Economic life demands cooperation, it calls for service on behalf of one another. The individual contributes in freedom with his/her capacities, skills and initiatives and benefits only because of what everyone else is contributing."

Many of the problems faced by farmers today have their origin in wrong ways of thinking and therefore Christopher helps us mobilize our thinking and turn it upside down and inside out. He asks: "Why is it that farmers cannot make ends meet?" and proposes that one of the many economic problems of farming – especially small-scale organic farming – has its origin not in the price of the product but in the price paid for the land or the rent of the land paid to the land owners. Christopher offers many radical ideas, one of which is negative rent: the idea that farmers should charge landowners for their work entailed in weeding and maintaining the owner's asset! Be prepared to break loose from old ways of perceiving the economic process when reading this collection.

Instead of social dynamics being governed by various economic factors, economic activity governed by and proceeding from living, mobile thinking will give rise to a new social culture. This will enable humanity to progress and is why these essays (and all the other books by Christopher) are a gift to humanity in its attempt to practice 'world economy' and real brother/sisterhood. From content in chapters such as Associative Financing of Agriculture, Agriculture's World Role in Social Life, Rudolf Steiner on Land Taxation and True Pricing and Transparent Bookkeeping, nothing is left out of consideration. Other topics include ecology viewed from an economic viewpoint and Community Supported Agriculture, considered vital for the social relationship between the farmer and the consumer, but not as a necessary benefit for the economic process. The book is informative, essential, poetic and well written. Here is another treasure from Christopher Houghton Budd!

A Second Chance for the World

A Deed in Becoming

A Collaboration

During 2019, two events took place that had at their heart the question whether humanity gets a second chance to take a better course in history. In this case, can the direction set by the Treaty of Versailles at the end of World War I be reset? Can we imagine a different future, with different goals and intentions. These proceedings chart the various deliberations that occurred – talks, plays, songs.

Welcome to Rare Albion
Where social life is all shot through
With fire, with fire that burns away
The forces that deny the I...

Where adversaries do not hold sway
Where annihilation is denied.

Welcome to Coleridge Hall
Where spiritual science is declaimed
Where intersectional work began
To rid the world of all the shame...

That on the Flanders fields began.

Welcome to the nadir point
Debut place for Barfield's vision
The moment where we swore to go
Towards that all-inspiring goal

The day on which we made a date
– with gods we shall participate!

Welcome to the Second Chance
That gods to men have given
To those who've always striven
To meet the key condition:

That spirit soul to spirit self shall listen.

As gods on earth we do give birth
To vows anew, in mood of mirth
No longer dread, nor drear, nor dearth
Shall keep us from our fullest worth...

For gods once spake to men, and now
They speak again: And we to them.

– CHB:

*Part of a 'Second Chance' conference held at
Emerson College, England, 26 August 2012.*



The © Mark / *Colours of Money Handbook* chb

As readers may have noticed, in the past year or so the © Guarantee Mark has been in the forefront of some people's minds. The impulse, begun in 1998, seems now to be getting a response from 'the periphery' – notably in Karlsruhe, Germany, and in Argentina and Brazil.

The original concept and iteration of the mark was a somewhat formal affair, but ten years ago it was converted into a self-auditing tool. In recent months, together with Daniel Havro in Brazil, Mauricio Garay and Natalia Conti in Argentina and Leif Sonstenes in Germany, we have reviewed, revised and amplified the original web pages with the benefit of their 'outside' eyes and so that the same material can be reproduced in Portuguese, Spanish and German. The result is a refreshed site, currently replicated and embedded in the Economics Conference of the Goetheanum and *Centre for Associative Economics* websites.

The © Mark is, of course, linked to the *Colours of Money* seminar evolved by Marc, Anita and myself – a course given in many places and in different ways during the last 20 years. Over the years, my version of this seminar has been accompanied by a *handbook*, which in the last few months I have reworked as a downloadable booklet, shortly to be available in English, German, Portuguese and Spanish.

I think it is worth remarking that, in a world full of ISOs and any number of groups trying to give a platform for change, but in fact tied to their particular objectives and interests, or even state-controlled, the © Mark is virtual. It cannot be captured as intellectual property, nor can money be made from 'using' it, while any kudos one might seek to monetise would be cancelled out by the effort of fulfilling the Mark's criteria!

Technically, it is also not a trade mark, but a guarantee mark. Just as the *Woolmark* says the wool is of a certain quality, or steel might be graded as 10mm, these are statements of fact, not mission statements or claims to ethical status (though in the case of the © Mark, that might also be the case).

Economics Conference Fund

Update

Thank you to all who have contributed to the Economics Conference Fund, some having donated via the online donate buttons.¹⁴ It's great to see that pump being primed, thereby furthering research into the comprehensiveness and practicality of associative economics as initiated by Rudolf Steiner in 1922. All contributions are used to finance research and publications related to these efforts, along with their administration. We are especially grateful to the following contributors and apologise if anyone has been left out due to the covid chaos:

Ulrich Wagner
Anne-Marie Fryer
Lorene Allen

Some Late News from Academia! chb

As I may have reported on before, Ro Naastepad at Technical University Delft and myself were engaged on a four-year EU-funded project based at Said Business School, Oxford, called *Creating Economic Space for Social Innovation*. A book resulting from this work (entailing several papers and reports on our part) was recently published by Oxford University Press (2019). It contains a chapter by Ro entitled, *Capital and Capacities – Using capital to create economic space for capacities*, in which she summarises the contribution we were able to make about the importance of financing capacities. It was a struggle at times to get this notion accepted, but in the end we managed. We hope this adds to the growing literature where what are essentially the ideas of associative economics are finding their way into modern debates.

Meanwhile, we hope you will join us in wishing Xavier Andrillon the best of luck for his doctoral viva at Campinas University, Brazil on 17 June. He has completed a remarkable thesis on 'upgrading' our understanding of sustainability by linking it to Steiner's idea of 'true price'.

...and then, a fresh email has arrived from Manolis Tzouvelekas in Athens who recently got 'excellent' for his doctorate, which includes a chapter dedicated to Rudolf Steiner and associative economics. He writes that, "It is the first time in Greek academic literature that Rudolf Steiner and associative economics appear and it is strange to many academics." His examiner had said, "there is no literature critiquing Rudolf Steiner's work..."

Well, now there is!!

¹⁴ <https://economics.goetheanum.org/funding>



Remembering Richard Rettig / (March 30, 1929 – March 5, 2020)

Stephen Vallus

Born in the small farming community of Monroe, Wisconsin, Richard was descended from Swiss people who migrated to America due to a famine in 1845. His father was a clergyman in the town of New Glarus, which is named after the canton of Glarus in Switzerland.

Richard's father was involved in the yearly Labor Day production of the play *William Tell*. As a child, he played the part of the son for two years. As legend has it, the governor would spare Tell's life if he could shoot an apple off of his son's head with a crossbow. He succeeded, but how did William Tell end up in such a predicament? At least one historian relates how in 1273 the Hapsburgs refused to recognize the independence of the Swiss and sent tax collectors to enforce "full feudal dues." William Tell was arrested for his refusal to acknowledge the Hapsburgs. Thus a legend was born as Tell's resistance ignited a revolt in which a league of mutual assistance was formed in 1291. This culminated in a decisive military victory of the Swiss over the invading Austrians. Thus Swiss autonomy was assured. Tax resistance comprising a nation-state's origin story might sound familiar to American whose own "Boston Tea Party" protest occurred 500 years later in 1773 and led to the Revolutionary War (of independence) two years later.

Perhaps then it is no accident that one of Richard's areas of interest was Rudolf Steiner's indications about taxation. Richard wrote letters to the editor, educated his fellow citizens and lobbied for "Fair Tax" legislation, a national sales 'consumption' tax, rather than the US 'income' tax system.

Richard went to Harvard and graduated with honors in 1951. His first choice of career was the U.S. State Department but when this didn't work out, he was hired by the Central Intelligence Agency. He worked there for almost five years doing we know not what but he was posted to Hungary before the Revolution in 1956. He also had a career in public relations and worked internationally with a computer subsidiary of General Electric.

As recently as the end of 2016, Richard seemed close to raising the necessary (venture) capital for a business he had championed for over a decade. He wanted to form an online platform, "The Organic Food Network" where consumers, farmers, and distributors could meet and transact business. With this project he hoped to foster "a community of mutual interest, a conscious interdependence..."

Looking over notes assembled by his friends in San Diego, it seems that Richard was fated to have a life enriched by Anthroposophy. His aunt had a friend who founded High Mowing Waldorf High School in New Hampshire. While there he formed a relationship with Hermann Poppelbaum, his chemistry teacher. Later, while living in New York City, he joined the First Class through Ehrenfried Pfeiffer. While there he married Danilla, a eurythmist who taught at the Pasadena Waldorf School. He attended associative economics workshops and until his passing was active in study groups in the San Diego area.

(With acknowledgements to Elizabeth Sevison, Joseph Rubano, and other San Diego friends who assembled notes during Richard's passage.)

I knew Richard for many years and met him whenever I was in Southern California. I always respected his fidelity to Rudolf Steiner's social ideas, but especially his tenacity regarding the subject that most people stay away from – Rudolf Steiner's ideas on taxation. In fact, it is almost impossible to achieve 'threefolding' if the tax regime remains as it is, so with Richard's passing we have lost an important colleague.

Maybe, Richard, you can have more success from where you now are or are going.

Christopher (Houghton Budd)

Participation News

Welcome to the following new Colleagues:

Mary Adams, USA
John Bloom, USA
Patricia Delisa, USA

Oriole Costa Lechuga, Spain
Daniel Maeder, Switzerland
Rachel Maeder, Switzerland