

THE JUST PRICE -

WORLD ECONOMY

AS

SOCIAL ORGANICS

One of Three lectures by Herbert Witzmann Held in
Arlesheim, Switzerland on December 14 and 15, 1974

Translated, introduced and annotated

by

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The Author and His Work

Herbert Witzmann (February 16, 1905 - September 24, 1988) had in his youth a decisive meeting with Rudolf Steiner, which determined the course of the rest of his life. In 1963 he became a member of the Executive-Council of the General Anthroposophical Society in Dornach, and two years later head of the Section for Social Science at the Goetheanum, Free School of Spiritual Science, until around 1970 this latter position was taken away from him by a majority decision of the Council and in 1979 occupied by the late Manfred Schmidt-Brabant, who in 1984 also became president of this Society. This working translation is translated from *Der gerechte Preis – Eine Grundfrage des sozialen Lebens* (Gideon Spicker Verlag, Dornach 1993).

This first lecture is being made available as private study material for members and friends of the Anthroposophical Society and the Herbert Witzmann Foundation by the *Willehalm Institute for Anthroposophy as Grail Research, Royal Art and Social Organics* in Amsterdam.

Note by the Translator

This first lecture of the fifth revised edition is dedicated to the Occupy College for which the translator gave a lecture partly based on this study on November 23, 2011 in Amsterdam in the Occupy encampment on the Stock Market Square (Beursplein) entitled "Crisis and Alternative – Social Organics as a Candidate for Reforming the Economy". He also wrote a discussion paper "Oases of Humanity – Contemplation on the Future of the Occupy Movement" and is working on a second one entitled "Oases of Humanity – The New Mysteries Are Enacted at the Train Station (Joseph Beuys) – Why Not Then on the Stock Market Square?"

Soon the complete edition will be published with a new introduction: orders can already be made.

Comments, gifts or inquiries are welcome and can be made to:

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List of Contents and Summary

Introduction to the First Edition by the Translator ...7

Introduction to the Second Edition ...11

Introduction to the Third Edition –

An Internal Council For Responsible Globalization ...12

Acknowledgments21

"Leviathan – Society as an Organism" – Intro to the Fourth Edition22

First lecture on December 14, 1974 24

These three lectures are an introduction to Rudolf Steiner's *Course on World Economy* as social organics (held in 1922 in Dornach) and indicate that social and economic life can only be developed in the light of today's world economy. Five quotations from this course indicating that the question "what is a just price?" is one of the most important problems facing us today. Due to the disproportional rising and lowering of prices, a complete restructuring of society came about in 1922, something which today is occurring on an even greater scale. The prices indicate if the economic organism is healthy and its associations-to-be have the task of finding the necessary solution based on the barometer of the price indices. Like all the other courses Rudolf Steiner gave for professionals, this course requires mobility in thinking and is itself a training course for this faculty. The course is also a bitter complaint about the lack of this mobility in thinking in modern mankind and its refusal to develop this flexibility. Appeal by Rudolf Steiner to move beyond rigid, intellectual thinking in terms of cause and effect in order to penetrate economic processes from the inside. About the lack of understanding on the part of the clergy and the academics and about the unwillingness to bring about mergers in the economic life, which in principle could be started with tomorrow. The social organic process is a matter of developing and raising consciousness. Psychological or soul observation as a protest against the present-day universal lie concerning the primacy of death is the basic demand of this conscious awareness. This must be fully met with in order to understand even the simplest word of Rudolf Steiner. Two super-personal spiritual worlds of experience inside economic associations which transcend this. The image of the sower on the plowed field as the most real representative of living thought and its truth. Humanizing as a process of forming human rights by people capable of making social organic judgments. In this social organic course Rudolf Steiner develops a new conception of the threefold social order. *The fundamental social law of occultism.*

Second Lecture on December 14, 1974 (not included)

The first formulation of the fundamental social law from R. Steiner's essay *Anthroposophy and the Social Question*. The general meaning of this scientific course for professionals inevitably comes down

to three main questions: 1. How do I stand within reality? 2. The bridge to other people, the problem of justice, equity. 3. The sense for individuality, for one's own but especially for the individuality of the other person. In this sense, the *World Economy Course* is purely practical; as a sort of social scientific meditation it gives rise to a fruitful disposition and a worldview and so makes a most important contribution towards the solution of practical problems. The historical contrast in the economic development between England and Germany in the 19th century is the point of departure for the new formulation of the idea of the threefold nature of the social organism. Two opposite ways of economic activity and creating value: capital formation and labor. The first one is N_L^V , nature modified by human labor: V_1 *this is a process of transubstantiation*. The second type is when the human spirit is directed in human labor: V_2 or L_S^V . *This is a process of incarnation*. The social organic work of art must be created through the working together of these two polarities and is expressed in the forming of true prices. This is created as any other work of art, because in this context it is always a question of transubstantiating (transforming) matter and incarnating (embodying) it with spirit. How the social organic work of art originated in its cultural-symptomatic mode of appearance, on the one hand by the emerging economic contrast between England and Germany in the 19th century and on the other hand by its conceptual structure: this forms the introduction and fundament of the whole *World Economy Course*. And in this manner, the idea of the threefold social order is expounded anew. The labor that transubstantiates nature is the economic life in a narrow sense, while the labor that incarnates the spirit defines the spiritual or cultural life. And now both value forming processes must be brought together and balanced in such a way that each one comes to its right. This is a question belonging to the sphere of rights. About the fundamental misunderstanding today that the creation of economic value through labor being applied to natural resources no longer exists. The division of labor turns the labor process more and more into a question of awareness. Parallel to that, the raising of the awareness of rights is demanded: the question how both of these labor and value processes are differentiated from each other. This has to do with the issue of just price, but also with the proper relationship between the awareness of community and liberty. This leads us back to the afore-mentioned three main questions. In order to answer them, we need a worldview enabling us to also overcome (economic) self-sufficiency, because this goes against the inner nature of the economy that can only thrive when everyone wants not to *have*, but to *give* as much as possible. The wage earner is driven by self-sufficiency. *The delusion that there exists a reality in a finished material form for the human being and that this would be sufficient for him to take care of his own needs*. The truth, however, is that the archetypal human experience, faculty and task consists of self-realization and not self-delusion. The self-sufficiency attitude in cognition and labor is in essence one and the same thing. Money as realized spirit. The relation between capital formation, means of production, and personal credit. Personal credit makes things cheaper, in contradiction to collateral credit based on unimproved land, which actually causes severe damage to the economic life of the present. The task of the associations is to prevent this damage by steering the flow of capital, something that is now done by the banks, but purely from the viewpoint of maximizing profit. But also the flow of human labor can be steered; this would entail a comprehensive re-education and retraining program, something that has been started nowadays. How can the transubstantiating labor and the incarnating labor be weighed against each other in the right way to yield just prices in the social organic field of activity? The comprehensive answer by Rudolf Steiner in his book *Towards Social Renewal*. The blindness regarding the value and evaluation of spiritual work is based on the materialistic superstition of our time that is related to the blindness for realization and reality. The social organic conceptual trinity of *paying-lending-giving* cannot be instituted, if it is not recognized that the value of incarnating labor, i.e. V_2 has at least the same significance as transubstantiating labor V_1 . The right judgment on the role of the spirit in the social organic process by the rights sphere has the effect of making things cheaper.

Third Lecture on December 15, 1974 (not included)

Summary of the two pillars supporting the whole course – out of the intertwining working of these pillars true or fair prices should come about. The concepts *paying-lending-giving* in view of the inherent threefold components that underlie economic life. About donations in the sphere of purchase money, donations to creative people in the free spiritual life and to the rights sphere so that associations can be formed. The transfer of the means of production on the basis of judgments formed in associations to the most capable people. A more detailed view on the trinity *pay-loan-give*: how do they work in and on each other and what are the falsifying effects on pricing? The *wage* concept is mistakenly viewed as the price of labor. But labor cannot be bought, it is not an object or a product for consumption, on the contrary, work is something that is connected with the spiritual nature of the human being. Transubstantiating labor is the result of a process of incarnation, of absorbing spiritual faculties and manifesting them. The entrepreneur does not purchase the work from the worker, but the product that he makes. What is the right relation between V_1 and V_2 and the role of investment capital therein? This permanent counter-current of two intertwining flows, their course in an opposite direction; this constitutes the whole social organic process and the equalization of both flows will be one of the most important functions of the associations. Just prices come about when the flow of capital is steered in the right way in this process. The old prejudice stemming from Adam Smith that just prices come about automatically through the market mechanism of a free play of supply and demand. Rudolf Steiner's view on Smith's equation, which he recognizes as partly right. The three famous equations pertaining to traders, producers and consumers that Rudolf Steiner formulated in his *Course on World Economy*. The concept *price of money* in these times of inflation leads to the question of the *aging of money*. Pause. The demand for a balanced, stable value, devaluation and revaluation of money leads to Rudolf Steiner's concept of *old and new money*. When it is recognized that money can only be covered by social organically useful means of production, it will also be realized that money can come into being as well as depreciate and expire. Then the economic process will become dynamically stable. The function of the associations thereby. Another equation by Rudolf Steiner about fair or just price formation through the right balancing act between the two value currents. About a misunderstanding concerning the V_2 equation. The currency problem and the currency factor. $L_a: P_o =$ the ratio arable land area to the population. Each single member of the total population of the earth should in principle have such land area at his disposal as results from this ratio and he should receive such minimal benefits as corresponds with the value of the average land area. Concerning the objection that if this becomes valid, one of the most important driving forces, namely working for a profit, will disappear; without incentives for labor, people would not work anymore. In a modern, completely realized social organism profit remains, just as before, the decisive incentive, yet not in an egotistical, selfish sense, but as *a gain in productivity*. – A final contemplation from two points of view. Social organic transubstantiation requires a community consciousness in the sense of the Christmas Conference 1923 in Dornach, Switzerland during which the Anthroposophical Society was founded anew by Rudolf Steiner. This conference points to the fundamental social factor of the future, to the forming of a *community consciousness* that can absorb more in itself than the sum total of the individual consciousness. That is why the fundamental social law is designated as the law of occultism: a higher, supernatural consciousness potency manifests itself within the acts of donation (endowment). The other great impulse has to do with the *consciousness of freedom as spiritual activity*: the basis for this is borne out by the soul or psychological observation that the human being is capable of realization, co-creating reality. The community consciousness in the sense of the fundamental social law is a future consciousness that points to the recently created social work of art, while the freedom consciousness draws out of the

past from the spiritual world, out of which human beings give birth to their free creative impulses and ever new driving forces. Within the flowing together of these two basic impulses and incentives for labor, V_1 and V_2 are united; they have to flow together in associative advisory organs in which an ever renewing and continuing formation of the rights sphere takes place, in which a true sense of justice in comparing the for and against of the two value streams leads to just prices. The world economy of labor and the social community can be saved by a global network of associations in which community consciousness and freedom consciousness, production and creator consciousness can converge and confer in human beings because they are capable of speech.

Documentation of Works in English by Herbert Witzmann...(not included)

Documentation on the Willehalm Institute (not included)

Introduction to the First Edition by the Translator (1999)

This working translation of *The Just Price* is a second attempt to bring the concept of social organics as developed by Herbert Witzmann on the basis of Rudolf Steiner's idea of the threefold nature of the social organism to these American shores. The first attempt in this campaign took place last summer (1998) when Herbert Witzmann's profound contemplation on the social-organic nature of the principles of the Anthroposophical Society entitled *The Principles of the Anthroposophical Society as a Basis of Life and a Path of Training* was for the first time translated in full for the occasion of the annual meeting of the Social Science Section of the Goetheanum, Free School for Spiritual Science in North America. In this first *Social Esthetic Study* the emphasis is on social organics related to the principles as a universal charter of humanity embodying the archetype of a living society of free spirits. As such it makes manifest why Rudolf Steiner attached such great importance to the realization by the leadership of the Goetheanum of these all-encompassing principles of freedom, which were originally called statutes, when he said:

The central Council will have to consider its task to be solely whatever lies in the direction of fulfilling the Statutes. It will have to do everything that lies in the direction of fulfilling the Statutes. This gives it great freedom. But at the same time we shall all know what this central Council represents, since from the statutes we can gain a complete picture of what at any time it will be doing. 1[1]

The task of realizing the principles also includes furthering Rudolf Steiner's Course on World Economy, originally called Course on National (or Political) Economy. This course expresses, as will be shown in these three lectures, the new form for the exposition of the idea of the threefold social organism, to which this working translation is an introduction. This task follows from the explicit mentioning of the World Economy Course by Rudolf Steiner during the discussion of the central paragraph nr 8 of the principles 2[2] at the Christmas Conference 1923/24, in which the question

1[1] Rudolf Steiner, *The Christmas Conference For The Foundation of the General Anthroposophical Society 1923/1924*, Anthroposophic Press 1990, p. 115 ff. In this translation, the last part of the last sentence reads "what it (i.e. the Council) is doing", which weakens this statement considerably, for the German word *jemals*, meaning *ever* or *at any time*, has been omitted. Another, more fundamental problem is the question of the title of this book, which refers to The Foundation of the General Anthroposophical Society. As pointed out in the forewords and footnotes to the statutes in my working translation of Herbert Witzmann's social esthetic study *The Principles of the Anthroposophical Society*, which is appearing simultaneously in an updated edition with this present booklet, it was not the General (note the G written as a capital letter) that was founded, but the general Anthroposophical Society (i.e. general as opposed to the national or particular Anthroposophical Societies that were founded as groups of the general society). During the Christmas Conference, Rudolf Steiner uses both terms interchangeably, but he emphasized that there is in effect only the Anthroposophical Society, the rest are local groups. Moreover, the statutes that were endorsed as well as the membership cards that were issued both read *Anthroposophical Society*. The General Anthroposophical Society as such derived its name and identity from the Goetheanum Building Association that on February 8, 1925 changed its name accordingly and added to it three sub-divisions, namely the administration of the Anthroposophical Society, the administration of the Goetheanum building itself, the Anthroposophic-Philosophical Publishing Co. and the Clinic. See the foreword to the fifth edition of above-mentioned booklet on the principles for further background information to and insight into this thorny constitutional issue and a solution in the form of a three-act real life mystery play entitled the *Kardeiz Saga*. See also the coming, revised edition of *Munsalvaesche in America – Towards the New Grail Community*.

2[2] This paragraph reads (in my translation): "All publications of the Society shall be open to the public as is the case in other public societies. The publications of the Free School of Spiritual Science will not be exempt from this public availability; however, the leadership of the School reserves the right from the outset to challenge the validity of every judgment on *these* works, that is not based on the schooling of which the works themselves are the outcome. In this sense the leadership, as is altogether customary in the recognized scientific world, will not acknowledge the validity of any judgment that is not based on the appropriate preliminary studies. Therefore the publications of the Free School of Spiritual Science will contain the following imprint: "Printed in manuscript for the members of the Free School of Spiritual Science, Goetheanum, Class ... No person is held qualified to form a judgment on these works who has not, through the School itself or in an equivalent manner recognized

arose whether the imprint of the Goetheanum, Free School for Spiritual Science should also be printed in this lecture course as a manuscript for members of this School. The relevant part of this discussion went as follows:

Dr Steiner: *On the whole the imprint will apply only to the lecture cycles and those publications which are equal to the cycles.*

Herr Werbeck: *What about the National Economy Course given here. Does that count as a cycle?*

Dr Steiner: *The matter is somewhat different regarding the few works which have not been published by me or the Anthroposophical Publishing Company.... In one way I am quite grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak about this rather vexed question. In the case of these papers it should be a matter of course that they are only to be used by those who have been permitted to do so. This National Economy Course is one, and the medical course is another, and so on. If they were to be published more widely, the author's rights would have to be returned to me. If we were planning to transform these papers into the form given to the cycles bearing this note, they would have to be returned to me, and they would only be brought out by the Philosophical – Anthroposophical Verlag as cycles published bearing this note..." 3[3]*

In so many words, Rudolf Steiner therefore states that his World Economy Course too is to be nurtured, further developed and spiritually protected by the Anthroposophical Society and the Goetheanum. In effect, this means nothing less than that since the Christmas Conference the Goetheanum School also has the task of realizing the new form of the idea of the threefold social organism, here called social organics, in the world. This is something Herbert Witzenmann has constantly endeavored to do from the time that he became leader of the Social Science Section at the Goetheanum in 1965 until his – as he himself writes – removal under coercion from this position by a majority decision of the Executive-Council (Vorstand) of the General Anthroposophical Society in 1972. Afterwards he continued this task, so to speak, in the shadow of the Goetheanum until his death in 1988. To what extent he succeeded in that task may be left up to the judgment of the reader.^{4[4]}

The foregoing serves to explain to those anthroposophical readers who were perhaps inclined to ask why these three lectures by Herbert Witzenmann on Just Price were not given in Dornach, but in the nearby village of Arlesheim. Those readers interested in the related question why it has taken 25 years for these three lectures to reach American shores, I refer to my booklet *Munsalvaesche in America – Towards the New Grail Community* and other relevant literature listed at the end of this publication. Suffice it to say, that after the removal of Herbert Witzenmann from his chair at the Social Science Section, the threefold social idea in this crucial new form was unfortunately all but

by it, acquired the preliminary knowledge advanced by the School. Other opinions will in so far be rejected, as the authors of the works in question do not enter into any type of discussion concerning them."

3[3] Rudolf Steiner, *The Christmas Conference...*, p. 153 f.

4[4] See the foreword to this third edition for a response to criticism of the editors of the American journal *The Threefold Review* that Herbert Witzenmann misinterprets and misrepresents Rudolf Steiner's Course on World Economy.

neglected by the new occupant of this chair in the person of the late President of the General Anthroposophical Society, Manfred Schmidt-Brabant.⁵^[5]

Be that as it may, the concept of social organics *has* reached American shores in the form of these two booklets on social organics by Herbert Witzemann and my introductions and talks on this subject. In the introduction to my translation of Werner Greub's third volume *From Grail Christianity to Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy* of his Grail trilogy for the occasion of the recently held astrosophy conference on the Grail Astronomy at the StarHouse in Boulder, Colorado, I wrote the following:

What brings me back to these United States for the third time now are invitations from friends and some welcome financial backing from both sides of the Atlantic to participate in three summer conferences: the one in Boulder already mentioned, then a conference for members of the Social Science Section of the Goetheanum in America on *Deepening our Understanding of Threefolding*, followed by a public conference *The Threefold Social Order and the Challenge of Elite Globalization* from July 7-11, in a Shaker village, New Lebanon, NY, and finally *The Other America Convocation* in Concord, MA, from July 11-14 by keen followers and kindred souls of Emerson, the American Goethe, and his friend Thoreau. What connects all these three endeavors is indeed the Grail, for the Grail impulse of the 20th century – and no doubt also for the coming one – lies in transforming the driving force of the world economy from egoism to altruism. This is the mission of inner spiritualization of John. Based on indications by Rudolf Steiner and Walter Johannes Stein, the Dutch writer Willem Frederik Veltman expounds in his book *Temple and Grail* (not translated) on the three grades of chivalry. The first one is the grade of Faith (Peter), the second one of Hope (James) both lying in the past, while the current and future one is the grade of Charity or Love (John). Veltman writes: 'This Grade of John can only be realized today and has to do with a world economy based on a truly Christian love. But for the time being, the world economy as a world power is still developing in an opposite direction.'

How this can be done has been shown by Rudolf Steiner in his course on World Economy in Dornach 1922. In the first of these 14 lectures he states that what he is about to deliver is the new language, even the new way of thinking with which to present the threefold social order in the near future, and that it is above all necessary to come to an understanding of the concept *social organism* as consisting of humanity and the earth as a whole. This unity was already seen in the spirit by Casper Hauser, who is a vital link in the historic Grail line. The social organism is thus essentially the body of Christ; but He can only wholly incarnate into this earth, if we as humanity practice the threefold order in the sense of Rudolf Steiner's World Economy by creating the right balance among the production factors of the social organism: nature, labor and capital (spirit). This is the Christian justification for taking up the threefold social order or social organics, a term I think that Thoreau would welcome into his *Walden* and Walt Whitman would plant in his *Leaves of Grass*.

⁵^[5] M. Schmidt-Brabant, who passed away earlier this year, was a brilliant speaker and did much to somehow improve the (outward) appearance of things. However, next to his discontinuation and glaring neglect of the new, actual form of the idea of the threefold nature of the social organism as developed by Rudolf Steiner and expounded by Herbert Witzemann – a form which later in this foreword is referred to as a, or even, the Grail impulse of the 20th and 21st century – he withdrew the attention from Arlesheim Hermitage to Santiago de Compostella in northern Spain (formerly Portugal) as the central Grail area. See also my introductions to Werner Greub's *How The Grail Sites Were Found – Wolfram von Eschenbach and the Reality of the Grail* that was recently published by the Willehalm Institute Press in Amsterdam and presented in Montreal and various libraries in New England including the Rudolf Steiner Library in Ghent NY.

A most enlightening introduction to these green economic matters are three lectures from the year 1974 entitled *The Just Price - World Economy as Social Organics* by Herbert Witzmann, the late leader of the Social Section at the Goetheanum. From 1972, however, he was unable to continue his work there, because as he himself writes (*Im Bemühen um Klärung* p. 4, see also *Munsalvaesche in America*), he was “forced out” in connection with the “book question”: the living spirit and creative work of this genial human being exchanged for the dead letter of the book, be it even a book by Rudolf Steiner! 6[6]

Again, this veiled ‘internal’ opposition to the true proponents of Rudolf Steiner’s impulse is one of the main reasons that it has taken so long for these vital matters to reach American shores, but come they must and come they will. I am therefore grateful for the support of the organizers of the second and third conferences, namely Bernard Wolf (Social Science Section) and Stuart B. Weeks (Concord Convocation), and others such as the New York City economist David Gilmartin given to my proposal to translate these three lectures during the two weeks between the first and second conference, and present them afterwards as study material. This as a further step in introducing the concept of social organics to America.

The actual translation of *The Just Price* was begun on my laptop on June 21 in David and Laura Lee Tresemer’s *Morning Star House* just outside of Boulder, Colorado, and continued three days later in the great New York Public Library, whose marble walls provided a welcome albeit temporary relief from a blistering heat wave. Over the 4th of July holiday the proofreading was done with the help of David Gilmartin, who was also so kind as to put me up during most of this time and who also helped finance the printing. Without his help, this working translation would have hardly made it.

The synopsis here was translated from a summary made for a Dutch working translation of *The Just Price* that was presented in Amsterdam in 1994 by the translator as study material for the Willehalm Institute for Social Organics. The foreword to the German edition of *The Just Price* by Dr Götz Rehn was not included here, because of lack of time. In this foreword, credit is given to Hans Mrazek who wrote in shorthand the lectures on which the German text is based. The quotations from the World Economy Course are taken from the version by A. O. Barfield and T. Gordon Jones published by the Rudolf Steiner Press in 1972, but here and there I have made what I consider some improvements. I have not made the English pronouns gender neutral, with my apologies to the feminists.

May this working translation be followed soon by an official one, where of course this introduction would have to be revised in order to address a more general public. This official publication could perhaps include, or be followed by, two further booklets by Herbert Witzmann with his enlightening approach to social organics: *Currency as Consciousness* and *Social Organics – Ideas for the Reorganization of the Economy*. 7[7]

6[6] On the vitally important but still relatively unknown, so-called, book question, which in fact is a question concerning the proper representation of Rudolf Steiner’s anthroposophy, the nature of the Anthroposophical Society and its research and development center, the Goetheanum, Free School of Spiritual Science, see H. Witzmann *The Principles of the Anthroposophical Society* and *Munsalvaesche in America* by the author.

7[7] German titles: *Geldordnung als Bewusstseinsfrage*, Gideon Spicker Verlag, 1995 and *Sozialorganik – Ideen zu einer Neugestaltung der Wirtschaft*, G. Spicker, 1998.

New York City, July 6, 1999

Robert J. Kelder

Introduction to the Second Edition (1999)

The first edition of 50 copies of *The Just Price* was printed in New York City overnight on the eve of July 6 and picked up the next morning – the day that the internal part of the Social Science Section Conference *Deepening our Understanding of Threefolding* in New Lebanon NY, was to begin. During the three days of lectures, research reports and deliberation on the conference theme, I was able to refer, among other things, to the new and actual form of threefolding as propounded in this working translation. Unfortunately, I cannot report that the indications given by Rudolf Steiner in 1922 to think and talk about Threefolding in a new way – indications which are taken up by Herbert Witzemann in this volume, and to which I referred at last year’s annual meeting of the Social Section – have as yet had any noticeable effect.^{8[8]} Practically all the participants spoke of threefolding in the manner that Rudolf Steiner presented in his book *Towards Social Renewal* from 1919, which was updated, and – thereby, as regards the form – outdated in 1922 by the World Economy Course. The one who most closely approached this fundamental new approach (for particulars I refer to the following three lectures) was the last speaker of the public part of the conference on the theme of elite globalization, Joel Kobran, one of the co-editors of the American journal *The Threefold Review*, who – not being a member of the Social Section, and thus not having attended its annual meeting – was therefore not in a position to react to my critical remarks. Another newly found ‘comrade in arms’ strongly tending towards this new approach advocated by Rudolf Steiner to present the threefold idea, was the international numismatist and monetary speaker, Hank Passafero from Oregon.

From this conference site – a former Shaker Village in New Lebanon, where in 1787 the first celibate Shaker Order in America devoted to “Hands to work – Hearts to God” was established – two other participants and myself were given a ride by John Moses to the “Other America Convocation” in Concord MA, organized by Stuart Weeks of the “Center for American Studies”. It turned out to be a ride of some three hours filled mainly with conversations on how to counteract Mammon and his cronies who – through their control of international capital and the central banks – are, next to our own spiritual indolence, the most formidable opponents to the realization of a world economy that is not only efficient, but also just.^{9[9]} After this eventful Convocation on some of the historic sites in and around Concord – during which I was given ample time to present this booklet – I spent a few days assisting Stuart Weeks in an effort to lay the social organic groundwork for a series of public summits in New Hampshire with presidential candidates this coming fall. More about this later. Stay tuned!

^{8[8]} See my report *Threefoldness and the Anthroposophical Society* on last year’s Social Science meetings *Munsalvaesche in America*, p. 21, 4th edition Amsterdam, which was to be presented at the Rudolf Steiner Library on September 2, 2001, but which will appear later this fall (2001). A slightly revised version of the report on this conference itself is given in the following foreword.

^{9[9]} See the statement by the British economist Richard Jolly in *Globalization Widens Rich-Poor Gap*, *U.N. Report Says*, *The New York Times*, July 13, 1999: “The international community has yet to figure out how to deal with global market concentrations of economic power.”

Robert J. Kelder, Ithaca, July 22, 1999

Introduction to the Third Edition (2001) -

An International Council for Responsible Globalization?

Since the last foreword to this booklet on social organics was written (July,1999), humanity has managed to enter into the third millennium; and certainly one of the most striking developments that has since come to the fore is the increasing vehemence and fervor with which the issue of globalization, the world economy is not only being addressed in all sorts of United Nations and World Forums and academic – including anthroposophic – conferences, position papers and books, but is also being fought out violently by extremists of all colors in the streets. Who has not heard and been struck by the violence of the “Battle of Seattle” during the World Trade (WTO) Summit in the fall of 1999, the subsequent skirmishes and clashes at similar high-profile events in Prague and Quebec and the most recent tragic shooting of a violent demonstrator by police in the streets of Genoa during a meeting this summer of the G-8, the political leaders of the eight leading industrialized nations in the world? It is indeed difficult to imagine a more pressing and explosive issue facing humanity on earth than this question of addressing hunger, poverty, ill health, poor housing in the third and fourth worlds *and* the preservation of the global environment in the face of a rich and prosperous first world consisting of the three current world power centers: North America (Canada and the USA), Western Europe and the industrialized nations in the Pacific (mainly Japan, Korea and Singapore). To put it in a nutshell: globalization is in. An example:

"When we focus on globalization, we are focusing on the number one problem. Globalization must remain constantly in view. Our Forum makes it clear that we need a permanent network structure allowing civil society to interact with the UN and the media. I suggest an *International Council for Responsible Globalization*. I see support for this idea. So let us discuss this possibility together and hope that it works. I am, as always, optimistic."

With this message, Mikhael Gorbachev opened the State of the World Forum 2000, “Shaping Globalization: Convening the Community of Stakeholders” that took place from September 4-10 in New York.

When I read a report by Ulrich Morgenthaler on this and events surrounding the UN Millennium Summit at that time^{10[10]}, my immediate reaction was to try to draw attention again to the contents of this little but remarkable booklet of three introductory lectures on Rudolf Steiner’s Course on World Economy. For much more than the scarce allusions that Gorbachev makes to “a permanent network structure allowing civil society to interact with the UN and the media” and then already expressing the hope “that it works”, *The Just Price* develops after all a much more detailed as well as intrinsic and all-encompassing guideline for the justification, constitution and task of such an International Globalization Council: economic associations consisting of consumers, traders and

^{10[10]} I read this report on October 8, 2000 in the German Weekly *Das Goetheanum*, the organ for the General Anthroposophical Society in Dornach, Switzerland, a report that later appeared in translation under the title “An International Council for Responsible Globalization” in *News for Members* (Winter 2001) the organ of the Anthroposophical Society in America, Ann Arbor, MI.

producers to establish through the new royal art and science of social organics the so badly needed just prices for the commodities and services that humanity requires in order to live and progress comfortably and safely on this earth. Or to put it in words of the last paragraph of these three lectures:

"The working world economy and the social community will not be rescued by a world computer (internet), but by a network of associations covering the whole earth, a network in which community consciousness and consciousness of productive and creative freedom can meet and confer in human beings, because they have become capable of speech."

So I sent an e-mail the next day under the heading "Real Alternatives to Current Globalization" to various friends and colleagues including Bernard Wolf and Claus Sproll from the Social Science Section in America, Nicanor Perlas, author of the book *Shaping Globalization – Civil Society, Cultural Power and Threefolding*, the Working Group Global Threefolding (GlobeNet3) and the Anthroposophical Society (Forum 3) in Germany, who together had issued an invitation the "people all over the world all over the world to work with spiritual substance and explore practical ways to engage in the social movements of our time" (*Das Goetheanum*, nr 8/2001) during their conference "Building a New Global Culture of Spirit" from June 20-24 in Stuttgart, Germany and other friends and colleagues. I referred in this email to the news in the said report by U. Morgenthauer that the IFG (International Forum on Globalization) is planning a position paper "Beyond the WTO: Alternatives to Economic Globalization" to answer the question often put to them: "If you are an opponent of the current global regulation inclusive the WTO, what are you for?"

I now quote from an updated, and here slightly revised version of this e-mail done in Hillsdale, NY on July 31, 2001 that was sent to, among others, Stuart Weeks of the Center for American Studies in Concord, MA and John Friede from the Worldview Institute and Lisa Beaudoin, who is campaigning for environmental justice in the New Hampshire area. Why I am repeating this here will hopefully become clear in due course:

"Now, as some of you may know, in the summer of 1999 I translated and published with the help of among others economist David Gilmartin in New York a working translation of Herbert Witzmann's introduction to Rudolf Steiner's course on World Economy, entitled *The Just Price – World Economy as Social organics*. This project grew out of my experiences of the first meeting of the Social Science section of the Goetheanum in North America that I attended in the summer of 1998 in Kimberton Hills, Pennsylvania and where I presented a working translation of Herbert Witzmann's social-esthetic study *The Principles of the Anthroposophical Society as a Basis of Life and Path of Training*.

In a report about this conference that the *Willehalm Institute* in Amsterdam published in a booklet *Munsalvaesche in America – Towards the New Grail Community 11[11]* I wrote (on. p. 23 ff.) the following remarks, which have in essence not been outdated by the march of time:

11[11] Munsalvaesche is the name given by Wolfram von Eschenbach in his poem *Parzival* to the Grail Castle. The Goetheanum as the physical and spiritual center of anthroposophy – the science as distinct to the poetry of the Grail – could be seen as a modern Grail Castle, the idea with respect to America being that as a necessary supplement to the idea of a

'Having hopefully made the point that mutual brotherly criticism, if it is immanent, can be constructive and even uplifting, let me now proceed to some fundamental observations I felt called upon to make during the conference, and concerning which it is necessary to gain clarity in our ranks, if the goals set by the conference are to be properly realized.

The first one recalled to mind that Rudolf Steiner, to my knowledge, never once spoke or wrote of the threefold *society* as such, but always of the threefold *social organism*. This is of fundamental importance, because the concept of the social organism includes the whole earth, while the concept of society does not.¹²[12]

Secondly, this social organism is the functional counterpart of the threefold *physical human organism*, and in the first instance *not* of the human being as body, soul and spirit as was maintained during the conference. (Why the economic life for example is functionally related to the nervous and sense system, the rights sphere to the rhythmic system and spiritual life to the metabolism of man cannot be dealt with here. See Rudolf Steiner's book *Threefold Social Renewal*).

Thirdly and most important of all, if we are speaking of the threefold *social organism*, it is important to realize the weight of Rudolf Steiner's indication in his lectures on *World Economy*, already referred to here, that the form in which the idea of the threefold nature of the social organism is presented must, from now on, be based on these very same lectures. Concerning this point, I allowed myself the sad but true observation that, apart from a few true and hardy souls, this crucial change of form has not (yet) been taken to heart within our movement, including the Social Science Section under the current leadership, with all the dire consequences for humanity and the earth. This point seems especially important for the following conferences that the Social Science Section in America as a three-year plan has in mind, namely, as the conference text further stated "to support the developing of threefold concepts and recognizing their emergence. Future conferences concerning threefoldness on a world-scale and threefoldness in the individual are planned."

Lastly, if we are speaking of a threefold *society*, we can, nay must look at the *Anthroposophical Society* as the universal prototype for such a society, i.e. regard the 'principles' as the archetypal charter for a general human society on earth (see Herbert Witzgenmann's booklet on *The Principles of the Anthroposophical Society*).¹³[13]

Grasping this distinction may be especially relevant to someone who not only spoke with great enthusiasm about the threefold society, but also has written and acted on it, namely Nicanor Perlas from the *Center for Alternative Development Initiatives* (CADI) and author of the *Philippine Agenda 21 Handbook* (PA21). What is striking about this Agenda, which is fully endorsed by the current government of Philippine President Ramos, is the implicit similarity between the central objective of this official document, which sees a threefold society in terms of Civil Society, Polity and Economy (Business), and the first (central) paragraph of the 'principles' (originally called statutes) of the

modern Camelot that John F. Kennedy's administration seemed to embody in the eyes of many of his contemporaries, America needs a Goetheanum, a modern Munsalvaesche in order to search and find its bearings.

¹²[12] "The whole Earth, considered as an economic organism, is the social organism." Rudolf Steiner, *World Economy* (London, 1977), p.23.

¹³[13] A new edition of this working translation is to be presented during the third of three talks at the Rudolf Steiner Library in Ghent, NY this summer. See the poster in the appendices for further details.

Anthroposophical Society! For the central tenet of PA 21 is sustainable human, spiritually liberating development. Is this not another way of saying that the Philippine people are striving to be "a union of people who wish to cultivate the life of soul in the individual as well as in human society on the basis of a true knowledge of the spiritual world" – the first statute of the Anthroposophical Society? This striving could be a fruitful basis for further dialogue and deliberation during the proposed international conference on *Shaping The Future: Globalization, Anthroposophy And The Threefold Social Order* from October 26 to 30, 1998 in Metro Manila, Philippines on, among other things, the all important question on how to realize the objectives of this PA 21 in the light of the research already done on the 'principles' of the Anthroposophical Society and the experiences (and mistakes) made in the attempt to implement them.¹⁴[14]

Having translated this booklet by Herbert Witzenmann on World economy as social organics during two sizzling hot summer weeks in the cool marble halls of the New York Public Library, I was able to refer to it during the social science meeting in Upstate New York later that summer of 1999 and provide some copies to friends and the bookstore of the New York branch of the Society.

But the point I want to make, or rather the question I want to raise is this: Why has this booklet – apart from criticism by Gary Lamb, co-editor of the American journal "The Threefold Review", in a (private) letter, which we will deal with shortly – been largely, if not completely ignored (as far as I can see) in the subsequent world-wide discussions about Globalization and World Economy,¹⁵[15] and, more important:

Is it not finally time to start considering, and if found to be valid to start acting on the main point of this booklet, namely that the World economy lectures by Rudolf Steiner still form today the new exposition of the idea of the threefold social organism and that the presentation (not the contents) of his earlier book on Threefolding (*Towards Social Renewal*) in 1919 as he himself has stated, is outdated, and therefore, as experience has shown, doomed to failure?

¹⁴[14] This conference was organized by the Anthroposophical Group in the Philippines, 110 Scout Rallos Street, Timog, Quezon City, PHILIPPINES, tel. No. (63-2) 928-3986 fax (63-2) 928-7608; Email: nperlas@info.com.ph Nicanor Perlas. In the conference text *Rationale and Need for the Conference* another striking similarity is the observation made on the failure of what here has been called the social organic counter principle. Under the heading *Internal Crisis and Loss of Moral Authority* it is written: "Of equal concern, the global anthroposophical movement is minimally prepared internally to deal with the challenge of elite globalization. It has not threefolded many of its key institutions around the world. As such, it does not have the moral authority to advocate threefolding since it does not do what it champions. The global anthroposophical movement is also embroiled in internal disputes, losing sight of the great task ahead at the end of the 20th century." The text then goes on to quote the late Hagen Biesantz, former member of the Council in Dornach: "He refers to the importance of the organic working and mutual strengthening of the Center (Dornach and Central Europe) and the Periphery (all other national societies, groups and individuals) of the global anthroposophical movement. Problems arise in the anthroposophical movement, if this healthy working of Center and Periphery is interrupted or is not functional." Biesantz could well have referred here to the writings of his former colleague on the Council, Herbert Witzenmann, such as *The Spiritual and Social Significance of The Principles of Rudolf Steiner* and *To Create or Administrate/ Rudolf Steiner's Social Organics - A New Principle of Civilization*. During the conference in Kimberton Hills I mentioned the possibility of translating these studies as study material for the next conference, as well as for the coming Manila gathering. (Update: this proposal was not accepted and so still awaits realization).

¹⁵[15] In the preface to his book *Shaping Globalization* N. Perlas writes on page xxiii: "I would deeply appreciate comments of any kind, positive or negative." I do not know if he regards my comments as positive or negative, since I have not (yet) received any response from him.

As I see it, the world asks of us a twofold task that proceeds from the common spiritual font of social organics as the new Royal Art:

- 1. Realize and implement the lectures on world economy as the new conception and language of global threefolding, and**
- 2. Realize and implement the 'principles' of the Anthroposophical Society as the universal charter for a truly civil society of free spirits.**

This was my motivation for translating and presenting the two above mentioned working translations by Herbert Witzmann (1905-1988), former member of the executive of the General Anthroposophical Society in Dornach and head of the Social Science Section at the Goetheanum."

The foregoing may serve to make it quite evident that the most pressing issue occupying the minds (and bodies) of so many of our contemporaries is the globalization issue and that exactly this issue was already addressed through the new way conception and language that Rudolf Steiner developed in 1922 in his Course on World Economy. But the notion that this Course also inaugurated a new, universally valid, form for the representation of the idea of the threefold idea of the social organism has not totally convinced the editors of *The Threefold Review*. As mentioned, the only criticism of the argument presented in this booklet that I received was from Gary Lamb in a letter in which he maintained – after admittedly only having read the first of the three lectures presented – that “Herbert Witzmann erred in his conclusion that in the World Economy lectures Steiner was presenting a new conception or metamorphosis of threefolding in which the economy is no longer to be viewed as a component of a threefold organism.”¹⁶[16] He conceded that Rudolf Steiner presented the threefold idea a new form in his World Economy Course – he could hardly deny this, as Rudolf Steiner states this quite clearly himself in the first lecture – but did not indicate what exactly this new form consists of. He then furthermore strongly urged me to reconsider my attempt to introduce this conception of social organics to America.

Now Lamb’s criticism on this point is shared by his co-editor of *The Threefold Review*, Joel Kobran, with whom I recently spent a congenial afternoon in the company of John Root Sr. and Famke Zonneveld in North Egremont (MA) discussing it at some length. We parted company, however, without coming to any real consensus. Since I consider the issue at stake absolutely fundamental and vital to the development of the royal art and science of social organics, I will attempt to present both sides of the argument here and then draw some conclusions. Hereby I will denote the two editors as “the critics”, Rudolf Steiners course on World Economy as “the Course”, the idea of the threefold nature of the social organism as “social organics”.

The critics make several points:

¹⁶[16] I do not have the complete letter in my possession during this stay in America, but hope to give the complete gist of his critique here, complemented by the discussion I had with his co-editor Joel Kobran. I have not been able to ask Gary Lamb for permission to make a quotation from his letter semi-public, semi-public because this booklet is not publicly for sale but meant as private study-material. In any case, I thank Gary Lamb for taking the trouble to make his critique and sincerely hope that the editors of *The Threefold Review* will now finally proceed to raise this argument on fundamental Threefold strategy in the pages of their magazine, so that more interested parties can take note of, and possibly join in, the discussion.

1. The Course does not represent the new way for the presentation of social organics, or at least not in the West, because immediately after its conclusion, Rudolf Steiner gave three lectures on social organics in Oxford, England on August 27, 28 and 29, 1922, the last two of which are published under the title *Threefolding – A Social Alternative* (London, 1980), in which he spoke in the “usual” manner of the book *Towards Social Renewal* and did not mention the Course at all.

Commentary: It is true that Rudolf Steiner does not mention the Course by *name*, but he certainly does so judged by its *contents*. In the lecture on August 18 e.g. he compares among other things the rate of industrial development between England and Germany in the course of the 19th century and then states that precisely because his book *Towards Social Renewal* was not understood and as such acted upon the horrendous inflation that was scourging in Germany at that time came about. Therefore “it is quite natural that in Germany my book *Towards Social Renewal* is almost forgotten today..., while in 1919 it was soon read far and wide. The moment in time when the contents of the book should have been realized is now past as far as Central Europe is concerned. The moment was past when that strong decline of the German currency began which now completely fetters the German Economy.”¹⁷[17] Here is the point where Rudolf Steiner could have said something like the following: “An just because of this abominable situation in Central Europe, which made it impossible for my book to be read anymore, I took pains to present the threefold idea in a new way in my Course on World Economy.” As pointed out and developed by Herbert Witzmann in the second lecture of his booklet, the social organism as a social organic work of art originated in its cultural-symptomatic mode of appearance, on the one hand, by the emerging economic contrast between England and France in the 19th century and on the other hand by its conceptual structure: this forms the introduction and fundament of the Course. Thus looked at contextually, Rudolf Steiner certainly does mention elements of the Course in his lectures in Oxford.

But what about the question of the new form? After all, he states in the same lecture on August 28: “So I believe that in future my book should be read more in the West and in Russia, but that it has no chance of becoming effective in Germany. The West, for instance, can learn much from this book, for in a non-utopian manner it simply states how the three spheres co-exist and should interact. For the West the moment in time does not matter, for much is still to be done for the right interaction of the three currents, the spiritual life, the economic life, the politic-legal life.”¹⁸[18]

Here my answer would be that Rudolf Steiner probably believed that for some time to come his book from 1919 could be read in the West and Russia. The question however is: for how long? Perhaps it was read for some time, but the fact of the matter is: *social organics was not understood and implemented in the West, let alone Russia*. And it is my contention that after the economic crisis and crash in 1929, a second world war as a continuation of the first, brought on largely by economic causes, the establishment of central banks as the (partly hidden) real centers of world-wide power and control, rampant inflation and huge debts in third world countries and the so-called victory of capitalism (the West) over communism (the East), in which economic forces predominate over anything else, we must now turn to the Course as the most viable way to present social organics as a real alternative to the current form of globalization to the world.

¹⁷[17] Rudolf Steiner, *Threefolding*, p. 18.

¹⁸[18] Rudolf Steiner, *Threefolding*, p. 19.

Update for the 4th edition: We include here the reference to the words that Rudolf Steiner spoke during the Christmas Conference 1923 concerning the effects that the march of time has on the presentation form of the social threefold idea. This reference was inserted as an addendum to the previous edition; they are, to our knowledge, the last words with which Rudolf Steiner addressed this theme. They are not given here as proof that our viewpoint is necessarily correct, since there is after all a time span of some 78 years separating us from them. They do serve to show however that the way of representing social organics from 1919 is out of date; they can be read in the lecture "The Idea Of Future Building in Dornach" on 31 December 1923, in the volume entitled *The Christmas Conference For The Foundation of the General Anthroposophical Society 1923/24* (Anthroposophic Press, 1990, 214 ff.):

"I have often stressed amongst ourselves that if you want to live in reality and not in ideas, then the realities of time must be given particular recognition. The time in which one lives is a reality. But it is difficult to generate an understanding for this time as being something real. There are still people today who represent the threefolding of the social organism with the very sentences I used to use with regard to the conditions prevailing at the time, in 1919. History is indeed advancing so rapidly just now that if someone describes things in the way they were described in 1919 this seems to be hundreds of years out of date."

I did quote these words in my presentation of *The Just Price* in the Rudolf Steiner Library on Sunday, August 26, 2001 and expressed the hope that our critics will include them in their (hopefully) forthcoming response to our response, which was done in the spirit of a brotherly competition for the truth.

2. "Herbert Witzmann erred in his conclusion that in the World Economy lectures Steiner was presenting a new conception or metamorphosis of threefolding in which the economy is no longer to be viewed as a component of a threefold organism."

Commentary: Implicit in this critique is that Herbert Witzmann would somehow negate or even destroy the usual image of the social organism as consisting of the spiritual-cultural, politico-legal and economic sphere as given in *Towards Social Renewal*. For, so it is further argued, just as the spiritual sphere is threefold, so the economic sphere is threefold. This is a serious but unfounded charge and results from a lack of conceptual discrimination, from not adopting or understanding the view that Herbert Witzmann, in line with Rudolf Steiner, is taking in the Course in order to develop the new threefold language. And in order to adopt this novel view, which requires mobility in thinking, it is certainly necessary to read beyond the first lecture from this booklet, because it is really in the second and third lectures that Herbert Witzmann further presents and rounds of his argument. The above sentence must furthermore be placed in the right context. We quote from the end of the first lecture of this booklet, at the place where Herbert Witzmann comments on Rudolf Steiner's announcement calling for a new language and way of thinking:

“That only means: Today one cannot speak anymore about the threefold idea in the way that one did when it was inaugurated. With that the threefold idea is not suspended; on the contrary, it is a matter of becoming aware of the way it can become active among people in a new form and be understood. The decisive sentence here is the following one (p.102)19[19]: ‘We have found, within the economic process itself, a division that is threefold. Only, it is necessary that we begin to think of this threefold order in the right way.’ That is the decisive sentence: The threefold idea was inaugurated in a period of extreme economic, political and cultural turmoil. It was the period of complete collapse after the First World War. That would have been the moment to make the three members of the social organism mutually independent and in their independence bring them into a proper working relationship with each other. That would therefore have been a point in time to find the proper place and function for the economic life etc. within and out of this threefold social organism. Unfortunately this fruitful moment was lost; it was not recognized and seized. Time moved on and Rudolf Steiner says: We cannot speak anymore as we did then, because the economic, political and monetary straitjackets and automatisms have gotten much, much worse; and because the situation is no longer so open as it was then, we cannot make any headway directly in threefolding the social organism. Instead we must see how these three components, i.e. the economic proper, the rights and the spiritual, are latent within the economic life; we must see how actually all economic and social problems arise because these three components do not function together properly. We must develop the threefold idea out of the economic life, so that we recognize: These three components function together within the economic life, but we cannot come to a proper conscious awareness of their significance and function; here lies the cause for all economic and social problems. The transformation of the threefold idea therefore means that the economic life can no longer bring itself to bear as a component within the three independent components of the social organism, but that the threefold idea must be recognized as consisting of the three economic archetypal forces and be taken up within this economic life, if this economic life is to be saved from destruction.

This is directly and indirectly expressed by Rudolf Steiner in many passages. At one point, he says (p. 134): ‘And you can see it also from the other side. I pointed out how in the simple case of exchange, where money becomes more and more important, or indeed where exchange is recognized at all, the economic life enters directly into the sphere of rights.’ One person gives and the other one takes in the economic life. By becoming aware of this, we realize that these rights components and this rights sphere cannot be omitted in any way, for in giving and taking it is the just balance that matters. To this can be added the following: ‘The moment that reason is to enter the economic life, we must once again let that which prevails in the free spiritual life flow into the economic sphere.’ The organizing in the spiritual life, the justice in giving and taking, and the actual economic activity of enhancing products of nature: in this sense you therefore have in this course a continuation and at the same time a re-inauguration of the threefold idea. To say it once more: *The economy is not a component within the threefold social organism, but the threefold organism is a component within the economic life.* That is the interesting new situation that is characterized by this Course.”

The sentence that made our critics stumble is put in italics here, but it can obviously only be understood when it is realized *that in this booklet Herbert Witzmann is talking about two forms of the economic life*: the economic life (proper) in a narrow and in a larger, extended sense. In the

19[19] All page numbers from quotations of the World Economy Course in the three lectures refer to the translation by A.O Barfield and T. Gordon-Jones (Third edition, paperback, London,1977).

above sense the word economy must be taken in the latter, extended sense as containing the (half free) spiritual life, the rights sphere (exemplified through just price) and the economic life proper (work applied to nature). Thus the economic life in a larger sense assumes the position of the social organism as a whole in which all three sub-systems, including the economic life proper – the transformation (transubstantiation) of nature – can be found. Only seen in this way does the above sentence make sense and can the new social organic paradigm be understood.

3. Our critics further maintain the following: When Rudolf Steiner at the end of his first lecture in the Course (p. 16) said: “And now the position is such that if we are to speak once more today to people such as you, we can no longer speak in the same terms as we did then; today another language is necessary, and that is what I now want to give you in these lectures. I want to show you how today one must think once more about these questions, especially if one is still young and can participate in what has to take shape in the near future.” he was addressing students of economy, hence the Course is meant only for economists and therefore deals exclusively with the organization of the economic life.

Commentary: The first thing to note here is that Herbert Witzenmann calls this a Course on *Social Organics*, a term which – it must be admitted – rolls much better of the tongue than the *Threefold Social Order*, the *Threefold Commonwealth* (smacks of the British, no offense meant), *Trifurcation* etc. all of which do not convey the real meaning of the German word *Dreigliederung*, which is not so much a folding than an organic “membering” process. The term furthermore directs the attention to the main concept at hand, namely that of the social organism a term which, as we have seen, goes much more in the direction of the green concept of *environment*, than the term *society*. At the end of the first lecture of the Course, Rudolf Steiner says that above all else the social organism has to be understood: “The first thing needful is to describe the economic process.” (p. 22). But even before this can be done, the social organism must be understood: “The old State frontiers and limitations are interfering with the economic process. The latter (i.e. the economic process) must indeed be understood, but we must first gain an understanding of the social organism.”(p. 22).

That this Course is not exclusively the domain of economists, but for all those who are concerned with the proper production, care and management of humanity’s needs on earth is one of the many contributions that Herbert Witzenmann makes in this booklet to understanding the Course. As he develops in the second lecture, far from being only a course for economic experts, it is “a practical book, purely by the fact that by serving as a sort of social scientific meditation, it elevates the mind and develops a worldview.”

This brings to mind another aspect of the change in form initiated by the Course, showing how it differed qualitatively from the book *Towards Social Renewal*. In a footnote to his “Preliminary Remarks Concerning The Purpose This Book” Rudolf Steiner wrote (on p. 27)

“The author has purposely avoided confining himself to the customary political economic terminology. He knows exactly which are the passages a ‘specialist’ will call amateurish. His form of expression was determined not only by his desire to address himself also to people who are not familiar with political and social scientific literature, but primarily because of his view that a new age

will judge most of what is specialized in this literature, including its terminology, to be one-sided and inadequate.”

In his Course on World Economy this was different; there he addressed himself to the scientific world in order to develop out of the terminology and concepts of the traditional, national or political economy a science of world economy, a new form of the threefold idea to meet the needs of the time. This is why, like all the other professional courses he gave, he emphasized – as I have shown in the introduction to the first edition to this booklet – that the annotation of the Free School for Spiritual Science should be inserted in it, stating among other things that these manuscripts are, as it were, text books, study-material of the School for Spiritual Science – something which unfortunately was broken with in the course of the dramatic history of the Anthroposophical Society, a tragic and still unresolved chapter known as the “book question.”²⁰[20]

By now it may be obvious that the Course far extends beyond the usual scope of the (academic) economist, for by taking as a starting point for the genesis of the social organism the three production factors *nature*, *labor* and *capital (spirit)* and showing how through the interaction between these three factors, economic values arise that ultimately need to be balanced by economic associations in order to establish just prices, it touches on the three major issues that all have their particular lobbies and political parties vying more or less against each other for political power and clout: the Greens have *nature* as their prime concern, the Democrats in the US and the social-democrats in Europe are concerned with *labor* and have historical connections to the unions, while the Republicans here and the Liberals and Conservatives in Europe see *capital* as their mainstay of power. There is at present no real world-wide alternative movement with the foresight and vista to help bring about economic associations, international councils for responsible globalization, that alone are capable of harmonizing these three productive components of the social organism: a movement for social organics as a Grail impulse of the 21st century could.

Acknowledgments

This third edition with the above foreword was written, and is also to be presented, in the Rudolf Steiner Library in Ghent NY. I am extremely grateful to Fred Paddock, the librarian here and John Root

²⁰[20] For further information and background see Herbert Wittenmann’s social esthetic study on the Principles of the Anthroposophical Society (Willehalm Institute, 5th ed. Ghent, NY, 2001).

Sr. from the Berkshire-Taconic Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in America for providing me with the facilities to complete this work and for making it possible to send out a newsletter announcing these talks to the members and friends of the Society in this area. I also want to warmly thank newly found friends such as Dennis Evenson for his (late night) editing work and his help in getting this booklet to Pro Printers in nearby Hudson, and Richard Roe who, while away on holidays these last few weeks in August, let me stay in his snug little cottage just a couple of houses up from Fern Hill where the Library stands. Lastly, I thank all those who attended my first talk and presentation at the library of Werner Greub's book *How The Grail Sites Were Found – Wolfram von Eschenbach And The Reality Of The Grail* and all those who bought copies of it. This enabled me to find and partly finance my way over here and made my stay, on the whole, a fruitful and even joyous occasion. Perhaps it can lead to the establishment here of an American branch of the Willehalm Institute for the advancement of anthroposophy as grail research, royal art and social organics.

Robert J. Kelder,

August 23, 2001

Rudolf Steiner Library, Ghent

"Leviathan – Society As An Organism" –

Foreword to the Fourth Edition

This edition is being made on the eve of a visit to London to present the fourth, British edition of *How The Grail Sites Were Found* in the Rudolf Steiner House on October 26. In my various introductions to editions of Werner Greub's work, I have referred to this booklet *The Just Price* – and also to the one on *The Principles of The Anthroposophical Society* – by Herbert Witzenmann as being examples of publications that are written out of the Grail impulse of the 20th century: Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy or science of the Grail, more particularly: transforming the driving force on which the present world economy is based, namely egotism, to a world economy based on altruism. It therefore seemed appropriate to also make new editions of these two booklets available for the launching of Werner Greub's book in London, since the editions made in America on half letter-size (in contrast to the European A-5 format) were sold out. This meant redoing the whole layout since the original manuscripts were left in Montreal in the hands of publisher Jacques Racine with a view to supplying possible demands in North America.

Considering the lack of time, I will restrict myself to two items that I hope to work out further in a future edition of this booklet.

The first one consists of the observation that the concept of the social organism seems to be enjoying a comeback in North America, albeit in a sort of neo social-Darwinist fashion. I am referring to the book *The Lucifer Principle – A Scientific Expedition Into The Forces Of History* by Howard Bloom (published by The Atlantic Monthly Press, New York in 1995). In the foreword, David Sloan Wilson writes: "The bone of contention is the organismic nature of human society. Thomas Hobbes and many others of his time regarded individuals as the cells and organs of a giant social organism – a Leviathan – 'which is but an artificial man, though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defense it was intended.' Today this idea is regarded as no more than a fanciful metaphor. Evolution is thought to produce individuals who are designed to relentlessly pursue their own reproductive success. Society is merely the by-product of individual striving and should not be regarded as an organism in its own right. Even individuals can be decomposed into selfish genes whose only purpose is to replicate themselves. It is a mark Howard Bloom's independence of thought that he resisted the extreme reductionism that pervades modern evolutionary biology. He believes that Leviathan, or society as an organism, is not a fanciful metaphor but an actual product of evolution. The Darwinian struggle for existence has taken place among societies, as well as among individuals within societies. We do strive as individuals, but we are also part of something larger than ourselves, with a complex physiology and mental life that we carry out but only dimly understand. That is the vision of evolution and human behavior found in *The Lucifer Principle*, and at the moment it can be found nowhere else."

The anthroposophic concept of the idea of the threefold nature of the social organism and – more important – the way that this idea, as developed in this booklet on "Just Price" based on Rudolf Steiner's lectures on the world economy, ought to be presented and implemented, is not found in *The Lucifer Principle*, not even the slightest reference to it. This is, indeed, not surprising, considering the present state of affairs in the world, which has after all come to be what it is because of the steady refusal of the scientific and religious elite to consider the helping hand offered to them in solving the ills facing mankind. Herbert Witzenmann refers in these following pages to the bitter complaint

lodged by Rudolf Steiner to this effect. But this present radically polarizing world situation is no less due, conceptually speaking, to the steady refusal of many, if not all, well-meaning representatives of the idea of the threefold nature of the social organism to consider and act on the words of Rudolf Steiner in his first lecture of the course on world economy that a new language and way of thought for this social organic impulse to rescue mankind on earth from complete inhumanity was necessary. This far-reaching consequence can admittedly only become evident, when this new approach has been understood; without that basis, this charged statement will appear absurd and far-fetched.

This brings me to my second observation, which I had to make after reading through the German language newsletter *Dreigliederung des Sozialen Organismus* (Threefolding of the Social Organism) nr. 1, March 2001 published by the *Initiative Network Threefolding* in Stuttgart, Germany. This issue of some 44 pages deals with "Trisectoral Partnership, Civil Society and Threefolding" and is a long-drawn debate between, among others, Harrie Salman, Christoph Strawe and Nicanor Perlas. And again, the same utter silence, implicit denial and non-recognition of the actual form of the threefold idea, so strongly emphasized and clearly developed by Rudolf Steiner, that we encountered in North America is met with in this journal. The closest to acknowledging the form as demanded by the spirit of the time, albeit implicitly and in some sort of pluralistic manner, comes the editor Strawe in his contribution "On The Search For the Forms of Implementation of the Threefold Idea". This is when he presents in a chapter "About the Manifold Forms of Implementing the Threefold Idea" a short history of the threefold movement from 1917 until 1922, but then leaves out the course on world economy that year and the founding anew of the Anthroposophical Society in 1924 as social organic modes of appearance, and only writes (p. 18): "there is not the smallest indication that Rudolf Steiner did not considers other ways and means of implementing the threefold idea.", after which he gives a few more recent examples, all from the political-rights sphere.

These two observation may suffice to illustrate the present bankruptcy and impotence of the spiritual life of mankind, which I tried to diagnose in my foreword to the fourth British edition of *How The Grail Sites Were Found*, but this only as a prelude, a backdrop to a possible therapeutic course of action: *A Union of People – The Kardeiz Saga To Recall the Anthroposophical Society*.

In a forthcoming book with this title I hope to enlarge on this; those interested in reading more on the Kardeiz Saga, I refer to my introduction to Herbert Wizenmann's social-esthetic study on *The Principles of The Anthroposophical Society* that is coming out in a sixth edition.

Robert Jan Kelder,

Willehalm Institute,

Amsterdam, October 23, 2001

First Lecture on December 14, 1974

Ladies and Gentleman, Dear Friends,

The task of this weekend conference will be the study of our theme "the just price." With that is meant, in all humility, a sort of introduction to the so-called *National Economy Course* by Rudolf Steiner. I say "so-called" because we are dealing here with lectures that Rudolf Steiner gave in Dornach in July and August of 1922 mainly at the request of students of economics. He himself, however, would hardly have given this title to this course of lectures, even though the words "national or political economy" often appear in it. Doubtless, he used this term only to relate to the outlook, education and situation of the majority of his audience, as he always did. And with this in mind, one can understand this title, which was probably not Rudolf Steiner's. If we look only at the content, it is quite impossible to speak of this as a "Course on National or Political Economy," because it is a course on world economy, or even more precisely, on *world economy as social organics*. Something like that would have to be the title of these lectures, for they show that social and economic life can only develop against the background of the world economy of our time.

Perhaps I have been too bold in choosing this title of the just price, but it arose, if I may be allowed to say something personal, from a wish I have been nurturing for a long time. For a number of years I have wanted to hold a seminar about this theme as an attempt to introduce the concept of social organics. This did not take place, because those who could have assisted made the obvious objection, as is of course always possible, that before one tackles the most difficult problems, one should begin with simple ones. Now everyone who knows the course will know that the main topic of discussion is the problem of just price. One can understand these problems that are treated within broad contexts only when they are understood as an elucidation of this one main problem. This objection at the time was therefore perhaps not quite justified, but by raising it, one can of course stifle an initiative.

Now, as every sentence shows, directly or indirectly, this course deals with the problem of just price, and during our study over these two days what is meant by this will, I believe, also become clear. I would like, however, to illustrate this with the words of Rudolf Steiner in order to remind you or introduce you to them. You probably all know them, but there is always a reason in our joint effort here to bring these archetypal words to the fore. To begin, please listen how Rudolf Steiner quite unmistakably expresses that in these 14 lectures he speaks and will speak about nothing other than just price.

Right away, you will find in the second lecture - the first lecture is a grand prelude, but the concrete problems are approached only in the second one - at the beginning (p. 24):

"In the last resort all the most important considerations in the national economy really merge in this question of price" – here the term national economy is used, even though the course speaks about the latter having moved into world economy – "for all the impulses and forces that are at work in (national) economies culminate at length in price."

In other words, everything depends on our being able to come to a mental picture of just price as it arises in the economic process. Naturally, nothing more is given at first by such a formula – about the concept of just price actually a whole number of formulas – than an abstraction, and our task in these lectures will be, at least roughly, to work the whole of national economy into this abstraction.

Rudolf Steiner always emphasizes the same thing: to become aware of the processes that lead to price forming. All processes affect price formation, and in social organics it is a question of creating an awareness of all these processes as regards their price forming function. At the beginning of lecture 7, we hear for example the following words (p. 84):

“We have seen now how the whole economy takes its course; we have seen how purchase or sale, loan and gift act as impelling factors, motive factors within this system. We have to realize that there can be no economy without this interplay of loan, gift and purchase...The important thing is to understand what role these three factors play in the forming of price. Only by recognizing this, shall we succeed in any degree in formulating the price problem.”

Again and again, Rudolf Steiner attaches great importance to focusing on the central role of the price problem.

Allow me to add a few more short quotations to prove my point. On page 91 we read:

“Altogether the things that happen in the economy” – allow me to say social organics – “depend far more on the relative rising and falling of prices than on any other circumstance. It is by the relative rise and fall in prices that the difficulties of life itself are introduced into social organics. As to whether the products as a whole rise or fall – if they all rose or fell uniformly, that would basically be of little interest to people. What interests them is that the different products rise or fall to a different extent. This fact is emerging just now in a very tragic way under the present economic conditions” – this was in the year 1922, but he could also say it for 1974; we do not have to reformulate it at all – “because of the rising and falling of the (prices of) products in the most varying ways, what is rising and falling are the money values themselves,” – that we also notice very clearly – “but in these money values is stored up what were previously real values. By this fluctuation an entire mingling and confusion is now being brought about in human society.”

One could also say: a complete rearrangement. This is in an even much greater degree the case today than at that time. We need not change a single word and can only say: What was true then to a certain extent, is true today to the greatest possible extent.

Another quote (p. 96):

“We have perhaps already seen that the most important question in economics is that of price. The point therefore will now be to observe prices in the sense that I have indicated. The rise and fall, or stability of prices – the fact that the prices of certain products are too high or low (for one can have a feeling for such things) – indicates whether or not the economic organism is functioning properly. For that is what must fall to associations” – i.e. unions of people involved in the social organic process –

“to discover from reading the barometer of the price indices what needs to be done in the rest of the economic sphere.”

And now the last quotation in this context (p. 184):

“It is the forming of prices that matters, to begin with, and in this respect you do not need to go back to anything vague or indefinite. For you can always follow things back to the fundamental relationship of value which is brought about by the very fact of work upon the land, namely the ratio of the population to the land available for cultivation.” – This is a far-reaching explanation in which actually everything is summarized that is said about the price problem in this course and that we gradually need to become aware of. Rudolf Steiner continues –: “In this ratio you will find that which originally underlies the formation of values. In effect, all the labor that can be done must come from the given population and, on the other hand all that this labor can unite with must come from the given land. For everyone needs what this labor produces, and as far as those who are spared from this labor on account of their spiritual work, the others must perform it for them in addition to their own.”

I will have to come back to this in the course during our joint efforts.

Summarizing, Rudolf Steiner therefore says that the main issue of economy, the forming of prices, is actually a matter of focusing on the *ratio of arable land area to population*. For running the economy, doing business is essentially a matter of bringing products into exchange among people, and this exchange among people expresses itself in price formation. The forming of prices – that must to begin with be the thing that matters. All the efforts devoted to these lectures will be in vain if they do not lead to an understanding of the function of price forming processes.

In the time available, it is naturally impossible to treat this problem exhaustively. Yet perhaps it will be possible to show you that this course by Rudolf Steiner on world economy as social organics is in no way only a course for experts, even though it came about at their request, but that it also contains a certain view of totality (holism). Rudolf Steiner always speaks about the same totality of things, but always from new viewpoints. The great thing about this course is that he has developed in it a totality concerning man, world and knowledge from perhaps the most interesting viewpoint that there is. Therefore, I hope that this small impulse we are creating together in this weekend could perhaps lead in the coming years to a whole week in order to go through this course lecture by lecture.²¹[21] Before turning to our actual work, however, I would like first to characterize some aspects of this course pertaining to its original contents and tone.

The course demands, perhaps more than all other courses, but in any case at least as much, a certain way of thinking, and the course itself is meant to be an instrument for the schooling of this mode of thought, namely of *mobility in thinking*. But at the same time this course points in every sentence, sometimes quite bitterly, to the degree that present-day mankind lacks this mobility in thinking and how little mankind is prepared to take the necessary steps to develop this flexibility. And

²¹[21] This unfortunately did not take place, as far as I know, although Herbert Witzmann gave numerous lectures and wrote many articles on this theme, none of which are available as yet in English.

we want to bring to mind the words of warning by Rudolf Steiner and the really deeply painful tone with which he emphasizes this fact. There we hear for example the following appeal (p.58):

“This is the infinitely sad thing today, that for many centuries mankind has grown accustomed to sharply defined concepts that cannot be applied to living processes. Today we are called upon to bring our concepts into motion in order to penetrate economic processes with conscious understanding. This is what we must attain: mobility in thinking so as to be able to think a process through to its end inwardly.”

Instead of the rigid cause-and-effect relation thinking that looks at the effects from underlying premises, we must attain a process-based thinking that learns to look at the processes of circulation and metamorphosis. Such a thinking recognizes that one and the same thing is simultaneously the same and yet something else. For example, a product is indeed a product everywhere but, depending upon where it turns up within the economic process, it has totally different evaluations, and brings about and demands totally different prices. Naturally, this also depends on its location or on its stage within the process. Thus, the product is at the same time identical with an archetype, appearing in many facets. And so the cause and effect relation is recognized by process-based thinking as just one example of the product’s archetypal content and nature.

Here is another passage in the same tone (p. 107):

“It is actually – I would like to say – extremely tragic that no understanding should be found for something that is after all so simple and so correct. For, the moment that there is real understanding, it can be accomplished not even by the day after tomorrow, but by tomorrow. For it is not a question of radical changes, but of seeking the associative union in each case.”

Rudolf Steiner thought that this detailed solution could in effect be found not today, but already tomorrow as prompted by the concrete cases in question, but whereby, as the whole course makes evident, a series of insights in mobile thinking is necessary:

“You need only to summon the will and direct the intelligence to do it.” – You see, it comes for the most part down to understanding. – “This is the thing that in effect touches one so painfully, for at this point economics does coincide in a certain way with morality and, I would like to say, religion. For it is completely incomprehensible to me, for example, how this view on economics could have remained completely unnoticed by those who – let us say – are officially in charge of responding to the religious needs of the world.” – That the idea of threefolding could have remained unnoticed by economists and businessmen, that is perhaps understandable to some extent, but that it could have remained entirely unnoticed by those who had to take care of the religious needs of mankind; that is completely incomprehensible.– “For there is no doubt about it, during recent times it has clearly emerged that the economic conditions are no longer being mastered, the facts have gone beyond the control of human beings and so today we stand above all for the question: How can this be mastered, how shall we grapple with it? But it must be mastered by human beings and mastered by them in associations.”

As the previous words show, it must be done from a certain religious-moral aspect.

One more quote (p. 185):

“Truth has departed from our way of life” – as is practiced today – “out of words of truth we have slid into empty phrases; out of the sense of what is right and wrong into mere conventions, and out of a practical hold on life into dead routines. And we shall not escape from this threefold untruth of *phrase, convention and routine*, till we develop the will to dive down into things as they really are and see how they are shaped.”

Part and parcel of coming to this decision, a decision that at the same time harbors cognitive and religious-moral dimensions and therefore strengthens the rights sphere, is consciousness raising. Rudolf Steiner expresses this in a succinct sentence to the effect that everything that takes its course instinctively must be elevated into the clear region of reason. Social organics is a process of developing and raising consciousness.

We want to attempt once more to survey and review the quotations that were just read, because the quotations are chosen with a view to conveying, according to my conviction and feeling, an initial overview of the whole social organic course. I want to proceed from this necessity of developing awareness, since this is connected with living thinking. For we live consciously in our own cognitive behavior and in our life in general and the world that surrounds us, only when we become aware of the great lie that dominates the world today, namely the lie that the origin of everything is death, that death is the father of life. This is a pertinent lie and a obvious impossibility, for each instance of soul observation would show us that there can be nothing in the world, at least nothing in as far as it is present in our consciousness, that would not appear to us as coming from the realm of the living. This is therefore the basic truth that we must become aware of when we want to understand this course; this basic truth is indeed the general foundation of anthroposophy, i.e. that death is not the father of the living, but that the living is something that leaves its traces in the non-living. Anthroposophical life in general and the understanding of this course in particular are based on the constant practice of observing one's own behavior in cognition and life and thereby coming to realize that incoherent perceptual matter is structured by living, archetypal concepts. The vitality of these concepts permits them to freeze, to crystallize into various perceptual situations, similar to a plant as an archetypal being that only appears in multiple examples of itself in the different metamorphoses and stages of its course of development, while it is the essence of the plant that underlies these various modes of appearance as something that cannot be represented and observed with the ordinary physical senses.

This practice is actually the basic prerequisite for the development of greater awareness, that must be fulfilled everywhere for understanding even the simplest word of Rudolf Steiner, e.g. understanding that what in a certain shape becomes present in our conscious cognition of Being and what can be represented in this particular state is based on mutually forming, living potencies that freeze into these different metamorphoses, leaving them as examples of their true vitality. That is what is meant by living thinking.

That is therefore the basic truth the thinking human being must become aware of, that he must have the courage, but also the power of observation, to protest against the universal lie dominating the world today, that death is the father of life.

Yet, we are not only thinking but also speaking human beings. And everything depends on whether we speak with each other and make ourselves understood. We can only do this if we come together in advisory bodies in which the individual participants or members can put their experiences and abilities at the disposal of the others, from which then an encompassing opinion can be formed. These bodies in which human beings can come together as speakers in the fullest sense of the word are called associations by Rudolf Steiner. And just as the living human being is lifted up into a world of archetypes that weave and shape a spiritual realm of universal being above his limited personality, a world wide web of Being floating above him but near enough to be sensed, so the human beings able to speak with each other experience that they are in a community in which they can speak. They then speak a common language, actually only now discovering this language community, and finding themselves once more lifted up into the spiritual sphere of understanding, in which they are carried still further beyond themselves than in the experience of the archetypal world of the truth.

And once more they are lifted up higher upon becoming aware that they are also acting, walking human beings, striding into social reality. And in this striding together into social reality they are lifted up a third time even higher above themselves. When they stride into social reality motivated by the truth that the origin of life is indeed life and not death, the truth that the avenues of understanding among people can and must constitute the life of rights, when motivated by this twofold raising of consciousness, they then realize not only what hovers above them as the angel of truth in this social reality, and what hovers above them when they speak with each other as the spirit of a language community. They then they come to that religious consciousness which was addressed by Rudolf Steiner with the words that the spirit of the age can and wants to be present in human beings who together take the road to social reality.

We can conjure up the following picture. You have no doubt this fall and winter passed by fields that had been plowed. You may have been deeply moved to see how the earth was heaved up, displaying its brown and black shades of color, surrounded by the green of winter meadows. In your mind you then would have seen the sower going over this field. By saying this, I am really well into using a figure of speech, for sowing is mostly done mechanically these days. Yet in one's mind's eye appears the image of a sower, when seeing a plowed and tilled field, a real old-fashioned sower who has gone over the field sowing the seeds. For a sower – and perhaps even today – it is completely impossible to believe in the universal lie that death is the father of life. This sower lives in these archetypal concepts that underlie all reality, he experiences himself in this archetypal vitality of the world as one of its members and from this awareness of the formative spirituality of the real spirit, which is not frozen in chains of effects, he drops the seed onto the plowed field. He is actually the most real representative of living concepts and their truth that I can imagine. For him, it is a directly felt truth in life that human needs and abilities spring from standing in that world of truth that shapes all reality, and that from this world of truth arise the true commodities that satisfy vital human needs.

Here is the living stream in which the commodities are carried as products of nature, in which these wares swim, like the blood corpuscles in the blood stream, and in which they are liberated from their heaviness in accordance with the real spirituality which in this true formative spirit stream gives them the buoyancy, the release in weight from their mere naturalness, whereby they can become objects to satisfy real human needs. In this way the sower, as a representative of the truth, walks over the field, and in so doing he is not only a thinking, but also an acting human being, sowing the seeds as one standing together with others in the practice of human life, who is aware that he acts for the

others and that he can do this only because others do things for him. By standing in the real spiritualized processes of nature as a representative of the living truth, he is responsible for the formative forces of the spirit flowing out of the past. But by standing, on the other hand, within the human community for which he is active and which acts for him, so that he can in this sense of mutuality drop his seeds into the furrows, by not only being a thinking man, but also a man of experience, he is a representative of the future. He realizes, on the one hand, the past of the spirit ever anew by knowing that he is part of the real formative process of the living spirit, and by walking over the furrows and dropping the seeds, he draws in the future with every dropping of a seed. And so the past and future flow together in him. And it is this streaming together of past and future, of thinking and walking or doing, that actually gives him the possibility to communicate with others, for this is only possible if one is both a thinker *and* a doer, if one is aware of the transubstantiating spirit that continues to work from the world of the past into the present of the human being, and if, on the other hand, one is aware of how the spirit of the future wants to incarnate.

Realization from the past and transformation through ‘futurization’, their intersection enables a formation of human rights, which can only constitute itself in human beings who are capable of speaking with each other, of communicating, of conferring together, forming social organic judgments.

Please allow me to continue these introductory reflections a little further. I would like to draw your attention to another point, namely that Rudolf Steiner’s social organic course presents a new conception of the idea of the threefold nature of the social organism, in accordance with the social, cultural and historical situation, which in the year 1922 was already different from the time that the threefold idea was inaugurated 22[22] and which today is altogether different. Yet the threefold impulse was not given up, but transformed in a way that is also for us today, I believe, of the greatest importance.

We can rely on the words of Rudolf Steiner in order to show how this course presents a metamorphosis of the threefold idea. Already in the first lecture Rudolf Steiner states (p. 16):

“And now the position is such that if we are to speak once more today to people such as you, we can no longer speak in the same terms as we did then;” – when the threefold idea was inaugurated – “today another language is necessary, and that is what I now want to give you in these lectures. I want to show you how today one must think once more about these questions, especially if one is still young and can participate in what has to take shape in the near future.” 23[23]

22[22] Rudolf Steiner inaugurated the threefold idea privately in 1917 with his memoranda to the German and Austrian governments, hoping that they would become the Central European basis for ending World War I. When this attempt failed, he turned to the public in the spring of 1919 with his book *Towards Social Renewal* which soon saw a second edition and which was translated in many European languages, including English. An American edition also appeared.

23[23] The last sentence in this quotation is completely missing from the heavily edited translation of Rudolf Steiner’s World Economy Course by C. Budd, which was published by New Economy Publications in England with the acknowledged help of the management of the Rudolf Steiner Press in 1993 under the title *Economics – The World as One Economy*. In his editorial introduction the translator justifies this omission by writing: “In some cases I have left out whole sentences, in others I have supplemented them...My purpose has been to make the sense and direction of Steiner’s approach clearer and more understandable than is possible by a literal translation.” If this is really the case with other passages remains to be seen; the omission of the sentence by Rudolf Steiner that a new *thinking* is called for and that this will be exemplified in this course so as to realize these ideas in the near future etc., is quite incomprehensible to me.

That only means: Today one cannot speak anymore about the threefold idea in the way that one did when it was inaugurated. With that the threefold idea is not suspended; on the contrary, it is a matter of becoming aware of the way it can become active among people in a new form and be understood. The decisive sentence here is the following one (p. 102): “We have found, within the economic process itself, a division that is threefold. Only, it is necessary that we begin to think of this threefold order in the right way.” That is the decisive sentence: The threefold idea was inaugurated in a period of extreme economic, political and cultural turmoil. It was the period of complete collapse after the first World War. That would have been the moment to make the three members of the social organism mutually independent and in their independence bring them into a proper working relationship with each other. That would therefore have been a point in time to find the proper place and function for the economic life etc. within and out of this threefold social organism. Unfortunately this fruitful moment was lost; it was not recognized and seized. Time moved on and Rudolf Steiner says: We cannot speak anymore as we did then, because the economic, political and monetary straitjackets and automatisms have gotten much, much worse; and because the situation is no longer so open as it was then, we cannot make any headway directly in threefolding the social organism. Instead we must see how these three components, i.e. the economic proper, the rights and the spiritual, are latent within the economic life; we must see how actually all economic and social problems arise because these three components do not function together properly. We must develop the threefold idea out of the economic life, so that we recognize: These three components function together within the economic life, but we cannot come to a proper conscious awareness of their significance and function; here lies the cause for all economic and social problems. The transformation of the threefold idea therefore means that the economic life can no longer bring itself to bear as a component within the three independent components of the social organism, but that the threefold idea must be recognized as consisting of the three economic archetypal forces and be taken up within this economic life, if this economic life is to be saved from destruction.

This is directly and indirectly expressed by Rudolf Steiner in many passages. At one point, he says (p. 134):

“And you can see it also from the other side. I pointed out how in the simple case of exchange, where money becomes more and more important, or indeed where exchange is recognized at all, the economic life enters directly into the sphere of rights.”

One person gives and the other one takes in the economic life. By becoming aware of this, we realize that these rights components and this rights sphere cannot be omitted in any way, for in giving and taking it is the just balance that matters. To this can be added the following:

“The moment that reason is to enter the economic life, we must once again let that which prevails in the free spiritual life flow into the economic sphere.”

The organizing in the spiritual life, the justice in giving and taking, and the actual economic activity of enhancing products of nature: in this sense you therefore have in this course a continuation and at the same time a re-inauguration of the threefold idea. To say it once more: The economy is not a

component within the threefold social organism, but the threefold organism is a component within the economic life. That is the interesting new situation that is characterized by this course.

Here is another introductory remark. Of equal importance with the problem of the just price there is another theme running through the course that expresses the same thing and that is actually only the other side the coin. This is the *fundamental social law of occultism*. One side of the coin reads “The Just Price” and the other “The Fundamental Social Law” as the true gold standard of the social organism. This fundamental social law that pertains to a certain type of economic behavior within the social organism, makes no moral demands – this is made perfectly apparent from the way it appears in the course. This law is a social organic observation according to the methods of natural science. Why ‘occultism’ we will consider later. Let us hear how it is formulated here – a great, succinct formulation (p. 43):

“It is not a God, nor a moral law, nor an instinct, but simply the modern division of labor that calls for altruism in modern economic life, in labor and in the production of goods. Thus it is a purely economic category that is demanding that.”

The fundamental social law of mutuality is no moral demand, but a social organic observation according to the natural scientific method. It is also formulated as follows (p. 42):

“The division of labor tends towards a situation where nobody works for himself anymore and that what a person produces must be passed over completely to others. A person’s needs must on the other hand be met by society.”

And another quote (p. 44):

“Thus one of the first and foremost essential economic questions comes before us: How are we to *eliminate this principle of working for a living* from the economic process? Those who to this day are still mere wage-earners – earning a living for themselves – how are they to be placed in the whole economic process, no longer as wage-earners but as men who work out of social needs? Must this really be done? Of course it must. For if this is not done we shall never obtain true prices, but always false ones. We must seek to obtain prices and values that depend not on the human beings but on the economic process itself – prices that arise in the process of fluctuation of values. The cardinal question is the *question of price*.”

The price problem must be solved by those measures that bring the values to a proper fluctuation and a mutually inherent valuation in the economic process. When this occurs, it is (already) independent from people; in order for it to come to that, a human code of behavior is required, namely that of mutuality, which by virtue of the division of labor is simply a fact in social

organics, but which people must become aware of as being a fundamental question of existence. One last quotation about that (p. 133):

”The overview of the economic process will become active; the interest for one’s fellow human being will actually be there in the economic process that is formed. In no other way can a true economic judgment come about and thus we are impelled to rise from the economic processes to the mutuality, the give and take between human beings and furthermore to that which will arise from this, namely the objective community spirit working in the associations. This will be a community spirit proceeding not from any ‘moralic acid’, but from a realization of the necessities inherent in the economic process itself...There is no lack of people nowadays who say: ‘Our economic life will be good – tremendously good – once human beings are good. You people must become good!’ Think of men like Professor Förster 24[24] and his kind, who go about preaching: ‘If only men and women will become selfless, the economic life will become good.’ But such opinions are really of no more worth than this one: If my mother-in-law had four wheels and a handle in front, she would be a bus!”

A wagon is built in the course on social organics with which one can start to move into the future, maybe not today, nor the day after tomorrow, but perhaps tomorrow.

24[24] Förster, Friedrich Wilhelm (1869 – 1966); German pedagogue and pacifist.