



24th Annual Meeting / Economics Conference of the Goetheanum

Towards 2033 / 1

Whitsun and St John's Tide 2025

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

We have published at St John's Tide (next stop Michaelmas), but do so shortly after two impromptu online gatherings at Ascension and Whitsun, both attended by about 25 colleagues. Impromptu because it is so challenging in these zoomy times to convene in-person events, especially on a worldwide basis. For this reason, too, this first issue of *Towards 2033* also serves as our 24th annual meeting. So it was great to see so many of you and a joy to watch the arrival of material for this, the first edition.

Our chosen picture is Caravaggio's gruesome but precise depiction of the beheading of John the Baptist, painted – so the story goes – to expiate a crime; though even then he was expelled from the Templar Order of the Knights of John. The image stands witness to human cruelty, without which, in this case however, there would have been no Lazarine event. Christianity would not have become the mystical fact on which we now rely if we are to overcome our egotism, for which economic life becomes a locus if it is to deserve the name 'associative'.

It has been nearly 23 years since we set out on this road – a long journey that I recently reviewed by looking through the complete archive of newsletters (41) and *Towards* (10). What a tenacious core of colleagues looks out from these

pages! And what depth of engagement and breadth of undertakings. A diaspora we may be, and with a demographic largely north of 60, yet faithful carriers of a beacon and providers of continuity in that great project of transposing Rudolf Steiner's economic insights into the language of accounting, while also freeing economics from its capture by the English language in the process. At the same time, it undergirds the Anthroposophical Society / School of Spiritual Science, whose own well-being depends to no small extent on the way it is financed and how its own books are kept. It is surely not for nothing that Steiner often analogised karma to bookkeeping!

This anthology edition brings fresh oxygen to delicate and long-burning flames. The first part begins with topics germane to the Economics Conference itself, and reprises the idea of partnering with sections other than its own. This is followed by montages on economics and economic history, financial literacy, financing and education, and farming and food. A second part focuses on the Anthroposophical Society in the Americas, in which many colleagues have an active interest, as is also the case in other parts of the world.

– Christopher Houghton Budd (Convenor)



Northern Summer Musings

Kim Chotzen (Administrator)

As administrator, I am party to questions and conversations regarding the ongoing existence and relevance of the Economics Conference. It is challenging to reckon with the fact that its research work is almost completely unknown in the worldwide anthroposophical movement, for when I read the insights that come from the substance of this research, at times my breath stops at the realization of the deep and broad truths to be found there, compared to the often illusory concepts paraded in their place. Is it to be the destiny of this small and dedicated band of researchers to leave a legacy only for a future time?

That said, there are those for whom the Economics Conference stands as a placeholder for an Economics Section, which grows more conspicuous the longer it is absent. A key part of that work is the divining together of 'leading thoughts', assessments of what could guide our thinking and actions, enabling our disparate existence to become a circle of higher selves, such that our angels can interpret for us the spiritual world's intentions for our work. That, at any rate, is how we see the purpose of *Towards*. The call for this kind of collegial working is all the more urgent in our troubled, fallen angel, times.

So, it was heart-warming to 'see' many colleagues' faces on the recent Ascension Day and Whitsun zoom calls. Just knowing you are all out there, working with this content with seriousness and dedication brings strength and hope. Together with Marc's comments below, it put me in mind of Daniel Dunlop saying: "Yes, you can do the impossible, what else is worth doing?"

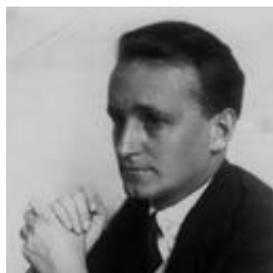


Thank you, Daniel!

19.9.1952–22.1.2025

Daniel Maeder was one of those rare individuals for whom money was not something in itself but a means of making possible what destiny asks of us. I met him in 1984 in Bern (Switzerland) at a café table while we were looking to create an alternative in the world of pension funds. An accountant with wide experience in the field, he was the catalyst for the creation and development of **CoOpera**, the only anthroposophically oriented pension fund that has ever existed. For 40 years, he was its creative and committed driving force. With his radiant and cheerful spirit, he saw everything that others would have considered a problem as an opportunity to find another way to make the impossible possible. So doing, he opened up many concrete ways for the practice of an associative economy and remains a model for all of us who share that goal.

– Marc Desaulles



From the Convenor's Desk *chb*

The question continues to sound: Why is there no Section for Economics? Why has the Social Sciences Section not matched the general evolution of the social sciences by establishing at least a department for economics?¹

Arthur Edwards in England recently asked this question point-blank, while others do so *sutto voce*. Stefanie Guyot in Switzerland, for example, writes:

'Kim's recent reflection concerning the reinforcement of the dialog with the spiritual world had a strong impact on me: *Yes!* It seems to me that the efforts done in the past on the horizontal level – the meetings all around the world, the numerous publications and the teaching in schools are tremendous, as well as the many attempts to get into relation with the Goetheanum. What has been achieved is just great! Even so, it seems as if all the possible ways have been explored and that we need to go forward in another way. That was my first feeling, even if I have no precise idea how.

Later on, I thought that it might be good that a few of us try to focus on that question which came up: What are the next steps to be done to help to create an Economics Section at the Goetheanum? I have the impression that we might ask this question to our spiritual guides that inspire us all along our past up to know. I think with the guidance of the spiritual world we might find the way.'

But now comes an unexpected twist to this tale, shared by Fionn Meier. The threefold archivist in Berlin, Sylvain Coiplet,² recently discovered an important detail of this story, dating back to 1923:

"On December 16th at Villa Hansi (Dr. Wegman, Dr. Wachsmuth, and me). Dr. Steiner reads the statutes and then says how he envisions the board. He: President. Marie Steiner and I: Vice Presidents. Dr. Wegman: Secretary. Wachsmuth: Cashier. (Wachsmuth suggests Treasurer, to which Dr. Steiner laughingly replies: "The name doesn't matter.") Then, heads of the individual departments. Dr. Steiner: of the entire High School. I'll write *belles lettres*. Wachsmuth: Economics. He'd prefer natural sciences. But Dr. Steiner says it's a shame he's not a mathematician."

– Albert Steffens's *Tagebucheintragung*. GA 259, pp. 727-728.

¹ In the same way that the current Agriculture Section was previously a department of the Natural Science Section.
² <https://www.triarticulation.org/profile/sylvain-coiplet>

Sylvain also suggested that now there should be an independent Section for Economics alongside the Social Sciences Section!!!

The possible reasons for this Section's continued absence are many. For example, if the ground for such a section were to be the economics lectures from 1922, then one can imagine an unspoken opposition to it from bankers – of any stripe – for whom the associative conduct of finance signals the end of their mission. Or, from the Camphill movement insofar as it has claimed much attention in threefold circles, yet it places Karl Koenig's economic ideas above those of Rudolf Steiner. Then there is the private as distinct from societal³ funding of Waldorf Schools in many countries, resting everything on the luck of personal fortune rather than collective endeavour.

Above all, and perhaps most instrumental, has been the absence of a comprehensive link between Steiner's lectures and accounting, especially the idea of money as bookkeeping. Much of this is due to widespread disdain for finance in our movement, with little interest shown in financial literacy – the ordinary sort, let alone associative financial literacy.

But there may be a deeper, or at least subtler, aspect to this: financial awareness is about self-awareness and so acts as a powerful medium for finding oneself at the threshold of the spiritual world, where only the 'I' exists to begin with, and does so, moreover, on a ground of self-doubt. This makes the idea of finance (or accounting) as guardian or guardian-like no empty phrase.⁴

And one can ponder still more deeply. Providing physical resources, not only for one's own earthly life, but especially for the initiatives one wants to undertake, brings a challenge of another kind. How does one understand the physical body and the material world as such? How does one bring something about out of the spiritual world without that thing or its initiator becoming caught by the world, managing to be in it without becoming of it?

In other words, does one understand that the spiritual world is primary and that, therefore, before anything can be grounded it has first to be endowed? Not with money or statutes, but with a way of working that carries itself. And that such an endowment needs interpreting, curating and guarding; a seal and a secretary. And that it is constitutionally self-grounded on the active, free and continuing will of those for whom it is a reality and who in freedom and without collusion represent it.

Put another way, is it possible or even allowed, to think in terms of an economic representation of Rosicrucian occultism? Not economics in its external, obvious sense of producing and giving access to physical resources, but economics in terms of the

challenge it presents to one's I never to forget the primacy and fundamental reality of the spiritual world. And to achieve this in the teeth, as it were, of the very materialism that relies on external economics for the efficacy and effectiveness of its intrusion into human evolution.

In short, however else one may explain the absence of an Economics Section, this is not the case if one sees its development to date as an endowing. For then it would exist very much as it now does: off-stage, in the wings, conspicuous by its absence.

All that said, it remains one of the anomalies of not having an Economics Section, that anthroposophical bankers, foundation trustees, Society treasurers and others involved in elaborating Rudolf Steiner's ideas in economics and finance have no effective section in which to meet or locate their research. A further anomaly is that little if any formal research takes place among such people, yet they are very active doing things and producing written and video'd output, much of it, therefore, often of a somewhat contradictory nature when seen from the world looking in.

A further anomaly is that I spend much of my time researching and giving workshops about the financing of the Anthroposophical Society. So, on this occasion, I have allowed myself some editorial privilege and punctuated this edition with brief montages of some of this work in those sections of our journal where they seem to belong. The reportages concern visits I made so far this year to Scotland, Ecuador, Brazil, the US, Australia and New Zealand.

**Thou, spirit of mine earthly realm
Unveil thou the light of thine age
To the Christ-begifted soul
That, striving, it can thee find
In the choir of spheres of peace
Resounding with light and strength
Of the sense of one devout in Christ**

**Du, meines Erdenraumes Geist,
Enthülle deines Alters Licht
Der Christ-begabten Seele,
Dass strebend sie finden kann
Im Chor der Friedenssphären
Dich, tönend von Licht und Macht
Des Christ-ergebenen Menschensinns.**

- Rudolf Steiner

³ Meaning neither socialist, nor state, nor corporate.

⁴ *Step into Another World – Economic Life as a Medium for Modern Initiation*, a Collaboration. Christian Thal-Janzen,

Marc Desaulles, Anita Grandjean and Christopher Houghton Budd. 2019. Search aebookstore.com.

Economics Conference
Section for Social Sciences
Economics and Economic History

Joan of Arc and John Maynard Keynes

Meg Freeling / Columbus, Ohio, USA

On my way to a weekly piano lesson, I drive by a tastefully designed Catholic church that often inspires me to contemplate John Maynard Keynes and his deeper links to economic life. The sign out front says, 'Saint Joan of Arc Catholic Church' and it is surrounded by wide, well-kept green lawns. I know nothing about the life of this church, but this year's Ascension coincided with the Catholic Church's annual celebration and honouring of her death on 30th May (1412-1431).⁵

According to those who have pondered such things, John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946) may have been a reincarnation of Joan of Arc,⁶ come back to pick up the threads of her short life (she was 19) and weave them further forward with his own contributions toward a higher, more humane vision of economics.

Despite the intensity each experienced in their roadblocks as they faced their respective challenges, each was committed to safeguarding the fundamental direction of history. At Joan of Arc's time it was to bring about the separation of England and France, so that England might create a proto-global economy through what the world came to know as the British Empire. She had to get Britain out of France so that the idea of a worldwide commonwealth could emerge through Britain's world-wide trade relations.

In the later time, Maynard Keynes came to lay the groundwork for a supra-national understanding and practice of world economics based on fair play across old boundaries. Both had to transcend the limited thinking and self-serving tendencies of those in their surroundings who prevented them from accomplishing all that they could see to do. Yet they pushed on and accomplished much while they were here. Joan died at the stake; Maynard of a heart broken by US intransigence.

These words are offered in simple tribute to them both. Whatever our thoughts regarding unbornness and incarnations, it is important to carry on what we

have each set out to do while here on earth, and there are many reasons to recognize that we can all do better. The world needs us, each and all, to take on what we can, borne by our deepest commitments to pursue the good from where we are right now.

Harvard Calling

Harvard Divinity School is hosting an event that showcases aspects of anthroposophical work. While many 'threefolders' are seeing this as an important opportunity, for Marcelo and Christopher it comes with a 'health warning'.

Marcelo Delajara:

Regarding the conference marking the 100th anniversary of Steiner's death at Harvard Divinity School, my initial reaction was, "We have to go and defend Steiner." Upon reflection, this impulse to defend may not align with how Steiner himself would have approached such a situation. During the Christmas Conference, he addressed the matter of publications and judgments about them in Statute 8, as follows:



All publications of the Society will be open to the public as are those of other public societies. The same will apply to the publications of the School of Spiritual Science; but in regard to these works, those responsible for the School reserve the right from the outset to deny the validity of opinions unsupported by the proper qualifications, namely by the training of which the works themselves are the outcome. In this sense, and as is customary in the recognised scientific world, they will admit the validity of no judgment which is not based on the requisite preliminary studies. The publications of the School of Spiritual Science will therefore

contain the following notice: 'Printed in Manuscript for the members of the School of Spiritual Science, Goetheanum, Class ... No person is held qualified to form a judgment on the contents of these works, who has not acquired – through the School itself or in an equivalent manner recognised by the School – the requisite preliminary knowledge. Other opinions will be disregarded; the authors decline to take them as a basis for discussion.'

But, as Arthur recently wondered (see p.2), does the School still hold the authority to make such claims? Better put, as members of the School can members of the Economics Conference speak with that authority? And in which capacity would they do so?

⁵ The thought was originally shared on 1 July 1992 outside Keynes's house in Sussex, England by Josef Zimmerman, a retired Waldorf teacher from Wuppertal, German.

⁶ The adjacent image was drawn by Marina Breslau, a participant in a recent Finance and Education seminar in Curitiba, Brazil (see p.10). She said she had no idea why she drew it.

Participation is open to all:

Following a twenty-year period that has seen a huge increase in the quality and quantity of the scholarship on Steiner and anthroposophy, the centennial of Steiner's death in 1925 offers a perfect opportunity for scholars, practitioners in areas of 'applied anthroposophy,' such as Steiner education and biodynamic agriculture, and interested members of the public to come together to debate major issues.⁷

However, when it comes to presenting, the invitation is clearly directed at scholars:

We warmly invite interested scholars to submit abstracts of maximum 300 words. Alongside the keynote lectures that will start and end our proceedings, we intend to run eight 90-minute chaired panels, each consisting of at least three and at most four 15/20 minute papers, leaving ample time for questions from the floor.⁸

Christopher Houghton Budd:

Thank you, Marcelo, for nuancing the Harvard event. If I understand you correctly, it raises the question who among us is a scholar (in conventional terms) and who on that basis can represent Steiner's work in the field of economics? The honest answer to that is probably very few.

As it happens, while we were discussing that on Zoom, Jason Brittin in England, was participating in an MBA module trying to match Michael Porter's 'five forces of competition' to Steiner's ideas. Porter is well known at Harvard.⁹ If he were to show interest in Steiner from within Harvard Business School outwards, this is the kind of thing I would take seriously because any critique by him would serve as a bellwether. But Jason said it was going to take time to 'decompress' from Porter's deep Darwinism.

The Imprint, which was soon left to one side, was designed as a kind of protection, a statement to the universe that 'spiritual science' is as scientific as any science (even more so) and needs to be understood on its own terms not others. I think this also holds true for economics as a science (which is how Steiner regarded his course). But this discussion belongs, surely, in the Department of Economics, not the School of Divinity.

It is also important to notice that the conference organiser, Dan McKanan, who I know a little, is a Unitarian. As Keynes pointed out, it was because Isaac Newton was a Unitarian that he could not be Master of Trinity at Cambridge (England). In short, I think we have to be wary of look-a-like, relativist events. More challenging, when it comes to economics is how to position Steiner on his terms. Part of that story is knowing that, in the English-American world of scholarship at least, economics long ago stepped out of the patronage of divinity. Or, as Steiner might have put it, purged itself of moralic acid.

Looking for America

Daniel W. Osmer / Sebastopol, USA

The 14th April Economics Buzz Cafe (no. 542!) public event in Sebastopol focused on the founding and destiny of America as it approaches next year's 250th anniversary. In a brief introduction, the major economic, cultural and political currents leading to the forming of the United States of America as a republic were described. From the 16th century on, three great European powers fought to claim and colonize all of North America for their own expansion and exploitation of resources. It was the largest emerging market in history.

Sister republics, America (1776) and Switzerland (1291), have a history of striving for and developing a federation, confederation or republic that aims for self-governance and equal justice in the form of mutual agreements. In each case, success was dependent upon the ability to be victorious on the battlefield, which in turn, was dependent upon success in the fields of finance and diplomacy. America and Switzerland are both considered as types of federal constitutional republic. America tends to the centralized side of federalism; Switzerland takes a decentralized approach.

The Swiss experience of self-governance and (Helvetian) confederacy had a considerable influence on the personalities that founded America and was part of the debate about the form and adoption of the US constitution. Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry were in favor of the Swiss confederation that tended toward a unified, yet more decentralized approach, with every citizen having the right to bear arms with no standing army. Hamilton and Adams were critical of the Swiss constitution for being too weak, lacking a strong central government or standing army.

Both can be seen, therefore, as twins in federalism, with both in need of 'the federalist attitude' as described by Swiss Denis de Rougemont:

True federalism consists neither only in the union of the cantons (or states), nor only in their complete autonomy. It consists in the continuously adjusted balance between the autonomy of the regions and their union. It consists in the perpetual combination of these two opposing yet mutually reinforcing forces. This is perfectly expressed in the motto of Switzerland, a motto both paradoxical and dialectical: "One for all and all for one."

– 1947 Montreux address by de Rougemont.¹⁰

I described the federalist principle by looking at the work of Althusius, Montesquieu, Proudhon, Publius and de Rougemont, all of whom have expounded on the nature and value of a republic midway, as it were, on a continuum between anarchy and tyranny. Why were leading individuals the world over so interested in America and its ideals?

⁷ <https://pes.hds.harvard.edu/steinerconference>

⁸ Call for proposals (Deadline June 15 2025): https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfZDs17XhrDY2o_tRl6yvCafxttS_rfO3H5WzvEezJecuyjg/viewform

⁹ See *Associate!:* Beyond Positivism – March 2011, Harvard's New Gospel?

¹⁰ <https://www.aubier.ch/fr/l-attitude-federaliste.html>

The thinking of the founders of America who came from various parts of the world was guided and inspired by indigenous cultures and the greatest thinkers of the past – from Ancient Greece and Rome to the Enlightenment. The 'revolutionary generation' of that time was not limited to the founding colonists of America but included adept individuals from all over Europe who were dedicated to the 'idea' of America, including a dignified life, liberty and the pursuit of one's destiny!



1925 and All That chb

Hobnobbing at the Bank of England. Bank on the left, Stock Exchange straight ahead.

Having published *Beyond Gold*, about how money as bookkeeping would enable us to go beyond both gold and bank money,¹¹ I went with interest to a full day Bank of England seminar about Britain's 1925 return to gold. But why dwell on such a topic? For me, to put my finger on the pulse; for my colleagues, to try to see order in world events without the lens of threefold society, especially since the Treaty of Versailles.

In this report, I have incorporated some typical expressions whose resonance (or otherwise) may show how near this sampling of world experts – albeit only 16% women – is to an anthroposophical sense of modern economic history. It was Montagu Norman, the Bank's governor from 1920 to 1944, who described the world as 'still human, rather than divine;' meaning, presumably, that when it comes to money, our understanding and behaviour will not be flawless.

The day took the form of 10 half-hour presentations which amounted to a state-of-the-art exposé of how, in the light of recent history the Bank seeks to understand its present and future tasks. Many of the presentations were of a modelling type, much of it guesswork and inconclusive. Indeed, one historian described her results as 'ahistorical' – an acknowledgment that data is prescriptive of events, seeking to press them into an intellectual framework rather than letting them tell their story and describe themselves. Causation is sought at every turn; symptomatology is not part of their lexicon.

However, there were a number of high level and rich presentations, but these tended to come from historians on the right (my colleagues, in fact) who see markets where Steiner sees associations. But

they are clear that some kind of science has to replace gold when it comes to managing modern economic life. They are also clear that politics, governments and especially tribal parties – in a word, 'intervention' – has no place. Only, where Steiner would have consciousness of shared will, they extol the wisdom of the market.

Where, then, if at all, do proto-associative elements peek out between so much systematized thinking? Answers: In the persistent goal of overall financial stability, even if currently reversedly described. In the recognition, in Keynes's famous image, that monetary policy is a form of sovereignty (constitutional monarchy, in fact), not a democratic affair. In acceptance that gold and the gold standard engender 'trade jealousy' between neighbors, 'setting each country's advantage at variance with all others.' Unless, that is, gold is seen and used as a shared thing, an instrument of healing not hoarding, of cooperation not isolationism.

London's calling, but what's the point?
 Its nose will n'ere be out of joint!
 "But wait," said Dunlop, "wait and wait,
 one never knows wherein lies fate.
 For timing's everything and more
 If saving mankind's not a chore
 You never know, you never should,
 It's gods not men who know what's good.
 Go step by step, don't fear to tread
 Then to your deeds you will be led.
 - chb

A main criticism concerned the post World War I emergence of governments as major economic players, constantly distorting economic life, but also history, in service to narrow, fickle and short-term objectives.

But it was also noted that the War also gave rise to foreign currency markets and that these were both the toy and playground of currency speculators. The discussion was about out-witting this situation and, although it turned entirely on exchange rate controls, at no point did anyone mention a one-world currency as the way to escape today's 180+ national currencies. Nor was money anywhere thought of as bookkeeping. All eyes remain firmly on the prize of currency hegemony (i.e. what will replace the US dollar). No one notices the impossibility of this, even if they impliedly but disconnectedly refer to it. But, then, nor will they until they stop thinking that money is a thing.

At the end of a long but immensely informative day, I found myself asking: What event might bring this about?

¹¹: <http://ethicspress.com/products/beyond-gold/?INTEGRITY>

Economics Conference Section for Pedagogy Financial Literacy

Economics, Money and Banking for 11th Grade

Daniel W. Osmer / Sebastopol, USA

Lorian Shick teaches the economics block at Summerfield Waldorf High School, Santa Rosa, California where she provides a rich experience for 11th grade students. Each year, she has a guest presenter for a day during the three weeks. This year she invited me as a local entrepreneur, to cover the evolution of money and banking from an associative economics perspective. In past years, Gary Lamb, Chris Schaefer and John Bloom had their day.

The elements of the economy are in reciprocal relationship and the economy of the world is a living organism not a mechanism. The following associative economics books were presented to the class as suitable 'self-education' texts for an introduction. Christopher Houghton Budd's *Prelude in Economics – A New Approach to Economics*,¹² and Marc Desaules's *A Human Response to Globalization*.¹³

Before the class began, the students had completed a questionnaire with nine questions about money, the economy and banks. Their responses became a starting point for the class. Several had the idea that economics began when people settled in one place, while others suggested that it began at the same time as money. Aristotle was mentioned three times and cited as someone who may have invented money or had something to do with economics. Another student gave a specific beginning date of economics – 10,000 years ago as depicted on the timeline on the wall (see image below). A few students were able to articulate the difference between a debit and a credit card and understood that a debit card could represent cash on-hand for *spending* and credit cards for *borrowings* that needed to be returned.

Installed on the walls of the classroom were two large (10' by 3.5') history timelines made from colored chalk on black paper. They provided visual depictions of significant events and people in the evolution of trade, money and economic life in the context of the development of the human being and society, as well as the awakening individual and the rise of nation-states. One wall was covered with a world history timeline; the other depicted events since the Renaissance (15th century), featuring the founding of America and its financial history.

As questions arose, the timeline proved a great tool. The students learned about the two main tasks of a bank – the clearing of exchanges over a specified period time (trade) and the pooling of capital for lending. This was visually reinforced by the timeline's depiction of the short-lived cooperative clearing and the pooling of significant amounts of capital, both of which occurred briefly at the close of the Renaissance.

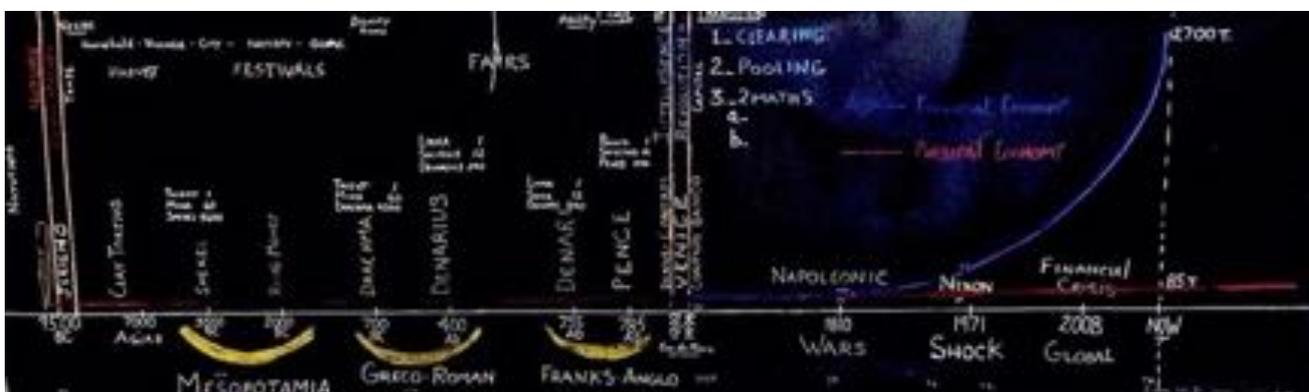
Other topics covered included the story of central bank independence and the significance of fiscal policy and monetary policy. Soon after the class, Jerome Powell, the Fed and their relation to the Executive Branch were front-page news!

11th Grade Economics Curriculum

Fionn Meier / Winterthur, Switzerland

In January this year, I met Constanza Kaliks, the leader of the Pedagogical Section, to speak about the question how her section could help to promote our financial literacy work. She suggested that we publish some of the material on their website called *Waldorf Resources*,¹⁴ which is frequently visited, especially from people in Latin America. The website is in Spanish, English and German. I am glad to see that this meeting shows now its results, with a section on economics, where one can read two articles from the Swiss Economics Curriculum.

On the 10th/11th January 2025, Nicholas Dodwell organised a seminar about Financial Literacy in Karlsruhe. It was attended by eight participants from



¹² *Prelude in Economics*, 1996 [1979]. Search aebookstore.com.

¹³ *A Human Response to Globalisation – Discovering Associative Economics*, Marc Desaules. Search aebookstore.com.

¹⁴ <https://www.waldorf-resources.org/en/academic-publications/curriculum/economics>

different schools, most of them having a professional link to the field of economic life from their earlier career. This made for an intense and fruitful seminar.

Further, I was very happy this year to get an invitation from the teachers' seminar in Ljubljana, Slovenia. In April I ran five sessions with about thirty ongoing teachers on the threefold nature of society and the teaching of economics.

Since 2020 I have been in a close working relationship with Sylvain Coiplet, who runs the *Institut für soziale Dreigliederung* in Berlin,¹⁵ and is trying to correct the misunderstanding that all agreements belong to rights life (see my article *Towards understanding the threefold nature of social life*, in *Towards 2022*, pt. 4). Sylvain gives many seminars, also to young people. Some of them resulted in the film *Zusammenspiel – Anregung zur einer sozialen Dreigliederung des öffentlichen Lebens* to make the ideas of Sylvain available for a wider audience. This film has now been provided with subtitles in Spanish and Portuguese, initiated by Joachim Lamatsch, who also organised online meetings for Latin America where Sylvain Coiplet and I could present our work. The film and my article can be downloaded here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17Eaa4NDdj-pzmaOxoxYbM8yHfydjRcP>

In my view, it is important that this work is taken into account by the members of the Economics Conference because it helps to get a clear understanding about the role of rights-life, in itself and especially as regards economic life.¹⁶

My next project! The Swiss Economics Curriculum covers classes one to nine. However, in the last four years I have also been teaching economics in Class 11. Over these years, I have developed some material on how one can teach young people about the current monetary system. For example: How does central bank policy influence the monetary system? Or how does money come into being through the interplay of central banks, banks and the non-banking sector? Based on my experiences this year I plan to write a handout for teachers and students.

High School Economics and Finance¹⁷

Alberto Baldeón / Quito, Ecuador.

In Ecuador, since 2024, financial education in schools and colleges has been mandatory, for which the Ministry of Education published a Financial Education Curriculum for high schools and colleges.¹⁸ It contains the word 'money' 88 times and the word 'accounting' 6 times, but on none of these occasions does it explain what either is, even though the curriculum describes in detail the skills that students must acquire, as well as the criteria and indicators to evaluate them.

¹⁵ See footnote 2.

¹⁶ Fionn and others are planning to use the 11th Economics Conference event in Karlsruhe, Germany this November 7-9 to focus on this.

¹⁷ <https://www.ninapacha.org/nuestra-comunidad>

Although the 'official' curriculum is oriented from and towards banking, we sought to take advantage of the opportunity to invite students to analyze the paradigms of that curriculum in the light of economic science, away from egoism, so that new skills can be proposed in addition to those established by the official curriculum, and a space for reflection generated where students can resonate and express their opinions or, failing that, their disagreement. The following table gives two examples of this:

Skill (per official Curriculum)	Example	New Skills (proposed)
"Consult digital databases and other web resources to understand factors affecting the purchasing power of money."	Understand the cost of (compound) interest vs. the possibility of personal credit.	Observe financing through personal credit (without collateral).
"Recognize financial factors that lead to conditions of social equity and income equality."	Understand the purchase and sale of labour as a commodity.	Observe true price . Observe that labor is not merchandise .

The two topics were approached with the students of the second year of high school (at least as an introduction). They were discussed in common sense terms in the classroom and the blackboard was used to let accounting 'do its part' to evince answers.

In each class double-entry accounting exercises were carried out, which despite their complexity allowed us to consider (however terrifying!) such things as accounting and the nature of money.

Simple examples – such as imagining the balance sheet of every person in the world, or the price a litre of milk should have in a community (closed economy) where students buy and sell, or the development of accounting in a start-up bakery (initiative) – helped to clarify ideas and solve questions.

At the end of each class it was surprising how 'naturally' the students resonated with what was told to them, how they received the class with interest and performed simple tasks at the blackboard. Above all, they elaborated critical judgments about the reasonableness of what was presented (it made sense to them!). Clearly, we need to take this work further!

Also in Ecuador

In March, the Spanish edition of the Economics Curriculum was launched at a meeting of the Waldorf teachers in Quito. It is available [here](https://www.associative-financial-literacy.com)¹⁹ and at www.associative-financial-literacy.com. Two videos of the launch event will shortly be available.

¹⁸ <https://educacion.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2024/10/insercion-curricular-educacion-financiera.pdf>

¹⁹ http://associative-financial-literacy.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/AFL-Swiss-Curriculum-es-trad_ABR.pdf



MAIA Awards in London chb

June 12th saw the first in-person awards ceremony of the Money Awareness and Inclusion Awards,²⁰ that celebrate the increasingly important work being done to help people understand money better, and so benefit from the financial system. Hosted by the London Foundation of Banking and Finance, it afforded an opportunity to meet many of those involved in what is being called 'financial capability'. The paradigm is much the same as before, but the effort to become more aware is commendable and rightly meant. Of course, the ideas of associative economics are absent; this is not an easy thing to remedy in today's world. But I met some key players and it is interesting to see how there could easily be an interest fostered, but that one has to go slowly and not answer questions that are not (yet) being asked. My attendance at the top table was a gesture from the London Foundation to reflect their interest in my work with them, which has resulted from the CEO's visit to my Mini Money Museum some years back and the youth bond exhibition (see financefolkestone.com²¹).

Economics Conference Section for Social Sciences Finance and Education

In recent months, a review of how 'Waldorf' education should be funded has been in the air – in the UK, in the US, Ecuador and Brazil, and in Australia. None of these countries take their cues from Germany, whose very constitution provides that every school be state-funded to the amount of 85% of its budget (equivalent to teachers' salaries). Waldorf education has largely been positioned in the so-called 'independent' sector and so been unable to thrive and, indeed, in some countries, become riven. Some, like Australia, have taken the state's shillings and are now seriously compromised though they do not say so publicly. In this section, a number of recent events are reported on. Their existence unknown to her, they come as responses to the question raised independently by Meg Freeling, with which we begin.

Freeing the Circling Stars – Prefunded Education: a Sequel

Meg Freeling / Columbus, Ohio, USA

In 2004, with help and encouragement from the late Tamara Slayton, Christopher Houghton Budd wrote a small book that has encouraged me to pursue a goal

that I still find worthy of my efforts. *Freeing the Circling Stars: Pre-funded Education*²² has inspired enough people around the world that it is now available in English, Spanish and Portuguese. Needless to say, this little book has touched the hearts of many. Why?

Speaking for myself, I find that my connection to education as a life path is continually being re-awakened and re-enlivened by the ideas and strategies that have been mapped out in this book. Sparse and profound, its 60 pages hold a key to an approach to schooling that, if practiced faithfully over a period of time by even a small group of aware people, could give new hope and courage to many of the young people coming into the world today.

I have discovered that, for me, this book is very difficult to put into practice. I have also discovered that it has been and is being attempted by a wide variety of people in a variety of settings (and languages) around the world. My hunch is that each of us has tried different aspects of the recommendations, based on what background experiences we bring to it. This has led me to the following proposal:

Might we bring together the people and the experiences that have gathered around this book and organize a collection of 'lessons learned'? Might this create opportunity for collaboration and renewed energy to pick up where we left off and find new ways to move forward again?

I am willing to start the gathering and organizing. I see it emerging as a kind of sequel to the original book, thus making it more possible to realistically ask, 'What next?' I am hoping there will be enough response to warrant giving it some considerable time and attention. I have not yet written up a budget but recognise the need for a balance sheet projection if this were to take wings and begin to fly.

I have written an initial set of questions, which I can make available to those colleagues who have taken up any part of this book and tried something that resonated. I will treasure whatever you can send me and will collate and organize it in alignment with the book and with our present realities. I look to Christopher as the author for help with reality checks and guidance on this path. However, I see it as an opportunity to pull together what is already living in many of us so perhaps we can help each other take individual steps that can enhance the whole.

Thanks for considering again the possibilities that now lie ahead. My email: megfreeling@gmail.com.

²⁰ <https://www.maiawards.org/>

²¹ <https://www.financefolkestone.com/>

²² *Freeing the Circling Stars and Curriculum-Neutral Capitation*. Search aebookstore.com.

As Comenius out from his shadows stood
 And Bacon looked on the egg he'd fried
 When everyone saw just what John had done
 They knew that the battle could yet be won

And everyone knew 'cos they had understood
 That it all depended on how hard they tried
 Those teachers, tested, but who had Steiner
 shunned
 Would they now regroup and work as one

The door ajar, if now they would
 Crowd through; then he could not but cry
 His mission failed, his allies stunned
 As in every corner a light now shone

-chb

Findhorn-Forres, Scotland

Meg's proposal (see above) coincided with a renewal of interest in funding of Waldorf schools in various parts of the world. In Forres, Scotland, the long-established Steiner school associated with Findhorn struggles on, but without the celebrity involvement of actress Tilda Swinton, whose children have now graduated. Like many schools in the UK, it has seen better days, but at least it is still there. In the UK both schools and trainings have largely disappeared. Low enrolment and the fact that the parents have already paid their education taxes continue to bedevil developments, but also a lack of financial literacy on the part of teachers and trustees, who tend to rely on standard professional advice. It matters that none seem to know, or at least speak about, the threshold at which we all stand today and beyond which lie the forces we need if we are not to become tired out and dependent on old financial ideas.

Curitiba, Brazil

Three wonderful days were spent in Curitiba at a second Finance and education seminar, attended also by Daniel Havro, Lorene Allen, Camila Pannain and Lucia Sigolo. This time the event was organised by the [Grao Saber Waldorf school](#) and was attended by both auditors and other financial professors and some mature (twice through) class teachers. The event was also supported by the Steiner Schools Federation. Slowly, slowly, headway seems to be being made and my hopes are high that, perhaps especially in Curitiba, where there are three schools, a new step can be taken. Key there is a youngish (c. 40 years) group of board members and teachers. Two evening talks (videos available soon) were given, aimed at placing Waldorf education against the background of free spiritual life and teacher-led (not parent-led) education and on the importance of financial literacy in high schools.

Canberra, Australia

All Steiner schools in Australia are now state-funded. I was the keynoter at their annual meeting of administrators in May in Canberra – a fascinating city designed by anthroposophists before even going there and still true to their 'threefold' design. My brief was to introduce the administration profession to the karma of administration and the mystery origins of accounting! The schools are deeply down the rabbit hole of state compliance, convinced that

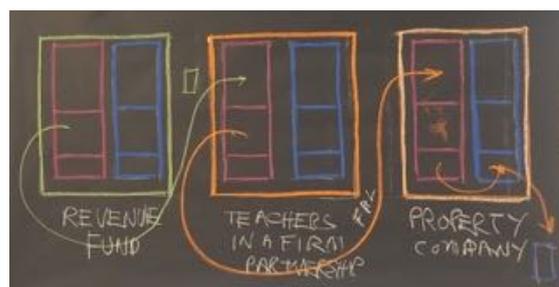
such a compromise is sustainable, although my talks were (a) warning against that and (b) were intended to find a way out back to school freedom. Again, this relies in the end on teacher-autonomy and practical knowledge of life at the threshold, not just pedagogical insights. Many were glad to have some 'anthroposophical' input but largely blind or feeling impotent. I have experience in state-funding and so know the ropes, so was able to warn that, apart from being antithetical to teacher autonomy, it was also unreliable. Whether the schools can recover their ground is a moot point, as with the state come onerous levels of reporting and form filling, along with a growing banking industry in how to collect on parents' pledges! I felt like a voice of doom, except that I remain convinced that financial literacy is something the state will respect, *were it evident and active!* The other keynoter was an expert in state funding and his message, like mine, though for different reasons, was to say that state-funding was unreliable and could be lost at any moment of fickle politicking; for example, if the Labour Party got an absolute majority, which they did that very night!

Refreshing Waldorf Education

Melissa Lyons, the administrator of Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) in the US recently shared concerns about the current financing of early years Waldorf education in the US. Mindful of my current experiences in various countries, I offered the following memorandum.

In my view, the problems facing education based on a spiritual scientific image of the human being (so-called Waldorf or Steiner education, hereafter 'Waldorf') cannot be addressed effectively unless those concerned, teachers and administrators recognize, in whatever terms they find valid, that there is a threshold to the spiritual world, at which humanity currently resides. And that the will to act at that threshold depends on being able to access the ideas that lie on the other side, visible on the farther bank, as it were. This fundamental fact and the ability to meet it, appears today in the form of finance and accounting, which are not really understood in their own right unless as Guardian-like phenomena.

Secondly, as Steiner made clear at the outset, the ground for Waldorf education has to be a broad understanding in society of the role and need for a free spiritual life. Without this, the reason for Waldorf education will not be known or understood, and other 'agendas' will invade. Steiner himself envisaged some kind of world association and was deeply disappointed when this was not realised.²³ How is this condition to be met today?



²³ This topic is well treated by Gary Lamb in Chapter 4 of *The Social Mission of Waldorf Education*, AWSNA 2004.

Nor can these problems be addressed if one obfuscates or forgets that there is a struggle going on in humanity between education based on a natural scientific (materialist) view of the human being and that discovered through spiritual science (anthroposophy). The notion of 'independent schools' fudges this, because only Waldorf education is based on spiritual science; all other education systems are modifications of national curricula (deriving ultimately from Amos Comenius).

Furthermore, the first entails conditional financing: education dictated by finance, whether from the state, companies or parents; while the second requires unconditional finance. By unconditional finance, I mean that the basic relationship between a professional (in this case, teachers and administrators) and a client needs to be akin to the financial aspect of the Hippocratic Oath: namely, that one's relationship to one's client is not mediated by finance. It is this lack of financial mediation that allows the professional and the client together to find the intuition that belongs to the situation they seek to address and for which they together provide the medium for pedagogical evolution.

This way of financing requires supportive buffer organizations (ideally flow-throughs, but could also be spend-down funds), designed specifically to receive money for Waldorf education such that it can be accessed by the teachers on their terms: that is, as their particular 'delivery' of education requires it. The role of these buffers is to convert the will of donors into a chalice for the will of teachers.

But this presupposes the teachers are organized as a profession. There should be Waldorf teachers, not Waldorf schools. And the teachers should organize as a duly structured professional association, which one joins on graduation. Here, in the association, would be nested all concerns for the articulation and development of the profession, like the woodiness that is fed by the root hairs in a plant's roots. Here, too, would be the home of trainings and the locus for any codes of conduct. (The Pedagogical Section of the Goetheanum would also likely have to rethink its role, representing a spiritual scientific approach to education at all levels including tertiary; not just focused on 'our' schools, but playing a leading part in public debates.)

Such a development would require all such activity leaving the various Waldorf organizations, which would then become supportive, buffer organisations not drivers, and operate more in the way of lobbying organizations, with combined purchasing power, etc. – but for curriculum-neutral finance and equitable use of taxes, not for education per se, free or otherwise.

Then, *in those countries where taxation has become the main funder of education and so the main user of parents' disposable income for that purpose*, ways need to be found to recycle taxation and make it available on a basis of curriculum-neutral capitation.²⁴

²⁴ See, for example, *Freeing the Circling Stars and Curriculum-Neutral Capitation*. Op. cit.

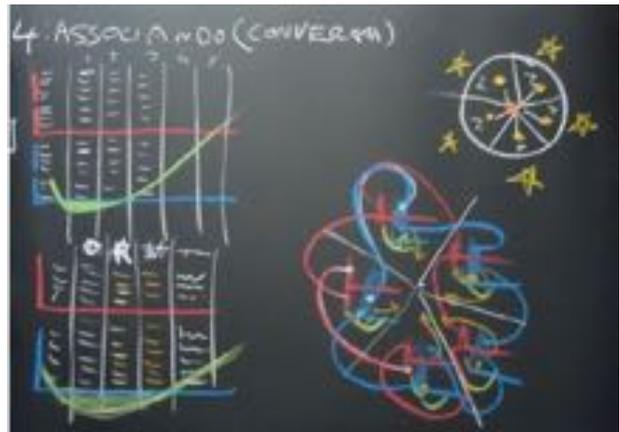
Economics Conference Section for Agriculture Farming and Food

Biodynamics in Costa Rica Economics and the Financing of Agriculture

This year sees the 38th annual meeting of the Latin American Bio Dynamic Association, which will be held in Costa Rica. Mauricio Garay from Mendoza, Argentina is keen for there to be an Economics Conference presence and has organised this proposal, which includes Natalia Conti., Marcel Delajara, Christopher Houghton Budd and Alejandro Urtizberea.

How can the farmer's work be honored and respected economically?

Modern life is dominated by economic and financial factors that, although necessary, can distort our relationship with the land and the community. When profit prevails over ethical and social considerations, the environmental and human costs outweigh the benefits of material prosperity. This imbalance particularly affects young and small farmers, excluded by rigid systems that prioritize capital over people.



In light of this, it is time to revisit Rudolf Steiner's approach and the work carried out in recent years by the Economics Conference. It is about re-imagining economics: legal structures, capital structures, true prices, access to land, and collaborative models that free farmers from bureaucratic constraints and speculative markets. The challenge is not 'how to farm', but how to create economic conditions that allow for truly sustainable agriculture. From an economic perspective, the urgent need is to avoid misguided social regulations that reproduce the problems they are intended to solve. In this context, the key is to strengthen farmers as entrepreneurs, viewing them as individuals capable of taking control of their destiny, strengthening their understanding of the history of economic life in the evolution of humanity, understanding the tools of economic life, and building confidence in their capabilities, which is the substantial aspect of their capital.

Rethinking Land and Money

Hamish Mackay

On a recent, return visit to Australia hosted by Hamish Mackay – a long in the tooth biodynamics practitioner, who I first 'met' in 1976 when part of a European consortium importing CO² protected 'Demeter' wheat from Sydney. This time it was a repeat workshop on farm financing – not food prices, but the cost of land and capital and associated topics of land tenure where 'Crown Land' is operative. Here is Hamish's abbreviated report.

At a recent gathering in Yuin Country at Jillamatong, a group of farmers, economists, policy thinkers, and students came together to grapple with one of the most complex challenges of our time: how to reimagine finance in a way that genuinely regenerates land, livelihoods, and meaning. The workshop was titled: *Mine or Grow, Yours or Ours*.

It began with an Acknowledgement of Country and a brief recognition of elders and participants present, both in person and online. The day unfolded as a searching conversation that questioned long-held assumptions about ownership, value, and the very purpose of economics.

"What do you want to leave here with?"

Some of the participants were farmers grappling with succession planning, others were from finance and academia, and some were simply concerned citizens questioning how the current system serves (or fails) community and country.

Some economic history

The workshop was given by Christopher Houghton Budd, who outlined his background as a historian of monetary systems, the role of London as still central to world liquidity and policy thinking, especially due to its legacy of English common law, imperial trade networks, and global finance. He noted that much if not most of Australia's legal-financial structures is derived from Westminster.

He then outlined a timeline of economic evolution, culminating in the Treaty of Versailles, then all the way to the 2008 financial crash. He emphasized that after 1923, for the first time humanity began to reorder the world according to its own ideas, not inherited structures.

Land has no intrinsic value!

Christopher's central claim was startling in its simplicity: "In economic terms, land has no value. It

is human beings who generate value." He traced this insight through centuries of monetary history, from (ill-named) feudal lords in Europe to modern balance sheets, showing how land shifted from communal responsibility to private asset—and how that shift has distorted markets and relationships alike.

Using land as collateral leads to systemic inflation because one is borrowing against something that has no intrinsic economic value and does not itself produce value. He called on people to "crash their own markets"—i.e. self-remove or devalue speculative value before external shocks force a correction.

By separating the use of land from its asset value—via leaseholds and foundation models—communities can stop the inflationary spiral and redirect capital toward what truly matters: soil, biodiversity, and community resilience.

CHB: "Such value *can* be recognised—but not by inflating land prices. Instead, it must be embedded in long-term stewardship models like **leases, trusts, and use-rights** that reflect real work and real care."

Christopher introduced the concept of **encumbrance**—usually a legal term indicating a limitation on ownership—as a positive force. By encumbering land through long-term leases, non-profit structures, or conservation easements, landholders can prevent speculative use and protect regenerative practices from being undone by inheritance battles or market pressures.

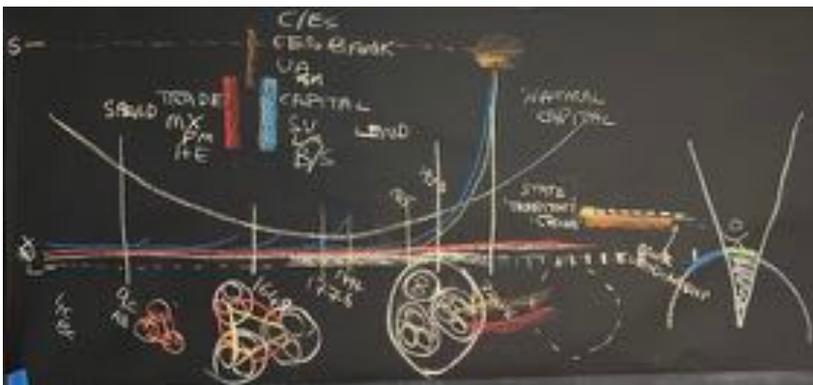
One farmer offered a real-world example: "We set up a family-controlled trust that owns the land for 80 years, leasing it to a nonprofit that manages the farm. My mother was paid out, and we've tied long-term stewardship to future ownership. But yes—we've lost access to traditional capital."

CHB: "You're a first mover. Now you must find capital that lends to people, not assets. Like banks used to do."

Another participant noted the Northern Territory's unique lease-based system and asked how these ideas apply where land is held communally by indigenous groups. Christopher acknowledged the complexity and potential of those models, suggesting they reflect **custodianship** more than ownership—a distinction that could guide a new economic language. For example, no one owns land; one owns the exclusive right to use land (usually two spits deep).

These ideas are very relevant when it comes to succession, for example: "When our children inherit the land, how do we ensure they don't just sell it off?"

◦ CHB: If you lease it to yourself now and make the use-right long-term and independent, that will disincentivize speculative resale.



Money, Markets and a Quiet Revolution

Drawing on Rudolf Steiner and accounting logic, Christopher identified three uses of money, which correspond to the three functions of money in economics and are ideologically neutral.

- Selling and Buying / Purchase Money / Income/Expense accounts
- Borrowing and Lending / Loan Money / Balance Sheet accounts
- Receiving and giving / Gift Money / Closing Entries (future-oriented)

He argued that everyone, from central banks to farmers, operates within this framework: it is universal, neutral, and unavoidable.

“Isn’t this all very idealistic? Can it survive in the real world?”

CHB: Yes, but only if done carefully and incrementally. Build long-term financial plans, find lenders who lend to people not assets, and learn to live from earned income.

A question about risk also revealed hidden assumptions: “In finance, risk normally means the bank might lose money. But for the entrepreneur, risk is often about the bank pulling the plug just when you need liquidity. Same word—two worlds.”

The Crown, the Commons, and the Future

As the conversation drew to a close, Christopher explored the legal abstraction of **the Crown**, which underpins all Australian land title. He warned that becoming a republic without redefining the Crown’s role risks replacing it with a more dangerous abstraction: the **state as landowner**.

Closing Thoughts

Christopher concluded by stating that economic structures are meant to serve human community and ecological integrity. The Anglo-Saxon legal and accounting systems, reflect this purpose, but have been distorted by asset speculation and egotism. To restore balance, he urged attendees to reclaim agency through personal financial clarity, accurate economic language, and legal arrangements that favour use and stewardship over possession. He left the group with this challenge: “Rebuild the economy from your own balance sheet. It won’t fix the world overnight, but it’s the only place you can begin.”

Food Connect at 20

Emma-Kate Rose

This item is a partial lifting from a longer report of a workshop organised by Robert Pekin, who, it turns out, is a long-time fan of associative economics in Brisbane, Australia and of the example of L’Aubier in Switzerland, although he has never been there. The reference to CHB is secondary and incidental to the homage paid to Robert’s tenacity and deep intent, while the reference to a ‘social brain’ is attributable to Marc Desaules in ‘Step into Another World’(mentioned elsewhere in this issue).

In early May, I had attended a series of events at Food Connect Shed exploring ‘Regenerating

Investment in Place-Based Business, Regions and Communities’. What started as an historical reflection on the evolution of money, quickly evolved into a fundamental questioning of how money and finance shape our world, and more importantly, how we might transform them.

The events were organized by Robert Pekin, who has spent 30 years watching people try to fix our broken food system - everything from pushing farmers to go organic to asking consumers to buy local to lobbying governments for better policies - yet these efforts consistently miss the real problem underneath it all. They place undue pressure on farmers, consumers, and government to ‘do the right thing’ while ignoring the real culprit: a money and finance system that prioritises profit over human wellbeing, local supply chains, and ecological health.

Our guest speaker, Christopher Houghton Budd, didn’t argue for reforming capitalism or replacing it entirely. Instead, he presented something far more intriguing: the possibility of capitalism’s metamorphosis. As I sat listening to his unconventional presentation - complete with images drawn on a blackboard - I found myself reconsidering everything I knew about finance.

The core insight resonated deeply with our work at Food Connect: our financial system serves two distinct purposes that we often conflate. Money functions as a reflection of goods necessary for our material existence; capital, however, funds the development of human capacities. Watching Robert’s three decades of experience trying to create sustainable food systems, it’s clear that when we fail to understand this distinction, we create systems that work against human flourishing rather than for it.

Christopher took us on a fascinating journey from the Anglo-Saxon transition from collective mindset (in service to Gods) to individualistic mindset (in service to self), and how we’re now heading toward what he called a ‘social brain’ (in service of life). This wasn’t just academic history - it felt deeply relevant to the challenges we face in creating community-led food systems today.

He traced pivotal moments: the founding of the Bank of England in 1694; the evolution of merchant banking since the 15th and 16th centuries; and crucially, the West’s missed opportunity for a second Renaissance in the early 1900s due to the gold standard’s outlived validity, leading to two World Wars. The pattern he revealed was striking: early-century financial collapse led to WWI, then 1930s financial collapse led to WWII. As someone working in sustainable food systems, I couldn’t help but see parallels to how financial pressures today create conflicts around land, resources, and access to healthy food.

Economics Conference Section for Social Sciences The Anthroposophical Society in the Americas

Many Economics Conference colleagues are active in the financial affairs of the Anthroposophical Society. This is especially the case in the Americas, as the following contributions reflect.



Economics Group in the US

Kim Chotzen, Viroqua, Wisconsin, USA

In September 2016, Daniel Osmer, Susan Gravelle and Kim Chotzen, later joined by Anne-Marie Fryer, met in Wisconsin and undertook to study the finances of the Society in America. With this was seeded the idea of establishing an Economics Group of the ASA. Shortly afterwards, following a Skype call with Christopher Houghton Budd, an invitation to participate in its forming was sent out to Economics Conference members within the US. Then on December 12, 2019, an official letter signed by 8 participants was sent to the ASA Council, informing them that we had established a subject matter group based on the Rudolf Steiner's 1922 Economics Course and subsequent research in economics. The group became a recognized group within the ASA and met monthly on calls until March 2019, at the 'Second Chance for the World' Economics Conference event in Vancouver, where we met in-person for the first time.

Our next in-person meeting was at the Economics Conference Annual Meeting in Folkestone 2019 at The Grand Hotel, during which Marc shared his thought that without a body for the content of the Economics Conference, it would not be able to take effect in the world (see adjacent image on). In my experience, this inspiration informs the work of the Economics Group in the US, and we have since met every month on zoom, discussing a wide range of topics. The Group has also convened several workshops at Steiner House in Ann Arbor and, together with Steiner Books, published Bernard Behrens's 'legacy' book.

Speaking as a founder-member, its work now seems to be focussing on archetypal images linked to the Christmas Meeting as these concern Europe and America especially, and as introduced by Marc Desaulles at last year's Society AGM in Portland. There, among other things, he presented the very ordering and monumental thought that the Archai, Archangels and Angels are all working in concert with



the Anthroposophical Society – what he called the Resurrection Body of the First Goetheanum.²⁵ Through our conscious working with this Body at the General Society, Country Group and Branch or institutional levels,²⁶ we enable the Being of Anthroposophia to work in the world, on behalf of peace and 'so that Good May Become'.

This year, directly after the Easter Festival in Spring Valley, the Economics Group sponsored a Treasurers Research Meeting²⁷ during which we heard how the Circle of Treasurers and the Goetheanum Fund Worldwide provide practical financial pathways for working with these Beings. Via a brief review of the evolution of sacred architecture, we were also reminded, of the initiation path of the I-being in modern life laid into the Anthroposophical Society during the Christmas Conference and the significance of the pink and blue cards in that connection.

What Next Steps?

Lorene Allen / Amsterdam, Netherlands

There are two events that stand out to me from the Treasurer's Meeting in Spring Valley this last April. One is the evening lecture 22 April on the topic of architecture as a reflection of the development of the 'I' being in humanity (see next item). The other happened on the 23 April while gathering with the Spring Valley Branch.

The unscheduled evening lecture 22 April had a surprising effect upon me. As Christopher reminded us of *Step Into Another World*,²⁸ demonstrating how architecture through the ages of mankind reflects the development of the human Ego, I became alert to a felt sense of the postures from prone, crawl, squat, to being upright in body and being. I found my heart warmed by my own search for a secure footing in the basic morals of integrity, truthfulness and honesty.

I remembered the time I was introduced to Anthroposophy. I recognize that event as a step into a commitment to living into the importance of my decisions on others and my future. I came to know my decisions can be of a higher level of conscience. When I made the step to join the Society I found my longing for spiritual truth being answered. This remembered awareness has revitalized my enthusiasm for trust in life.

By following the evolution of architecture, we came to the modern temple for Anthroposophy, the Goetheanum. In this sanctuary, the individual goes through similar steps of development of the will. Each person makes his or her own design for

²⁵ January 2025 issue of *being human*, p.44.
<https://issuu.com/anthrousa/docs/bh33-web>

²⁶ http://www.hopespringseternal.world/fileadmin/pdf/essays_etc/MD_Society_and_School_-_One_Movement.pdf

²⁷ See report in AWW 7/2025.

²⁸ *Step into Another World*, op. cit.

becoming an active member of the Society. When one asks for a pink card, one is saying, "I want to initiate myself." While with the request for a blue card one is saying, "I want to take the next step. I want to be a 'representant'."

Another special opportunity that came to us was on the evening of April 23 at the Spring Valley weekly Branch meeting. Thirty-six gathered in a large circle bathed in the warm environment of a colorful sunset. An image of the Statue of Man was directly across the circle from me as an intimate companion. As the room darkened, it seemed evening leaned over our shoulders listening to the tale told: an extensive and personal panorama of the 60-year journey of Christopher's relationship with the Anthroposophical Society, his interaction with its leadership, and his ever-deepening understanding of the forms and underlying intentions of the Christmas Foundation Conference, including the Statutes.

The topic for this session was titled, 'Next Steps'. As our research retreat came to a close, I found these questions percolating: How will this Branch be different after all that has taken place during this Easter week? What have we done that indicates where we are going? Who has the will to build those next steps?

A Brief Visit to Another World²⁹

Stephen Vallus / Fayetteville, Ar, USA

In the midst of the Treasurers' Conference in Spring Valley, NY, April 21-23, we spent an evening considering the evolution of temple architecture. We began our journey through the history of architecture in Vezelay, a small hill town east of Paris famous for its Romanesque basilica containing relics of Mary Magdalene. Vezelay also happens to be on the *Way to St. James*, for over 1,000 years a pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela in Northern Spain. The 12th century pilgrim entered the church via an atrium. The building was without ornamentation and instead of the later stained glass the windows around the altar were clear. The transept gave way to the open altar, prefiguring the Goetheanum where the members with pink cards face the podium where the blue card-carrying representants speak with the Representative of Humanity behind them.

This architectural form of the Greek cross was presaged by the experience in Egypt where uprightness was the dominant theme. In *Step into Another World*, Christian Thal-Jantzen describes how the sunrise illuminated the tip of the pyramid first and descended down the golden sides, as if the Gods in the cosmos were descending as well. The neophyte had to crawl and then gradually reach uprightness to reach the temple interior. This was followed in Greece by a temple in which the god lived, the building evincing a balance between immense earthly weight and the 'levity' of the divine. After the Mystery of Golgotha the temple cannot be conceived without human beings inside, witness in Romania Timisoara's high-domed basilica, a perfect

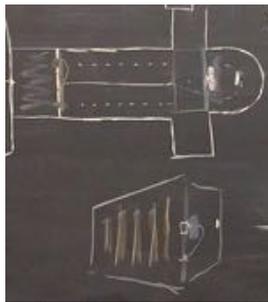
square with an Evangelist at each corner and the human being in the center, per Marc Desaulles 'feeling himself as the last step in the incarnation of the divine.'

Catholicism later prevented this experience by elongating this form and making the Catholic Mass with its hierophantine priest the order of the day. While the West became closed off. As Rudolf Steiner says: 'Thus it happened that ... those who were under the influence of the pure Christian esoteric teaching developed in Ireland, worked in such a way that the necessity was perceived in Rome to cut Europe off from the Western hemisphere.'

Christian Thal-Jantzen brought the experience of pillars in the form of 8' staves, enabling those present to experience how the columns of the Goetheanum 'grow out of the walls [so that] standing in the large cupola looking towards the stage [and] the small cupola, you experienced that the proportion of the columns did not constrain you to move or to go somewhere but left you free ... to move out of your own volition; it was up to you.'

Two Moods, One Fund

Jenny Doty / Rockford, Il., USA



The final evening of artistic performances during the Easter 2025 *Anthroposophy Ever Anew* festival of the Anthroposophical Society in the US culminated in nineteen eurythmists on stage performing Rudolf Steiner's *Twelve Moods*. It would be my first time to see them in eurythmy and I had no expectation as to the forms that would be performed, nor much familiarity with the verses themselves.

As the performance commenced, I found myself quickly creating a narrative for what I was seeing. The planets, each represented by a eurythmist, moved slowly in a line around the stage in a steady progression, passing, one at a time, in front of 12 eurythmists – arranged in a large circle – like the hour hand of a clock. This progression was the entirety of the performance; orderly and systematic.

One of the eurythmists, came on stage with arms outstretched overhead, in an 'A' position, a position held for the entire performance, save for the moments when he actively 'eurythmized' in concert with others or in response to activity in the forms created around him. I was taken aback when he came on stage upright: maintaining this active, challenging position could not be overlooked! It symbolized how unique each of the zodiac and planet beings represented on the stage are.

In the movement of the planet beings around the stage, with the sun-being making a full circle for each increment gained by the planet beings between two zodiac signs, I saw organization and coordination. At the same time, each being characterized on the stage had its own timing,

²⁹ *ibid.*

The God dwelt in the Greek Temple; the spirit of the community may dwell within the Roman or Gothic edifice; the world of the Spirit itself must speak through the building of the future. We have seen the house of earthly forces and forms arise and pass away in the course of human evolution; we have seen the house of the union of human souls arise and pass away in the spiritual evolution of the earth. It is for us to build the house of speech out of our love for true art, which at the same time is love for true spirituality and for all mankind.

- Rudolf Steiner, *Ways to a New Style in Architecture*, 1914, GA 286.

response, or activity that rose up seemingly in its own rhythm, unique unto itself.

On stage, it was a moving image of freedom and coordination. There was wisdom, grace and beauty in each being's activity and choices, and also in what they were creating from their movement in unison. I was left with a powerful realization that welled up in me: *This is how a flower opens*. The freedom and harmony in the heavens, in all their macrocosmic largess and complexity, are like the graceful and powerful creative force that unfurls the tender petals of every blossom.

Four days later, still in Spring Valley, I was in one of the final sessions of the Treasurers' Conference, co-convened by the Anthroposophical Society in America and its Economics Group. The session topic was the Goetheanum Fund Worldwide, and a summary of its activity in 2024 was being narrated. As a group of about 14 individuals, we inquired as to the nature of the Fund, reviewed several of its bookkeeping transactions, and pondered its expanded use across the Society internationally.

The Fund is a coordinated yet autonomous way to move money between Societies, potentially anywhere in the world, to fund activities that forward the School of Spiritual Science. It exists within the accounting records of each Country Society, meaning it comports with the legal and financial framework unique to that country. As donors gift money or a Country Society reallocates funds into a Goetheanum Fund Worldwide account, that society has funds available to disperse to individuals in the community that are active in the work of the School.

Opportunities for cooperation internationally then follow: communication among the treasurers of Country Societies can then result in funds directed here or there to support those forwarding initiatives of the School. For example, a group of initiative takers from several different countries may convene in Australia for a 2-week research project. With funds already in a Goetheanum Fund Worldwide account in Australia, or funds recently solicited as a result of a budget created and disseminated by the initiative takers, the Country Society in Australia can pay the individuals for their engagement in the project from the Goetheanum Fund Worldwide account. Alternatively, treasurers can call on one another,

informing each other of opportunities to disperse funds to School initiative takers that might be working in their country. (CHB note: *While liquidity transfers may take place in the Goetheanum Fund Worldwide, the main intention is to effect money movements via bookkeeping.*)

The big picture here is one of a common goal and a commitment to a high level of coordination in our free acts of will. We create a worldwide bookkeeping structure with a shared purpose and supported by a mutual willingness to act in concert (albeit individually) in support of the School.

It wasn't until a few days after the conference ended that I recognized the parallel gestures of the *Twelve Moods* in eurythmy and the Goetheanum Fund Worldwide. With the Fund we have a bookkeeping form that allows freedom and coordination in the use of money across the globe. With an intimate level of trust, clarity of purpose and a common form of bookkeeping, we can facilitate funding of the School's work anywhere the Society gives it a home. These are the tools that can allow our freedom, goodwill and love to unfold in the world like so many delicate, graceful flowers.



From Fragmentation to Foundation: toward an Anthroposophical Society in Mexico

Marcelo Delajara / Mexico City

Since November 2023, I have been working with members of the Anthroposophical Society in Mexico to found a Country Society. For the past 50 years, anthroposophical activity in Mexico has taken place without this support. Despite this, several branches and subject-matter groups – mainly in education, medicine, agriculture, and the arts – were established and operated in direct connection with the Goetheanum.

However, this lack of coordination hindered the development of a shared understanding of how to manage these initiatives in line with the threefold nature of social life. The principles of fraternity, equality, and liberty remain largely abstract in this context. Financial practices are inconsistent: membership payments are not properly managed, and many initiatives are either underfunded or run as for-profit ventures.

Bringing together diverse actors to establish a Country Society grounded in anthroposophical principles – especially financial organization – was a significant challenge. A committed group began meeting quarterly after April 2024. Formal procedures were introduced: meeting dates and agendas were shared widely with members across the country, including representatives of all branches and key initiatives. Minutes were kept and distributed to the same group.

The first eight meetings focused on defining the need, vision and mission of the Society. In addition to handling communications and minutes, I contributed insights from the Economics Conference of the Goetheanum and others regarding Rudolf Steiner's organizational and financial ideas from the Christmas Conference of 1923–1924, as well as the guidelines of the Circle of Treasurers.

This work culminated in the ninth meeting on May 31, 2025. A major step was taken: a Letter of Intention to found the Country Society – based on the agreements reached – was signed by all attendees, with additional signatures collected afterwards. This Letter will be presented to members of the Vorstand of the General Society during a meeting in August. Objectives for the Society's first year were established, and a working group was formed to implement them. A preliminary budget was also approved, with the identifying of income sources designated as the group's first task.

I conclude this report by expressing my satisfaction that the Economics Conference's insights were seen as useful and aligned with core anthroposophical principles – an encouraging sign of their clarity and relevance.



Brazil Dialogos
chb

With the agreement of the treasurer, Leda Meirielles who was unable to be present, an intensive seminar looked at how the Society is financed in the Brazilian context. Several Economics Conference

colleagues took part, but also in attendance were members of the internal auditing team. It was interesting to see how, on the one hand, the Treasurers Guidelines have a universal character, and on the other how they interface, or not, with local conditions and regulations.

Mendoza, Argentina Making Direct Contact
Mauricio Garay / Mendoza, Argentina

*For some years now, the Mendoza Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in Argentina has been thinking of establishing itself autonomously from the main Society, largely because Mendoza State and city are far removed from Buenos Aires and life there, tucked beneath the Andes, is very different. The group has long studied the Christmas Conference and also has a very economic colour, witness the way they understand school finance and the project orientation of its main members. Mauricio Garay, who has written about this in the earlier editions of **Towards** recently sent the following update.*

During these last three days, we had our annual Christmas Meeting. This meeting culminates the work we have been doing during the whole year about our economic link to the Goetheanum, more specifically to the Society and the School.

The Group concluded, among other things, that we would like to have a direct link. In other words, we would like to be a branch linked direct branch to the Goetheanum. At the moment, we are 26 members out of which 12 are members of the school. There are several reasons for us to take this decision, but the most important one is that we would like to directly support the Goetheanum with our memberships. We have been working continuously with the Christmas Conference since 2017 and we see the utmost importance of this decision and link.

New Zealand Clarification
chb

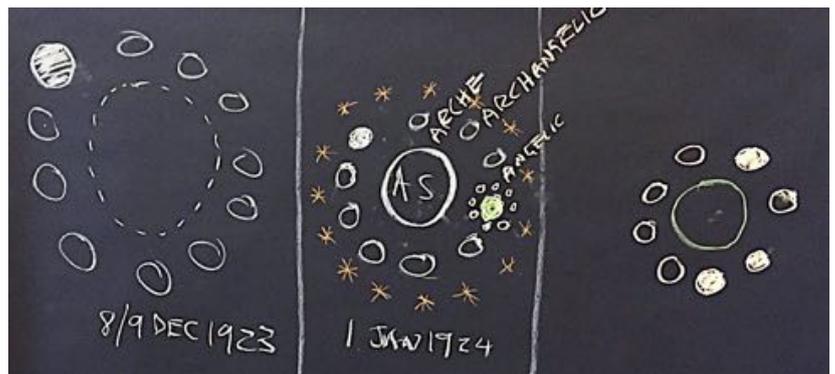
A late-scheduled weekend stop in Auckland allowed a group of members of the Anthroposophical Society in New Zealand to meet with their council and treasurer to clarify financial arrangements. Much of the ground covered was also visited a week later in Melbourne, Australia (see next item). Again, finances provided an objective ground to review the history of the Society, the various 'streams' within it, and how it might develop going forward, often from a place of low numbers and internal discord and disconnection.

Australia When Groups come A-circling
chb

The AGM of the Anthroposophical Society in Australia took place in Melbourne in May. It was a threefold event, comprising the AGM provided by the Council, meetings of the representatives of the various branches in this far-flung country, and workshops offered by members directly. A whole day was given over to me to do as I wished under the rubric *Economia*, suggested by the General secretary, Jane Bradshaw.

'Economia' turned into a special country where things could be discussed in the ideal, but hopefully with consequences for practical matters. For various reasons – karmic, historical and constitutional – the Australian Society is somewhat at odds with itself, but these tangles can be largely sorted out if one takes a long and wide view of how the Society came about before 1923, what happened at Christmas in that year, and how it can be envisaged since.

The adjacent drawings illustrate this and were an attempt to visual the complexities of our story, which



for many people far removed from the Goetheanum are now readily known or understood. This is especially the case where detailed discussions of this history are held only in German and in constitutional monarchic and Anglo-Saxon contexts of the Antipodes, and where a particular feature of both is the relationship they have to remedy with the indigenous people (Aborigines and Maori) who were overtaken by the English settlers.

In the case of Australia, a specific suggestion was made and is now under consideration to renew the links between the various Branches, renaming them Groups, and convening a next AGM in the spirit of the 1923 refounding of the Society.

Concerning Research Funding

Arthur Edwards / Stroud, England

Arthur Edwards is a trustee of the Cultural Freedom Trust and administers the Goetheanum Travel Fund within it. The Fund exists to reimburse travel costs to 'activities of the School of Spiritual Science wherever they might occur'. The Trust understands the Goetheanum in the post Christmas Foundation Meeting sense as the being of the Anthroposophical Society animated by the School of Spiritual Science. Here he argues that research could be enhanced by a heightened understanding within the anthroposophical movement of the significance of how research funding is conceived as linked to Section activity, giving new life to the image of the Goetheanum as the source of new impulses for humanity.

In the course of his economics lectures, Rudolf Steiner observed that 'gift money' is the most productive kind of money, not simply as funds that are given, but gestures that have the effect of developing economic life. True insights liberate the human being with respect to how work is organised, bringing enlightenment as the essence of spiritual work.

Research as Insight

How is such development to be fostered? In the view of the trustees, the liberating effect of true research is contingent upon it being based on what Steiner calls 'free spiritual life'. By contrast, much formal academic research has a very different character. In the first place, it is often firmly rooted in a materialistic view of the world and in that sense does not actually understand the world it seeks to apprehend. Secondly, such research is often conditioned by its funding and the goals for which it is commissioned. For the true progress of humanity, a different foundation is needed. One could analogise the School of Spiritual Science to a university with different departments (sections) and gradations (classes), albeit Sections should not be conceived as having permanence but rather giving expression to the karma of their leadership. Their task is the furtherance of the insights necessary for the development of humanity by 'going further' than natural science. To this end, they require grants and donations for their research.

Research as the Work of the Sections

But Section work also entails collaboration and a shared image to. As in society generally, so in our movement also, professionals in economics, medicine, education, etc. need to confer with their colleagues, albeit in our case based on a true image of the human being. Those of us who are active in the world and striving to transform practice in different realms, need to be engaged in professional associations which might be seen as the outer faces of the Sections. To the extent that they do not see or understand the Sections as serious research venues and do not promote Section work professionally, all this potential 'working together for the greater good' risks being lost.

Sowing Thoughts

Applicants to the Goetheanum Travel Fund are rarely aware of this larger background, but by applying for funding, engaging in correspondence and being asked to demonstrate both 'Section auspices' and published research outcomes, we hope to encourage them in the direction of this 'greater good'. This often involves taking contact with Section leaders to check the auspices of events taking place, and here it becomes apparent that Section leaders themselves are, on occasion, unaware of the meaning of auspices. It is as if the higher significance of the whole story has been lost or remains undiscovered. The imprimatur of the School of Spiritual Science should be a clear 'logo', signalling a meaningful reference to itself as an activity of the Michael School (with all that signifies) and related institutions' trainings, conferences or research, as also initiatives undertaken by individuals as 'representants' of anthroposophy, that being the sole and substantial condition of membership of the School.

Ordering Ideas

By stipulating its conditions the Cultural Freedom Trust aims to stimulate an organising insight among those concerned. Research is needed, but not 'any old research'; research that has the signature of Michael, carrying his legitimate sign and seal. This work should then contribute to humanity in a meaningful and significant way rather than 'privately' or with the karma of some other esoteric impulse or institution with other goals. For this reason, we believe it would help if within the anthroposophical movement funding were conceived along clearer lines, such as recently given in *Anthroposophy Worldwide* with its front-page caption of 'Loan Money for Warmth, Gift Money for Research'. If such ordering imagery were the norm within the movement then clearer ideas might inform our decisions than has been the case to date.

Scientific Esotericism

This also assumes a better, or perhaps more precise, conception of Section research as by its nature both scientific and esoteric. For its own purposes, the Cultural Freedom Trust is producing a brief memorandum of how it understands research, which it plans to share with Section leaders and applicants. Just as within the School of Spiritual Science the three classes can be seen in relation to the three Degrees of 'Master, Journeyman and Apprentice', so too one can differentiate between different kinds of Section-auspiced events. While in principle, the Goetheanum Travel Fund is presently supporting

travel to any kind of Section-aided event, we realise that individual study, trainings and research are not the same things. A person studying for his/her own enlightenment may not (yet) be a Magus charting the star that heralds the Christ.

Collegial Research / Individual Conclusions

In our image, research is the core activity of the second class of the School of Spiritual Science, implying collaboration with other researchers as peers. Such research has the signature of 'when two or more are gathered together in my name, then I am also present'. Coming together in such a rightly constituted school as spiritually active beings is the prelude for the intuitions and inspirations, which can then go on to form the basis for better images and conceptions than an individual researcher can offer to the world. Many anthroposophists are active in different and disconnected circumstances. It would be better, surely, to join our karma by collaborating in the school Rudolf Steiner inaugurated for that purpose?

Not to do so is to perpetuate a disjointed and disparate world circumstance, rather than coherent and consistent efforts of the kind arising from Rudolf Steiner's own work and the movement he led.

World-Working-Will

If we were to potentise the effect of what we do as anthroposophical researchers by recognising Rudolf Steiner's deed, and working in the collaborative school he founded, who knows how quickly those wider circumstances might change? Focusing our thoughts and funding on this kind of research should be the number one order of the day. The sword of Michael would then be better brandished!

Our Own Finances

Adjacent are the balances as at 31 December 2024. As noted before, the ongoing work will need fresh inputs and we invite all members to 'bang the drum' for research funding in particular. In our case, any funds sought should be directed to the various restricted fund accounts we have in Societies around the world.

EC Fund 2024										
Country	GAS	CH	DE	NL	GBP	USD	BRL	CAD		
Rate to HIB	1	1	.94	.94	1.098	.80	.146	.586		
Currency	CHF	CHF	EUR	EUR	GBP	USD	BRL	CAD		
Opening Balance	8,410.58	43,583.55	0.00	124.00	4,235.64	819.07	28,783.13	4,250.08		
Net Movements	7,189.55	-3,548.81	0.00	0.00	2,773.88	6,339.43	-3,704.11	0.00		
Closing Balances	1,221.03	40,034.74	0.00	124.00	1,461.76	7,158.50	25,079.02	4,250.08		
Hibernias	54,856.23	40,034.74	0.00	116.56	1,605.01	5,726.80	3,661.54	2,490.55		