



22nd Annual Meeting / Economics Conference of the Goetheanum

Towards 2024 Part 2

Looking beyond Christmas 2023

21st Anniversary Edition

Internal document sent to all Economics Conference colleagues. Please, do not circulate it, therefore.

Dear Colleagues,

welcome to this, possibly last, edition of *Towards* (2024, Part 2, in this case). We hope it has served a valuable purpose by keeping us all in touch during the covid interruption or interval. This issue is a typical synthesis of our collegial work to date, with 2023 marking the Economics Conference's 21st year. What have our efforts meant all these years? Where have they gotten to? Is the world any better for them 21 years on?

This time we provide a **membership update** and news of **events** around the world. Under **Contributions**, perhaps notably, most submissions are from actors or activity in the Western hemisphere, where it has been wondered if Rudolf Steiner is expecting something as a counterforce to economic materialism to come from the West. As Rudolf Steiner states, 'humanity has to learn to sweep out of economic life the denial of the spirit.' For example, had Keynes and Hayek encountered Rudolf Steiner and his ideas, would there be a different story told in the West? – a theme touched on in the various poems included here. The pieces on *conscience* – developed both from a Christological viewpoint and by suggesting hallowing 'The Closing' in accounting – also point in this direction. As also the exploration **Beyond Hibernia**, with its reminder of the history of the Verse for America.

In this period marking the centennial of Rudolf Steiner's activity immediately prior to the Christmas Conference, one can experience in the Economics Conference work a 'building up' of an understanding of how, when Steiner's economic thought is put into practice, 'economy can become a force of transformation,' as our friends report from Argentina. Similarly in Brazil, the brave warrior women, guided by Lucia (and now Camila), have just completed their 7th financial literacy cohort. Likewise, an associative approach to financing agriculture was explored in the USA in March and, though not an Economics Conference event, much of the material and substance developed in its context has informed the *Hope.Springs.Eternal* work there.

As convenor, Christopher has traveled to many and distant places, committed to maintaining in-person collegial connections whenever and however possible. Despite contrary modern tendencies, in-person contact is an opportunity to plant or nurture seeds of cosmic hope, perhaps, as is said in the *Calendar of the Soul #18*, in order that one can 'find the strength to fashion worthily one's soul as fitting raiment for the spirit.' For world economics, hope resides in consequent willing based on the economic ideas of Rudolf Steiner, full of optimism and aimed, as they are, at renewal in the face of disintegration.

As the centennial moment approaches of what Rudolf Steiner called the 'beginning of a cosmic turning point of time', how crucial it is that we take these words deeply into our activity as guidance in our efforts to bring stability to human affairs. Especially that young people obtain tools for such work. To this end, *Telling a Different Story* (see p. 8) will see Fionn Meier visiting the USA for the first time to explore a financial literacy curriculum with North American educators. It is hoped that the inherent I-wisdom of double-entry bookkeeping can be imparted and associative financial literacy become an essential component of education.

The EC Fund balances reported here show not-insignificant sums that continue to facilitate activity in various world currencies but beyond the vagaries of the foreign exchange markets. Is this money as bookkeeping – a form of global financial homeopathy, perhaps?

We close this edition with thoughts both retrospective and forward-looking, but would like to take this moment to acknowledge those of you who have sent in 'thank you's, indicating your gratitude for being kept informed along the way. Such warm words of encouragement have been very much appreciated.

With our warm greetings,
– Christopher and Kim

Membership Update

This issue includes 'administrative' updates. First, some welcomings, and then some remembrances. Then our Fund balances at the end of 2022.

Welcome

Jenny Doty joins us from Rockford, IL, USA.

In her joining letter she wrote: 'In the final year of my undergrad studies, I woke up to the question of where food comes from, which led me to a multi-year work experience on a biodynamic farm, where I first encountered Anthroposophy. I have worked at multiple points on the food value chain: cook, buyer, merchant, waitstaff, manager – and back to farmer again... I then graduated in agricultural economics and have since taught farmers about accounting, business planning [resulting in] an intimate understanding of their challenges, needs and goals. Now, in light of the content of Steiner's economics lectures, I aim to be involved in research endeavors that improve their financial environment, as so many are hamstrung by low prices and high land costs.'

Congratulations

Our colleague, Mary Adams, has recently been appointed General Secretary to the Anthroposophical Society in America.

Remembrances

(* close friend)

Elliah Rael (15 April 2023)
Michael Hallam (1 March 2023)
David Clark (5 October 2017)
Richard G Rettig (5 March 2020)
Christian Groezinger (13 September 2019)
Benediktus Hardorp (7 March 2014)
Ulrich Roesch (14 February 2014)
Thelma Hodges* (16 July 2023)
Katherine Thivierge* (9 July 2023)
D'Arcy Mackenzie* (21 February 2018)
Tamara Slayton* (30 June 2003)
Edward Baumheier* (10 October 2021)



Eliah Rael (Henry Passafero)
28 February 1949 – 15 April 2023

*Vivaianne Rael Sinclair
McCormick, SC, USA*

As many of you may know, Eliah, my husband and a colleague of ours in the Economics Conference, crossed the Threshold on April 15, 2023 – the Saturday evening following Easter Sunday. During the last days, weeks and months before he crossed, he had many initiatory experiences that helped to give him a sense of

completion of this lifetime and prepared him for his journey 'home'.

During the last week of his life, the veil to the spiritual world appeared to be very thin. He participated in many lucid adventures, which he could only share a glimpse of with me. He raised concerns about the current world economic situation and the incarnation of Ahriman. The last book he asked me to read to him was entitled, *The Encounter with Evil* by Sergei Prokofieff.¹ He also acknowledged the nearness of our spiritual allies, including our angels and Michael, with whom he conversed in the last 10 days or so of his life. One of his favorite quotes by Rudolf Steiner was "Ahriman sits in a cave and calculates and calculates, but Michael will do the last addition."

When I think of Eliah, the first word that comes to me is 'magnanimity'. He had no fear of the financial realm and navigated it with ease and confidence in his numismatic business. If he had cash in his pocket and/or excess in his bank account and someone showed up on his path that needed support, he didn't hesitate to share as generously as he could. He often paid tuition for students in Waldorf schools that he felt a destiny connection with whose parents were struggling. He lived out of a spirit of freedom and brotherhood.



Eliah was boisterous and bold, loved life and the people he encountered. Jordan Walker wrote, "When Eliah was in our midst there was an expectation that anything could happen

and I mean *anything*." Eliah had no fear to say what was on his mind and made a lasting impression on almost everyone he met.

In the mornings, he often told me about his nighttime dreams of flying to various places to which he put his attention. He loved flying in dreamland and loved the beautiful flying butterflies in our butterfly habitat during the day. His memory was nearly photographic. He read virtually every lecture by Rudolf Steiner that was translated into English at least once – and sometimes many times. He also had a gift of integrating the lectures into a coherent multi-layered colorful tapestry, so he was quite the historian and

¹ *The Encounter with Evil: And Its Overcoming through Spiritual Science: With Essays on the Foundation Stone.* Sergie Prokofieff, Temple Lodge Publishing, 1999

storyteller. He engaged all those he met to test their interest to see if there was an opening for a deeper exchange. There was nothing he liked better than to share his wealth of knowledge and engage with those who were hungry and nourished by what he had to share. He also employed his storytelling capacities to elucidate the coins he sold.

The Christmas Conference was Eliah's North Star. He had an uncanny ability to see the weaknesses in communities and longed for more economic wakefulness and collaboration. He had an intuition in his twenties that the Anthroposophical Society was not as Rudolf Steiner had intended. He questioned all the elders he could find to find out 'what happened'. He got glimpses here and there of the breakdowns that had happened after Steiner's death. He was eventually able to put the story together, thanks to the meeting notes published in the Society Newsletter in 1935, the writings of Thomas Meyer, with D.N. Dunlop's biography, and J.E. Zeylmans van Emmichoven's biography of Ita Wegman. He read and reread the Christmas Conference proceedings and especially loved the evening lectures where Steiner explored the karmic relationship between himself and Ita Wegman. Eliah continued to delve into the karmic inter-relationships of Marie Steiner, Ita Wegman and Rudolf Steiner. Eventually, he came to a broad and deep 5,000 year karmic biography that he wished to share to reveal the true stature of Rudolf Steiner from Ancient Egypt to the present.

Eliah strove valiantly during the last years of his life. After two strokes and two amputations that began in 2016, he suffered the loss of most of his eyesight, balance, use of his right side, and spatial perspective. Though he was nearly blind, could barely type, and wheelchair bound, he carried on with enthusiasm. He was determined to bring his research that unveiled the history of money, the evolution of consciousness and the Archangelic epochs to light in the form of a book entitled *Money Unveiled*,² a term coined in 2007 by Arthur Edwards, with whom Eliah collaborated and intended to co-author the publication, ably assisted, in the last year of his life, by a friend and former business partner, Peter Jensen.

He would like more than anything for his labors of love of both the written works and the colorful slide show he created to accompany his research, to be a contribution to our time and our culture. If, on reading this, you are interested to learn more about the project and/or have the capacity to contribute financially to this project please feel free to contact me by email: viviannerael@gmail.com.

Chicago Meeting

10 March 2023

Further to the email of 21 February 2023, a first post covid in-person meeting of the Economics Conference of the Goetheanum was held in the Rudolf Steiner Branch building in Chicago, USA, on 10 March 2023. Neither a report nor a formal set of minutes, this 'reportage' gives the reader and those not present a sense of the range of topics discussed in our two short hours.

Attended by Mary Stewart Adams, Lorene Allen, Charles Burkham, Kim Chotzen, Patricia DeLisa, Gordon Edwards, Meg Freeling, Christopher Houghton Budd and Daniel Osmer, and apologies from Arthur Edwards, Stephen Vallus, Susan Gravelle, Jason Brittin, Mauricio Garay, Lucia Sigolo, Camila Panain, Viviane Rael and Eliah Rael, inter alia and random, we considered:

- How to further the work of the Economics Conference in North America, in regard to financial literacy, farming economics, and other aspects of our research.
- How to bridge and work cross-platform with both public and independent Waldorf schools.
- The proposed financial literacy event end June 2023 (now 21-24 September, see *Events* section).
- The meaning of groups and the case of the Economics Group of the Anthroposophical Society in America
- Lucia and Camila's work in Brazil in August (see *Events* section).
- Further steps for people joining the School via the Economics Conference through Marc and now Eduardo being 'apostiled' to do so where there is no 'resident' or local First Class Holder.
- The changes in the anthroposophical movement's leadership and style being mooted in the May 2023 meeting (since held).
- What do we mean when we say 'The Goetheanum', 'The Society', 'The Leadership'?
- Whether the Goetheanum site is a sanctuary or a university campus, and governed by karma or democracy?
- In the run-up to the Christmas Conference centennial, it is as important to mark the anniversary of the setting up of country societies.
- How do we understand 'the culmination'?
- What is it about the West, beyond Hibernia?
- The challenges of Masonry and Jesuitism in Latin America and Bolivar's understanding of Montesquieu's 'separation of powers'.
- The difference between *Res Privata* and *Res Publica*.

² We hope to have details in the next *Associate!*, eds.

'Dear Mr Haefner...'

Open Letter from Lúcia Sígolo

In May, Lucia wrote this, as yet unanswered, letter to Gerald Haefner, leader of the Social Sciences Section.

Dear Mr Haefner,

I'm writing to you from São Paulo, Brazil, a place you have been to, and as I know it is cheering for you. We actually met once or twice. I hope you are doing well.

I'm a member of the first class and I work actively in the name of *Antroposofia* quite a few years from now. I've also worked in some of our initiatives such as – *Widar* – an anthroposophical bank founded in 1994, *ABT – Associação Beneficente Tobias* – a foundation that gave financial support to many anthroposophical initiatives, and at *Sociedade Antroposófica no Brasil* as Brazilian Treasurer, (2005-2011).

Today I am working on a project that has been completely inspired by my involvement with the work of the Economics Conference of the Goetheanum. And I must say that I was very sadly surprised not to find easily the Economics Conference site on the internet page at the Goetheanum website. When I finally did find it, I was again surprised to find it among 'projects'.

Of course, I'm not writing you to complain about the time I've lost looking for it or anything like that, but I think it's of great importance to call your attention to the work the Economics Conference has been doing, and to tell you I think the place given to it does not correspond to the place it should have.

I'd like to call your attention, and the attention of all members of the *Vorstand*, to this matter, and ask you kindly and seriously to think about the possibility of giving some thought about the work the Economics Conference of the Goetheanum has been doing and to consider the possibilities for the

future it can bring to humanity. We live in such times that economics as such cannot be neglected any longer by the Goetheanum.

Please let me know if you think there is anything I could do to reverse and contribute to heal this situation. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mes sincères salutations, Lúcia Sígolo

Economics Conference Fund Balances

The adjacent table shows the EC Fund balances at the end of 2022. Details can be had on request. It is perhaps important to remind ourselves here (see Review on p. 21) of the way the EC Fund is operated, insofar as how I have interpreted such things in my role as convenor. As such, I sign off on the overall accounts since the Fund is embedded in the General Anthroposophical Society at the Goetheanum.

The Fund has various components: research, administration, website, newsletters, and the costs of the convenor work. To date, these have been met by a combination of small gifts, sizeable donations with donor intentions, and publicly subscribed money. The money is mainly held in accounts in several Anthroposophical Societies around the world, providing interest free liquidity until we call on it by way of disbursement agreements. The funds are received post taxation but disbursed in two ways – against primary documentation for things like train tickets, and bona fide tax invoices from individuals – so that the Fund's worldwide operation conforms with income tax rules. In each country the Fund has a treasurer.

In the adjacent table, the balances are shown in national currencies converted into Hibernias via the Swiss Franc (CHF), which is assumed to be at a rate of 1:1.

HIB	Goeth. CHF	CH CHF	DE EUR	NL EUR	CA CAD	GB GBP	US USD	EC USD	BR BRL	BR BRL
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707			735							
119				124						
6,628					4,408					
2,881						7406				
6,655							7,582			
1,501								1,710		
517									2,874	
4,897										27,216
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Events

Throughout and since the covid time, Economics Conference colleagues have continued to be active in different venues and in various ways. A worldwide event continues to elude us, but those meetings that have taken place have been in-person. How different the discourse is when one is not having to attend to the constraints of a camera!



Seed Corn

The Economics of Farming
17–19 March 2023 / Chicago,
USA

Organised by the Economics Conference of the Goetheanum and supported by the Economics Group of the Anthroposophical Society in America, this event was held at the Rudolf Steiner Branch building in Chicago, USA, it featured presentations by Anna Chotzen and others with a focus especially on the situation in the USA. For a full report: https://economics.goetheanum.org/fileadmin/economics/Various_pdfs/EC_Seed_Corn_Report.pdf

The Economy as a Force for Transformation

From initiatives to real projects
4–7 May 2023 / Mendoza, Argentina

People from different parts of Argentina met at the foot of the Andes Mountains, in the city of Mendoza, with the aim of getting deep into the economic life from the perspective of associative economics and transforming ideas into concrete projects. In this meeting, we worked specifically from the economic sphere, with tools that help us to transcend the obstacles that prevent us from realizing our undertakings, so that we can bring spiritual life to the social organism. In other words, to bring what lives in our will to material life, so that we can build an individual and collective image of it, so that spiritual life works through the economy as a true force of transformation supporting humanity as a whole.

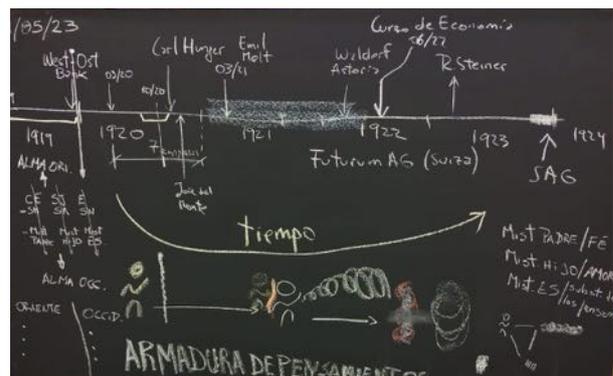
On the first day, we took as our starting point the experience of the 'Coming Day' company as an example of efforts to embody an initiative in the world.³ We looked into the fundamental ideas of the threefold social organism contributed by Rudolf Steiner and his collaborators prior to the economics course in 1922. More than 100 years after this initiative, we reviewed its context and the challenges it faced. We reflected on our own understanding of the ideas of threefolding and the challenges of today, especially at this particular

time in Argentina, with an inflation rate of more than 100% in a year.

We also discussed the idea that the world needs the right people with the right skills and knowledge in the right initiatives. Without this combination, ideas and undertakings are at risk of not coming to fruition. Additionally, as Steiner pointed out in his book *The New Social Order*, to design and build a bridge it is necessary to know how to solve partial differential equations. Thus, in addition to having received the idea from the spiritual world, it is also necessary to know and understand the modern techniques and tools of the economic world in order to be able to bring the ideas from the spiritual world into the social organism.

We worked around the idea that the fruits of our initiative not only give us an answer that it is wanted by the world, but at the same time allow entrepreneurs to connect with their innermost aspect, their own self or I. They also allow them to understand, in the light of the economic process described by Steiner, what to do with the capital arising from work on nature and from the spirit organising work. From these fruits, a conscious relationship between the higher self and the lower self can develop in the future, allowing one not only to become aware of what lives in the subconscious, but also to receive and deliver the fruits of human will as it unfolds in the world.

We focused on Emil Leinhas's comments that, in order to understand in depth the impulses that must unfold from economic life in our time, it is necessary to do so in the light of the experience of the Christ in the present context. To this end, we developed some of the contents of *The New Spirituality and the Experience of the Christ in the 20th Century*.⁴



We then briefly reviewed the history of economic thought from Aristotle to monetarism, passing through scholasticism, mercantilism, physiocracy, the classics, socialism, Marxism, marginalism and Keynesianism, among others. An important aspect was highlighted in relation to the work contributed

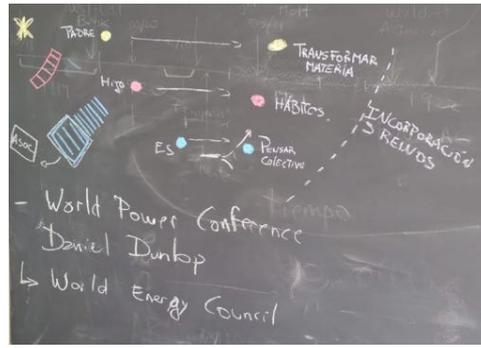
³ 'A Brief History of Der Kommende Tag', in Rudolf Steiner, *Economist*, New Economy Publications, Canterbury, England 1996. Search aeBookstore.com.

⁴ *The New Spirituality and the Experience of the Christ in the 20th Century*. (CW 200)

Alquileres (lugar)	Alquileres (lugar) \$10año = \$10
Máquina (horas)	Máquina (horas) \$5Dct = \$50
Gastos (harina, otros)	Gastos (harina, otros) \$5año = \$5
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Expectativa de venta?	RESULTADO PROYECTADO = \$5

PRESUPUESTO	
VENTA	\$50
MÁQUINAS	(\$50)
ALQUILERES	(\$10)
GASTOS	(\$5)
RESULTADO	\$5

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In addition to all this, we were accompanied by the image of the World Power Conference created in 1924, now called the World Energy Council,⁶ and its creator Daniel Dunlop. In the

by Étienne Bonnot, Abbé de Condillac (1715-1780) and his mention of the 'vrai prix'. In addition, we reviewed the history of accounting, focusing on the work of Luca Pacioli and the double-entry book keeping technique.

We also looked into the details of strategic planning, project and programme management, which, as tools, allow us to deploy ideas by transforming them into materialized initiatives.

Regarding project management, we dived into the technical details of its methodology, tools and techniques. As an exercise, we worked in groups taking projects from the participants. The main goal was to apply the Canvas methodology (from Alexander Osterwalder)⁵ to actual projects which were either in planning or execution phase. With this tool in hand, an associative approach was provided to the different projects. Through presentations, we exchanged various thoughts and insights about the initiatives that served as examples. We were confronted with the same archetypal questions, which proved useful to us when talking about project management planning.

During the meeting, we tried to increase our understanding of the role of economic life in relation to the development of the individual and humanity. Through unfolded will, humanity will be able to embody the spiritual essence of all the kingdoms of the earth, and at the same time develop the necessary sheaths for the Christ, who bound Himself through the Mystery of Golgotha to the destiny of the earth and humanity.

current facts of world energy transition, and although the world is not yet heading towards *one-world economy*, we could appreciate some original 'gestures' and 'intentions' to understand that we are within one *atmosphere*, that we are on one *earth* and that from there we must understand globally how *all together* we develop as brothers and sisters without leaving anyone behind.

Each day ended with a theatrical representation based on the work of Leo Tolstoy: 'How much land does a man need?' Through this activity, we displayed our creativity, strengthened our bonds, and at the same time felt 'touched' by the contents of the play, which reminded us of the consequences of a life spent without the ability to set limits to our egotism.

During the last day, we exchanged impressions, doubts about the current economic life, types and uses of legal entities, national money issuance and its image in companies, ideas and images of the future. Images that converge on the same point: collective work, the need for regular meetings, which nourish us to unfold what beats deep in our hearts and needs to be unfolded in the world.

As a result of the positive financial outcome of the meeting, contributions were made to the Youth Group of Mendoza (in charge of the lunches and coffee breaks of the meeting), the nearby Estrella Andina school for its teacher training fund, and the Economics Conference Fund in Argentina.



⁵ <https://www.alexosterwalder.com>

⁶ <https://www.worldenergy.org>



Quito – Light of America!
 100 years later, what awaits the Anthroposophical Society?
 10-13 August 2023 / Quito, Ecuador

Carried by Gabriela Palacios, Alberto Baldeon and Eduardo Rincon (Mexico), this event will be an intertwining of the Economics Conference and the Anthroposophical Society in Ecuador.

Both outwardly and inwardly, 1923 was an important year in human history. The world was in chaos; the gods having left us to our own devices for the first time, it was being organised dishonestly on the basis of the false principles of self-determination of peoples, instead of the threefold nature of society. Inwardly, Rudolf Steiner refounded the Anthroposophical Society and inaugurated the School of Spiritual Science as a twin arrangement intended to bring example and stability into human affairs. How do things stand one hundred years later? Outwardly, what is the contribution of Ecuador in today's world, and what role does the Society/School play in that?

This is what we would like to explore through a three-part event, 10-13 August. Each part represents an 'esoteric day', so it begins with a thematic evening session, which is then explored the next day. The first day takes as its focus the history and purpose of the Anthroposophical Society and the School of Spiritual Science. The first is the body, the second its soul. But what of its spirit?!

The second day aims to look at the contribution of Ecuador to humanity's development through the work done in education, farming and medicine, not for themselves, as it were, but in terms of the larger concerns that Rudolf Steiner sought to address through them.

The reason for Waldorf pedagogy, for example, is to give the foundation, through education, of a free spiritual life. Forget that, and the societal role of Waldorf education becomes lost to sight, as



also recognition of that role by the world at large. Similarly, biodynamic farming exists on the one hand to give a conscious basis to what previously has lived instinctively; on the other, as represented by the topsoil, it is to enable a dying earth to be regenerated. For anthroposophical medicine, in Ecuador as elsewhere, the need is 'to revitalize the art of healing'. To what extent are those who work in these fields or benefit from them aware of and animated by these larger concerns and the ground and opportunity our biographies in regard to them give for their unfolding? And does the Society/School have a part to play in this?

Day Three is about looking ahead to see how the Society/School can host and so strengthen these challenges in the years ahead, with c. 2230 marking the end of this Michaelic Period. The idea is to work with a combination of presentations intended only to set the stage in the light of Rudolf Steiner's indications for discussions among members. For this session we recreated the First Goetheanum interior (see lower left images).



Intuit Capital, Inspire Labour, Imagine Goods Double-Entry Bookkeeping as a portal, contributions to child and youth financial literacy.
 18-19 August 2023
 Sao Paulo, Brazil

Another in-presence meeting of the Economics Conference of the Goetheanum, for all who are interested in financial literacy based on associative economics. Our colleagues, Lucia Sigolo and Camila Panain, are organising this event, linked to Lucia's ongoing work with 'women warrior' entrepreneurs in Brazil, where the 7th cohort of twenty just completed (see next page image).

"No child should reach the age of 16 without knowing accounting." – Rudolf Steiner, CW 294.

We live in a very complex world, in which social issues seem to become more difficult every day. Rudolf Steiner considered pedagogy as one of the most important issues in today's society. Therefore, teachers and educators have a fundamental role in training young people who will act and transform the world in which we live.

Associative economics offers us new perspectives for understanding the modern economy, which allows us to



answer to the contrary impulse that became the United Nations. Except that nations should not unite; rather they should identify their own light and respect the light of others. This is a fascinating story, but with its focus on Teutonic mythology and little or no detail as regards Latin America.⁹ However, this paucity of detail from Rudolf Steiner enables this theme to be investigatory, an exploration based on actual soul and national experience.

What, then, is the light of Brazil and how does this shine in the work of the Society and the School? And what do Brazilians see when looking in on what we do?

expand our awareness of who we are and how we act in society; and puts us in relationship with our greater purpose, harmonizing our lives and contributing to the whole. As an example, we can mention the thoughts of Rudolf Steiner who, in economic life, relates intuition, inspiration and imagination with capital, work and merchandise.

It's the same with our ideas about money. For example, 'money as bookkeeping' allows double-entry accounting to reveal itself as a simple and true tool that serves as a universal language for understanding our actions in the world.

With these and other of Rudolf Steiner's thoughts as a background, we would like to dialogue with anyone who feels called to expand their knowledge on the subject. The program will have an introduction on Friday night to the philosophical and spiritual aspects of Rudolf Steiner's lectures on economics, while Saturday will be devoted to double-entry accounting exercises combined with themes linked to Waldorf Pedagogy.

'Thank you,' Rudolf Steiner

Revisiting the Anthroposophical Society 100 years on
25–27 August 2023 / Sao Paulo, Brazil

Similar to the Quito event, this one will ask what lives in Brazil.

As Peter Selg has recently reminded us,⁷ in 1923 Rudolf Steiner encouraged the founding of Country Societies, of which Brazil was one. After the Christmas Conference, they became Country Groups of the Society, autonomous yet part of the world Society.

In the background of Country Groups stands the *Mission of Folks Souls*,⁸ Rudolf Steiner's 1910

Lastly, how does this all look in the realm of finances? Money is always a reflection of intention and will, so it seems fitting to mark the centenary of the Anthroposophical Society with a fresh effort to stabilise our finances together. The more so when one recalls the maxim 'as above, so below'.

Is now the time to recognize Rudolf Steiner's genius in finance and to take new steps in funding the Goetheanum worldwide, wherever the activities of the School and Society are done in its spirit?



Telling a Different Story, Financial Literacy for our Times

21-24 September 2023
Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA

Today's world conditions can be both described and understood, even framed hopefully, through the lens of financial literacy. For over 20 years now, colleagues of the Economics Conference have been developing a practical understanding of *associative* financial literacy at a general level and as informed by Rudolf Steiner's ideas concerning economic, business and finance. This has resulted in a substantial literature on central themes – such as *The Hibernian Mysteries* and *Modern Finance / Money as Bookkeeping / Revisiting US Financial History / Associative Financial Literacy and Adolescence / Finance at the Threshold* – which can be found on these two related websites: <http://www.economics.goetheanum.org> and <http://www.associative-financial-literacy.com> We would like to share this work with a wider world and are now organizing an in-person gathering to be held in Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA on 21-24 September this year. A provisional program for this event has been in progress for a

⁷ 'The Autonomous Country Societies and the World Society', based on a talk he gave to the Swiss Anthroposophical Society in February 2023.

⁸ *The Mission of the Individual Folk Souls in Relation to Teutonic Mythology*, 7-17 June of 1910, Oslo. CW 121.

⁹ With the exception of Mexico, which is well documented in *Inner Impulses of Evolution. The Mexican Mysteries and the Knights Templar*. CW 171.

year or so and was tested out with a small in-person gathering in Sebastopol, California in September 2022. With the same title, a report of that event, including a transcript of the main presentations made, is available [here](#)¹⁰ or on request to Kim Chotzen, kc@kimchotzen.com. The content of this report covers efforts already underway to review the financial history of the USA and the origins and evolution of 'deep accounting', two topics critical to an understanding of today's financial situation, especially in regard to how this is taught in schools and to young people.

Of particular interest is the pedagogical work and curriculum insights that have been developed over the years. Fionn Meier, our Swiss colleague, who will be present, has been specially funded as a 'financial literacy ambassador', enabling him to deepen this research with colleagues in Switzerland. This gave rise to a special conference held jointly with the Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum in October 2020. Since then, Fionn and his colleagues have developed a curriculum (see next item) for grades 1 to 9 which was published by the Swiss Association of Waldorf Schools (<http://www.steinerschule.ch>) in German in May 2023. It is now being translated into English in order to be launched at this event in the USA.

Including parents, teachers, economists and accountants, we hope that this event will be of interest to anyone practically involved in teaching finance, economics or business to young people especially and in both formal and informal settings.

Associative Financial Literacy

A Swiss Curriculum

In May, Fionn Meier and his colleagues in the Swiss Waldorf School movement (working mainly in the northern German-speaking part of Switzerland) published an economics curriculum (*Lehrplan*) based on their experience in the classroom teaching associative financial literacy. It places the accent on bookkeeping because this concerns both practical economic life and today's financial system, but also because it illustrates economics's very understanding of itself. The 'handbook' is understandably embedded in Swiss experience and German-language publications, so an English version is being prepared which transfers the generic aspect of the curriculum into an Anglo-Saxon (in particular, US and GB) context.

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https://economics.goetheanum.org/fileadmin/economics/Various_pdfs/Telling_a_Different_Story.pdf

By way of meetings in Stroud and London, England, zooms and emailing, part of this work entailed valuable back and forth between Fionn, Arthur Edwards, Christopher Houghton Budd, Stephen Vallus and Stephen Torr, to fine-tune our overall understanding of today's financial system and so-called 'money issue'.

Rudolf Steiner said a lot

chb

Though Doctor Steiner said a lot
He spoke about a different plot
And therefore put us on the spot
For those who do not know him well
His story's not a simple tale
Indeed, it may be just a spell
There it is, his theoried mind
So different to both yours and mine
- a token of some future time?
If one could but find a way
To place him in the light of day
Allowing him belated say
At first 'what if?' and scarcely known
Then slowly maybe hear his tone
Then try to make it one we own
A sound that calls from nowhere near
And one we never thought to hear
Which so far still does not ring clear
But maybe now the time is ripe
To set this little matter right
At least to bring it into light
Who knows what then might occur
Though late in history be the hour
We might in fact become inspired
In questing ever to be free
We trusted first to rampant spree
Then sailed upon the Marxist seas
In recent years we tried again
Assuming 'ere there's gain there's pain
But now that journey seems in vain
In awe the while of markets' lore
We've sought of late to reach the shore
Perhaps it's time for something more
What about this Steiner guy?
Time to look him in the eye?
Surely, folks, it's worth a try!

Contributions

Importantly, various colleagues have continued to beaver away researching backgrounding themes that connect Christology and accounting, karma and bookkeeping, events since World War I, and the challenges of working in and out of the West

Beyond Gold chb

In 2023, a central theme for economics, both associative and unassociative, is the way, 100 years on, that humanity understands economic life after World War I: that is, once the universal currency role of gold lost its historical and economic validity. Though he could have given several lectures on this topic alone, it occurs in Rudolf Steiner's 1922 economics course as something of a side topic. In wider economic history this was and continues to be the pivotal event of our times. A riddle as yet unsolved.

With this in mind, I recently wrote a four-part book (*Beyond Gold – Hayek, Keynes and Steiner in Concert*) in which I ask how history might have unfolded, and could yet unfold, had both Hayek and Keynes met the work of Steiner. I am currently looking into its mainstream publication as a sequel or companion to *Finance at the Threshold*,¹¹ including the poems that punctuate this edition of *Towards*.

In an effort to be morally tactful, the original MSS was organised so that Steiner appeared from the side-lines, via footnotes and references when deemed suitable. When I sent it to the biographers of Hayek and Keynes, each said unknown to the other that that will not work. I needed to place Steiner firmly and clearly centre-stage and then proceed from there – and do so in a way that acquaints him to a world that is either ignorant of him or at best holds him askance.

I took this as permission to be more bold and to answer a question that has perhaps now been asked: What does Rudolf Steiner's economics entail? Whether this book sees the light of day remains to be seen, but this much of the story I felt it right to share with my Economics Conference colleagues.

1923-2023 'Own Lights' and Folk Souls Christopher Houghton Budd

Culminating in the centenary of the Refounding of the Anthroposophical Society, 2023 is an important year. But also, as Peter Selg reminds

¹¹ <https://www.routledge.com/Finance-at-the-Threshold-Rethinking-the-Real-and-Financial-Economies/Budd/p/book/9781138094628#>

us,¹² because it marks the period when Rudolf Steiner encouraged the creation of Country Societies. After the Christmas Conference these became Country Groups of the worldwide Society.¹³

If one bears in mind countries' links to folk souls, then one can also reflect on where things stand today. Backgrounded by Rudolf Steiner's 1910 Oslo lectures,¹⁴ the idea of this article is not to dwell on how this story has played out since but to draw attention to a related yet little known aspect of the last 100 years.

In *The Mission of Folk Souls*, Rudolf Steiner describes two matters of relevance here. Firstly, as regards the human being,

‘the homeless man’ [is] a technical expression [meaning] one whose understanding and grasp of the great laws of humanity cannot be influenced by whatsoever a person acquires through association with his native country. Furthermore, a ‘homeless man’ [identifies] himself with the great laws of human evolution without allowing the particular shades of feeling and sentiment associated with his native country to colour his outlook ... from which the ‘homeless man’ must liberate himself to some extent [in order to experience that] homelessness is, or may be, a detour, so that, once this sanctuary, the state of homelessness, has been reached, the ‘homeless man’ may rediscover the quintessence of the folk and achieve a harmonious relationship with the stable element in the evolution of mankind.’ (7 June 1910.)

As regards the folk souls, Steiner says that, ‘the etheric auras that can be perceived over the various countries ... preserve a fundamental tone or quality which persists over long periods of time... [They] change in the course of human evolution when a people migrates and occupies new territory. The strange feature is that the etheric aura over a certain region depends in fact not only upon the etheric emanations from the soil, but also upon the people which last made its home there.’ (Lecture 2, 8 June 1910.)

Compare this to the 1953 statement by American economist, Milton Friedman: ‘...flexible exchange rates are a means of combining interdependence among countries through trade with a maximum of internal monetary independence; they are a means of permitting each country to seek for

¹² Under the heading, ‘The Autonomous Country Societies and the World Society’, and based on a talk he gave to the Swiss Anthroposophical Society in February 2023.

¹³ Or did they? Quite whether country societies are country groups is a topic worth reflecting on.

¹⁴ *The Mission of the Individual Folk Souls in Relation to Teutonic Mythology*, 7-17 June of 1910, Oslo. Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1970. CW 121.

monetary stability according to its *own lights*, without either imposing its mistakes on its neighbours or having their mistakes imposed on it. If all countries succeeded, the result would be a system of reasonably stable exchange rates; the substance of effective harmonisation would be attained without the risks of formal but ineffective harmonisation.¹⁵ (Italics added.)

This phrasing is very close to what Rudolf Steiner had in mind – namely, that in a single global economy, financial methods and principles necessarily converge, but this should be matched by diversity at the level of folk souls. Otherwise, they will be tyrannised – but not by a higher-level event such as supranational governance. The tyranny will come from one folk soul (that of England) being more influential than the others because, in its mind at least, it is closest in its nature, way of being, history and language – not to mention abstract financial proclivities – to the consciousness soul.¹⁶

This would explain today's Anglo-Saxon predominance, insofar as the Anglo-Saxon mind-set thinks it is a synonym for the consciousness soul and so does not hesitate in lauding worldwide its notions of finance and democracy. Friedman's image merits consideration, therefore, not as a doctrine in support of 'western' ideas about inflation, employment and monetary policy, but as a call to the folk souls to wake up and renew themselves on their own terms – precisely by articulating their 'own light' and then allowing universal finance to support their diversity.

Abstract finance, disassociated or emancipated from the real economy and therefore at risk of usurping it, belongs to this Michael Age, but it is not Michaelic to second one's light to that of finance. Archeic rather than Archangelic, common to us all but unique to none of us, modern finance cannot in the end work if every culture emulates the Anglo-Saxon one or chases the American dream rather than its own. Friedman has antecedents. In 1908, Ralph Hawtrey argued that, 'if all countries maintained internal price stability, both economies and exchange rates would be stable without the need for 'contractual' transfers'.¹⁷ 15 years later Maynard Keynes,

published his tract on monetary reform,¹⁸ which he wrote at the same time Rudolf Steiner was giving his 1922 economics course,¹⁹ each seeking economic stability.

Perhaps we need to go back to those times, and those texts, and start over. Availing ourselves of today's second chance to embark on a shared world economy but one in which no country leans on, hides behind or dominates the economic life of another, but asks instead how it can best contribute to humanity's overall welfare.

To do this we need to dig deeper into recent economic history, even if the result seems outrageous. For example, the claim²⁰ that Joan of Arc (1412-1431) reincarnated as Keynes (1883-1946), so that, having driven the English out of France at the start of the British Empire, s/he returned at its end to drive imperialism out of the English, urging them to convert their imperial adventure into a worldwide commonwealth. In this connection, in England recently, Sebastian Tombs gave an enlightening talk²¹ about Keynes's life, highlighting how he constantly sought ways where something of this kind could come about, ever assessing and describing the fluidity and

interdependency of the many factors of economic life, on the basis of which people can carry out what Aristotle called 'fine actions'.²²

Closer to home, can the anthroposophical movement (of which the Economics Conference is, of course, a part) make history a conscious

affair, as also our part in its making, by asking whether, however unintended, Friedman's 'own lights' dictum might also be an allusion to folk souls and their working together and we as anthroposophists are not called upon to render this possibility visible on our own stage? The thesis is that Country Groups of the Anthroposophical Society enable the folk souls to speak directly into human affairs.²³ What challenges and tasks such a thesis portends!

*Spirit of my earthly habitations
Reveal the Light of thine Age
To the Christ-endowed soul
That, striving, I may find thee
In the choirs of the spheres of peace
Singing the glory and the power
Of human hearts devoted to the Christ.*
– Rudolf Steiner

¹⁵ *Essays in Positive Economics*. M. Friedman, Phoenix, Chicago (1966 [1953]) p.200.

¹⁶ This is thesis brought to my attention by a German-born Argentine lawyer and anthroposophist on the occasion of the 30th commemoration of the Falklands War. He was adamant that the roots of this phenomenon go back, in Argentina's case, to its dispossession of Las Malvinas by Britain in 1833.

¹⁷ Robert Skidelsky, writing in *John Maynard Keynes: Fighting for Britain, 1937-1946*. Macmillan, London 2000, p.215.

¹⁸ *A Tract on Monetary Reform*, Macmillan, London 1923.

¹⁹ *Economics – The world as one economy*. Rudolf Steiner, New Economy Publications, Canterbury, England 2014 [1996/1922]. (CW 340).

²⁰ Once made to me by an old Waldorf teacher outside Keynes's home in Sussex near Lewes, no less.

²¹ In March 2023 Social Sciences Section zoom meeting.

²² For Keynes's link to Aristotle, see Robert Skidelsky (2009), and Robert and Edward Skidelsky (2012).

²³ The recently created Goetheanum Fund Worldwide, introduced the idea of 'would-be country groups', a concept that allows the inclusion of folk souls (or their equivalents or counterparts) beyond the, essentially European, one's Rudolf Steiner focused on in 1910.

Hayek, Hayek come again

chb

Hayek, Hayek, come again!
Visit new your old refrain

Are you sure its markets that
Give to man the freedom fact

Though markets both do come and go
Might it be that you think so

Because though man's already free
We're unclear of our mystery

That you project what you hold dear
When really it's already near

We fear alas our shadows vast
And cling afeared onto the past

When truth be told we could declaim
Our freedom's here tho' still by name

We've yet to step into that void
So seek to have the truth unfold

From forces we invent and then project
When all the while they're heaven sent

Comes freedom from their mastery of us
Or should we not now call this bluff?

And deem the markets surrogate
And do ourselves what they berate
Take hold, be prudent, don't inflate

When issuing money as we buy
Or granting credit when we try
To take new steps in worlds unknown

Be disciplined, start first at home

Do not of banks expect salvation
Mend yourself your imperfections
E'er markets bring their own corrections

Not through lack of competition
But born of human indecision

As stark before the future we all stand
While gods refuse to lend a hand

But wait to see if we alone
Can forge our world and free it hone

The state awaits all those who fail
But markets too can false avail

If after all the fault is ours
Should now in fact it be the hour.

From Cherubim to Conscience to Closing... and back again A Collegial Triptych

Three Economics Conference colleagues recently put their minds to the deeper background of the key technique of accounting: the end of year closing. They are shared here as a contribution to what may prove to be a new field of study: the Christology of Economics.



How is Conscience born?

Meg Freeling
Columbus, Ohio,
USA

Lifted from a larger paper that follows the evolution of conscience from the Cherubim to the Closing in accounting.

"Oh, the voice of conscience is of high origin, high being. It actually lives in the world of the Cherubim [from where] it weaves itself into humanity and at first resounds from the depths of this humanity in an indeterminate way. But it is a great, mighty encounter when Man,²⁴ through intuition, can come into contact with the field of the Cherubim and encounter the world where one's conscience lives and works. It is the greatest personal discovery anyone can make." – Rudolf Steiner.²⁵

The development of conscience in human beings results in the event when, in our modern era of the consciousness soul, we look to that moment in which every transaction in our economic lives comes to its end. In accounting, this is called the closing, although its significance would be better expressed and, indeed, hallowed, were it formulated (as here henceforth) as The Closing. After tracking one's income and expenditures in one's respective accounts and making any necessary adjustments on one's balance sheet, one engages in the closing of the accounts for the particular project, time period or set of transactions with which one is concerned. The

²⁴ Mindful to today's gender sensitivities, we use Man here with an initial capital letter. In part because it is a quote from another era, but also because 'M-A-N' is an *ur* word for the creature that thinks. It dates from the times before the separation of languages and is simply a description of the human being with its power of self-reflection that no other creature has. It does not, in that sense, refer to gender.

²⁵ Rudolf Steiner, "The Wisdom of Man, of the Soul and the Spirit" Lecture, Berlin, 15 Dec 1909 (CW 115). Also, Steiner, Rudolf. Lectures to the First Class. Vol. II. CW 270. Lesson XIII. Dornach. 17 May 1925. found at: https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/CW_270/English/eLib240517a01.html2018/19

Closing is where all is made clear. After which, a new time period or project begins.

For example, I once worked as a learning consultant for a company that prepared the site and laid the underground pipe for large construction projects. I helped them create learning programs for crew members so they could develop into crew leaders faster while deepening their knowledge of the job. I was often working with crew members in the field while my colleague, industrial and systems engineering and adult learning consultant, Michael Colburn, was working with the managers to clarify the company's mission and goals and track their progress. We created a learning design team through which people from different departments, including managers and executives, came together to learn and to discover what the people in the other departments considered important.

When a new project started, managers learned to share key aspects of it with the crews to show them how their work fit in with the whole. Crew members learned to read blueprints, understand some of the financial aspects and help identify which pieces of equipment they would need throughout the project. As people worked in this environment, some became dependable experts in certain aspects of their jobs. At times, a few were encouraged to set up their own entrepreneurial enterprise within the company and contract services with the larger company. This was very inspiring – and motivating – to many of the co-workers.

It is in such a context, that one can look at the closing of the accounts. Of course, there had to be an opening first, and this happened as a follow-up to the original contract that was signed with the client, usually an architect and his/her client who initiated the building project. The site management company set up its accounts to reflect the contract agreements. When it came time to close out the project, the question arose: who shall attend to the closing – and who decides? Circumstances dictated much of this, but there were moments when the closing could go one way or another depending on the awareness and mutuality living in the individuals involved. In other words, the conscience that lives in the room.

To clarify what happens at The Closing in terms of accounting, my US colleague, tax consultant Stephen Vallus, explains:

In bookkeeping terms, the Income and Expense activity represents the fulfilling of needs through sales, services, and purchases. It shows a particular time-frame which periodically dies away (all accounts are netted to zero): the net result, gain or loss, is then transferred (by right) to the Own Capital account on the Balance Sheet, [which]

represents the past values which subsist through time. Means of production, Assets and Liabilities, what 'I' owe and what is owed 'to me' are shown. In conventional practice, the gain or loss is automatically transferred to 'own capital' without so much as a pause. (Note that, as recently as the 1990s, there was accounting software which asked the user to distribute the result by hand, at year-end closing.)

In a more cooperative context, this pause would be 'pregnant', with at least a meeting of management with coworker-entrepreneurs and funders. Questions would be asked: are our prices true? If not, then our gains may be falsified thereby. But beyond the short-term needs of – to cite one example from a multitude – business expansion, are there gains which need to be circulated rather than stored up?

In the case of the site management company, at one point, it was able to use the 'pregnant pause' of one of its project closings to expand the business by building a designated space for its learning design team. Because of that commitment, workplace learning flourished, and the employees created a wide-ranging learning program with classes designed and taught by employees and scheduled during the winter down-times. It was largely the CEO's commitment, not only to his clients but also to both his employees and their learning, as well as his own learning along the way, that made this company stand out.

Going back to Stephen's explanation of The Closing, he identified the crucial question of, "Beyond the short-term needs..., are there gains which need to be circulated rather than stored up?" He continued:

Here we are firmly in the realm of the future, but in the rights life as well. In a tax regime based upon income tax, the state has one answer for excess gains. This has been viewed under liberalism as 'coerced altruism' – the idea that the state can fund social needs through redistribution. Although whether this is what actually happens is highly debatable, my point is this: *can we turn this coercion inside out?* We must "render unto Caesar..." but can we, through "gathering" our own experiences and ideas, identify and meet social needs (I have in mind especially the capitalizing of young people) out of our own (economic) activity rather than relying on our notions of the government, the banks, or the non-profit world, or even expert authority?

The full text of the above quote (from Matthew, a tax collector!) is, 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's.' (Matthew, ch.22, v.21.) In a

discussion about the difference between money (as payments) and credit (as rights), my British colleague Arthur Edwards said, “perhaps it is the case that the magic concerned [is] with the creative qualities of rights relationships.”

A practical example of this ‘magic’ in the realm of rights comes from another colleague, this one in Mexico, Marcelo Delajara. In his research, *A Second Chance for Labor Income: The Minimum Income Standard*, he describes a process of turning to the employees themselves, through a well-thought-out system of representative focus groups, to determine what laborers need to receive as a living wage that honors their basic human dignity. The results of this study are then presented to employers who care about their workers and want to pay them fairly.²⁶

A final example of The Closing involves two business owners of a whole foods store in England. Economics Conference colleague, Tessa Houghton Budd, the current owner of Folkestone Wholefoods, writes, “Beth and I spent hours working out how to value the goodwill element of the business before coming to our final solution. It was a steep learning curve, especially as we came at it from very different philosophies – Beth more materialistic, me more associative. But we both had a will to find a solution we both felt happy with and that is what matters I think.”²⁷

If the participants at The Closing have developed a cooperative spirit, the ‘pause’ can expand to become a meeting in which the following three realities can be addressed by the group that has gathered:

1. The “Why are we doing this?” which is to say, the *spirit or purpose of the undertaking* we have just completed.
2. The *social effects* of the undertaking for all involved, in which participants examine together the degree to which the following elements are in evidence: true prices, equality, equity, and the rights and responsibilities of all who have been or will be affected by the undertaking.
3. The *economic implications going forward*; the potential for the ‘not yet’ aspects of the enterprise.

²⁶ A presentation of this research can be found in *A Second Chance for the World: A Deed in Becoming*, (documentation of meetings held during 2019 in Vancouver, Canada and Folkestone, England) Published by Associative Economics Worldwide. (search aeBookstore.com)

²⁷ Tessa Houghton Budd, “One Enterprise at a Time” in *Associate!* June 2023, p. 4. (<https://economics.goetheanum.org/publications/newsletters>)

It is possible that, through such an interchange at The Closing, the participants would discover not only the polarities that exist among them, but could also begin to find their way toward each other under the influence of the higher Conscience (what Jason Brittin later on calls ‘the Social I AM’²⁸) living in each who gathered them together and is ready to reveal new possibilities and new potential harmonies coming toward them out of the future.

The Closing provides more than an economic tool for making sure everyone is fairly treated and getting what is due to them. It can also provide a setting and a focus for a purposeful meeting of colleagues who have worked together on an initiative to bring it to an apt conclusion. It provides a ritual for the turning from old to new tasks. By closing out the accounts of the just-completed project, a group of colleagues can set its sights on what is ahead – for each individually and/or for all or some of them to move on together toward what is calling to them from the future as deeds to do next.

If an anthroposophical understanding of reality has taken hold of such a group, raising awareness of the fundamental elements of work and life in the human world could become part of such a closing ritual. The Closing could become a time when honor is paid to the following:

The *1923 Christmas Conference* lets us know we’re not alone and gives us the expanded self-knowledge of the Foundation Stone verse and the social framework provided by the Statutes.

The *threefold social organism* gives us the balanced movement and communication between functions that we need.

The *associative accounting and bookkeeping practices* related to The Closing make our transactions transparent and thereby more trustworthy going forward.

The Closing prepares us to set *meaningful and realistic priorities* in the context of both practical, material considerations and spiritual long-term commitments.

We can identify ways to divide up the tasks we need to do to accomplish the new priorities, thereby creating our own *division of labor from the inside out*.

By elevating The Closing to a ritual in our work initiatives, our reference points and metaphors can begin to change. For example, in ancient times during the ‘old mysteries’ (think ‘Old Testament’ and material reality), the entry into

²⁸ See third part of this triptych.

the Promised Land was an important goal. Today, what is becoming more important is the entry into the etheric realm of the spiritual worlds where Christ dwells and from which He maintains His living connection to the earth. And to be able to live in and perceive reality from the etheric realm becomes a deepening desire for those who want to stay connected to the new mysteries that are now unfolding.

In another example, to access the mysteries of ancient times one had to go through portals which included rigorous soul and spiritual training. Today, there are again portals one must pass through, but they take on a different quality and purpose. Before, it was the human task to get more grounded onto the earth; today, we have to prepare for a conscious connection with and entrance into the world of spirit, where collaborations between human and spiritual beings can become more frequent, trust-worthy and fruitful.

The Closing can become a dependable vehicle for human beings intent on working together on meaningful tasks that expand and strengthen us as we move with courage and faithfulness into the future.

So, then, how is conscience born today?

Echoing the English Romantic poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861), who opened her 43rd sonnet with "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways..." perhaps we can ask with her: "How is conscience born? Let me count the ways..."



Seeing the Principles that live behind . . .
Stephen Vallus / Fayetteville, Arkansas, USA

The term 'conscience' originally meant 'working together'. To research

this, I went to Owen Barfield's book, *What Coleridge Thought*.²⁹ From Coleridge as his source, Barfield³⁰ created a path of word meanings as follows:

a. The term *life* includes all that 'really is'. (Coleridge.) Life is "the power which discloses itself from within as a principle of *unity* in the

²⁹ Barfield, Owen. *What Coleridge Thought*, "Man in History and Society" (1971) Wesleyan University Press: Middleton, CT (158ff)

³⁰ Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), Owen Barfield (1898-1997).

many, or the principle/process of individuation [while] the *form* taken by the process of individuation is unceasing *polarity*." Thus, the tendency to progressive individuation is the central idea of Coleridge's cosmology (and Barfield's as well). This not only applies to the whole of the phenomenal world, but also to the noumenal (spirit/essence). In other words, the processes of individuation reach a certain culmination in the human being and begin to apply also to the individual human spirit.

b. If this is true, in the long run, "neither evolution nor history will ever be fruitfully discerned unless they are contemplated as substantially one and the same process." But here one is immediately faced with the split (seen by Descartes) in consciousness between the human being and the natural world. Coleridge defined this split as the *terra incognita* of human nature: "except where it is perceived, it is our unconsciousness." Along the same lines, Francis Bacon transformed Plato's ideas-as-forms into 'natural law'.

c. "How to heal this necessary fracture is the individual and collective problem of our era." But ultimately, the development of our self-consciousness per Steiner and Barfield is based upon this 'man and nature' polarity.

d. And within this polarity another arises: that between two human beings. In order to contemplate with Coleridge the "mind of the world as a single mind," we must first ... have raised in our own minds the iron curtain of presupposition and fancy that sunders mind from nature, since it is the same iron curtain that sunders mind from mind." (Barfield.)

e. "It all begins with an act of will and its origin. Selfhood... must will otherness..." The self depends on another self, or selves, not just for its support but as a condition of its very existence. It is a philosophical and historical principle, as well as a Dominican aphorism, that, where two or three are gathered³¹ together, the I AM is 'in the midst' of them ... [Human consciousness] begins with 'the equation of Thou with I by means of a free act...' (Barfield.)

f. Barfield points out that in English legal history "equality is the principle of equity," and further that the courts of equity "were formerly known as 'courts of conscience.'"

g. "...in Coleridge's interpretation of history, 'reason' is defined as 'fidelity to our own Being so far as such Being is not and cannot become an object of the senses.' This is reason itself, while 'conscience is reason in its aspect of will.'" (Barfield.)

³¹ Matthew 18:20.

h. "As for society, Coleridge looked to the 'idea of an ever-originating social contract' and to Rousseau's formulation: 'To find a form of association – by which each, uniting himself to all, nevertheless obeys only himself and remains as free as before.'" (English translation from the French.)



"Who does the gathering together...?"

Jason Brittin / Tenterden, England
(with Meg Freeling)

In the gardens of the United Nations stands a statue of a man beating a sword into a plowshare, a bronze sculpture by artist Evgeniy Vuchetich (1908-1974) and gifted to the United Nations by the USSR on December 4th, 1959.³²

What is the significance of this statue and what is its relevance to the question posed by Meg Freeling at the beginning of her essay, "How is conscience born?"

The Old and New Testaments of the Bible are quoted here as one important source of history and insight into a wider understanding of the spiritual and soul development of the human being through the different ages of world civilizations.

The statue was inspired by words from the prophet Isaiah (740-701 BC) who wrote:

'It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, ...that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and *they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.*' (Isaiah, ch.2, v.2-4.)

This prophecy describes a remarkable, and long hoped-for change in humanity, from distrust and conflict to cooperation and peace. How so?

Through the words of the prophet Jeremiah (650-570 BC), we learn:

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they then broke... For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days...: *I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.* And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for *they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.* For I will forgive their injustice, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jeremiah, ch.3, v.31-34.) Here we are told that the development of the human being was to undergo a further transformation by means of a 'new covenant' that included a new capacity to recognize the birth of an inner conscience that would speak to each person from within.

Thus, under the old covenant/contract, social cohesion was based on external spiritual guidance and enforced laws. Through the new covenant/contract, each person has the possibility for a deep inner connection to the Divine – for conscience to be born and grow from within each individual.

Out of this new covenant, individual conscience gradually replaces external authority. A new condition of inner strength and commitment to doing the good enables each person to find a deeper connection to the Divine, and to find community, freedom and peace on an intra-human level. In the process, one's relation to the realities of the spiritual world becomes more mature and more responsible, as indicated by Christ: "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." (John, ch.15, v.15.) (Also Galatians, ch.4, v.1-7.)

It was this 'new covenant' that Christ referred to during the Last Supper: "...and likewise, the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." (Luke 2:20.) This is the provision of Christ's shed blood when brought to the human being; so powerful is this transformation that St. Paul spoke as follows: 'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.' (2 Corinthians, ch.5, v.17.)

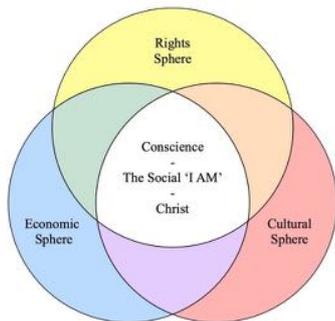
Now we can have full confidence in the words: "Again, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three

³² <https://www.un.org/ungifts/let-us-beat-swords-plowshares#:~:text=The%20Book%20of%20Isaiah%20contains,they%20learn%20war%20any%20more.%202>

are gathered in My Name, there am I among them." (Matthew, ch.18, v.19-20.) Christ promised to be within a group or community gathered in 'His Name', for the purpose of the spiritual, moral and physical development of humanity.

And so, to the question, "Who does the gathering?"

To be gathered in His Name is to be gathered in the I-AM of the Representative of Humanity which is to say in the Christ as He is today. To be gathered in the I-AM is to be gathered in the spirit and in the source of Conscience. To be able to say I-AM in



Only this connection allows for the Social 'I AM' to appear

recognition of Conscience, as a participant among those who have gathered, is to see that in the center of such a group is the Christ, the I-AM, the Conscience of the whole; the one who identified Himself as both 'the door of the

sheep' (John, ch.10, v.7.) and 'the good shepherd' (John, ch.10, v.11.). And within each person so gathered lives an individual conscience striving freely to attune itself to the whole. The group or community participants are inwardly aware that they are there because their own conscience has been moved to be there.

As Stephen Vallus writes in his piece, "conscience' originally meant 'working together'." Instead of seeing conscience as only related to knowing good from bad, either after an action or, we hope, before we act, Stephen reminded us that the objective of conscience is to be able to work together.

In this article, I am looking at the central role that conscience plays in the life of human groups. I am looking at how an individual can, at the same time, relate to self with integrity *and* relate to the group with compassion, wonder and conscience.

The three-circle image shown here and based on Rudolf Steiner's lectures on the threefold character of social reality, provides an indication of where conscience must sit for a true experience of the three social spheres that are always interacting within us and among us. It is not that conscience only sits there in our group life, but it should be seen in the light of Christ's promise, "...where two or three are gathered in My Name, there am I among them." The threefolding shown in the image and gathered in such a manner will bring about the full incarnation of the true Social I-AM. Wherever human beings can finally beat swords into ploughshares, there will be the places where each individual's humanity can truly unfold.

No, No, Maynard!

chb

Rise, walk with me and let's discuss
 This labour value theory stuff
 That it can by bits be sold
 Is a nonsense very old
 You of all should not accept
 The decoy of this great deceit
 Not one Maynard in this world
 Nor any Lydia brave and bold
 Did live by selling labour by the pound
 Never ever was that their ground
 They, like all, have destinies and artists are
 They do their fate, but then make sure
 There's food enough upon their plate
 They think and dance and inspire all
 Our 'product' grows as they enthral
 Come back and start your book again
 Rebut, deny your old thought train
 Then carry on and try once more
 To tell the truth of law and lore
 Reveal afresh what lies in store
 When once our science gets it right
 And places man in his true light...

...and women, too, and babes and bairns
 And for the youth let's set up cairns
 That they may all their paths espy
 And follow them where e'er they lie
 For truth be told we labour not
 It's capital that we allot
 By spreading wings when time is right
 Before there's air we all take flight
 For capital does not itself exist
 But comes about when we insist
 On being who we truly are
 Adept followers of our stars
 From whence derive our fruits and gifts
 From whose sharing we subsist
 That goods result and services
 We owe to god and not to us
 Be gone, false tale of labour sold
 A tale as false as that of gold
 If by its store we feign would live
 Than by the truth that gift is gift.

Beyond Hibernia

The story of conscience related on the previous pages sets the stage for these further remarks that link the theme to Hibernia. Readers might also like to consider the content of the book, [Guarding the Shores](#),³³ which provides valuable background to this theme.

Novalis on Conscience³⁴

"Then," said Henry, "when will there be no more terror or pain, want or evil in the universe?"

"When there is but *one* power, the power of conscience; when nature herself becomes chaste and pure. There is but one cause of evil – common *frailty* – and this frailty is nothing but a weak moral susceptibility, and a deficiency in the attraction of freedom."

"Explain to me the nature of Conscience."

"If I were God, could I do so; for at the moment we comprehend it, conscience arises."

"Certainly," said Sylvester. "Conscience is the only begotten redeemer of every man. It represents God upon earth, and is therefore to many the highest and the final. But how far was the former science, which they called the doctrine of virtue or morality, from that pure form of this sublime, comprehensive, personal thought. Conscience is the innermost unique essence of man in full transfiguration, the divine archetypal man (*Urmensch*). It is not this thing and that thing. It does not command in general sentences. It does not consist of individual virtues. There is but *one* virtue – the pure, solemn Will, which, at the moment of decision, instantaneously resolves and chooses. In living and inherent indivisibility it dwells and inspires that tender emblem, the human body, and can excite all the spiritual members to the truest activity."

The Hibernian Mysteries

Paraphrasing and summarising Sergei Prokofieff in *The Spiritual Origins of Eastern Europe and the Future Mysteries of the Holy Grail*,³⁵ the Hibernian Mysteries were founded by Manu in Ireland shortly before the Atlantis catastrophe. 'Inner Ireland' is where divine forces untouched by anything earthly are still preserved as a kind of memory of Paradise before the Fall. It's a

reflection of Paradise before Lucifer entered into it.' So there was a purity of the astral body / sentient soul that was untouched by Lucifer – in that portion of the earth which had nothing of Lucifer in it. Out of this, conscience was born as a new organ for the perception and knowledge of the Christ Impulse. 'Conscience is the permeation of the sentient soul with the feeling of the ego,' and proto-Ireland is 'the cradle of the conscience of humanity.'

Hibernia

Ireland, during the first Christian centuries, was an excellent shelter for spiritual life – an exceptionally good one, protected against all possible illusions. More than any other region on earth, it was real protection from any possible illusion. This is why so many of those who wished to spread Christianity during its early centuries originated in Ireland. They had to work with a naïve population, however, because the Europeans among whom they worked in those days were somewhat primitive. Whereas they had to consider the naïveté of the people, they themselves had to know and understand the great impulses of humanity. During the fourth and fifth centuries in particular, Irish initiates were active in Central Europe. They began there while preparing for what would take place in the future. To a certain extent, they were influenced by the initiate knowledge that the fifth post Atlantean era would begin in the fifteenth century (beginning in 1413, as you know). They also knew that they had to prepare for a completely new age, that naïve humankind must be protected for this new period.

What could they do at that time to keep harmful influences from entering this unsophisticated population, surrounding it with a fence, so to speak? What did they do? Evolution was guided by well-informed and honest groups, so that gradually all oceanic travel was eliminated – the kind of journeys that had been made previously from the northern lands to America. Whereas in the past boats had crossed from Norway to America for certain purposes, it was arranged that knowledge of America would be completely forgotten by the Europeans. Thus, the connection with America was gradually obliterated. By the fifteenth century, Europeans knew nothing of America. This development was directed in particular by Rome, so that the connection with America would be gradually lost, and Europeans would be sheltered from American influences. The initiate monks from Ireland, who had spread Christianity throughout Europe, were especially

³³ <https://www.lulu.com/shop/christopher-houghton-budd/guarding-the-shores/paperback/product-9dggjq.html?q=guarding+the+shores&page=1&pageSize=4>

³⁴ From Vojislav D. Jankovic, 'On Science' (trnsl. the late Svetlana Correa).

³⁵ *The Spiritual Origins of Eastern Europe and the Future Mysteries of the Holy Grail*. Sergei Prokofieff, Temple Lodge Press, London 1993, pp. 23-4.

involved in this process of protecting European humanity from American influences.³⁶

In the past, some of those who were familiar with Ireland expressed its particular characteristics in fairy tales and legends. I would like to point to an esoteric legend that expresses the essence of Ireland in relation to the earthly organism. It was said that humankind was cast from paradise because Lucifer had misled humanity there, and people were thus scattered across the rest of the world. The rest of the world, however, was already there when humanity was forced to leave paradise. Thus, one can distinguish (according to this fairy tale) between the paradise of Lucifer and the rest of earth, into which humanity was expelled. In this sense, Ireland is not part of earth; before Lucifer entered paradise, its likeness had formed on the earth and became Ireland. You should fully understand that Ireland is the area of earth that had nothing to do with Lucifer. It would have prevented Lucifer from entering paradise, therefore Ireland had to be separate so that an earthly likeness of paradise would arise. According to legend, Ireland was a separate area that would have hindered Lucifer from entering paradise. Lucifer could not enter paradise until Ireland had been separated from it.

The Wild Willed West

And so, we arrive in the wild willed West! How is it now beyond Hibernia? The story of the western hemisphere's (re)discovery is not homogenous. The places we know as countries today (from Canada to Chile) do not have one history, not before the Europeans' return, nor since. Their 'conquests' were different in character, events and consequences. In terms of spiritual geography, an understanding of focus is placed on what is now the USA and the experiences of unbridled will that characterize its 'development'.

This was tracked in the 2007 Pomona conference, held jointly by the Economics Conference, the Social Sciences Section in North America and Associative Economics North America (AENA), and revisited in the 'Perspectives' seminar held in Sebastopol, California, USA in September 2022.³⁷

The classical or popular version of this history shows only the 'downside' of how the West was won. It avoids the interface with those who were there prior, and does not enquire into the why of the translation of people from Africa, or the karmic consequences of that episode. Nor does it ask if, as well as Masonic interests, there was a

genuine Templar or Rosicrucian aspect to the creation of 50 states that then became united into one country, the home in principle of all those who belong to 'the new world'.

These themes are highlighted here to draw attention to the challenge we face if we would understand the role of the USA (or those who live there) today.

Is this the land of which Sergei Prokofieff says:³⁸

'According to the indications of spiritual science the word 'spectre' – as distinct from the words such as 'demon', 'phantom' and so forth – is a technical occult term for Ahrimanic elemental beings which arise in man's *etheric body* as a result of bad social relationships in one or another human community. Everything which, for example, leads to unrest, which makes itself felt in bad relationships from man to man, works through the mood which is generated by this kind of social life in such a way that the effects reach the etheric body. And whatever gathers in the etheric body through the working of these soul-attributes leads, in turn, to the separation from the etheric body of certain spiritually active beings who then come to be found in our surroundings. These are called "spectres" or "ghosts"'. (CW 102, 4 June 1908, pp. 136-7.)

The strengthening of these processes through introducing into humanity social conditions that are as unhealthy as possible and favourably disposed to the authority of the 'ahrimanic spectre' is the essential task of the secret western 'brotherhoods' mentioned above. For this reason, these 'brotherhoods' inspire a very active enmity and resistance to the development of a 'threefold social organism'. For what these 'brotherhoods' have as their goal, in the organization of their social life, is directly opposed to the ideas of social threefoldness. The fulfillment of this goal leads to the appearance in the astral world of as large a number as possible of 'little ahrimanic spectres' which inspire human beings to wars and to other destructive social processes that are gradually preparing the future War of All against All.

Against all these antisocial influences in our time must be set the *social* impulses proceeding from the Etheric Christ...

Or is 'America' the place where humanity has to learn to 'sweep out of economic life the denial of the spirit...' (29 August 1920, CW 192) and instead 'pour spirit into the economic imperium...?' (22 February 1920, CW 192.) And can the essence of these challenges be met, let alone accomplished, unless and until the 'verse for America' becomes a meditation made live?

³⁶ See *The Reappearance of Christ in the Etheric*, p. 164.
³⁷

https://economics.goetheanum.org/fileadmin/economics/Various_pdfs/Telling_a_Different_Story.pdf

³⁸ *The Cycle of the Year as a Path of Initiation: Leading to an Experience of the Christ Being*, Temple Lodge, 2014.



A Verse for America
Kim Chotzen / Viroqua, USA

From notes of a conversation between Kim Chotzen and Marc Desaulles regarding 'Colombia' - 19 September 2010.

Columbanus and St Gall. 15th century image.

Ralph Courtney, an American journalist for the *New York Herald Tribune*, who had been to see Steiner in 1919, and had been personally given two documents by him,³⁹ was in the US.

In 1923, a young man by the name of Rheinhard Mueller, age 17 or 18, was going to the US to start a branch of his father's business. His father had a cloth business in St. Gallen in Switzerland and was sending him to the US to sell or manufacture cloth.

When Courtney heard that Mueller was to come to the USA, he contacted him and told him to go to Steiner to get a verse for working in the USA. So, Mueller went to Steiner who wrote out the 'verse for America' on the spot as a way to indicate what was needed to collaborate with the spiritual beings there.

Courtney was a friend of Charlotte Parker, heir to the Parker pen fortune. Together with others,⁴⁰ they founded the Threefold Group on Parker's vacation land at Spring Valley outside New York. The verse was not meant to be used as a 'threefold' verse but became linked to that work.

What is interesting to note is that Mueller was from the town of St. Gallen, named after St Gall, one of the Hibernian monks who accompanied Columbanus, another Hibernian monk, to visit the Pope to tell him that the Europeans must forget about America (as it became known later). They must not know about the existence of America in order that the birth of the consciousness soul, with its requisite encounter with the world of the senses, not be derailed through the powerful forces under the earth there related with the north-south mountains that reinforce the double. Columbanus said the European souls were just too

vulnerable. As a consequence, the Church received authority to erase the names of this continent and all traces of it, so that in three generations no-one remembered it was there. The European souls were just too vulnerable to the forces of materialism coming from the West.

Hibernia (Ireland) was the opposite of America in the sense that it had no forces coming from underneath the earth and so people were very protected there and, because of their purity, were able to perceive the threat of the strong underground forces in America. The West was therefore 'closed' to the consciousness of Europe in 500-600 AD.

Much later, Columbus, who came from Genoa, went to Spain and from there took his ships to America when the West was 'discovered', but actually re-discovered. Sometime quite a bit later, Amerigo Vespucci also travelled there, and

because he kept a journal that recorded the experiences of his voyage, he was accorded with the discovery. Therefore, the country was (controversially) named after him.

In Marc's words, it is interesting that the verse for America was brought by a man who came from St. Gallen, a place linked to Columbanus, from Steiner to America to give a way for people there to reconnect with the folk soul of America – overshadowed by the strong spirit of materialism – and to its true name and its true background story.

Emblematic, perhaps, of what might yet unfold there are the closing words of black poetess, Phyllis Wheatley's poem sent to George Washington prior to his defeat of the British. Called *Hymn to Colombia*, it ends:

Proceed, great chief,
with virtue on thy side,
Thy ev'ry action
let the Goddess guide.
A crown, a mansion,
and a throne that shine,
With gold unfading,
Washington! Be thine.



Verse for America
May our feeling reach
Into the centre of our heart,
And seek to unite in love
With human beings seeking the
same goal.
With those spirits who, full of
grace,
Strengthening us from regions of
light,
And illuminating our love,
Look down on our earnest heartfelt
striving.
– Transl. by Marc Desaulles

³⁹ These documents are with the Steiner archives in Dornach.

⁴⁰ <https://threefold.org/our-foundation/history/>

Looking Back...

Reviewing our Journey

Laying down

Christopher Houghton Budd

I am considering 'laying down' the role of convener of the Economics Conference, to which end I would like to share a range of considerations that have arisen in recent years. Not in a spirit of complaint but description. And as a way of asking how our work might best proceed. In this light, too, I would like to review the convenor's role as part of a reflection on the Economics Conference to date and going forwards, by explaining my understanding and behaviours to date, then asking how, first, others see things and then how its next convenor(s) will proceed.⁴¹

Rightly or wrongly, to date I have understood and conducted this role on the basis of my understanding that section or section-like activity, as with all research, belongs to and is part of the biography and even karma of those who undertake it. Likewise, convening such work – identifying 'hot' topics for research, calling for and organizing meetings of colleagues, editing and publishing their work, also belong to the convenor's biography and karma.

This immediately gives rise to two questions: Can the role of convenor be carried by more than one person, which I doubt, although the various tasks can indeed be identified and carried by others?

And does a section exist in permanence, like a university department, or does it live and die, breathe and pause only to the extent that those who inhabit it do so? After all, research can be the richer the more it has goals and is honest about whether they can be achieved or, indeed, have been achieved.

I made a pact with myself to stay incarnate and compos mentis until the 100th anniversary of the Christmas Conference. By then, or directly thereafter, I would like us to consider the various matters and concerns listed below⁴², and with me as a silent partner as much as possible! Before doing so, I thought a reminder of our history might be useful.

Our first (exploratory) meeting was in September 2002, with the idea of becoming an economics 'faculty', implying a cohort of educators and practitioners that would be normal for an institution or organization. On our first birthday, in September 2003, we changed to a standing conference – that is to say, not an institution or even the pretence of one, but a group of

independent colleagues who come together regularly to develop a coherent content and to compare notes in respect of their various journeys and experiences. In October 2009, shortly after our 8th annual meeting and now aged 7, we added the appellation 'of the Goetheanum'. In 2016, aged 14, we went to Folkestone. With this issue, we celebrate our 21st birthday – an opportunity to pat ourselves on our collective back, but also to conduct a review of our journey to date and give thought to where we may next be headed.

– Covid has sapped our will to meet in person, and also made it expensive to do so. But should we not 'come out fighting'? After all, zoom culture has huge costs of its own in terms of broken links and insights not received (or false insights received) precisely because we have become habituated to facsimile meetings.

– We have not held First Class Lessons or made overt reference to the First Class (let alone the other two!), but we have sought to meet in 'lesson mood'. Did we err here?

– There is still no section for economics and our work is hardly noticeable on the Social Sciences Section website, as also, seemingly to its current leader, Gerald Haefner.

– In South or Latin America, what should be the future status of Economics Conference and financial literacy coordination.

– Do we need to adopt project management? (See intriguing mention of this on p. 6.)

– Our financial literacy content is little known in the anthroposophical movement and runs seemingly parallel to the financing of the Anthroposophical Society itself, which remains a banking-based paradigm – money as thing, not as bookkeeping. How can this isolation, even shunning, be overcome?

– Are we better conceived and conducted as an Economics Group of the Society? And if so, as part of the General Anthroposophical Society, or on a per country basis (e.g. The Economics Group of the Anthroposophical Society in America)?

– It strikes me as important that a convenor cannot be without views of his or her own, but that these are not thereby those of a section or, more concretely, the other members of a section. Even if it is not wholly effective, I have sought to make this distinction clear in three main ways:

– identifying any editorial input by 'chb'.

– making clear on the website what I call 'The Current Convenor's Considerations'.

– replicating my views on or migrating them to the www.hopespringseternal.world website,

⁴¹ Responses to this are welcome in whatever format colleagues choose.

⁴² They are not in any special priority.

together with other related material from the Economics Conference website.

- Intended as ways for our community to share ideas and orient research, how useful and effective have *Associate!* and *Towards* been? Are they read by everyone? (This is an important question, given that this may be the last edition of *Towards*, only ever intended as a covid-time way of meeting; while the September *Associate!* will be the last in the current series.⁴³)
- How to progress publication in Spanish, Portuguese and German?
- What has been the basis of the financing the ECG work and has this been best (or even correctly) handled? This covers research funding and administration; donor-advised and freely provided money; shared decisions and convenor's discretion. The working of the treasurers and the worldwide bookkeeping also merits review (but also a big 'thank you!').
- The website has grown over the years but needs an overhaul. Should it be simplified or even converted into a publications resource?

Reflections of an Administrator

Kim Chotzen

Through their thoughts and deeds, those gathered at the laying of the Foundation Stone for the Goetheanum Building on the Dornach Hill in 1913, took on a mighty responsibility to imbue it with life, mindful of humanity's divine origin and purpose. During the laying of the double dodecahedron stone, Rudolf Steiner spoke solemnly of the longing in human souls for the light of the Spirit, which had been all but forgotten.⁴⁴

After the destruction of this temple by fire on New Year's Eve, 1922, he re-founded the Anthroposophical Society during the Christmas Conference. He did so knowing that humanity was at risk of losing sight of the Mystery of Golgotha, rescuing the situation by bringing to earth the 'structure' of a new temple. Through their affirmation, those present joined him and were thereby given the responsibility of sheltering it in their hearts and deeds on behalf of the future well-being of earth evolution.

Now, 100 years later, we do well to remember this solemn responsibility. But what does it mean

and what are the next steps? For 21 years, the research connected to the Economics Conference has described the structure of the Christmas Conference, with its specific economic implications.⁴⁵ Taking its cues from Rudolf Steiner's Economics Course (1922), the work has shown how economics reflects modern spiritual life, thus linking it to the ancient mysteries and their wisdom which 'disappeared' for a time, only to re-appear in a form suitable for modern consciousness. The mystery wisdom re-emerged during the Renaissance as double-entry bookkeeping.⁴⁶ How daunting, how almost unfathomable it has been to discover that modern mystery wisdom is accessible to all who would undertake self-initiation via entrepreneurship, using accounting as a tool of self-perception to travel an economically conscious path.

Being in service to this idea and to the circle of colleagues who embrace it is what has motivated me since becoming the Economics Conference Administrator in January, 2015. There have been moments of fulfilment alongside tense and challenging ones. Of necessity in such a karmic group, paths have crossed and uncrossed in the process of trying to bring associative economics into the light of day, each according to one's ability, and circumstances in regard to culture, language, age and ideological diversity. Worth celebrating at this moment – the centennial of the Christmas Conference and the 21st anniversary of the Economics Conference – is the unity born of striving to join with Rudolf Steiner in understanding and overcoming economic materialism.

Over the years, dedicated colleagues have warmed a space into which many profound resources – books, articles, essays and research meeting reports from myriad authors – could enter into human thought and language. The legacy of the Economics Conference is substantial, capable, even, of turning the tide of today's events if rendered in deeds.

This legacy may now be at a pause point. Certainly, the administrative work has waned markedly in the last years. The covid period led to fewer in-person meetings, etc., an alienation that surely reflects deeper truths about our world. It has been and continues to be my view that the work of the Economics Conference gets to the very heart of understanding those truths, as well as announcing an authentic path forward. It is clear to me that Rudolf Steiner revealed to us all how to take initiative in complete responsibility and complete freedom in order to renew social

⁴³ See

<https://economics.goetheanum.org/publications/newsletters> and <https://aebookstore.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Journal-Index-1980-2015.pdf> for the whole story.

⁴⁴Rudolf Grosse, *The Christmas Foundation; Beginning of a New Cosmic Age*, Steiner Book Centre, North Vancouver, Canada, 1984.

⁴⁵ For examples, see various annual meeting reports <https://economics.goetheanum.org/publications/reports-of-annual-meetings>. Also Arthur Edwards and Jesse Osmer have a work-in-progress piece entitled *The Economic Consequences of the Christmas Foundation Meeting*.

⁴⁶ Marc Desaulles, lecture and emails, 2 August 2023.

life. The work of the Economics Conference helps us know right into every economic detail how his genius can be applied in modern life.

It has been a very great honor to work as administrator and I am willing to continue, until or unless there is no need or someone else would like to take on the role. My most fervent hope is to experience a unification of forces amongst all the colleagues who would carry the economic implications of the Christmas Conference into the future – as a foundation to stand on for those already here and yet to come, who will further it, whether in this lifetime or in future incarnations.

...Looking Forwards

chb

One can say and think many things about two deeply linked topics: The Refounded Anthroposophical Society and Rudolf Steiner's *economics* course.⁴⁷ History will one day record that these are not only related, but intertwined, or, to change the metaphor, two sides of one coin. The one cannot live or have effect without the other.

These are strong words, but I voice them to ask three simple questions: Over the time of the existence of the Economics Conference to date (and its antecedents), has something else also been at work? Has a cohort of initial observers found itself, scouts in an unexplored land? And can it be found by others? Maybe something of this is hinted at in this closing piece...

Man and Stars speak anew...

Mary Adams / Ann Arbor, USA

No matter the moment in human life, in history, in world evolution, there is a position of the stars standing behind it, as though simultaneously enlivening and recording that which is taking place in the earthly world. High human deeds are thus recorded not only on calendars and in books, but in the rhythmic return of sun, moon, planets and stars to the places where cosmic inscriptions are made and cosmic memory is gathered.

One such rhythm of return involves the moon's

⁴⁷ I underline 'economics' because that is what it is. It is not a course on banking, leadership or management. All those are important fields, but they are no more economics than economics is them, and it is not until Steiner's 'economic' ideas are lifted out of other contexts, also moral ones, that their merit, significance and relevance shines out. Not just as ideals that many in the anthroposophical movement take seriously, even if their interpretation may not be 'purely' economic, but as illustrations of conceptual and policy changes that those responsible for outer economic affairs, such as pensions and credit creation, can also take seriously.

nodes, which are tricky to conceive because they are not an object in space (like the moon itself), but are instead a point of intersection defined by the planes of moving bodies. But just here, at the point of intersection, it is as though a portal opens, from one sphere to the next. In the case of the moon's nodes, their rhythm is 18.7 years, as they seem to move retrograde (East to West) against the background of stars, those doorkeepers of eclipse and destiny, allowing shadows to rise and fall that we may find our way, in freedom.

The position of the nodes is interpreted as the destiny axis of an individual or an event, one's personal eclipse point, since, when the moon is new or full near its node, an eclipse will occur. The south node can be imagined as a portal through which forces of the past are gathered in, as a foundation, or as familiar territory; while the north node can reveal the goal, aim, thrust of the destiny – where we intend to go.

Just as an individual is born with the nodes in a particular position, so, too, events, such as the Christmas Conference of the Anthroposophical Society. The same nodal position of this event will recur every 18.7 years. But, to the extent that the nodes reveal the 'destiny' of this event, it is also worthwhile to consider what happens when the nodes are touched by the other planets. Is there something that throws further light on destiny?

2023, the centenary of that seminal year in Rudolf Steiner's life that culminated in the Christmas Conference deed, sees the planet Saturn moving back and forth over the south moon node of that event. Saturn has a rhythm of 29.5 years, which means that the planet has touched the south node of the Christmas Conference several times since 1923.

The first time was in March 1935, a few weeks prior to the general assembly at which the expulsions of several significant colleagues and members were enacted. The second time was April, 1964, shortly after Guenther Wachsmuth and Albert Steffen had died in 1963. The third time was February, 1994, close to Sergei Prokofiev's publication in English of *Rudolf Steiner's Research into Karma and the Mission of the Anthroposophical Society*.

And the fourth time is *this* year, when, because of its retrograde motion, Saturn will cross over the south node of the Christmas conference three times: at Easter, April 2023, again at the end of August, 2023, and finally, during the Holy Nights, at the 100th anniversary of the Christmas Conference itself. The August date also includes Saturn's retrograde opposition with the Sun, which means that while Saturn occupies the south node position of the Christmas Conference, with a gesture as of spirit recalling, the sun will occupy the north node position, with the call of spirit beholding.