

From St Gallen to Spring Valley and Beyond

A Timely Triptych

Spring Valley, 6-8 October 2025

At a recent research meeting about the finances of the Anthroposophical Society, the evenings were given over to talks by Christopher Houghton Budd at the Spring Valley Branch on themes central to many fast-moving events in the Anthroposophical Society that, for better or worse, will have a significant and lasting impact on the Society. The aim of the presentations was to build a bridge of information and comprehension between members in the USA and current developments at the Goetheanum as regards bylaws and finance, but also to explore the special circumstances of the Anthroposophical Society in America. The talks were recorded for transcription purposes as the basis of these edited versions.

The Lost Section and the Task of Treasurers

From endowment to curation to enactment

6 October 2025

The Magnitude of the Deed of Rudolf Steiner

The threefold foundation of the Anthroposophical Society

7 October 2025

Rudolf Steiner's House

The history and future of the Goetheanum Association

8 October 2025

The Lost Section and the Task of Treasurers

6 October 2025

Good evening. I'm not quite sure what's going to happen; it's a kind of interactive idea. I didn't plan to begin this way, but I'd like to start with the verse for America, if you can read it Kim. But before that, Judith, would you say a few words about what you said to me on the stairs?

'Our friend, Steve Usher, passed over on Saturday afternoon 4 October at 3:30 in Austin, Texas. As you may know, he was on different financial boards, but also oversaw the Dietrich Asten Fund. Steve worked with a few people like that and enabled a lot of things to happen. He was an economist and also knew you well, I think.'

Yes, and I think he was the only anthroposophist who was a member of the American Economics Association.

'Many of us were watching *The Portal of Initiation* at the same time that Steve passed over and he was very involved in the Mystery Dramas early on when Barbara came and started producing them. He was also very supportive of eurythmy. Just in February, he sponsored and enabled our eurythmists to perform in Austin, Texas. That was all Steve's enabling, together with his wife, Beth.'

Many thanks. If we could then move on to Kim; maybe we can say the verse with Steve in mind.

May our feeling reach
Into the center of our heart,
And seek to unite in love
With human beings seeking the same goal.
With those spirits who, full of grace,
Strengthening us from regions of light,
And illuminating our love,
Look down on our earnest heartfelt striving.

OK, quite what's going to happen this evening, I have no idea. We'll find out as we go along. But there are definite topics I want to share by way of introduction. This verse is also linked to that because it is the version by Marc Desaulles.¹ It's not the one by Frederick Heckel. And that's part of the story, in that, though she doesn't like me saying this, the reason we're here is because of Melissa Lyons. Last year, your (or should I say our?) General Secretary, Mary Adams, had been in a conference some of us were at in Switzerland, and out of this, she invited Marc to come to the Portland Conference last year. Melissa heard he was coming and asked if he would come by Spring Valley. Marc asked, 'Who's Melissa?', and I intervened saying, 'Forget about going to Spring Valley. Go and have your vacation before Portland. Don't try and fit in Spring Valley. I'll manage that for you because I kind of know Spring Valley.' And so we all met in Portland and that's how we ended up here. I'm apologizing for Marc's absence. I hoped he would be able to come this time but it just hasn't gelled. But he's here in spirit. And this is why I thought it would be good to begin with his version of the Verse for America.

Plus, the story behind the verse is part of what I want to share this evening. I think what happened 100 or so years ago might have been different based on what I want to share. Marc is very linked to the Christmas Conference. He's very serious in business and knows a lot about finance. So his version of the verse is more, to my mind, grounded than the original version, which doesn't, if I can say it rather strongly, have a financial consciousness in it.

¹ General Secretary and Treasurer of the Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland.

So that's a little a hint of the kind of theme of this evening. I'm not quite sure what's going to happen, but my image is that we're going to be witness to and participants in whatever happens. So be careful if you say anything, or if you suggest something should be done! You can't suggest for others in this kind of world. Quite what we're going to witness, I don't know, but I wanted to begin with a second verse, which I'll read. It's called 'Why Now? Why There?' and was written two days ago, in my hotel in Shannon Airport. I wrote the verse because I was prompted to do so by events there. And if you allow me to read it, it's asking the question: 'Why Now? Why There?', with 'there' being here, the United States.

In Hibernia paused
I bestroll 'long her shore
And look out to the West
Where a rainbow attests
That somewhere beyond it
Our solutions lie hid.

Why would an Englishman
Be sat here in Ireland
Bound for America
– Western Columbia –
Whose monks went in earnest
As Golgotha's witness
To distant San Gallen
But also to Doveland

Where now once again then
Their story needs telling?

This has a background, which is why, in the first place, I think Marc Desales was invited to America. He and I have worked together for a very long time, and he's often had the image of a particular being in North America. And the reason we all met in Switzerland a year and a half ago was because he said, 'All your American friends from the north and the south of the Americas need to come to Europe.' This is where it's at, not in the United States. The Americans have to come to Europe.' This is a very strong view to hold but I said, 'Okay, I don't get it, but let's do it.' So, then we had this meeting in Switzerland, nearly everybody was from the western hemisphere, from Argentina to Canada. Nearly everybody was from there. And out of this meeting, Mary invited Marc to come to Portland and bring his story here. I don't know what others remember, but my memory of when he first spoke was, 'Oh! Now I get it. I should have come to America.' But, more substantially, that 'the Allies suppressed the being of Germany so that the healthy evolution of the consciousness soul that was supposed to happen in (Central) Europe now has to come about in the United States.'

That's pretty much how he began. And so we discussed that: What is it about this part of the world that is so important in your mind that you insisted we all come to Europe? And then when you came to America finally, and when you came to the farthest west you could possibly get in America, you saw actually this is kind of where it's at. What is this story?

In fact, we've been working on this for many years. And then for our recent Economics Conference publication,² I asked Marc to write about this story, but I only gave him a 500-word count in which he did not really provide much of what Steiner said. But he explained that in fact Steiner didn't actually say very much: 'This is my

² *Towards 2033 / 2*. Available on request to economics@goetheanum.ch.

sensing of what he meant.’ And then I said, ‘So, where are you getting your ideas from?’ ‘The last two lines of the second lecture of *The Mission of Folk Souls*.’³ And if you read that second lecture, it’s hugely complicated. As you know, it’s all about the evolution of angels, archangels, and archai, and how they move forward, they go backwards, there are fallen ones, there is ‘the law of deferment’; all this complicated stuff. They work with each other and against each other. So, it is easy to get completely lost. But in this story Steiner describes how you can have an archangel, which has become an arche, which would be Michael, and then you can have a fallen Spirit of Personality, like the one that governs North America. And that’s the quote: Steiner says the people of North America are subject to an abnormal Spirit of Personality. That’s the nub of this whole story with the rest of it a kind of extrapolation. That’s why Marc said the Americans have to come to Europe.

And so in our journal we explore a lot of what that means. And part of what it means – these are not my ideas, they come from Steiner, but may be slightly extrapolated – is that way back in Hibernia, in Ireland, the land without snakes, this whole story, there was a kind of consciousness where the monks saw the Mystery of Golgotha in the etheric not in the physical world, and they went out from there to tell the story. They went deep into Europe, including the town of St. Gallen near Zurich, and they went to what I call Doveland, or Western Columbia – *this* part of the world. And then, Columban and St. Gall, these monks went to the Pope and said, ‘There’s something in the western part of the world which humanity cannot cope with, and it has to be hidden to protect the evolution of the Consciousness Soul.’ (This is my version.) And so they implored the Pope to make a law or a ruling such that the existence of this part of the world would be forgotten, erased. And within three generations it was lost to sight. It was reopened to sight with the coming of Columbus and his discovery of this part of the world.⁴

This little town of St. Gallen near Zurich is named after one of those Columban monks. But the Roman Church sent St. Patrick in the opposite direction. So what we know of the Roman Catholic Church is based on St. Patrick, who saw nothing in the etheric. This is the big story that’s sitting in the background. I mention this because the Verse for America was, as you all know, given by Rudolf Steiner to Reinhard Mueller who then gave it to Ralph Courtney.⁵ Steiner gave it to Reinhardt who was wanting to avoid the draft in Switzerland, and a way he could do that was to go on his father’s behalf and start a branch of their lace business in New York. Ralph Courtney was the Paris correspondent for the *New York Herald Tribune*. He regularly went to Dornach to meet Steiner, and he got wind that this was happening, so he facilitated it. And that’s how this verse arrived in America, in my understanding, right here. Ralph and his colleagues had the threefold group in New York first, and then they bought this place. And why am I involved in this story now? I think it has to do with it being the time to revisit what that was all about. It’s quite a big thing for Steiner to give a verse for America, or so it seems to me.

Economics Conference of the Goetheanum

And now, for those who don’t anything about it, I want to say a little about the Economics Conference,⁶ of which six or seven of us here are members. This has a long history. It’s been a concern of mine, as an economist, that I’ve always been quite convinced that if you begin with Steiner’s image, that when he refounded the Anthroposophical Society, it was to provide a home for the School of Spiritual Science so that it could through its sections re-enliven the civilization of mankind. That is not the task of the Anthroposophical Society; it’s the task of the School of Spiritual Science. To bring into every practical domain its next step, otherwise humanity will go down the drain, as it were. My words, not Steiner’s, but he is very explicit. This is what the School exists

³ *The Mission of Folk Souls*. June of 1910 at Christiania (Oslo).

⁴ 533 years ago.

⁵ You can find this in Virginia Sease’s recent article in the May 2025 issue of *Being Human*.

⁶ <https://economics.goetheanum.org/home>

to do, to give new life to every field of human society. That is not the task of the Anthroposophical Society. It's task is to support the School in doing this. That's pretty much how I understand it. In order to rescue civilization; this is very precise in the Christmas Conference.

And if you look at that and you look at the situation today, one thing is very clear to me, namely, if we don't do this, or it isn't somehow accomplished, we will fall into or become trapped in the hugely economic materialistic world which we find ourselves in today, and which humanity likes to blame you Americans for. But I've never accepted this. I think it's an occult fact that the Americans are not to blame for the interference of the British. It's very easy for us to sit in London and let you guys take the rap for everything that pours into the world from Chicago Business School and things like this. We allow you to be the apparent authors of these things, but you are not the authors. In fact, it's us playing with you guys. This is more complicated than what the Catholic Church didn't want. This is a whole occult story of the English manipulating the world, including the people living in America. I've long been clear about that, and therefore it's clear to me, that the economic materialism of our times is largely a creation of the English. They took us into this vale of tears. They have to get us out of it. They can't take us into this vale of tears and then sit back as if they are innocent parties and let Americans take the rap, which is more or less what we do. They – that is, we – have to get us out of the situation, but we can't do it unless the School of Spiritual Science matches the evolution of economics. And that involves a very specific story.

There was never a subject called economics until the English economist Alfred Marshall called it that. And he had very specific reasons. Until then, it was always known as 'political economy' throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. But for Marshall 'political economy' was not working, because under political economy, there was a huge level of impoverishment in the world. And he thought the only way we were going to get out of that (I'm telling this very quickly), was to drop the political reference. We had to find a foundation for economics, which is completely not political and has no external moral basis. Its moral task is to solve poverty in the world, and we won't be able to do this, said Marshall, unless we have a scientific ground. And for this, he did two things. One was a trick of the English language. He called it 'economics', which in the genius of the English language links it to mechanics, physics. The language does this. I can't prove it, but when you say economics, you're just calling on this world of physics, mechanics, and so on, and that quietly gives economics a quasi-scientific basis, because it's making a link to the sense-perceptible world. But this is fake, inwardly fake. Marshall got around that problem by making the actual scientific basis of economics mathematics, and hence, it all became based on modeling and driven by the logic of mathematics – something you can't interfere with or question. I call this the Marshallian Detachment.⁷ In this way, Marshall made the field of economics separate from all other social sciences, quite deliberately, quite systematically, so that on this so-called scientific basis poverty could be eradicated.

This is the moral duty of the economist. It's a very powerful story. And if you follow the history of any serious history of economic thought it would tell this story. It was political economy, until Marshall said all this, and then economics separated itself out, created its own name, its own discipline. This then takes us to the moment, when in 2008 it came unstuck. Economics based on mathematical modeling became no use for humanity. This was the end of the detachment when economics had to re-embed itself in society. And in the field of economics professionally, it's very clear that the way it's going to re-engage in life is via accounting.

⁷ *Associate!*, September 2022, p. 5.

https://economics.goetheanum.org/fileadmin/economics/Newsletters/ECN38_Associate____2022.pdf

The Efficient-market Hypothesis

It is really important to have a sense for how modern economics ran out of road in 2008. It doesn't admit this outwardly, but internally economists all know the reason economics didn't work is because the so-called efficient-market hypothesis, I'm speaking technically, which became the foundation of all modern finance, was shown to be wrong.

In a few words, the efficient-market hypothesis says all information is in the market. There's nothing a human being can bring, which the markets don't already know. Therefore, trust to the market. You come to a threshold, both Rudolf Steiner and Friedrich von Hayek came to that same place. They were both Austrians. They knew their country; they knew their story. And they came to this place where Hayek said, the single human being cannot possibly comprehend the entire economic life. And Steiner said exactly the same thing. But Hayek was a Kantian. So, he said, nor can all human beings do this together, because there are limits to knowledge. Therefore, you have to trust to the market. Human beings have to absent themselves from the whole process, trust the market, trust to the wisdom of the market, and obey the wisdom of the market. You shouldn't have the arrogance of thinking, neither singly nor collectively, that humanity can out-think the market. Steiner comes to the same point: the single human being cannot comprehend the entire economic process, nor can everyone together, but for Steiner there are no limits to knowledge, and therefore we work associatively. And this will take us to another level of consciousness. (I'm putting it all very simply.)

And so, these two people side by side came to the same observation, but Hayek is Kantian, so he said there are limits to knowledge, and Steiner is Aristotelian, so there are no limits to knowledge. And this sets up so-called market theory versus Steiner's associative economics, technically. I hope that's enough. This is a very important story between Hayek and Steiner.

Finance at the Threshold

At that precise moment, I was asked to write a book – which became called *Finance at the Threshold*⁸ – by colleagues at the University of St. Gallen, as it turns out, which is the Chicago School in Switzerland. They wanted me to write a book to counter the neo-liberalism of that university. So, I wrote this book, and in it, it's a professional book, I said, 'Okay, so what happened? According to all you professionals, the 2008 global crisis was caused by you realizing the efficient-market hypothesis does not work. You said it was caused by people borrowing in the sub-prime market in New York. You said all sorts of things, but that isn't technically what happened. What happened was you had so much finance that was disconnected from the world, your hypothesis collapsed in front of your eyes. That's the truth. And, therefore, we have to find another hypothesis.'

And so, in my book, which is quite well known professionally, I say, the only other hypothesis can be what Rudolf Steiner called his 'true price formula',⁹ taken as an hypothesis. And in that book, I say something that Steiner would not agree with me about because he never spoke hypothetically. He would not agree that you have a hypothesis that you have to prove. You see things; you don't have to prove them. You know the sun will rise; you don't need a theory to prove the sun will rise. You don't need a theory to prove that when your stomach empties, you will be hungry again. You don't need hypotheses to be proven in order to know the truth. So, on Steiner's behalf, I excused myself for saying his true price formula was a hypothesis; but for an Anglo-Saxon

⁸ *Finance at the Threshold – Rethinking the real and financial economies*, Christopher Houghton Budd. Gower 2011.

⁹ 'A 'true price' is forthcoming when a person receives, as counter-value for the product he has made, sufficient to enable him to satisfy the whole of his needs, including of course the needs of his dependants, until he will again have completed a like product.' *Economics – the World as One Economy*, lecture 6. Search aeBookstore.com.

mind you have to start by taking it as a ‘what if’, not as a fact. The Anglo-Saxon does not accept Steiner’s factual statements. Even so, by moving from the efficient-market hypothesis on to Steiner’s true price formula economics will come out from its crisis, as will the financial system.

This is a very serious thing for me to be saying, but I do so because for me this is the task of the Anglo-Saxons. Technically what it means is that economics since 2008 will relink itself to all the social sciences and do so via linking itself to accounting and dropping its modeling. But this it cannot do except on the basis of Steiner’s economics course, which he himself describes as ‘the true science of economics.’¹⁰ So, if you’re an economist, when Steiner describes his economics course as ‘a true foundation for economics,’ this is just inadmissible to a normal economist, because the foundation of modern economics is modeling. It’s hypothetical. Therefore, you will never find Steiner in any conventional economic setting, because he’s basically saying, what you guys are saying is just nonsense. And in the middle of his economics course, lecture 8, he explains why it’s nonsense. It’s because Adam Smith couldn’t think clearly, and Steiner gives a very algebraic way of explaining this. So this is pretty powerful stuff that Steiner is doing in the evolution of economics. It’s pretty heavy duty. If you’re an economist, if you read these 14 lectures, and he’s already said, they are a true science of economics, you think, ‘Excuse me, I’ve been to Chicago Business School. Excuse me, what are you talking about? And who are you?’ And then you come to this very important lecture in which Steiner says, the trouble with modern economics is that Adam Smith could not think straight! To be precise, he showed that Smith did not think in terms of multiple independent variables.

But then out of his economics course Steiner ends up talking about money-as-bookkeeping. This is a huge clue, because if you study that course, you can see, how he’s seen his next course of lectures, which would be on the evolution of accounting. That’s how I read it. If you write a book, you might have an idea about the subject you have in mind or even a title, but the actual title is going to come later. You can give a course of lectures and you realize, actually, you want to talk about something else. So I’m quite convinced the next course Steiner would have given would have been a course on accounting, based on money-as-bookkeeping. And that’s substantially what the Economics Conference has been doing for 20 years in our technical work: matching money-as-bookkeeping to the techniques of accounting.

Section for Economics

I’ve always been clear that, if the School of Spiritual Science is to further the civilization of mankind the way Steiner described, it has to map the history of the different disciplines. It has to go into every discipline and redeem it, not have an opinion about it, saying things should be different. You have to go into these disciplines and redeem them and show a different way. But via the discipline, not commenting from the side, saying people should behave differently, and so on. If you take this seriously, you have to go into the history of economics and then you would have to have a Section for Economics. This has always been my argument. It’s just implicit in the whole logic of Steiner’s world.

Many years ago, when the Social Science Section was restarted in 1974 by Manfred Schmidt-Brabant at the Goetheanum, a council member of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain, Rudi Lissau, and myself were given the job to restart it in England. And so we did. We went to many meetings in England and at the Goetheanum, but there were always problems in these meetings. Firstly, the Social Science Section meetings were a rag bag of every kind of discipline you can imagine, but they always defaulted to finance and economics. That was always just very obvious, but people wouldn’t address it. That’s the second problem. The third problem was that for 40 years, the ‘anthroposophical’ bankers had the image – and most anthroposophists had this image

¹⁰ ‘Fundamentally speaking, therefore, we have not yet attained a true science of economics.’ Ibid., lecture 1.

– that they were ticking the box of associative economics. But no way were they ticking that box. They were not economists, they were bankers. It's simply not the case that they were being economists, in no way. Not in their own opinion and not in fact. At their 40th anniversary they had a kind of closing meeting but in all that time they had not created a section out of their own work. Other people had – for example, the social development people created a whole part of the Social Science Section for their work – but the bankers never did. And then on their 40th anniversary they said, 'We're done, that's it.' They've given the impression that economics has been sorted out, but from my point of view, it simply hasn't been.

So there's this long history, and then there came a moment at a big Social Science Section meeting in the Goetheanum where it all came up again. I asked the question: Why can't there be a Section for Economics? And Manfred said, 'Christopher, stop asking. Just go and do it.' That was a very important moment, but it caused huge problems of rivalry and all sorts of things, so it didn't happen. That was in 1996. I'm telling you this history because that was Schmidt-Brabant's answer: 'Just go and do it.' But it never happened. I'm not complaining, I'm just describing. All this went on for a very long time, and in the end there was a big threefold conference in Kimberton in October 2002. It was directly after 9/11, directly after the towers came down. Paul Mackay was there, he was the leader of the (now renamed) Social Sciences Section, and after that meeting I said, 'Okay, Paul, is it not time now at least to create a Department for Economics in the Social Sciences Section? He said, 'Okay.' And when we went back to Europe, we had a meeting and he said, 'You bring Marc and Anita Grandjean (Marc's long-standing colleague) and I'll bring Ulrich Roesch, who was his assistant at that time, and together we will do this.' So, this was the origin. It was originally called the Economics Faculty of the Social Sciences Section, and a year later was changed to the Economics Conference.¹¹ That's the history of it. We began meeting in 2002, and after about 21 years or so it was clear that, if we had done anything, we had created a course in accounting, and in my view, it was time to share it. We had created the foundation – of this I have no doubt – for building from Steiner's ideas about money to the accounting profession and its techniques in a very powerful way.

So that's where we've got to. We used to meet globally every year but the last meeting we had was in 2019. Because then COVID came, so we have not met again physically. I just travel around the world meeting colleagues separately. But by then we'd accomplished – I think of it as an accomplishment – we'd figured this out, translating Steiner's very powerful ideas about money into the techniques of accounting, working with accountants all over the world, with auditors, with professional people. It's a very interesting story. And now it's 'job done', except nobody knows that we did it! Or I could put that another way, a lot of people know we did it, but they resist what we did. It's a strange story. But now I jump forward.

Changing the Game

In Berlin, there's a young man called Sylvain Coiplet. He's French but he's lived in Berlin for a long time. And I think he's a member of the Society, but not a member of the School of Spiritual Science. And he's encyclopedic. He has this website, the Institute of Threefolding. It's in many languages around the world because he has an interesting funding system. He finds someone in Poland and says, if you want to put this in Polish, take the whole German website and put it all in Polish. And so he has colleagues around the world, and they create as much as they can in their language. It's in about 20 languages, and it's very powerful. He reads everything Steiner ever said, but especially on so called threefolding. And then recently, one of our colleagues, Fionn Meier, became very involved with Sylvain. I know Sylvain quite well. He has identified many mistranslations of Steiner's meaning in threefoldness, which he's put right. So now he's on a mission to go around the world telling threefoldingers how they've misunderstood Steiner

¹¹ In September 2009, this was changed to Economics Conference of the Goetheanum.

because he was never translated right in the first place. So Fionn and Sylvain are off to South America to tell the story. I was asked to go ahead and tell the people in South America they were coming to tell them they had got things wrong. But I said, 'No way! If you think someone's got things wrong, you go and tell them. I'm not going to. Plus, I have a problem. How does Sylvain know that he's right? Since he wasn't there how does he know Steiner's stenographer got it wrong? How does Sylvain know he's got it right since he wasn't in the room when Steiner spoke? But okay, let's hear him out.'

And then, coming to my point, I said, 'Where's the evidence of this? Give me one piece of evidence.' And that evidence is Sylvain quoting Albert Steffen on the 16th December 1923, in Villa Hansi – a week before the Christmas Conference. In the room was Dr. Wegman, Dr. Wachsmuth, Albert Steffen and Dr. Steiner. Steffen's diary entry reads:

'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 me: Vice Presidents. Dr. Wegman: Secretary. Wachsmuth: Cashier. (Wachsmuth suggests Treasurer, to which Dr. Steiner laughingly replies: 'The name doesn't matter.') Then, leaders of the individual departments. Dr. Steiner: the entire High School. Me: *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.

That's the quote. So Sylvain is saying what Steiner had in mind was not a Section for Social Sciences, but a Section for Economics. And then he gives the whole history of the Section for Social Sciences showing that it was never created by Steiner. It was created in 1961 by the Vorstand.

But this is a game changer. If this is true it has huge consequences, because it means the whole history of the Social Sciences Section is not from Steiner. What he wanted was a Section for Economics. And, therefore, we have to rethink the entire history of the Social Sciences Section, with three main consequences. Firstly, if there'd been a Section for Economics and the Treasurer was the leader of it, then all the treasurers would have had a place to do their research. I'm the convener of the Circle of Treasurers, and I know we do very little research anywhere, and I know in the Social Sciences Section there's rarely been in 50 years any research into finance of the kind we do. But if I go back to that point – 1923 – there would have been a Section for Economics and that is where the treasurer of the General Anthroposophical Society at least would have sat. This has the implied consequence of 100 years of treasurers not researching their field, because there was nowhere to do it.

A second consequence is – this is a huge issue that I'm constantly challenged by and challenged with, but my argument is always the same – I know there's a threefold social order, so why do I go on about economics and not about a threefold social order? And my argument has always been, that the threefold social order was well enunciated by Steiner in his book on threefolding in 1919,¹² but in his economics course in 1922 he says, 'Since the war I have frequently said that it was like living through four centuries in as many years. Now if we had lived through several centuries we would expect many changes to have taken place, especially in the language. But people still speak in 1922 the language of 1914, unaware that the changes wrought by the war really were centuries long. This is the problem.'¹³ This is Steiner speaking. We need a new language. And what he's saying is that because of the failure of the threefold movement and all sorts of stories we can hear, we now have to start in economics. Certainly in the Anglo-Saxon world, you will never get a hearing for Rudolf Steiner's threefold

¹² *Die Kernpunkte der sozialen Frage (The Threefold Nature of Social Life)*.

¹³ *Economics*, op. cit. discourse 5.

social order. It's too challenging to the hegemonic intentions of the Anglo-Saxons. The one thing they're very clear about is that Steiner was referencing the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the end of Anglo-Saxon – more precisely Anglo-American – hegemony. This is why in my opinion the whole effort failed. It was never going to happen; no way. So, you have to manage this, and I'm sure Steiner was aware of this. If you want to get the Anglo-Saxons on board, you have to go where it impacts them the most; you have to come into the evolution of economics as something apart. And I think if you go into this story, you will then see that in the threefold social order there will be a single worldwide associative economy. But that means you can reverse this: there cannot be a single worldwide associative economy or anything which speaks of that, except as part of an *unspoken* threefold social order.

So, my argument has always been: I'm totally aware of the threefold social order, but I'm also totally aware of the Anglo-American's opposition to it. So, I go the path of economics and finance, and I say nothing about the threefold social order directly because a single associative world economy cannot exist without the other two spheres. It's not technically possible. I don't need to tell that to people. They sense it. But the focus stays on finance. People get the finance part, at least the way I talk about it, but they don't get Steiner's threefold image because it marks the end of Anglo-American hegemony, if you know your First World War story.

Concerning Endowment

And then a third point, when you come into the West, you have to work into the economic life quite directly knowing what you're *not* talking about. It's not that you don't know about it, but you have to know what you're *not* talking about. If you want to deal with Ayn Rand or anyone in the American business community, you have to know what they're trained in. If you want to talk to Paul Volcker or anyone like this, you have to know what paradigm such a person belongs to. And I would say that also of Ralph Courtney. I think in the first place he had a financial consciousness. So, what I want to say about this quote from Steffen is, when I saw this, I thought, 'Ah, that's sending a huge signal.' This takes us into a very delicate area of Steiner's work, which in the Economics Conference when we meet about the treasurers,¹⁴ we discuss in some depth: What does Steiner mean by 'endowment'? If you take the example of the 1911 Endowment of the Society for Theosophical Art and Life, and if you read his lecture from the 15th of December 1911, he's very clear that he's trying to bring something about that he calls an endowment. It's born entirely out of the will life of those who want to make it happen. If there's no will it will not appear on earth. And then it has to be curated. Then it has to have a secretary, and it has to have a seal. So, he describes all this, and when someone asked, 'What happened to it?', he said it never happened. The will was not there to bring it down to earth. It went back to the gods or wherever it went back to.

If you read this lecture, it's very instructive in that it applies, I think, to the Anthroposophical Movement in its entirety, and certainly to what we call the Economics Conference. This is an endowed effort, something prior to the actual event. So, I would say that of the Economics Section, too. Meaning, now that I see what Steiner had in mind, the Economics Conference has done its job. It can retire if this section is about to appear. And I want to say the same thing about the Anthroposophical Society with all its struggles, I think we have to be very careful never to say it failed; rather to say we're trying to endow something, we've almost curated it, but not quite. We haven't got down to the secretary or the seal level, but it doesn't mean we can't. And it doesn't mean we won't. And it doesn't mean that it's not imminent in history. (I'm saying some strange things here.)

A Rose by any other Name

So, I want to end again with this little minute of Steffen. I think it's hugely game changing, because I can

¹⁴ Referring to the meetings held in the US as part of the Economics Conference work.

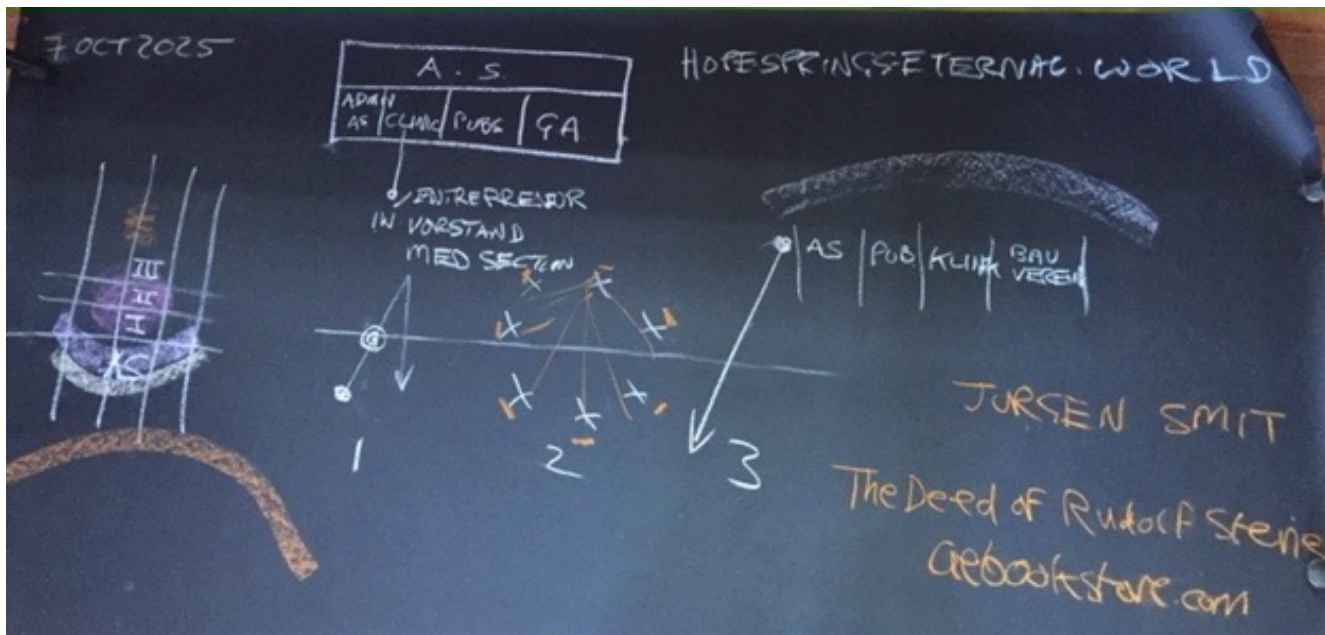
immediately see how it legitimizes the creation of an Economics Section. I don't mean the Economics Conference becomes that, but that we can then bow out. However, it's not valid to bow out prior or prematurely. In my mind, if you're in the world of endowment, you don't have a right to back off prematurely. Nor do you have the right to eclipse what's trying to happen. This is a very subtle thing I'm trying to say here.

So, I think we have got to a special place, and that's why all this is happening now. Why now and why not there but here, particularly in the United States: because there's a whole opportunity to revisit this story all the way from St. Gallen via Mueller, to Ralph Courtney and his colleagues, and I think ultimately, into the technicalities of Spring Valley itself. That's why I think we're here tonight. That is what we are here to witness. How would it have been if Ralph Courtney knew that Steiner wanted to create an Economics Section and that the treasurers would be in this section? How would this have impacted on economics? For me, it's quite uncomfortable to read Courtney, because I feel he's quite the American businessman, he even gets into world government at one point in the 1930s. So when I read him as an economist, I think, 'No, no, no. Don't go there, don't go to the Right.' And it's a similar thing I would say with Bernhard Behrens, who was a German economist who ended up living in Los Angeles. We published a book by him last year.¹⁵ When I read him as a businessman, I think, 'Oh, no! Stay with Steiner. You're caught in the American business psyche, which is very, very powerful.' I don't mean this unkindly and I'm not negating it, but it's a very powerful way of understanding things, like John Galt¹⁶ and all *The Objectivist* stuff.¹⁷ So this is the question I ask myself of Ralph Courtney now, here: As a threefold, did you stay with this conventional business paradigm or did you change that also?

¹⁵ *A Legacy restated – the work of Bernhard Behrens*. Ed. C Houghton Budd. Steiner Books, New York 2024.

¹⁶ *Atlas Shrugged*, Random House 1957.

¹⁷ Ayn Rand's journal.



The Magnitude of the Deed of Rudolf Steiner

7 October 2025

Good evening. The title I gave the second part of this triptych was ‘From St. Gallen to Spring Valley and Beyond, the Threefold Foundation of the Anthroposophical Society: School, Society, Resources.’ But as often happens when I give titles in advance of the day, I can’t remember what I had in mind. It’s not quite true, but it’s often like this. So, I’ve been trying to remember what I was planning to talk about! And in the interim, things are happening, because in our anthroposophical movement a lot of things are happening very fast, actually. Of both a negative and positive kind, but we don’t really have the bandwidth to keep up with it all. So, what I want to talk about is a kind of metamorphosis in front of my eyes. I’m going to stay on my topic, but in a slightly different way. I’ve retitled my talk ‘The Magnitude of the Deed of Rudolf Steiner’.¹⁸ And I start there because when I joined the Anthroposophical Society in 1972 I was already aware there was this thing called ‘the Deed of Rudolf Steiner’. And yet until this day hardly anybody knows of this, hardly anybody uses this image. Even in our work as treasurers at the center of the anthroposophical movement, I’m almost alone in talking about this. Not even Peter Selg talks about the Deed of Rudolf Steiner.

And so I want to start there because for me, it’s a very important image. It refers to the refounding of the Anthroposophical Society, but as an expression of the Deed of Rudolf Steiner, whereas for many people, the refounding of the Anthroposophical Society is itself the story. They don’t see that as the Deed of Rudolf Steiner, yet it goes one level up if you think in these terms. There is a reference from Zeylmans, likening the Deed of Rudolf Steiner to the Deed of Christ, in the sense that Steiner’s Deed enabled humanity not to lose sight of the Deed of Golgotha. This is a very powerful image from Zeylmans. And so I want to start there, because for me that’s always been in the background of my anthroposophical story, yet I hardly hear anybody who talks about or uses this image.

And then, I want to say a little bit of what that meant for me. Very early on, I came into the Anthroposophical Society via what was then called the English Section, because in the split in 1935 the English Society split into

¹⁸ See *The Deed of Rudolf Steiner*, 1996, 2013, 2019. Search aebookstore.com.

two. The Society continued under Cecil Harwood, and the English Section under a similar person called John Cornish. And it was through John Cornish and his wife that I came into the Society. And when they sensed that they had someone on their hook, so to speak (it's not what they were thinking), but when they sensed here's a young anthroposophist coming along, they invited me to their house in Eastbourne in 1971 for nine days, in fact, 10 days, so we could re-enact, so to speak, the entire Christmas Conference, hour by hour, minute by minute, day by day. It was a very powerful experience. Directly after that there was a big youth conference in 1972 in Dornach and I was in a workshop there which ended with a big statement on the Goetheanum stage: Can we see in the Anthroposophical Society an archetypal social form for humanity – Rudolf Steiner's masterpiece in sociology? I never said that, but you might guess that I wrote it. A very tall guy called Dean Langenderfer, a huge, tall American basketball player type person¹⁹ went up on the stage. He said it; I wrote it. But it came out of this workshop that we did, and many of the people in that workshop became Youth Section members of that time. People like James Dyson and other people you might know of my generation. It was very interesting because I later realized you can compact the whole Christmas Conference into five very disciplined days. If you run through it day-by-day continually, and you don't have breaks for discussion, you just read the entire text of the red book.²⁰ I did that in Tunbridge Wells in England in my business, then again in 2009 in Australia, and then the last time was in Mexico about three years ago. I think, Lorene, you were there. And Kim and Gordon. And there we did it in a wonderful way. It turned out we were 13 people, and we had 13 chairs in the place we met. We read it in Portuguese, Spanish, German, and English. When we went round, you read in your native tongue. It was a very interesting experience. So, I recommend this to anybody. It's easy. You can download the template,²¹ and then you just methodically read everything, with no discussion, and you can do it in five days. And then you can have a very powerful experience of what the Deed of Rudolf Steiner is all about.

And then in that story – which some people may know, certainly people like James Dyson, Paul Mackay, Michaela Glockler, people of this vintage – we were in England when Jurgen Smit came to a big youth conference and gave lectures on the three classes of the School of Spiritual Science as tasks, seeds, and qualities. He was speaking on behalf of the Vorstand on a tour, which he also did in Switzerland more than once. And what he was saying was that we can talk about these three classes with the first class, the second class, and the third class, but without debating whether they are here or not, or what they are or not. We can understand them as tasks, seeds, and qualities. And we should now take this seriously. This was in 1979, when they began the series of seven-year conferences at the Goetheanum. This was begun, I think, by Schmidt-Brabant. I was party to that, and all my same-age colleagues. We were all there at Smit's lectures. It was a huge event that none of us have ever forgotten. But not many people know about what he said.

Rudolf Steiner, the Anthroposophical Society and the School of Spiritual Science

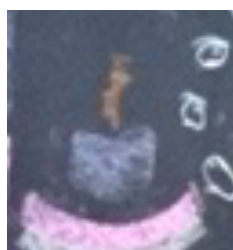
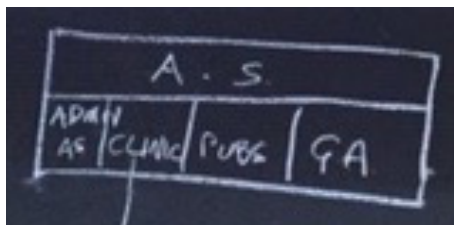
And then on this journey, in 1979, I had a very strange experience when I was not quite told, but kind of told to sit down and write a book. So, I did. It wasn't actually a book, it was a long essay. And it was called originally *Rudolf Steiner, the Anthroposophical Society and the School of Spiritual Science*. I sat down, not only in one setting but in different places, and wrote this book, but all the time I was writing this book, there was some kind of pressure on my back. And at one point, this was very freaky, I could feel the pressure coming and then going away, just telling me to keep going. So, I wrote this essay and then I published it. But before I did that, I sent the manuscript to every council member of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain at the time saying: What do you think if I publish this essay?

¹⁹ A student at Emerson college at the time, who later died tragically in a farming accident.

²⁰ *The Christmas Conference for the Foundation of the General Anthroposophical Society*. Anthroposophic Press, New York 1990. GA 260.

²¹ https://economics.goetheanum.org/fileadmin/economics/Various_pdfs/Revisit_CC_Retreat.pdf

Because it was very controversial, I went on a tour of all five of them, and I got a range of responses from ‘go for it’ to ‘never do this’.²² But, of course, I’m me, so I did it. And then came this experience of Jurgen Smit. I tracked everything he said, and then, with his estate’s permission, I published that. I republished the essay with all the lectures from Jurgen Smit about the three classes. And then I renamed it *An Economic Testament*. So it was a slight change; I’d gone from sociology to economics. And then I republished the whole thing again under the name *The Deed of Rudolf Steiner*, because I next included the ideas of Sergei Prokofiev about how the Society can be understood. I don’t know if you know all these stories about what I call the composite image of the Society, including the clinic, the Bau Verein, the Society’s administration and the publications. This is a very important image, which is kind of there but not there. And this is what Prokofiev was working with.



I tell you all that because I’m drenched in this story. And along the way, I think it was in 1984, I met Marc Desales and his now wife, Anita Grandjean, and we began a working relationship, which is now nearly 40 plus years long. And this had a galvanizing effect on this whole story, because they also went to Jurgen Smit’s lectures in Switzerland. They didn’t come to England. He gave the same lectures there. So, we met, and that changed the whole story. Then out of this work with Marc and Anita over many years we came to what I wanted to share with you. And you can find it in the Christmas Conference Proceedings, where the clue is when Steiner talks about the School of Spiritual Science as the soul of the Society. We looked at this quite a bit: if this (blue part in adjacent image) is the soul of the Society, it has to have a body (the pink part). This became our working image: the School of Spiritual Science held in the body of the Anthroposophical Society. Even in earthly terms, the Anthroposophical Society is the juridical vehicle of the School of Spiritual Science. The School has no earthly juridical existence. If you’re a section leader, for example, you will have a salary, but it’s booked to the Anthroposophical Society. The School of Spiritual Science does not exist juridically on earth. It’s held inside the Society. This is both an image and a juridical story.

And so, we started working with this, and then, of course, it’s kind of obvious. If you have a body and you have a soul, then somewhere, you have to have a spirit, otherwise this doesn’t make any sense. And the spirit – whether you say it’s Michael or Anthroposophia, one can discuss – but that aspect is even less ‘here’ than the School of Spiritual Science. I don’t know any expense item linked to Anthroposophia but I do know expense items linked to the School of Spiritual Science. So that’s an image that we worked on for a very long time. And it helped us to understand many practical things. I will come back to that in a moment.

So, then in the title ‘From St Gallen to Spring Valley and Beyond’ that I touched on last night, was another theme we worked on for a long time, Marc, Anita and I. What is the story about *this* part of the world? And I’ll just repeat what I said last night: Why St Gallen? What’s the point? The point is the monks from Hibernia not only went westwards, they went into Europe. They’d seen the Mystery of Golgotha in the etheric in Hibernia, and they went to bring the good news deep into Europe. And one of the places they went to is now called St Gallen, because one of the monks was called St Gall. He was one of the monks who went in the 7th century to the Pope, to ask the Pope to close awareness of the continent of North America. I’m always hesitant to say ‘America’, so I’m just going to say this continent. If I’m in Argentina, it’s not accepted. You have to be very careful. The word America in those days didn’t exist. There was just a place over there that the monks wanted the Pope to issue an edict about so that we all forget about it, and in three generations it was forgotten that there was a place over there, over here. And then you have the discovery of this part of the world by Columbus, this

²² Michael Wilson even said we have to wait till Rudolf Steiner returns!

weekend or next weekend. Discovery or refinding or being allowed back into this part of the world. And the reason was because in this part of the world, if people from Europe arrived here prematurely, they would not be able to carry the task of the Consciousness Soul. They would be caught by the double; and all these stories of things that happen here. So, from this, they had to be protected until the time was right. And in my image, I would say that in the 7th century, knowledge of this place was closed off, forgotten. Then in the 15th, 16th century, it was rediscovered. It was reopened, and we came here – we Europeans, that is. But it's only now, I would say, maybe with the Christmas Conference, that one can begin to understand what it means. Because I think it's only Rudolf Steiner who describes what we're going to find when we get here in modern terms. I don't know anybody else who talks about the North-South mountains and beware the Rockies. And I think it's important to sense that he's now giving in Consciousness Soul times and in Consciousness Soul terms an explanation of what it is that one has to deal with here.

That's me speaking very loosely, and towards this effort, towards this understanding, when people started to translate anthroposophy to the United States, that's when the Verse for America also came. So now, if you're going to carry this impulse of the Anthroposophical Society into the United States, you need something which will equip you for what you're going to find there, not just the knowledge about North-South and all this stuff, but an ordering principle, an ordering image.

An Ordering Image

This body-soul-spirit image of the Society is very ordering for the human being, because it's actually an image of the human being. It is analogous to the way the soul is related to the body and so on, and it comes at a very disordered time. This image wasn't there in 1923, so it is very ordering that we now have an image of an earthly, juridically existing and therefore potentially taxable society, which is simply a precise reflection of the way the human being as such is organized. There's no other such sociology anywhere, as far as I'm aware.



Now, at the beginning time for anthroposophy in the United States, the important period is from 1923 to 1933, when you first formed your Society with your bylaws from 1933 and the whole story of Ralph Courtney and the people here. It's in that period when, in my understanding, the first efforts were made to translate or to find how that universal story lives in this part of the world. This is a problem for every Country Society: How do you take further the Christmas statutes? Often a country society is organized by referring to the 15 statutes, then we fit them into our country through bylaws. This is pretty standard all around the world. The statutes you might say are universal, but the bylaws of a country, the culture, the habit life, the hidden forces, in countries, aren't identical. And so the role of the bylaws is to fit this universal situation to local circumstances so that the local circumstances enable this universal to come to expression locally. But the process doesn't go backwards and change the universal. For me, this is a matter of principle. When you come into a country and you want to embed the Christmas Conference in your country, it's there to better inform your country about itself. You have to be very careful that your country's habits don't reverse into this and say, 'We have a better idea.' (I'm saying that very quickly.)

So that is my image. And I think what's going on with this story here, and in all countries around the world, is Rudolf Steiner has this sociological masterpiece, he has this very important event, this Deed, the way he understands the Society. He needs to bring it into humanity at this critical point, especially at the end of the First World War, when humanity for the first time ever created its social order out of its own understanding. Up until then, everything was held by the gods. Even, I would say, right into the evolution of the Masonic orders which came to an end during the First World War. Jurgen Smit makes a comment about that to the effect that we have

to understand that the validity of the Masonic order, from the beginning of time right until now has just ended, and therefore, we need the three classes of the School of Spiritual Science. These are the legitimate heirs of the Masonic tradition, so to speak. This is a very powerful image and he's very clear about it. This happened during the First World War, which is partly why he was talking about the three classes in 1979. We may have problems in understanding them and talking about what they are, but as tasks, seeds and qualities they absolutely exist, and especially if you want to pick up the big mission of ordering human social life, but from the human beings outwards, not from the gods downwards.



This is a very important story, and it's especially important when you come into the business world. One can say a lot of things about the Masonic orders and so on, but in that world, there is a lot to notice. You will even see it on the back of your one-dollar bills. There's a lot of ordering. There's a pyramid and an eye and all sorts of things in the background²³ with a certain validity, I would say, until the First World War. And then the gods say,

'Now humanity, you are on your own, and your social order will be whatever you make of it, beginning with the Treaty of Versailles.' But this became a huge mess. And everything since is largely a mess of our own making.

A Second Chance

But we get a second chance, and so when you come to this point in time, 2023 onwards – I'm quite convinced of this – we have a second chance to do things right,²⁴ which is also why everything is so chaotic and falling apart right now, because we have to try again. So here I am, at this point in time, wondering if we can rerun this story: Can we come all the way from St. Gallen to Spring Valley afresh? And what would be the difference? These are crazy notions, but this is how I operate. And in this journey, in this coming here at this time, this story here is being quickened in this particular way.



Now I'm going to make a change in the drawing by adding 'the grid' from the Christmas Conference. Here you have the Anthroposophical Society. Then you have the School of Spiritual Science with its three classes, if I've got it right – open at the top and at the bottom.²⁵ And so, I put that on top of the earlier sketches because in a particular conference at the Goetheanum in December last year, there had been a series of conferences about Rudolf Steiner being yesterday's story and how we need to rethink the whole thing. He didn't understand what was going on. All sorts of things people say. So, we have to redesign the Anthroposophical Society to create a new Constitution. All this stuff's been going on, primarily only by German-speaking people and primarily only

German-speaking people from Germany. They don't live in the Swiss rights life. They sit in the Goetheanum talking about German rights life but in Switzerland, which has not got a German rights life. That's the whole point of Switzerland. It told the Hapsburgs to go away. This is a very serious story. So, when they sit – and I'm not being unkind, just descriptive – when 30 German people sit in the Goetheanum and redesign the Anthroposophical Society, they don't even think they're not in their own country, that they're in Switzerland. And so they don't ask themselves: 'Why did Rudolf Steiner do things the way he did, and do it here and not in Germany?'

²³ Annuit coeptis; Norus Ordo Sedorum.

²⁴ *A Second Chance for the World*. Search aebookstore.com

²⁵ GA 260. Op. cit.

It's a very strange story and it creates many problems. In this particular conference, which was leading into what we now call the convent or commission, there was a crisis moment when Gerald Haefner (leader of the Social Sciences Section) asked Marc Desaulles if he could start the next morning with his image of what he thinks the Society should look like? This is very important, because it means that Gerald (together with Justus Wittich) doesn't have a clear image, yet he's pushing and pushing and pushing for a rethink. But he asked for an image because he hasn't really got one. Gerald's position is that anthroposophy is not democratic; that Rudolf Steiner was 100 years ago; that we need to stop and start again in a modern democratic way. There are many people at the Goetheanum and around who think Rudolf Steiner is yesterday's story, that there are other important people, and that we have got to move on and catch up and be democratic, and all this.

So, Marc was asked to give his image²⁶ and I just want to replicate it, but I have added to it. This is the grid from Rudolf Steiner and in there is the story of the one, two, three classes. And Jurgen Smit said, you can say they're not here yet, you can say all sorts of things, and you can say there's only this one and there's not that, or – the official line – that the second and third don't exist, we only have the first one. For me, that's complete nonsense, yet that's the official line. And there's also the problem of saying there are three conditions for membership, when for Marc and me, there's only one condition of membership.²⁷

So then there are three classes, but as tasks, seeds, qualities. We don't need to argue about what they look like. We just need to start on the level of what I call the realm of endowment, not yet the realm of curation, let alone enactment. We can work on this level, and we don't need to fight about how the classes look. And this is Jurgen Smit's story, when he describes these different qualities. I'm saying all this in a fairly rapid way to bring you up to speed with the discussion, particularly at the Goetheanum, which is a fast-moving story, which you may or not know about. There is now a convent, or commission, to rethink the Constitution. The commission is following on from about five years of research into the whole history of the Anthroposophical Society, a great chronological story, 47 pages long.²⁸ The report is in German, but it also exists in English, and has great detail. It's a very valuable document because it tracks everything or purports to track everything. But now in that story, something is introduced which is very subtle, and this comes out of their research. As far as I know, it's not a prior image, but they start to see something, which you can already see in the Christmas Conference, in the Deed of Rudolf Steiner. They start to see and organize everything in two columns. There are things which you can carry with a large number of people, and there are things you can only carry with a small number of people. This is almost like the two cupolas, a small cupola and a large cupola. It's the same twin spaces story of the Anthroposophical Society, and they start to organize things in terms of what belongs in a large group and what in a small group. So, the membership of the Anthroposophical Society with 12,000 and now 40,000 people, that's a large group. But there are certain things a large group cannot do, like design a building or own real estate or own shares and competently manage them. This has to be done in a small group, and you already have that at the Christmas Conference because the refounded Society came into being inside a building which belonged to what was called the Goetheanum Association, which was a very tight group of people, and very competent. So, it was already in the Christmas Conference – a society of great width and potentially endless numbers of people in it, carried by the smaller organization of the Goetheanum Association.

They organize things accordingly. It's a very powerful image. But about six months ago, they ran into a problem because they'd not got everything in the right columns, if I put it this way, and particularly, they had the Bau Verein (Building Association) in the wrong column. So, there is the Goetheanum Association, the owner of the building, long before the Christmas Conference took place. This whole event took place inside someone else's

²⁶ See front page of *Anthroposophy Worldwide*, 1/2025.

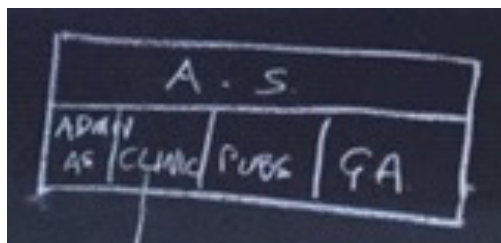
²⁷ https://economics.goetheanum.org/fileadmin/economics/Towards_2023/EC_MD_The_Challenges_of_Christmas_1923.pdf

²⁸ www.konstitution.anthroposophie.online

building. The site was acquired, the building was designed, everything – if you have ever built anything, this was a huge undertaking to build what became the first Goetheanum! Just on a totally practical level, apart from everything else you can say about it, how on earth was that going to be managed? It was managed by about 15 people who had the resources and the skill set to do it, and we were the beneficiaries of this when we formed the Anthroposophical Society inside their building. And so, you already had this very different story there.

The Bau Verein in the US

But now if you muddle this up, if you place the Bau Verein in the wide column, you're going to run into a huge problem because companies are not run by 40,000 people. They're run by a board of directors. And so they came upon a knot, about which Marc wrote a paper recently,²⁹ in which he described the Anthroposophical Society with its wide breadth as Michaelic. There's no limit you can put on the number of people who join the Anthroposophical Society over time. This is a totally Michaelic thing. But the kind of quality you need if you're going to build a building like the Goetheanum would be a small group of very profound Rosicrucians. They're the ones who know how to touch the earth and not be caught by the earth.³⁰ This doesn't come with the membership of the Anthroposophical Society. It's not a negative statement, but if you're going to come and touch this earth in this way – building a building, acquiring resources – you have to know what you're dealing with, and you have to be a very serious Rosicrucian, meaning never getting caught by the world you nevertheless have to go into. This is a very important distinction, because you can see how many AGMs, at least at the Goetheanum, can be very unpleasant events by and large, because where you might want to celebrate all that's going on in the eurythmy schools, in the sections, you hear very little about this, you just hear fights over who should own the shares of Weleda and what do we do with buildings. It's really not a nice experience. They're the most unpleasant meetings I've ever been to, so much politics, because in there you've got things which you need a very tight group of people with the highest skill set to deal with. You don't bring these into an AGM of up to 1000 people. That will just ruin the AGM. You can see this in many Anthroposophical Societies, how the AGMs are ruined by including in the Societies things which, in my view, shouldn't be in there directly.



So, I'm pointing to something, and you also have it in your 1933 bylaws here, as far as I understand them, because those bylaws are very interesting in terms of the story I'm telling. They are the bylaws of the Anthroposophical Society in America in New York State, when it was first incorporated. According to these bylaws, the Anthroposophical Society in America had an internal trust called Rudolf Steiner Foundation, which was a committee of people who have the skills to deal with the resources of the Society. And I think

this is a very interesting story, because it's very close to Steiner's composite image of the Society in which he put the Goetheanum Association inside the Anthroposophical Society. So, it's very important to have some sort of image of how Rudolf Steiner would do it. For then one can see the wide Anthroposophical Society and inside it is the narrow version, which is the administration of the Society. Then (in 1923) the publications, the clinic, the Bau Verein or building association. The building association was inside the Society in Steiner's composite image, not outside. And this is what the whole continuing row is all about. How are we to understand this? I think it's so interesting that in your 1933 statutes you have something very similar to this, where you have *inside the Society* an internal trust called the Rudolf Steiner Foundation. I don't know who they were, I can probably find out, but I think they were people who had the skill set to worry about and manage what I call serious assets – large sums of capital and real estate.

²⁹ http://www.hopespringseternal.world/fileadmin/MD_Two_Poles_Revised_.pdf

³⁰ For background, see *A Random Walk to Dornach*. Search aebookstore.com.

I mention that because now all over the world we have lots of problems, because many Anthroposophical Societies own real estate and they have large sums of capital, and in my experience you have a double negative here. If you're a study group and you're trying to study anthroposophy, and then someone gives you a million dollars, this is the end of your successful study of anthroposophy. You'll be fighting over what to do with a million dollars, and this happens very fast. Or when you were very happy in your side room, not paying rent to Threefold Foundation, that's very easy, very nice. I'm not criticizing it. But if you start getting charged \$100 an hour, your nice study group will transform in a split second: Who's going to fund the 100? Who's responsible for it? I'm not inventing this; it happens very fast. A group of people who just want to study to further anthroposophy are fine until someone gives them a million dollars or until they decide, we don't like the side room here, let's go and buy our own building and have a group building. And then the problems begin and very soon, you have both a not very happy branch and a very unhappy piece of real estate. This is my experience. I won't mention examples right now. These are all live stories.

When I was asked to be the treasurer of the Society in Ireland, I said I was very happy to be that, because you own nothing. And I looked at your balance sheet which has practically got nothing in it. And when you have council meetings you knock on the nearby Waldorf school and ask, 'Can we use your kindergarten for the Sunday afternoon?' Although we had to sit on childrens' chairs, for me it was worth it because in that room we never talked about funds, we never talked about real estate. We only talked about how to further anthroposophy in Ireland.



Rosicrucian Karmic Partners

We've made a muddle of things. I want to add a piece to this about what occurred in the meeting at the Goetheanum last December. Marc had spoken a lot about the soul and the body, and it was very clear to me that when this group tried to relate to this lecture nobody really understood what the body was, anthroposophically speaking. People said a lot of things, and I thought, 'Wait a minute, you don't know what the body is.' Meaning, I have a body, but you only see it because it's filled with substance. My body, you can't actually see. You can see it because it's filled with substance. And that's the image I wanted to share, because I think when you come into this – I put it down here – when you come down into this world, you have to be very careful. This experience will

come and meet you. When you come into the world of resources, the physical world, there's a kind of counterforce (the brown arc). You have to know this will come and meet you. When you go into the markets, if you start doing real estate development, you will be caught in all sorts of logics and temptations and all sorts of things. And if you don't have a sense that this is something you need to know about and have to manage and have to put in its place, you will be caught by it.³¹

A very simple example and a very major example. Most Anthroposophical Societies think when they're forming themselves that they have to be tax exempt. They think this, so they immediately incorporate in this country, for example, as a 501(C)(3), and then go for tax exemption. But often that's a very expensive choice to make. I can tell you about expensive tax stories in our movement, caused by choosing to be tax exempt, then not being able to be compliant with the rules, then getting fined. And the cost of the fine is more than the savings on the tax exemption. We make this assumption, we go straight for tax exemption, and now we're having to be compliant with the IRS, and very quickly, everything you do is in order to be compliant with the IRS. But you never reverse this story. You never say, 'Hey, IRS, we are a new thing in the whole universe. Watch us carefully and revise your rules.' I don't know anyone except Bernhard Behrens, the late Richard Rettig in San Diego, maybe

³¹ Referring to the forces that are found in the world of resources.

Stephen here, and in Germany, Benediktus Hardup, and, who ever took on to understand taxation, what Steiner meant about taxation, and how do we tell the tax world what its next step looks like. Most people just say, 'We want tax exemption, tell us what we have to do to get it.' And then quietly they reorganize themselves to be IRS compliant. This is the opposite of coming out of the Christmas Conference into the rights life of our time and giving it a new direction.

Or if you're dealing with funding, for most people, their largest asset will only ever be the house they live in. So that's, I don't know, half a million dollars max, probably less. But when you get on the board of an anthroposophical organization, now you have \$10 million to deal with. You're out of your depth, you're beyond your pay grade almost immediately, but you don't see this and you don't accept it. So you start doing things for which you have no training, and you don't have the competence. You wouldn't go out and build a portfolio of 20 houses and learn what that means, but now you can just say, oh, now I've got 20 houses. You don't see it, but it happens. You have huge opinions about things, and you make crazy decisions, in my view.

These are examples of where, if we're going to come into this world, then we'll come to a very strange story which I've been saying for years and years – ever since my 1979 essay. We have to be very careful. When this movement comes into the earth to do things, to build buildings and so on, to incarnate itself, it will rely on its Rosicrucian karmic partners. It doesn't have to do that itself. And they even have this verse, which has this line in it, 'to center the economy is to resolve the chaos in karma, facing us with the astral life, in touching a task, perhaps not his [meaning Rudolf Steiner], to maintain true the economic structure of the world.'³² One may bridle at this line – a task perhaps not Rudolf Steiner's – but this has been one of my deepest questions in the whole economic world. Yes, Rudolf Steiner gave the economics course. Yes, he did a lot of things in his own biography in finance and economics. But I don't think it's his task to maintain the economic structure of the world. He has a lot to say about this, but the people who are going to do that will have to be the ones that have the skill set and the karma to do this with his insights.

I believe there is an occult law: If you have very powerful insights, it's best that you do not have the capital to implement them. In the Old Mysteries you could not implement your insight unless you had the capital, in the way that was in those days. You couldn't have an insight if you didn't have the ability to implement it and vice versa. In the New Mysteries, it is the opposite. If you have an insight, you must use someone else's capital. Otherwise, you create a dangerous short circuit, and this will be tyrannical in social life. You can see people like Bill Gates or Warren Buffett, people with colossal resources, and they can just do what they want. Because there's a complete short circuit, they can just do what they will, and they never have to ask anybody. If they involve anyone, it is simply by offering investors a huge rate of return. They appeal to the egotism of investors in order to get other people's money. But really what they're doing, especially in their foundations, is deciding humanity's affairs on the basis of a personal whim. They can just say the thing we don't like this year is malaria in India, so we'll send billions there, and we will tell governments to get out of our way. All this because they have a direct link from their insight to their will and their ability to do what they think is important. But in the New Mysteries, it's not like that. If you have an insight, you must not put your own capital in the path of that insight. You put your capital in the path of someone else's insight, you break this connection. And that's what I mean in this kind of story, when I wonder if it is a task of Rudolf Steiner to solve the economic problems of the world. This is somebody else's task, and to me, these will be what I call our Rosicrucian karmic partners. I think to begin with they're members of the Anthroposophical Society (and also of the School). People who, as well as having the competence to take on real estate or serious sums of money, know what's in this world, and know how to be in that world without being caught by it.

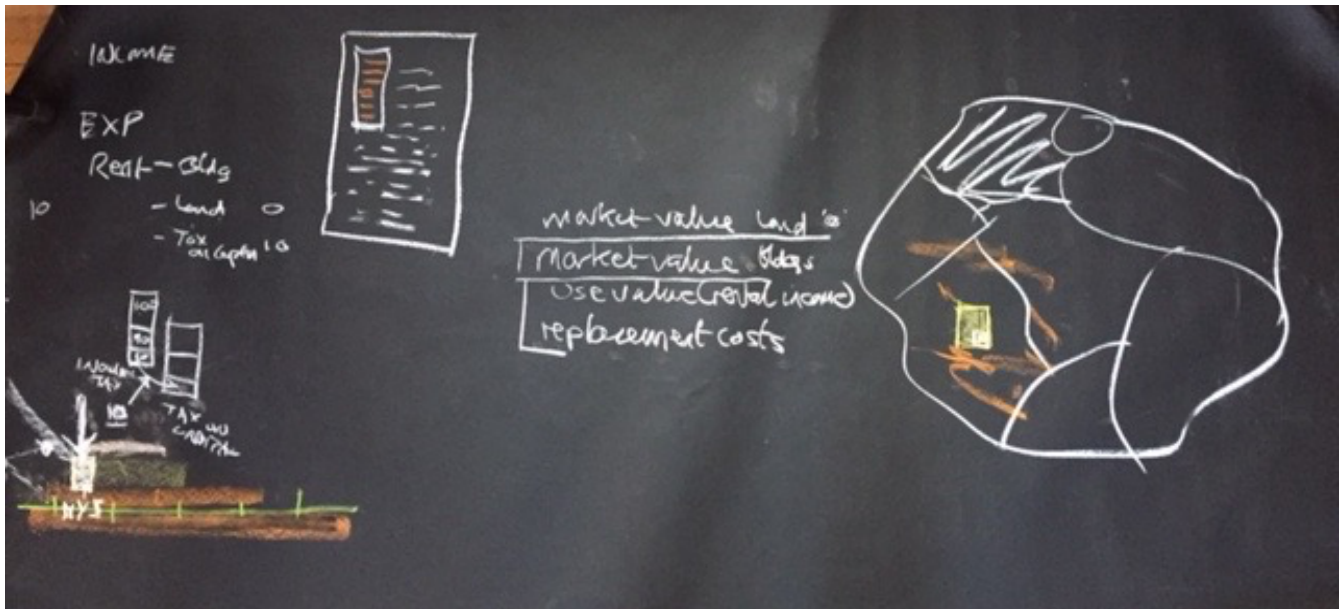
³² The verse this occurs in can be found in *The Deed of Rudolf Steiner*, op. cit.

Fast Track to Michaelmas 2033

And that's where I'd like to end, because if we go back 100 years or so and now come back here, there was a point I made last night: 100 years ago, Rudolf Steiner wanted there to be an Economics Section and he asked Wachsmuth to lead it. And so it would have been the case that the Treasurer of the Anthroposophical Society was in the Economics Section and had a clear research place to be. But it didn't happen. But if it had happened, you would have a very powerful story already in the Christmas Conference. There would have been an Economics Section where the people involved in finance had their home, a very precise home, and this would have had a huge influence because I think to begin with these people would then have been such people. They would have been able to do research, to understand what all this means and how to manage it. Now, 100 years later, I think because this is now known that this is what Steiner wanted to do, you can see the quickening effect when people discover this: 'OK, now something can happen. Now we have a way we can understand this story.'

And then we have a fast-track phenomenon. Now we can catch up with 100 years of delay. You have to make an image of where we might have been 100 years from then, and we can get there very quickly. The time frame I give that is 2033. Eight Michaelmasses away. This is me being very Rosicrucian, if I can put it that way. We need a timed strategy taking us to Michaelmas 2033, by when we have to solve this problem.

So, that's what I wanted to share. This is part of a triptych, so it's following on from what I said last night and preceding what I want to talk about tomorrow night, which is Rudolf Steiner's house.



Rudolf Steiner's House

8 October 2025

Good evening. This is the third of a triptych of three different topics. I call it a triptych because they're related and there's a journey involved in them. Originally, I wanted to do this on the way to the Detroit annual meeting as part of an ongoing work which some of us in this room have been party to for a long time, and which in the last two years has quickened as a kind of cohort who first met in Switzerland. Many of us arrived in Portland for the annual meeting last year, and we're continuing that journey. Originally, I wanted to come here and then go to Viroqua and then Ann Arbor and then Detroit, but it worked out that all three events are happening here, which I am very happy about.

There are three different themes, and each night I talk with a different hat on. The first evening and the first topic was called 'The Lost Section', and was about a recently discovered minute from Albert Steffen, in which just prior to the Christmas Conference Rudolf Steiner asked Guenther Wachsmuth if he would lead a Section for Economics. And when you dig into this story, it's evident Steiner never asked for a Section for Social Sciences. This was created in the 1960s by different people, so it has no origin with Steiner. What he wanted was the treasurer to start and lead a Section for Economics. If you know anything about the history of the anthroposophical movement, this is game-changing. If you have this image and then you track forward, what would have happened if that had happened? It means in particular that the treasurers and all those responsible for finance in the anthroposophical movement would have had a home for their research and would have grounded that work on Steiner's economics course. It would not have been taken over by the bankers who never grounded their work on Steiner's economics course, but did become the ones who advised the Society how to do its finances, which then became based on banking finances (money as thing) and not on money as bookkeeping, which is what Steiner would have done. So that's just one little window I'll open and then close, because that has huge consequences for the evolution of the Anthroposophical Society, and also for the world at large. If we'd been able to demonstrate money as bookkeeping the world at large would have been able to take hold of this idea.

Part of what we're looking at tentatively, is how would it have been if we'd understood that the origins of the so-called United States of America had a Rosicrucian foundation linked to bookkeeping? I'm sure that was the case;

if you look at Washington and all these people, they had a very strong link to bookkeeping. And if you go into the external history of your first and second National Banks all the way up to the Federal Reserve and onwards, you would have a totally different understanding of your history. That's a very huge topic. And yet, if you were involved in the Economics Section in the United States, that would be top of the list: How would Rudolf Steiner's image of money as bookkeeping explain or enlighten you about your own financial history? (I'll just throw that out in case anyone wants to do a PhD on that topic.)

The first evening I spoke with the credentials of the convener of the Economics Conference of the Goetheanum, part of the Social Sciences Section, which we started in 2002. The decision to do so was taken in Kimberton in 2001, just after the towers came down. There was a threefold meeting in Kimberton when I asked Paul Mackay: 'Can't we start an Economics Section?' What's now called the Economics Conference was the outcome of this. I also had the hat on of a founder-participant in the Circle of Treasurers, which is now seven years old, where all the treasurers of the Society around the world meet to discuss finance, and none of it as bankers. Our image is: How do we build finance out of bookkeeping? This is a big topic, but I just want to say that changes enormously when you look back and see, 'Oh, there should have been a Section for Economics and the treasurer would be in that section,' because now you can fast forward a lot of delayed problems in this movement, in my opinion. This is much of what we're doing in the Circle of Treasurers when reviewing how the finances of the Anthroposophical Society are understood and conducted. This is a very big story, and those were my auspices. That's also why I'm currently a member of the Anthroposophical Society in America, because I go where my research takes me. I am still a member in Quito, and I was a member of the Society in Ireland when I was the treasurer, and before that, in Great Britain since 1972. For the last two years, I've been a member of the Society in America, even though I don't live here.

So that was the first evening, and then the second evening was about the threefold foundation of the Society, which was a kind of hook to get you all in the room. It's what was illustrated a little bit here. I won't go over this territory again: but the relationship of the Society to the School; how the society is the legal-financial home of the School, which has no earthly juridical existence; how it is embedded in the Society; and how the Society relates itself to the world of resources and all the challenges of that province.



Last night I told the story about the Society as the body of the School, because the School is the soul of the Society. I won't repeat the whole story but here I have indicated the physical body compared to the phantom body.³³ If you understand this, then you can understand the problem of what happens when you come into the world of resources. I'm going to touch on that a little bit this evening.

Last night, my auspices were as author of an essay I wrote a long time ago, which is now called *The Deed of Rudolf Steiner*, which includes a section from Jurgen Smit about the lectures he gave in the period 1979 to 1983, about understanding the three classes of the School of Spiritual Science as tasks, seeds and qualities. We don't have to debate what they look like or whether they exist or not, which is a hugely complicated area. We can understand them as gestures.

This evening, my auspices are founder-member of the board of the Goetheanum Fund Worldwide, of which the Anthroposophical Society in America is a member, probably unknown to you.³⁴ The title I have is deliberately controversial and is intended to have an influence on policy. It's called 'Rudolf Steiner's House'. In case

³³ '...the Phantom, belongs to the physical body as a form-body which permeates, and at the same time holds together, the material parts that are woven into our physical body.' *From Jesus to Christ*, GA 131. 11 October 1911, Karlsruhe.

³⁴ See last section of this article.

anyone's wondering what to do with Rudolf Steiner House in Ann Arbor, this is about that. This is a funny story for me. As someone who speaks British English, I would never say *The* Rudolf Steiner House. In England, we have Rudolf Steiner House. It is the address of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain. But here you call it *The* Rudolf Steiner House, which for me is a grammatical mystery. Why is it so at a remove? Why doesn't it say Rudolf Steiner House, Home of the Anthroposophical Society, or Movement – or both! – above its red door? This would cause people to turn and look as they drove by. But why does your grammar, if it's your grammar, say, *The* Rudolf Steiner House? Because, grammatically speaking, that puts it over there somewhere, since grammar reveals how the soul is related to the world. I'm walking around my subject, so I thought, how do I address this whole problem? Because in my view, I would be very concerned if you were to sell that building now, very concerned. This would take a whole ground out from underneath the Society and the General Secretary, at the worst possible moment in my judgment. And so, because I want to talk about that, I came up with this title of 'Rudolf Steiner's House'. Be careful what you're doing with Rudolf Steiner's house in the United States at this point in time. This is my story and my concern. But it's all a work in progress. So even if I speak fairly dramatically or fairly adamantly, or with passion, it's still a work in progress. You'll have to forgive my passion.

Concerning Endowment

I wasn't sure where I would start, but luckily, I had a conversation when I came in. It gave me my starting point, because Monday evening I referred to the endowment, the endeavor to create a Society for Theosophical Art and Life. It depends on how you translate it, but in this effort, which didn't succeed – putting it very crudely, though I'm not convinced – you had a situation where Steiner was trying to create this endowment and in the lecture given on the 15th of December, 1911, called *The Way of Working* in the Mercury Press translation, introduced by Marie Steiner, there is Steiner's interesting commentary. You can read in there a very telling question that was put to him: What happened to it? And he replied: 'Why are you asking this?' It's very complicated the way he speaks. He didn't quite say this, but, 'Why are you asking this question? Why are you using words? And he has this whole way of putting it: 'Be careful how you speak, because even to speak may not be necessary.' It's a very strange thing he's talking about. 'Why are you even asking this question? It should be obvious (this is me speaking) that we're in a process from endowment to curation, to having a secretary, to having a seal. And this needs constant re-willing on a daily basis. It has no earthly existence, except out of the will of those who understand what I'm talking about. Indeed, it might never even appear as an organization.' That's how I read it. And so, to me, this is a very interesting story. Yes, it went back to heaven if Steiner says so, but I'm not so sure because there's another story linked to this.

The people who were carrying this, endowing this, bringing it to earth, included a lady who lost her bearings and so that had to be resolved. And so this is me trying to sense what's going on. So that whole effort disappeared, and therefore the group carrying that disappeared. But it kind of reappeared very soon afterwards, minus the lady, in link with the Bau Verein (building association). This is a very strange story, and it gives rise in me to two very important considerations. It creates a history, which I want to trace a little bit, and it creates a way to understand things. From this I learned that just out of the spiritual world, people can will something into existence; it comes through a process of being endowed, curated, having a secretary, and a seal. It may never be enacted. It doesn't have to happen. That depends on constantly willing it into being. And that could then appear in the lightest possible juridical form as a group of people sitting in a circle to talk about anthroposophy. They have no money and own nothing. They don't pay the rent for the room; there's a basket which can be ignored. Tonight, for example, we just happen to be here, and no one will know we were here, no one will know what we did, and when we leave the room, it's as if it never happened. And for me, this can be applied to the evolution of the Anthroposophical Society itself, especially now when many people are thinking it should all be rethought and

restructured, but for me, very uncertain reasons. I'm not sure. We could be saying not that it failed, but that we hadn't completed the process of endowment and curation and a secretary and a seal. And the endowment has to do with constantly willing it into being, not saying it's a done deal that happened once, but constantly breathing it into being, because it's not an organization, it's a set of relationships that Rudolf Steiner described to save mankind from itself (me speaking). This is not an organizational concept. You can see that in the whole way it came about with the Foundation Stone meditation, not the meditation itself, but its uttering as a foundation stone, which is the first thing that happened. You have the evolution of the meditation but the stone is already set. The evolution of the meditation, how you work with it, is not the foundation stone. The foundation stone is its utterance on the first occasion. This is really, I think, important to have a sense for.

And so it can't be undone, in my view. Just as you can't undo the Christ event. You may not understand it, and it may take thousands of years before it's really here, but certainly you cannot undo it just because you don't understand it, or you haven't got the will to hang in there, and so on. For me we're still in the area of endowment, and part of the problem of our 100 years of trying to endow this refounded Society is we haven't understood how to curate it. We haven't understood what form it should have, what its point is and so on. We've been doing so many things, often at cross purposes, and with all the conflicts of the 20th century. Not only in the movement, but in the world, so it's not surprising we still haven't learned how to curate this endowment. When you look into deeper levels, what would be the secretary? And what would be sealed, and is it in fact in its destiny to be enacted, to come into this world? Or is its destiny to hover just behind the scenes? For me, this is how I read the endowment, and therefore implicit in this is the need to be very careful when we say Steiner failed. And even when you cite Steiner saying, it's gone to the moon or whatever people say happened, be careful if you say these things – I'm not believing. It's like saying the Deed of Golgotha – nice idea, but you know what?, life's moved on.

Just because we don't understand something doesn't mean it didn't happen. I think this is very unfortunate, very dangerous, and to the end of my days, I will resist the idea that Rudolf Steiner failed. Yes, we failed to understand Rudolf Steiner. This I get. But if he failed, he did so because he put his trust in us, and so far that has proved to be misplaced. But I think he has a long view, and he doesn't expect everything to happen overnight, tomorrow, or in this lifetime. So, for me, it's really strange that we would give up on this project so soon after a first attempt to describe it. And also, in that mood, as I mentioned maybe last night, I firmly believe that humanity gets two chances. As I said, I think last night, after the end of the First World War, when everything was broken apart, when the Masonic influence had run out of road, and through the Treaty of Versailles humanity for the first time tried to create a world order according to its understanding of life.

It broke. But you get a second chance with things like this. It's a bit like after the Second World War, after all the bombings in Europe, people put up 'international' architecture, huge high rises that people were moved into, and in 20 years, they were torn down because they had become slums, they were impossible to live in. You could say retrospectively, that was obvious, but not necessarily. In those days, it was just amazing to put people in high rises and get them *out of* slums. So sometimes you have to come into the earth, do something in order to realize one's errors.

But we get a second chance. If you get it wrong, a second time, *now* you have a problem. And I feel this is an occult law, something like that. But close to this, and I think in this period now to 2033, we have a second chance to get it right and to understand what we are trying to do. And I would only give up after Michaelmas 2033. Even Christmas 2023 was not for me the important date. It's important if you're looking for anniversaries and wanting to celebrate centenaries, but the crucial date is 2033 – 2,000 years after the Mystery of Golgotha. That's the date we should be worried about. Even now we're in this situation where after the 100th anniversary of

the refounding came the next anniversary, 100 + 1. That got us to Rudolf Steiner's death day. Really? 100 + 10 will get us to Michaelmas 2033. This is a much more important date. If by then we haven't solved things then we really can talk about failure, in my view.

The Building Association

Where's my evidence for thinking like this? It's because I think this whole process from endowment to curation, to having a secretary, to a seal, and also the compassion of the gods, as they watch us try and figure it all out on our own for the first time in the whole of evolution is enormous, and Michael has a huge amount invested in humanity at this point in time. We're now in his crucial regency, because he's been saying to all the archangels, 'Trust me, they're worth it. Trust me, we've just got to get to my next regency. Trust me. It's only the first 140 years, and you know that I've got 350 years. They're one third through. Trust me, trust me, trust me. They'll get it in time. They just have to get away from the back suction of the Gabriel age. They have to get away from having crossed the threshold unprepared in the 1840s, and all its consequences. And Jahve losing control of his beings, leading to the First World War. Really, trust me. It takes a long time to get over the back pressures caused by those events, but now things will change.'

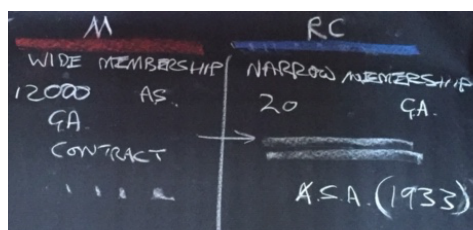
This is the period I think we're in where we can get a new lease of life. I'm saying all this in a slightly impassioned way to locate us in a particular history which is the history of the so-called Bau Verein. And I want to describe that in a particular way, because Bau Verein means building association, and it came about originally in Munich, when it was decided to build what became the first Goetheanum in Munich, and to do that, they had to get the consent and all the rest of it, so they created the Johannes Bau Verein in Germany. (Johannes refers to the Mystery Plays; not the John Gospel.) Then when it was decided to move from Munich to Dornach, they created another Johannes Building Association in Switzerland, a separate legal entity in 1913, that subsumed the Building Association in Munich into itself. I haven't said this before, but I feel like saying, this is like the two Jesus children story. That it wasn't just a legal subsumption but a deferment, if you see what I mean in terms of the two Jesus children. And so then we had the Bau Verein in Switzerland under Swiss law, which had as its board most of those who were on the board of the Society for Theosophical Art and Life.

This is a strange story, and if you follow that story, as brief as I can make it, it then changed its name in 1918 to the Goetheanum Association. But now if you imagine you're going to build, in the First World War, the first Goetheanum and all its ancillary buildings, meaning the Glasshouse in order to make the windows, the Heating House and so on, if you're going to build all that on a hill in the First World War with all the huge complexity of a building which 'cannot be built', you just have to make an image of who is capable of doing this. It won't be a large group of people. It will be a small group of people with a high skill set and able to command the substantial resources needed to make this possible. I think it's really important to make an image of this, and especially so at that time when the First World War was raging in earshot across the hill. And then in 1918, it was decided to change the name of the Johannes Building Association to the Goetheanum Association for the School of Spiritual Science, meaning this association would now be there to house the School of Spiritual Science. This is before 1923. So, it changed its name. It was still the same entity. It was still the same organization. It still had the same assets. And so, you have a problem coming up here, the same thing keeps changing its name, but not what it is.

And then you come to a situation with the refounding of the Anthroposophical Society which was originally founded in Germany in Cologne in 1912 to distinguish it from the Theosophical Society – not as the German Anthroposophical Society, but as the worldwide Anthroposophical Society headquartered in Cologne. And now, the movement grew; various other people decided to create Anthroposophical Societies in Switzerland, Sweden,

Britain, and so on. And a lot of those were deliberately encouraged and presided over by Rudolf Steiner in 1923 as he went around Europe. And out of this circle of Country Societies he then convened the Christmas Conference. It was convened by the Country Societies. It didn't exist before. And then you had this so-called refounding in which the General Anthroposophical Society was born out of all the Country Societies. And at this point, they became Groups of the Society worldwide. They might have been juridically and tax-wise, independent and autonomous of one another and of the General Society, but on another level, they were all Country Groups of the one Society. One of the consequences for the German people was, 'We've just been downgraded. We're now the Society in Germany, we're no longer *the* Anthroposophical Society,' because a Society is *in*, not *of*, a country. In your case, the Anthroposophical Society *in* and not *of* America.

This is very important and also, even if you joined this Society through the Country Group of the Society in America, the pink card does not come from there. It comes from the Society at the Goetheanum. That's not an image that allows people to say, 'I'm in the Society here and they are over there.' This is not an image you should ever allow yourself to have, because it's nonsense. If that's what you think, then send your pink card back and get your pink card from wherever you think it ought to come from. And then you will see the nonsense of the idea that 'the Goetheanum is over there and I'm here.' This is a problem all around the world. And so I'm trying to undo this story. But it becomes very complicated, because this refounding of the Society took place inside somebody else's building, a building of the Goetheanum Association. That's just a fact. Like here: your branch meeting, as far as I can see, has no legal existence, but thanks to those who own this building, their skills and their generosity, you're sitting in this circle. And thanks to whoever put money in the basket, your branch is getting some cash tonight. Because Threefold doesn't want it and neither do the Economics Group of the Anthroposophical Society in America or the Economics Conference of the Goetheanum. So, you've got no expense; you've just got income in your branch. This is just a little detail on an embryonic level.



Wide or Narrow

I'm trying to say a lot of things and if you follow this complicated story, it's easy to see the Anthroposophical Society was founded inside a building of the Goetheanum Association. It's easy to see that means two separate things. One has the building, the other just needs a place to meet. That's easy until as they go forward in their evolution, they

have a joint AGM day (I won't give you all the details). The one is called the General Anthroposophical Society, and the other one goes from being the Goetheanum Association to also becoming the General Anthroposophical Society. Now you have two separate entities with the same name, and so now chaos reigns. That's the history of it. And now you can go all through the 20th century in endless argument: 'What did I join?' 'I don't believe this exists.' 'I don't believe that exists.' You can take it all the way to the court in Solothurn in 2002, where the judge said, 'OK, let's be really clear. (This is me speaking.) The Society that was founded – or refounded, as you call it – in 1923 says in its statutes that it will have an AGM. In fact, it never had one, so it never consummated itself. It just endowed, curated, whatever, but it never got enacted. So it never existed. The other one with the same name, has a whole record of annual general meetings, so clearly that is the General Anthroposophical Society.'

This is too bad for those who think the pink card came from the other one, but that's the end of it as far as the judge is concerned. But not as far as the Anthroposophical community is concerned! It still rankles for many people, the evidence being that we're now rethinking the whole Constitution yet again. Every decade we go through this. I'm trying to tell you the story because you may or may not know it. There's a whole process taking place beginning five, six years ago with the Vorstand inviting all members via *Anthroposophy Worldwide*

to contribute to rethinking the entire chronology of the Anthroposophical Society in order to solve once and for all this stuff that is still flying around. That was five or six years ago. Since then it has published a 47-page report in German, also in English, but it's only on the website in German.³⁵

This report is very interesting because it starts to track very methodically the entire history from Steiner's theosophical time forward. A huge amount of research into documents and legal interpretations that is hugely interesting, and it comes up with an important research finding, if I speak professionally about research. It's very detailed. It's a good piece of research. It's very thorough. They didn't start out with this finding, but along the way they started to realize the thesis shown here of two themes in two colors and two columns. This arose out of their research; I'm not clear if it was there in their first thoughts. So here (in the adjacent drawing) we have things which involve wide membership, and things which need a narrow membership. As far as I know, this came out of their data: wide membership and narrow membership.

And so, they started saying of every element and event: where does it sit? For example, if you have a refounded Society, with 12,000 members, it belongs here where you can have a wide membership. 12,000 people cannot be a narrow membership. If you look at the Goetheanum Association, that had, I think, 20 or so members, including the board and contributing members, who were people who didn't have any voting rights. This is what one can call a narrow membership. And so that went in the blue column. And so they started to use this analytical device. And if you keep going down, you can start saying, well, does this organization, does this minute, does this contract have to do with a wide membership or a narrow membership? I'm rushing through this, but it became clear that the Goetheanum Association has a narrow membership. We should have a very small group of people that know what they're doing and they're not obliged to publish their information. This is not what people do who are building serious pieces of property; they remain discrete. They don't do this with 12,000 people. No way can you have 12,000 people deciding the color of a ceiling.

So now you can ask of any organization or contract – is it wide or narrow? And then they came to a certain point in their story. They had in here, the red wide column, the Goetheanum Association, a particular contract and so on, and it was clear, not to me, but to Marc Desaulles, the Swiss General Secretary and Treasurer, that they were in the wrong column – wide instead of narrow. Marc brought this to the researchers' attention, and it's been partly modified in the report, but not acted on as far as I know. Yet this has huge consequences, because if the Bau Verein was a narrow organization, it cannot be in the wide column.

This is linked to what I was trying to say last night, that the key to understanding the Deed of Rudolf Steiner is to ask how do you marry things from the heavens with earthly existence without being caught there? How do you bring these two things together? And here I would say, a key thing is to make this differentiation between what can be done by a wide group of people and what can be done by a narrow group of people. And if I put that to the ultimate limit, which I said this afternoon and I may regret having said it, but I'll say it again: if we look at the 12,000 here, a lot of people are talking about this and they're talking about how we're down to 40,000 and asking when do we go down to zero? About how in this movement how terrible it all is. But I say, no, at this point in time you would expect it to be 40,000 and then start to go back up again. Don't be caught by stats. Just have some image of evolution, and if you look at the whole last 100 years, why would it be any more than this at this point? It's not on a downward trajectory necessarily. That depends on how you understand things.

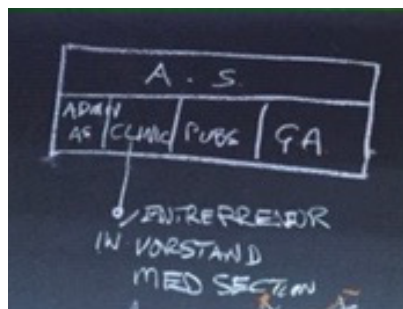
I'm saying a lot of things. A lot depends on whether the Goetheanum Association and a particular contract that I have in mind, belongs here (wide) or here (narrow). Get that wrong and one brings into the Anthroposophical Society, real estate, property, investment portfolios, the ownership of Weleda, the ownership of many buildings

³⁵ www.konstitution.anthroposophie.online

at the Goetheanum it does not need – houses and assets that have been given to it, but are just a drag on proceedings. Not the Glasshouse, not the Heating House, but houses. Why can't they let someone else look after them, and so on? And so if you go to these AGMs, they can be horrible, because they get pre-occupied with who should own Weleda,³⁶ and then all the fights begin. Worse meetings I've never been to in my life, all because serious assets are thought to belong to the Society. And so it goes on. But what do you here know about the details of the economy of Dornach 3,000 miles away? Some of you have never been there, right? You have a right to vote at the AGM and go online and you can join in, but you have no way of knowing what's going on there. Absolutely none whatsoever. I don't mean this rudely. You have no knowledge, certainly no local knowledge, unless you live or spend time there. If we can understand all this we can begin to unravel many things, one of which is the Anthroposophical Society in America!

The Anthroposophical Society in America

As far as I understand it, the Society in America is a narrow organization, its membership is its board. That's very important. So don't have an expectation of the AGM being somewhere where one has a vote. It isn't, except if the council proposes a change to the bylaws. It takes one hour, which is not long enough to have any conversation. That's not your forum. It's a narrow association. I want to flag this because of the complicated situation you have in the Society in America, but which we can start to understand if we make this differentiation. And yet you can see how this Society at its inception was very close to what Steiner had in mind – the composite image he had in mind. I'll do it here. Here's the Anthroposophical Society, and what he was trying to do in here was the administration of the Society. Here was the clinic of Ita Wegman. Here were the publications. And here was the Goetheanum Association, the Bau Verein. This is what I call Steiner's composite image of the Anthroposophical Society, in which the Goetheanum Association is inside the Society, not outside. You see an echo of this in the 1933 bylaws, which say that *within* the Society is an internal trust called Rudolf Steiner Foundation, to which the council defers all these complicated topics of property and investment. I'm not saying it's good, bad or indifferent, but that's how I read your bylaws. They are very close to Steiner's composite image.



And I want to add a further detail that Marc Desaulles pointed out recently. If I just take one example, the director of the clinic, Ita Wegman. She's also a member of the Vorstand. So she's an entrepreneur, she's on the Vorstand of the Society, and she's also the leader of the Medical Section. This is powerful stuff, if you make an image. The Vorstand will be made up of members who are leaders of a section *and* entrepreneurs, like Ita Wegman, like Marie Steiner. I'm just throwing this in, because while what Steiner had in mind is complicated and comprehensive, it can become clear if you look closely at it. It's an unfinished story, hugely complex to understand, but I

think in the end understandable through this little device of what belongs where? And if not entrepreneurs, then at least financially literate and able to understand the finances of the Society (or Section) they are responsible for – and not just be spenders of donated funds.

The Bau Verein and the Anthroposophical Society in America – a Special Case

I'll stop this whole story there. I'm sharing it because the way we understand real estate in this movement, not only in the United States, but all over the world, is now critical, and in the United States, you have a number of real assets – Threefold Foundation, Chicago, Pasadena, and in some recent comments I sent to the council about Steiner's House, I said, don't sell that in a hurry. Change your image, because in the letter you would have

³⁶ Treated differently, for example, to Rudolf Steiner Press in London and Steinerbooks and the Library in the US.

received, they say, 'We need to have something which everyone can get to. And I'm saying, no way, you don't need that. You already have three places that everyone can get to. We can all get to Threefold to have a big conference. We can all get to Chicago, may not be such good housing. We can all get to Pasadena – all of them good venues which need to be used and not just hung on to. If you make a movement-wide image, if we in our movement need to all get somewhere for a big conference, we have three locations already. Why are they there after the tide has gone out on the original rationale? Before we get rid of any of them and try and find other ones with all the complications that entails, make sure the tide isn't about to come back in again. And one way would be that movement-wide we ask, where can we all get large crowds?

We have three such assets in this movement, but not the house in Ann Arbor. It has another function – to provide an anchor, a place where the Society in a country can be a presence in its spiritual and cultural life. You need a place where the professional world in the United States can meet anthroposophical professionals (those active in sections) in small internal discussions in a very important town, like a liberal university town, in a very nice building with a big park nearby. You don't need hotels, you don't need anything to accomplish a professional seminal meeting of top level, world class stuff. If your image of the Society is not that then, of course, you don't need Rudolf Steiner House: without an image of anthroposophy contributing world class to every profession it is a dead story. But the demographics are telling you to be very careful, to up your game. And in the letter from the Council (I'm not being unkind to the Council), it says the purpose of the Society is to nurture anthroposophy, but I wrote back saying: Not only. The deeper purpose of the Society is to represent anthroposophy in America. Of course, you have to do some nurturing, but that cannot be your purpose. Your purpose cannot be to be on the path. Your purpose is to do something, for which you need to be on the path, but that can never be your purpose. You cannot – or at least should not – make a living out of being on a path.

It's a crumb on the path, it's indicative, but if you go on the website of the Council of Anthroposophical Organizations, it will say it's there for the movement of which the Society is the heart. And on that website, it says the basis of all this is Rudolf Steiner's course or path, but click on the link and it goes to 'Error 404'. If I am on the outside looking in, if this whole thing is grounded on the path, and when I click it says 'Error 404', this speaks reams. This is not just a dead page sign. I'm drawing attention to this because in the Circle of Treasurers, I place huge store, huge expectation on the Society in America. When I am asked, 'Which Society are you a member of this year, Christopher?', and I say the Society in America, some ask why, because if we look on our list, instead of sending \$90 Swiss francs per member, they send \$15.92 per member. They're not to be taken seriously. And they've probably got reserves in the bank.' So, from some treasurers' point of view, you don't count because you could pay full whack out of what you've got hidden in your balance sheet. And so, it looks very strange. But if they ask why do I have confidence in America, I say because in America something is possible which if they sort things out everyone can benefit from in financial terms. Many of us need to clarify our financial basis, especially our dependency on foundations and our challenges regarding real estate.

In our next Treasurers' meeting in November, I will be with your own treasurer and my fellow Economics Conference colleague, Charles Burkam. We're going to have to represent the United States to all the other treasurers, and why it is down at 16 bucks, when it should be 90. (I can say the same about other countries.) And why now? Because I feel we've got to the moment in time when we've got to the end of 'legitimately' not understanding our situation. Now is the moment to become conscious, to start doing, start organizing.

The Goetheanum Fund Worldwide Association

I think it's really possible here in the United States, and it's really possible with Ann Arbor. Of course you could say, okay, let's sell the building, realize the cash, and put it in the markets and live on the revenue stream and go

and find somewhere else to live or work in Ann Arbor. But I say run your calculations very, very carefully. Do a 10 year vision of what it would cost to refurbish the building with a new lease of life and a new image compared to what it would cost to sell it, move somewhere else, and so on, *on the old image*; and then run these two stories in terms of capital but also operating, and not only at the expense level, but compute the quality of life consequences for the Society in America operating inside a shared working, hot-desking facility. That may be what you have to do, but let's see the numbers in the long term, and let's see the vision that attaches to this, before you go down the road of selling it.

And now, were you to sell it, you have cash, and now (leaving aside the associative economic merits of investing in today's financial markets) you use this cash to rent someone else's property. Has it got the right shape? Is it the right color? Or are you just in a multi-use facility and you put your stuff in a cupboard until the next people come and take their stuff out? What are you really thinking about? Can the Society be in an indifferent space? If you say yes, then go find it. If you say no, it's going to cost as much to find that space in the long term as it would be to refurbish the existing one, then stay put.

But, again, let's say you've done that; you've sold 1923 Geddes. Who have you sold Steiner House to? You could for example sell it to a group of anthroposophists that had the ability and the will to buy the building and put it back in good shape. And then make it available to the Society in America, the part of it that it needs, the nice front part – and so it could come back to you, affordable, because competent people have taken on this whole piece of real estate, yet they're anthroposophists. If you make a consortium like this, okay, sell Rudolf Steiner House to this consortium, and now make sure your deal is that you get to come back in at an affordable rent for the part you need. So yes, you seem to have sold it away, but no, you haven't. If you had this consortium, they could say yes, we're outside the Society, and we own this house, but you get to be prior-use tenants, and do so at a rate you can afford; we'll worry about the difference.³⁷

But it goes deeper. Imagine this consortium says to itself that we act as *representants* of Anthroposophy. We do this in our capacity of having joined the School in order to represent Anthroposophy in the field of property management. Now these people who are outside are in fact bang in the middle of the Society. That's a totally possible concept. It's an echo of the original Rudolf Steiner Foundation construct, but something more grounded than a finance committee, which is responsible for providing advice but not acting on it – an understandable but at the same time dangerous division of function when it comes to finance.

It could even be that the Society reinvents itself, the current board members exit and create a new lighter entity for the Anthroposophical Society in America, allowing the consortium members to take responsibility for the existing asset with maybe a change of name but no tax consequence. And no need to go to the market.

And I'm going to come to a conclusion. If you have this sense and make this image, that I am in America as a member of the Goetheanum Fund Worldwide association, which was created three or four years ago to help solve the Weleda and the property problem, where the idea was, to create this association where the board is a new kind of a group of the Society, and its members are all the Country Societies around the world. Then we have annual general meetings, we now have 20, out of 37, societies as members, ideally represented by both their General Secretaries and Treasurers. And in my image, they're like the Templar story of the warrior and a monk on one horse. That's my image going forward. The General Secretaries and the Treasurers working together on the same horse, so to speak, and they come together at our general meetings. It's a 'narrow' thing and yet its membership represents 71% of the worldwide membership 31,402 out of 40,730 souls.

³⁷ They could also show their associative economic credentials by leasing it to you at a rent based on use, not speculative value.

The Goetheanum Fund Worldwide is an association located in Switzerland, it is a subtle thing, like a cousin to the Bau Verein in the sense that those who took on to build the Goetheanum can be seen as a group of *representants* in the field of property management and finance. This is the same story, of an association to which the Vorstand could entrust the management of its serious assets. It still keeps them, but it doesn't have the hassle, it doesn't need the competence to manage these assets directly. This is how I understand the promise and potential of the original Rudolf Steiner Foundation of the Society in America, in 1933.

So I'm going to stop there. I've said so many things because I'm trying to give you an image of what is a work-in-progress. It is hugely important to tell this story now and to do so in the United States, because I think it will enable you to unscramble not only your own omelet of a Society – if I may be so rude! – but also the omelet of the anthroposophical movement worldwide. I'm very serious about this. While this is something that can be conceived in Europe, it has to be done, consummated in the US.

And then we can get into the really big topic: Why towards the end of his life did Rudolf Steiner relocate himself in Hibernian territory, as it were? Why did he go to Penmaenmahr, Ilkley, Tintagel and Torquay in 1922, 1923 and 1924? Why before the Christmas Conference did he turn to face the West?³⁸

³⁸ To where Goethe also turned a yearning gaze, for which it is said his father gave him a piece of the mast of Columbus's ship.