

TRIUNE

NEWSLETTER FOR SHAPING A NEW FORM OF UNIVERSITY

- ❖ The cultivation of a living, imaginative thinking as the fundamental aim in teaching and research – the inseparability of science and art.
- ❖ Goethean-style phenomenology as orientation in relation to all faculties; awakening the eye of the spirit.
- ❖ The university as the expression and practice of the threefold social life.

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STORYTELLING TOWARD THE THREEFOLD SOCIAL ORGANISM AND ASSOCIATIVE ECONOMICS

An interview with Dr. Iris Curteis

TRIUNE: In some of your seminars, along with Hamish Mackay and Gillian Rogers, you combine story-telling with an exploration of associative economics and the social threefold. What is your own background in relation to the threefold social organism which has inspired you to do this?

Iris Curteis: I read Steiner's *Kernpunkte*¹ when I was somewhere between 18 and 20 and in soul-

agony because I'd realised, I had to live in *this* world. 'Organising' human society into three autonomous functions, each working out of its own inherent principles to create a healthy and humane society, rang true and bore hope. But I had this feeling of being struck by lightning when I understood that if we work to survive – that is, to earn a wage – we drive increasing competitiveness, greed, and egotism into our social structures. We participate in creating the toxic system we are trapped in that makes it impossible to ask ourselves: what have I come here to do out of love and devotion to humanity?

A few years later, I studied Speechformation and Dramatic Arts with Rüdiger Fisher-Dorp [who recently passed] and Ingeborg Gessinger, both accomplished in their fields of performing arts

¹ 1919, GA 23.

and very active in threefolding; they created several working initiatives based on threefold principles. During these speech studies, all the students ran into financial issues. Our course was so comprehensive there was no time to 'find jobs'. Our teachers were struggling to keep the course going despite not making a living themselves. I heard about Dieter Brüll and his approach, through threefolding, to especially support young people in their studies and endeavours with anthroposophy. The principal idea was to work out how much financial support we needed *as a group* and each time the money arrived, we'd come together and work out between us if we individually needed more or less, or if more funds could go to support one of us in greater need that month. There was no obligation to pay the funds back. Instead, there was a karmic obligation to support others we would encounter, throughout our life, who were in similar situations and needed support to fulfil their intentions.

Threefolding was an integrated aspect of the Speech seminar and all students spent a week in *Eulenspiegel* at Wasserburg. We all met Peter Schillinski, an educator, social activist, author, founder of both the *Witthüs-Teestuben* [Teahouse] on the North Sea Island of Sylt and *Model Wasserburg* at Lake Constance, a working village hotel '*Eulenspiegel*' that offered practice-based education to young people from across Europe, who were looking for *living threefolding*. Working and living at *Eulenspiegel* gave them experiences in practice and the capacity to apply these to their own situations.

Group conversations were a big part of our time there and a new kind of challenge. Additionally, open conversation circles were held for all commers every Wednesday evening, often fiery, and understood within the context of Free Spiritual Life, which includes the anarchy of ideas.

The importance of people meeting, *really meeting one another*, allowing their ideas to become more conscious within themselves and allowing others to become conscious through the conversations, still resonates for me. It was *real*, this experience of one another and of each other's impulses without which a social life resting on human equality is not possible, because *we must all be recognised as human beings*. There were of course public talks and seminars that included guest speakers, as well as the long-term publication of *Jedermann*, later renamed *Jedermensch*.

Peter, with Joseph Beuys, Rainer Rappmann and others was a cofounder of the International Culture-Centre Achberg (INKA). In Achberg, Beuys had a 'site' from which he could work creatively and socially to develop his impulses for a new understanding of economy and the nature of money, and develop his *Erweiterte Kunstbegrif* – his expanded concept of art. The shared experiences and insights cultivated through the Achberger Circle further played an important role in the founding the Green Party in Germany, which generated the idea of direct democracy. My teachers were a part of these initiatives and others, like *Forum 3* in Stuttgart².

For me the arts and social threefolding were inseparably interconnected from the start. What became clear to me over time was that most anthroposophists are not comfortable with the 'theory' of threefolding; many struggle or resist because they feel 'it's all too abstract', not meant for 'our time' and 'too hard because we will never change the whole economy'. People couldn't let go of abstraction and find a way to

² Forum 3 is a self-managed youth and cultural centre in the heart of Stuttgart. On five floors and 1,700 sqm, it offers in its open house a wide range of courses, seminars, lectures and discussions and a café as a meeting centre. It is a free association of people who have made it their mission to develop responsible action in order to contribute to the solution of the burning problems of our time.

connect on an imaginative level with threefolding.

Storytelling has a remarkable power to place us on a threshold between two worlds: the world of our physical sense experience and the world of the story. As we immerse ourselves into the story these worlds overlap. And inwardly, we create a third state or space of consciousness: the liminal space. This is a very big topic, but in a nutshell, this liminality provides us with a charter for our individual and communal, social behaviour. This is sustained by our ability to represent, understand and then act on our self and our community. The archetypes we encounter represent our cultures' ancient and contemporary awareness of its own being, our understanding of our humanness and our individual self-awareness. As this layered social

wealth and behaviour is *informed and inspired by Story in liminal space* it rests on the strength of imagination, not on the authority of prohibition.

But the thing that stood and stands out for me above all others is Steiner's statement that these [folk]tales are not 'made up', they're not allegories, but the deepest truths gifted to human kind. These pathways offered through storytelling take us directly to sources deep within our own soul that we can otherwise only reach through esoteric training and deepest meditation. Which brings me to a third aspect I recognise as vital in the context of threefolding, that of spiritual self-development, this was fostered by Rüdiger Fisher-Dorp, Ingeborg Gessinger and Peter Schilinsk with rigorous consistency.

IN A WORLD OF UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGES & UNPREDICTABLE CHANGES, HOW WILL WE THRIVE?



Coming Together

THREEFOLDING -

SPIRITUAL FREEDOM, SOCIAL EQUALITY ASSOCIATIVE ECONOMICS

THREEFOLDING IS THE CONCRETE TRANSFORMATION OF THE PRESENT UNITARY STATE; IT SHIFTS CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES, SHAPES PRACTICAL SOCIAL OUTCOMES, FORMS HEALTHY COMMUNITIES & REMINDS US OF OUR SPIRITUAL INTENTIONS.

WE'LL EXPLORE: WHY OUR CURRENT CULTURAL, SOCIAL RIGHTS & ECONOMIC SYSTEMS ARE FAILING, HOW THIS DIRECTLY IMPACTS ON OUR FREEDOM TO BE TRULY HUMAN & WHAT WE CAN DO TOGETHER TO INNOVATE POSITIVE CHANGE.

FACILITATORS: HAMISH MACKAY, IRIS CURTEIS, GILLIAN ROGERS

Flyer for a workshop with Iris Curteis, Hamish Mackay and Gillian Rogers. The image "Coming Together" by Iris. For the complete flyer with biographies see:

<https://www.anthroposophyau.org.au/wp-content/uploads/MEETING-THE-DEVILS-GRANDMOTHER-ECONOMY-ECOLOGY-COMMUNITY-Kin-Kin-compressed.pdf>

TRIUNE: How does the story-telling dimension of your work serve to develop these economic pictures?

Iris Curteis: I use three stories in these seminars each focusing on one aspect of threefolding, the associative economic, the social rights life and the cultural spiritual life. Hamish gives an introduction to associative economics and I tell the story of *The Devil's Grandmother* through which we explore what 'War Economy' is and why it determines the basis of all competitive economics. This folktale provides a very powerful imaginative experience of war, the terrible dilemma of war and being a soldier, and the deep sense that there are no longer any choices once I am caught in this dynamic.

The image of the fiery dragon appears, takes human-like form,

offers to carry three soldiers to safety, but of course there is no safety or freedom here. And, like so many of us, they feel they have no choice and sign off on the deal. We find hope in something older than the 'devil' in a place 'deeper than hell' where the primal Grandmother sits on a 'sorry chair' and listens to all the suffering in the world. She is full of compassion and cunning and shows a way forward, but it takes courage. The answers to the unanswerable riddle must come from all of us.

Gillian speaks to the social rights life. I work with the story of *Bearskin*, which draws on the social



Image by Iris Curteis for the story *The Devil's Grandmother*.

circumstances of the 'returned soldier', It explores powerful images of social isolation, the dehumanising of others and the collective responsibility we bear, and what it means to lose human connection because we have lost our own sense of our humanity. We can explore themes of social justice, compassion and generosity, without abstraction, through these imaginations. The experience is very powerful; the participants arrive at the insight together that conscious care for the other and our community are the essence of what makes us human.

I address the cultural-spiritual life and tell the folktale of *Silverhands*. Deception and coercion play a terrible role in this tale, *but* the centre point is a place where the 'people of the forest dwell', that can only be reached by a door over

which is inscribed 'Here All Dwell Free'. In relation to threefolding, Steiner speaks of the structure of a free society as not only freeing us individually, for ourselves, but freeing us so that we can bring about social self-determination.

Our task is to achieve a society free of coercion or pressure – whether it's religious, ideological, state power or economic pressure – used to 'shape' the personality of individuals. I use folktales because they offer dilemma, contradictions and questions, they probe our collective ethics, and challenge us to develop our individual, conscious Self. This gives us the courage to choose to act in freedom, not out of fear of reprisals. It is only through freedom and love that we can restore and develop our highest humanity.

But we also use games. *The Landlord's Game*, designed by Elizabeth Magie for her economics students, is a practical demonstration of those economic principles that enrich the few and impoverish the many. *Monopoly*, patented by the Parker Brothers, is a stolen and corrupted version of *Landlord's Game*. The players' goal is to drive opponents into bankruptcy. *CoQuest and CoQuest Threat* by Michael Howard³ move us beyond the competitiveness we find in our work life and entertainment such as team sports that transfer competitive dynamics from two individuals to two groups. Internally each team exercises a high level of collaboration in order to be effective in defeating the others. This same mix of collaboration and competitiveness is also found in business, politics and warfare. It works out of the prevailing assumption that self-interest is deeply rooted in human nature; competition unavoidable and, therefore, must be accepted as a fact of life.

The Social Puzzle forces us to look around and recognise a need someone else has. It can only

³ Michael's website: livingformstudio.org

be solved by players gifting to others. If we all do that, we all receive what we need. This speaks directly to the *Fundamental Sociological Law* that separates the idea of working for income/self-gain from the idea of working for the wellbeing of others. This was my lightning moment as an 18-year-old: that working for income means we suffer a 'clouding of our karma'. We cannot find a way to perceive and live out our destiny, because our sacred task is distorted, measured, calculated and enumerated.

I use a lot of conversation after the storytelling to build shared knowledge. Conversation literally means to 'walk with or turn around with'. Using conversation after the games builds a communal image and relationship to both ideas and to one another. Therein lies the seed to innovate change and new initiatives.

TRIUNE: Steiner talks about the imperative to cultivate imaginative thinking in university economics teaching in a way which inspires the social will, social creativity - not just theories. How could the work you do become part of a university economics training?

Iris Curteis: Joseph Beuys spoke about everyone being an artist in the social sphere and that we are all called on to participate in the transformation and reshaping of the conditions, the thinking and the structures that shape and inform our lives. He was criticised for being a charlatan, but those critics misunderstood his creative *aktion* – using the of image of the shaman - to stress a magical set of priorities and imagine entirely new ways to work, especially in universities that should be the cutting edge of innovation, but where more emphasis is placed on rationality, intellectual abstraction and critical analysis. We speak academically of 'keeping an open mind' but sometimes it feels more like a door left ajar letting in a cold draft. What academia is lacking is the capacity to suspend

disbelief, something we find in magical realism and in Novalis's magical idealism. I believe it was in this sense that Beuys spoke of the need for an enchanter to appear.

TRIUNE: Associative economics requires tertiary education to go beyond materialist thinking to a perception of the spirit in the social organism. What are the best ways the "eye" of the spirit can be opened for students within a future university education?

Iris Curteis: I understand how storytelling empowers our imagination and creative thinking and encourages us to appreciate our lives as works of art. As a social artist, I'm passionate about using creativity and threefolding, which I experience as deeply interrelated, to examine and change the way we think – we need creative thinking, Imaginative thinking. That's the crux of it. To build our capacity to shape more humane communities and support transformational change we need Imagination. The main focus of my work is the relationship between storytelling and community building; we are on the knife's edge, we either learn to work together to heal all the destruction we have caused with cold-hearted and materialistic intellectualism or we are likely to destroy our own future. But if we use spiritual perception, heart thinking, and we grasp the potential of ideas generated through storytelling, we get inside the idea together – we own these ideas together – we act like an orchestra synchronising individual skills and instruments to interpret the idea of the whole symphony. ≈

Iris Curteis is a Storyteller and Speech Artist with 40 years of artistic experience. Her background includes studies in Visual Arts, Speechformation/Creative Speech & Dramatic Arts (Europe), BA & BA hon. (Creative Writing) and a PhD on Storytelling and Community Building [Australia]. Anthroposophy has been her source of inspiration for 50 years.

<https://www.storyvisionsource.com/>

THE FORMATION OF CAPITAL: CULTIVATING IMAGINATION IN THE ECONOMICS FACULTY

Nigel Hoffmann

It's general knowledge that the faculty of economics at a university is centrally concerned with questions of the production, consumption and distribution of goods, provision of services and the creation of capital. The well-known definition of capital is money and accumulated goods. Economics is of interest to every single human being because all of us depend on capital and its potential. Meanwhile, over the last hundred and fifty years, economics has become a seemingly remote branch of the social sciences, a department largely unto itself, modelled on the objective, rigorous methods of the mathematical sciences. Presumably the plan is for the entire world economy soon to be shaped and controlled by A.I.

The question for the new university is: how can the study of economics – rather than being a highly theoretical, specialist discipline – proceed so that at every point, in its most essential expressions, it can touch the heart and will of those who choose to engage with it. For this to happen tertiary students of economics will need to become responsible for the social whole in a way comparable to the responsibility an artist feels for the creation of the whole work. Economics students should be inspired with a great care for the economic processes they are creatively engaged in and responsible for.

The phenomenological process of knowing calls upon much more of the human being than the intellectual mind. How do we enter into a phenomenon in order for it to “speak” to us of its essential nature? Rudolf Steiner points the way to such a phenomenology: “If I remain within the phenomena, lovingly, and I do not

attempt to impose some kind of hypothetical science will be free to develop new concepts”.⁴ It would be absurd to suggest that university students are expected to “feel love” toward economic phenomena. But what they can do is exercise the greatest care – we may call it an attitude of love – for the way they engage with these phenomena. For these economic phenomena belong to mighty and bounteous body of the Earth, to the dignity and creativity of human nature, to the mysteries of spirit.

The new university, the phenomenological university, is not concerned with advancing economic theories, neither capitalist, Marxist nor any other. That's not what makes it new. It's about how we see economic phenomena – and “seeing” doesn't mean seeing with the physical eyes. You can't physically see capital. It's about learning how to perceive economic phenomenon with the eye of the spirit – that is, with imaginative and intuitive forms of thinking. The economics student looks at the productions of the Earth, the minerals, plants and animals; at the commodities drawn from the Earth such as timber, oil and wool; at the goods created through cooperative forms of labour, with certain goods such as computers involving thousands of workers; at physical and digital forms of money. In each phenomenon capital can come to presence as an inward experience of knowing, a dynamic picturing thinking.

To conceive capital authentically it must be perceived as arising through the polarity of matter and spirit. This is done in the exactly same way we perceive colours as the interaction of light and darkness. Indeed, this Goethean form of colour study is a vital preparation for forming the inner organ of vision which can “see” the arising of capital. We look into yellow, enter into its inner activity, and see in its

⁴ From a lecture given by Steiner in March 1922, published in *Reimagining Academic Studies*, SteinerBooks, GA 81.

outward radiance its proximity to the light pole. It reveals itself as a slight darkening of the light. When the inwardness of darkness becomes more active in yellow it is intensified – then it becomes the more concentrated radiance of orange, and, further, the forcefulness of red. The intense quality of red is entered into with an exact cognitive feeling. We comprehend this colour’s “doing” or gesture in our own inner “doing” – the cognitive will. The university, in its foundation studies, is primarily concerned with the development of these faculties.



Just so with capital; unless it becomes understood precisely through cognitive feeling and cognitive will then it is not genuinely understood. If “economic value” is only conceived numerically in the study of economics, then the whole organisation and operation of society remains abstract. But capital is a mode of spirit and spirit is creative; capital belongs to the nature of the human being. Matter is something formed and substantial but spirit is formative, the driving force in creation – as Hegel, for example, understood it. We can “read” the presence of capital in economic phenomena in exactly the way we “read” a colour by entering into it with cognitive feeling and cognitive will.

We may consider a tree growing in a forest; if that forest is a rainforest in a national park we will not perceive any expression of capital; its value will be entirely natural. Phenomenologically, we will only perceive the formative idea of the tree itself, its formative (etheric) force and the idea of the plant most expressed in the flower. But if this tree is growing in a plantation then we can read the presence of capital because there is a financial intention behind its growth; for example, in the whole layout of the plantation.

Yet this phenomenon is still very close to nature, to the matter pole. However, when the tree has been felled and sawn into timbers, spirit (capital) begins to shine forth. We look into the timbers and we read creative potential of a very general kind. Many products can be made from this timber.

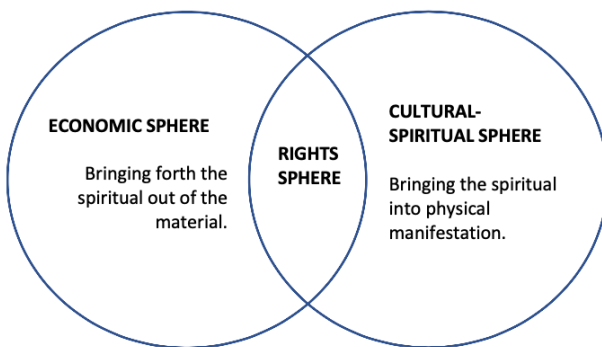
The students may then be studying a hammer phenomenologically – a hammer with a wooden handle and iron head. The hammer has a very specialised potential; the spirit (capital) shines forth in powerful way because the hammer has a particular meaning and use. Nature has mostly receded and capital appears with a much stronger presence. The hammer will serve the human creative spirit – to make a table, to build a house for example. If these two goods are part of economic process (made to be purchased) then a hammer is called a capital good – but that term must come forth and be grasped as a living picture. The capital which reveals itself in the hammer, the formative potential, can yield an intensification of that capital.

What Goethe called intensification or enhancement (*Steigerung*) the students will have already experienced in their colour studies. Yellow intensifies through orange into red; the diffuse outward radiation becomes more forceful, more direct outwardly. They will also have experienced intensification in the growth of a flowering plant. They look at the seed, and the different leaf forms, and then the flower. What is more or less “hidden” is more expressed in the leaf forms, and is overtly, radiantly expressed in the flower. This is how Rudolf Steiner explains intensification:

What Goethe calls enhancement consists of the bringing forth of the spiritual out of the material by creative nature. That nature is engaged “in an ever-striving ascent” means that it seeks to create forms which, in

ascending order, increasingly represent the ideas of things even in outer manifestation.⁵

In the living body of the social organism the process of intentification is not “natural” – it is carried out intentionally by the human creative spirit. But the actually process is the same; the economic realm is the realm in which human activity brings forth the spiritual out of the material. In the polar realm of the threefold social organism, the cultural-spiritual sphere, it is the other way around – human creativity brings the spirit (ideas, inspirations) into physical manifestation – for example, the production of a poem, in the instigation of a new enterprise.



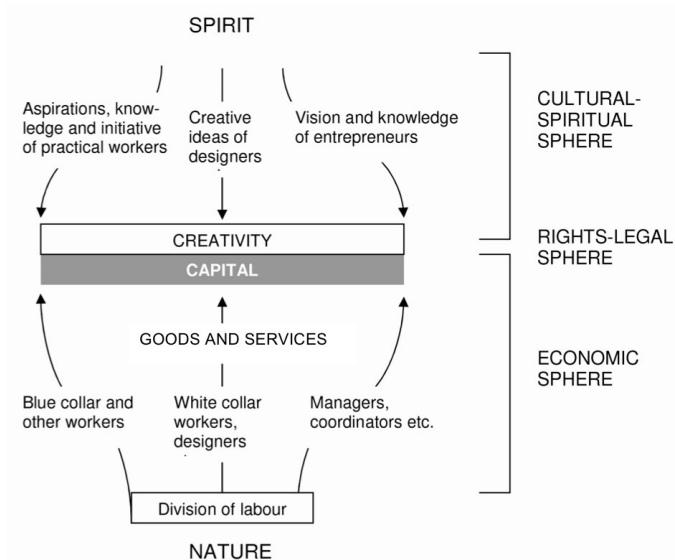
In the form of actual money physical money or digital (numerical) money, capital appears in its most expressed, intensified form. Nature has entirely receded and what the cognitive will now experiences is pure potential. Numerical values placed on this creative potential are the means for transference of this potential, one person or organisation to another, through different forms of exchange (purchase, loans, gifts). Goods and services can be purchased and if a profit is generated this potential become free.

Just as nourishing fruit arises on the plant as the interaction of Earth and Sun, where the Sun's energy distils mineral substance into energy substance (sugar), so capital arises as the

interaction of spirit and matter, from the transformation of Earth by intelligence – that is to say, from the spiritualisation of matter. Through this process pure actuality – that is, mineral, liquid and gaseous nature, plants and animals which are complete unto themselves and in a sense ‘finished works of nature’ – is transformed into a state of potentiality. Capital is the flowering of the transformative economic process and, like the flower, awaits fructification. In one way or the other it is human creativity which fructifies capital. Spirit transforms Earth into the form of spirit for the further realisation of spirit. In this way capital is grasped as encompassing Intuition. In its most distilled form as pure capital it expresses indeterminate potential, and in this state belongs primarily to the rights sphere, orientated towards the cultural- spiritual sphere. This is because capital ‘speaks’ principally to the human creative spirit, the individual capacities and creative intentions which can be realised through capital's potential. Capital is not an economic phenomenon (that is, a commodity) but primarily a rights phenomenon – it is born in the economic sphere, flowers in the rights-legal sphere and is used up (in a sense ‘dies’) in the cultural-spiritual sphere. This is why the German social artist Joseph Beuys called money or financial capital a ‘rights document’.⁶ Everyone has the right to capital which has been brought forth from the Earth to serve every individual spirit. And each person has the right to use that capital freely, to meet all their needs and to support the realisation of their aims.

⁵ R. Steiner, *Goethe's World View*, pp.58-59.

⁶ “People will increasingly see that money is a commodity, in other words an economic value . . . that it is an economic value and we have to reach a stage where it must become a necessary potential, must act as a *rights document* for all the creative processes of human work . . .”, J. Beuys et al, *What is Money?: A Discussion*, Clairview Books, Forest Row, 2010, p.17.



If the economics students at the new university have learned to inwardly perceive the enhancement of matter into spirit they will have entered into the living, dynamic unity of the threefold social organism. The whole human being has become engaged – the intellect, cognitive feeling and cognitive will – in order to grasp the economic process as an aspect of the living social whole. This understanding will then enlighten every other aspect of their economics study and research – whether it be true price, the operation of markets, loan and gift money, economic associations, business ownership or the processes and relationships of labour. ≈

Nigel Hoffmann is the author of *The Social Archetype: Realising Society's Threefold Unity: A New Goetheanism*, Clairview Books, 2024.



ECONOMICS: A SOCIAL NONSCIENCE

Page Smith

By the end of the 19th century political economy had split into political science and economics. Economics came to have great prestige, in large part because the arguments about the nature of the national economy occupied the centre of the stage. Many of the first generation of economists were unabashed socialists. To trace the transformations and permutations of economic theory from the inception of the discipline to the present would be tedious in the extreme. With the triumph of Keynesian economic theory, the role of the government in managing the economy became accepted practice. The task of the economists was then understood to be that of telling the government how to manage the economy. This proved more complicated, and the credentials of economists as scientists appeared increasingly shaky.



But the problem with economics is the same as that of the other social sciences. Although economics has far more direct impact in the real economic and political world than the other social sciences, it is as far as ever from being a science. It has, in the final analysis, to deal with human behaviour, and human behaviour remains maddeningly unpredictable, fortunately. ... Why do the social sciences, now that it is abundantly evident that they are not sciences, cling to this pathetic fallacy? Very few people outside the social sciences give them credit for being scientific, and many of their practitioners are quite ready to confess that their disciplines are not scientific in any proper sense of that elastic word. Why this strange tenacity?

Perhaps the answer is the old “identity-crisis” answer. If we are not scientists, then who are we? And what is our mission? To admit publicly to being not sciences but merely “studies” would presumably bring a loss of face but, more important, it would mean opening the door to all the questions, the “Big Questions”, the “Burning Questions”, that have been so long and so resolutely excluded. That must be an alarming if not terrifying prospect. ≈

Excerpted from Page Smith, *Killing the Spirit: Higher Education in America*, Penguin Books, 1991, pp.250-252.



FINDING THE HEART AND SOUL OF ECONOMICS

Kamran Mofid

Economics has its origins in ancient Greece and its roots in ethics. Amartya Sen, in his significant study, *On Ethics and Economics*, demonstrates that, in its recent development, a serious distancing between economics and ethics has brought about one of the major deficiencies in contemporary economic theory. Sen argues that modern economics could become more productive by paying greater and more explicit attention to the ethical considerations that shape human behaviour and judgement. He observes a surprising contrast between the self-consciously non-ethical character of modern economics and its historical evolution as an offshoot of ethics.

The ethics-related tradition of economics goes back at least as far as Aristotle. It has been argued that Aristotle deserves

recognition as the first economist, two thousand years before Adam Smith. Aristotle distinguished between two different aspects of economics: *oikonomikos* or household trading, which he approved of and thought essential to the working of any even modestly complex society, and *chrematisike*, which is trade for profit. He declared the latter activity wholly devoid of virtue and called those who engaged in such purely selfish practices ‘parasites’. His attack on the unsavoury and unproductive practice of usury held force virtually until the fifteenth century, when John Calvin’s writings started greatly to influence the study of economics.

The extension of Calvinism to all spheres of human activity was extremely important to a world emerging from an agrarian mediaeval economy into a commercial industrial era. Calvin accepted the newborn capitalism and encouraged trade and production, while, most importantly, opposing the abuses of exploitation and self-indulgence. Industrialisation was stimulated by the concepts of thrift, industry, sobriety and responsibility that Calvin promoted as being essential to the achievement of the reign of God on earth.

However, in the eighteenth century, with the publication of Adam Smith’s masterwork, *The Wealth of Nations*, there was a quantum leap in



1938 mural "The Wealth of the Nation" by Seymour Fogel is an interpretation of the theme of social security.

many aspects of economics. Now *chrematistike* became the driving force and primary virtue of modern society -- a point to which I shall return later.

As Sen points out, at the very beginning of *The Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle relates the subject of economics to human ends, referring to its concern with wealth. He sees politics as "the master art" which must direct "the rest of the sciences", including economics, and "since, again, it legislates as to what we are to abstain from, the end of science must include those of the others, so that this end must be the good for man".

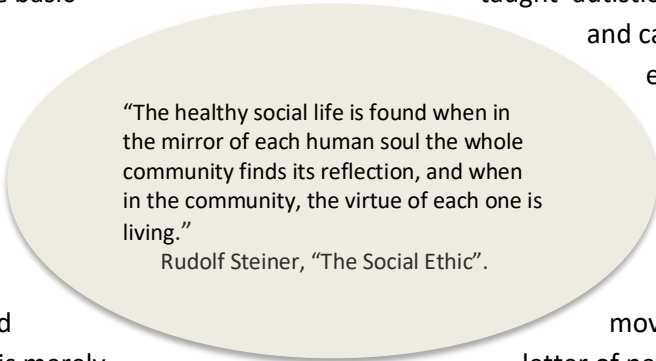
Furthermore, according to Sen, the study of economics, though directly related to the pursuit of wealth, is at a deeper level linked to other studies which involve the assessment and enhancement of more basic goals. Quoting Aristotle, Sen notes that, "the life of money-making is one undertaken under compulsion, and wealth is evidently not the good we are seeking; for it is merely useful and for the sake of something else." Economics relates ultimately to the studies of ethics and politics, a point of view further developed in Aristotle's *Politics*.

It seems clear to me that the time has come for economics to change direction and to find a path which does not deviate from true human values. The obviously contrived nature of neo-classical economics has begun to attract many calls for change. One of the most vocal has come from university students. This is music to my ears. It is

something I would very much like to share with you.

In the spring of 2000 an interesting dichotomy between theory and reality in economics teaching appeared in France when economics students from some of the most prestigious universities, including the Sorbonne, published a petition on the internet urging fellow students to protest against the way economics was being taught. They were against the domination of rationalist theories, the marginalisation of critical and reflective thought and the use of increasingly complex mathematical models. Some argued that the drive to make economics more like physics was flawed, and that it should be wrenched back in line with its more social aspects.

They called the economics they were being taught 'autistic' -- divorced from reality -- and called for a post-autistic economics that would 'rescue economics from its autistic and socially irresponsible state'. *Autisme -- economie, the Post-Autistic Economics (PAE)* movement, was born. Their letter of petition for change received important recognition when the French government agreed to set up a special commission to investigate its complaints.



"The healthy social life is found when in the mirror of each human soul the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the community, the virtue of each one is living."
Rudolf Steiner, "The Social Ethic".

Economics must once again find its heart and soul. It must reconnect with its original source and once again become rooted in ethics and morality. The huge controversy which surrounds modern commercial activity arises because it does not adequately address the needs of the global collective, and so marginalises or excludes the powerless. Surely, in the interests of all, this has to change? There needs to be an explicit

acknowledgment of universal values such as fairness, altruism, empathy and solidarity if economics is to work for the common good. Economics as practiced today cannot by any stretch of the imagination claim to be for the common good. A revolution in values is needed. Economics and the business community must at the same time embrace both material and spiritual values.

Given the state of our world today, with its extremes of progress and poverty, it seems that modern economics so elaborate and difficult to comprehend, so saturated with mathematical jargon and abstruse models and theories, has failed to deliver the happiness it promised because it has failed to satisfy people's real, spiritual needs. We have to reverse this. Let us not continue to construct a global society that is materially rich but spiritually poor. Let us work towards a globalisation for the common good by uniting spirituality and theology with economics.



The standard, neoclassical model is actually in conflict with human nature. It does not reflect prevailing patterns of human behaviour . . . If you look around carefully, you will see that most people are not really maximisers, but instead what you might call 'satisfiers': they want to satisfy their needs, and that means being in equilibrium with oneself, with other people, with society and with nature. This is reflected in families, where people spend most of their time, and where relations are mostly based on altruism and compassion. So most of our lifetime we are actually altruists and compassionate.⁷

What does all this mean for our economy? Economic thinking is primarily focused on creating systems of arranging matter for optimal

intake of consumption. It assumes that the main human impulses are competition and consumption, and it has side-stepped spiritual and moral issues because those would involve qualitative judgments on values and other intangibles that go beyond its initial premises. But, by assuming that the more we consume the happier we are, economists have overlooked the intricate workings of the human mind.

At the root of this belief in the market lies a very fundamental misconception. We have not really understood what makes us happy. Blind faith in economics has led us to believe that the market will bring us all the things we want. We cling to the notion that contentment is obtained by the senses, by sensual experiences derived from the consumption of material goods. This feeds an appetite of sensual desire. At the same time we are led to view others as our competitors, scrabbling for the same, limited resources as we are. So we experience fear -- the fear of losing out, the fear that our desires will not be satisfied.

We can observe that the whole machine of expanding capitalism is fuelled by two very strong emotions: desire and fear. They are so strong that they appear to be permanent features of our condition. Yet many religious traditions have taught us that, since these emotions are based on ignorance, a misconception of reality, they can be removed by the true understanding of reality. According to religion, happiness is an inner or divine experience available to anyone, rich or poor. Fundamentally, there is nothing that we lack. By developing the mind, our inner qualities, we can experience perfect wholeness and contentment. If we share with others, we will find that we are not surrounded by competitors: others depend on us as we depend on them.

We need to recreate economic theory based on an understanding of what a human being really

⁷ See Stanislav Menchikov and S. Tideman in *Compassion or Competition*.

is and what makes him happy. As long as economics is based on a partial or wrong image of man and his reality, it will not produce the results we need.

In a sense, the redesigning of economic theory has already started. In order to explain the persistent tension between economic theory and practice, and recognising that conventional economics does not help us in our pursuit of happiness, old assumptions are being challenged. As a result, certain intangibles -- such as values based on our more noble human impulses -- are gradually entering the scope of leading thinkers, including historians, social scientists, businessmen and bankers -- and even economists. ≈

Kamran Mofid, PhD (Econ) was born in Tehran, Iran, in 1952. In 1986 he was awarded a doctorate in economics from the University of Birmingham, U.K. Excerpted from Chapter 4 of *Promoting the Common Good: Bringing Economics & Theology Together Again* by Marcus Braybrooke & Kamran Mofid, Published by Shepherad-Walwyn (Publishers) Ltd., 2005. See:

<https://www.religion-online.org/article/the-roots-of-economics-and-why-it-has-gone-so-wrong>



COMMODITY, LABOUR AND CAPITAL: UNIVERSITY ECONOMICS EDUCATION THROUGH LIVING PICTURES

Rudolf Steiner

It is interesting to compare the modern Social-Democratic theory based on Marx and Engels, with modern academic political economy, which is completely unproductive. It produces no concepts capable of permeating the social will. Nothing results from the confused, chaotic concepts of modern academic political economy if we pose the question of what is to happen in social life. The concepts of modern

science completely dominate it. You know that in spite of the great and admirable progress of natural science, which is not denied by spiritual science, this modern science in the schools and universities completely rejects all that springs from the spirit.

As a result, political economy wants only to observe what happens in economic life. Observation of the economy is almost impossible in modern times because recent human development has rendered people increasingly incapable of having thoughts consistent with economic facts. Economic facts took their own course mechanically, as if by themselves; they were not accompanied by human thinking. Therefore, observing these thought-bereft facts of the world market cannot lead to economic principles, and has not done so, because our political economy is practice without theory, without ideas, and our Social-Democratic movement is theory without practical application. Taken as it is, socialist theory can never be put into practice, for it is a theory without insight into practical life. We suffer in modern times from the fact that we have an economic life that is practice without ideas, and with it the mere theory of the social democrats without the possibility of introducing this theory into economic life. Thus, we have reached a turning point in the historical evolution of mankind.

Since the necessary foundation of society is the relationships between people, you will easily understand that a particular attitude must underlie people's goals when they want to create a socially just life. You can also see that the goal of the threefold social organism is to create a certain attitude toward the relationships existing within society. Without such an attitude between people, society cannot truly flourish. Social threefolding definitely takes this attitude into account. Today, I would like to

mention only a few anecdotal things in this regard.

If you think of social life as an organism you will have to imagine that something of a soul-spiritual nature streams through it. Just as in the human and animal organism the blood is the bearer of the air that is inhaled and exhaled, so something must breathe through, must circulate through the entire social organism.

We now come to an area that is so difficult for modern people to understand because they are so little prepared for it in their feelings. However, we need to understand it if we are to speak seriously about social renewal or the reconstruction of society. We need to understand that social life in the future depends upon cooperative support between people, something done when we exchange our ideas, perceptions, and feelings. Human viewpoints are of no little importance if people want to be social beings. The future requires that we base general education upon concepts that can serve as a foundation for Imaginative thoughts, not just upon ideas taken from science or industry. As improbable as this may seem now, in the future we will be unable to properly interact socially if we do not teach people Imaginative concepts. That is, if we do not teach concepts that affect human feeling much differently than the abstract natural scientific concepts of cause and effect, force and material,

and so forth. In the future, we will be unable to begin anything social with those scientific concepts that influence everything today, even art. In the future, we must learn to understand the world in pictures.

What is meant by that I have repeatedly indicated, also in regard to the question of education. I have said: If we intimately occupy ourselves with children it is easy to impart to them, let us say, the idea of immortality by showing them the chrysalis of a butterfly, how it opens and the butterfly emerges and flies away. We then can make clear to the child our body is like the chrysalis, and in it there lives something like the butterfly, but it is invisible. When we die, then the “butterfly” emerges and flies into the spiritual world.” Through such comparisons we bring about an imaginative effect. But we must not merely think out such a comparison; this would only be acting in the manner of the scientific view. What is the attitude of people with present-day education as they hear such a comparison? People today, even when they are barely grown up, are very clever, exceedingly clever. They give no thought to the possibility of being wise in a way other than they imagine themselves to be with their abstract concepts. Today, people certainly have strange ideas about “wisdom”!

A few weeks ago, I gave a lecture in a certain city. It was followed by a meeting of a political science association in which a university professor—a clever man of our time, of course—spoke about my lecture and what was connected

“...to act rightly in the economic sense, we must make up our minds to enter into the events of production, trade, and consumption with picture-thinking. We must be ready to enter into the real process; then we shall get approximate conceptions – only approximate ones, it is true – but conceptions which will be of real use to us when we wish to take an actual part in the economic life ... Economic life cannot be built on theory; they must be built on living association, where the sensitive judgements of people are real and effective ... ”

Rudolf Steiner, *Rethinking Economics: Lectures and Seminars on World Economics*, SteinerBooks, 2013, pp.125-6.

with it. He was of the opinion that not only the views I had advanced but also those to be found in my books, are infantile. Well, I understand such a judgment. I can understand that because we have squeezed all truly pictorial life out of academic life, so that academics perceive everything understood, or perhaps I should say, not understood, as childish. This is just what is so extraordinary about modern cleverness. If we want to use a picture like the one I just presented about immortality with the butterfly flying out of the chrysalis, they say, "We are wise and, of course, we know that it is only a picture. We are above such pictures. However, children are only children, and we need to create such pictures of our concepts for them, though we do not believe in them."

The secret of the matter is, however, that in that case the child does not believe in it either.

The child is only taken hold of by the picture if we ourselves believe in it. The genuine spiritual-scientific attitude is to restore in us the faculty of seeing in nature not the ghost-like things of which science speaks, but the pictorial, the Imaginative. What emerges from the chrysalis and is present in the butterfly is really an image for the immortality of the soul placed into the order of nature by the divine world order. If there were no immortal soul there would be no butterfly emerging from the chrysalis. There can be no real image if truth is not the basis for it. So it is with all of nature. What natural science offers is a ghost. We can comprehend nature only if we know that it is an image for something else. Likewise, people must accustom

themselves to considering the human head as an image of a heavenly body. The human head is not round in order to resemble a head of cabbage, but rather to resemble the form of a celestial body. The whole of nature is pictorial and we must find our way into this imagery. Then there will radiate into the hearts, the souls and minds, even into the heads—and this is most difficult—what can permeate man if he takes in pictures.

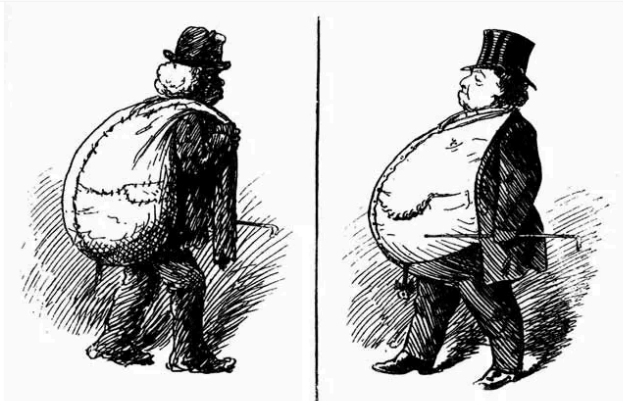
"...We can never found a real science of economics without developing pictorial ideas; we must be able to conceive all the details of our economics science in imaginative pictures. And these pictures must contain a dynamic quality; we must become aware of how such a process works under each new form that it assumes..."

Rudolf Steiner, *Rethinking Economics: Lectures and Seminars on World Economics*, SteinerBooks, 2013, pp.124-5.

In the social organism we will have to speak with each other about things that are expressed in pictures. And people will have to believe in these pictures. Then there will come from scientific circles persons able to speak about the real place of commodities in life, because the commodity produced corresponds to a human need. No abstract concepts can grasp this human need in its social value. Only that person can know something about it whose soul has been permeated by the

discernment that springs from imaginative thinking. Otherwise there will be no socialisation. You may employ in the social organism those who rightly ascertain what is needed, but if at the same time imaginative thinking is not incorporated in the social organism through education it is impossible to arrive at an organic social structure. That means, we must speak in images. However strange it may sound to the socialistic thinker of today, it is necessary that in order to arrive at a true socialising we must speak from man to man in pictures, which induce Imaginations. This indeed is how it must happen. What is a commodity will be feelingly understood by a science that gains

understanding through pictures, and by no other science.



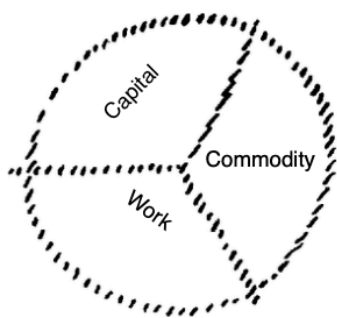
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LABOR AND CAPITAL.

In the society of the future a proper understanding of labour will have to be a dominating element. What men say today about labour is sheer nonsense, for human labour is not primarily concerned with the production of commodities. Karl Marx calls commodities “crystallised labour”. This is nonsense, nothing else; what we refer to as “human labour” is the particular way people use themselves up, consume themselves. You can bring about this self-consumption in one way or another. If you happen to have enough money in the bank or in your purse you can exert yourself in sports and use your working power in this way. You also might chop wood or do some other chore. The work may be the same whether you chop wood or engage in a sport. The important thing is not how much work-power you exert, but for what purpose you use it in social life. Labour has nothing to do with social life insofar as commodities are produced. In the threefold social organism it will, therefore, be necessary to have a reason to work other than the production of commodities. We must, to a certain extent, produce commodities through work because we must use work for something. *However, the basic reason people work must lie in their desire to work and their love of work.* We cannot achieve a humane society until we can bring it

about that people work because they want to work and realise that work is necessary.

This can only happen in a society in which one speaks of Inspired concepts. In future, men will never be warmed through by joy and love for work—as was the case in the past when things were instinctive and atavistic—if society is not permeated by such ideas and feelings as enter the world through the Inspiration of initiates. These ideas must carry people along in such a way that they know: We have the social organism before us and we must devote ourselves to it. That is to say, work itself takes hold of their souls because they have an understanding for the social organism. Only those people will have such understanding who have heard and taken in those inspired concepts; that is to say, those imparted by spiritual science. In order that a love for work be reborn throughout mankind we cannot use those hollow concepts proclaimed today. We need spiritualised sciences which can permeate hearts and souls; permeate them in such a way that men will have joy and love for work. Labour will be placed alongside commodities in a society that not only hears about pictures from teachers, but also hears of Inspirations and such concepts as are necessary to provide the means of production in our complicated society. That will give people the proper foundation upon which to build.

For this we further need to circulate Intuitive concepts in society. The concepts about capital that you find in my book, *Towards Social Renewal*, will only flourish in a society which is receptive to Intuitive concepts. That means: Capital will find its rightful place when men will acknowledge that Intuition must live in them; commodity will find its rightful place when the necessity for Imagination is acknowledged; and labour will find its rightful place when the necessity of Inspiration is acknowledged.



If you take the above diagram and do not write the three concepts one below the other but in the way I have done here, then you can learn a lot from it if you permeate it with all the concepts to be found in my book about the threefold membering of the social organism. There are connections, back and forth, between labour and commodities; between commodities and capital, inasmuch as capital buys commodities; connections between labour and capital, and so on. Only, these three concepts must be arranged as shown.

Above everything, we need to understand the truth of stating that a human attitude must permeate society in the future.

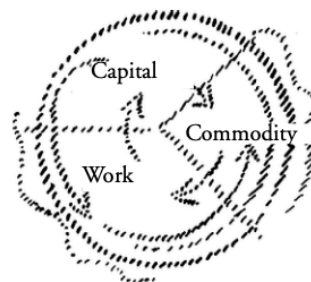


It is very important that we permeate ourselves with the conviction that we have to think thus radically if there is to be hope for the future. Above everything it is necessary for people to realise that they will have to build the social organism upon its three healthy members. They will only learn the significance of Imagination in connection with commodities if economic life is developed in its pure form, and men are dependent upon conducting it out of fraternity. The significance of Inspiration for labour, producing joy and love for work, will only be realised if one person joins another as equals in parliaments, if real equality governs; that is, if every individual be permitted to contribute whatever of value lives in him. This will be

different with each person. Then the life of rights will be governed by equality and will have to be Inspired, not decided upon by the narrow-minded philistines as has been more and more the trend in ordinary democracy.

Cultural Life
Freedom
Intuition

Inspiration
Equality
Rights Life



Economic Life
Fraternity
Imagination

Capital can only be properly employed in the social organism if intuition will rise to freedom, and freedom will blossom from out the independently developing life of the spirit. Then there will stream out of spiritual life into labour what has to stream into it. I shall indicate the streams by arrows. When so organised these three spheres will permeate one another in the right way. ≈

Excerpted from a lecture by Rudolf Steiner on 11th August, 1919, in *Education as a Social Problem*, GA 296.

LINKS AND INITIATIVES

This space is reserved for news, relevant links and outlines of initiatives. Please send any information to be included here.

AUSTRALIA

INDUS UNIVERSITY PROJECT

The Indus Project is a pioneering tertiary educational initiative feasibility-researched for Western Australia.

Go to:

<https://www.educationforsocialrenewalfoundation.com/>

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE NEWLETTER

To help develop an international community of people together striving to shape a new kind of university. To share insights and information which will help to develop the content, methods and organisational principles of this kind of university

BACKGROUND – ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY

The university, since its inception in the medieval people, has become a central organ of the cultural and spiritual life of society. It has been called a “little city”, a melting pot for new ways of thinking and for shaping the world creatively.

All knowledge in the medieval university was unified by faith in a transcendent God. During the time of Renaissance humanism, and later in the early-modern Kantian and Humboldtian universities, the human rational faculty became seen as the unifying power. The university came to be thought of as a centre for universal knowledge. The modern university can better be called a “multi-versity”; faith in God or the rational striving toward the universality of knowledge is not its central concern. It is essentially materialistic in outlook, serving mainly practical ends through its teaching and research.

SHAPING A NEW FORM OF UNIVERSITY

This means stepping toward a future in which the university is completely free of the state – financially, in terms of course content, and in relation to the awarding of degrees. This freedom is the responsibility and duty of this central organ of the cultural-spiritual sphere of the threefold social organism; it is already recognised in academic freedom. Ways this freedom can be further achieved can be discussed and advanced through this newsletter.

Following the indications of Rudolf Steiner, the aim of lower and higher schooling is not to educate but to awaken – to help awaken the modern human being to the spirit, the spirit working in the human being itself. What can be achieved at the tertiary level will fructify the whole field of education into the future.

Thus we can state boldly: the aim of the new university is to help open the “eye of the spirit” to the working of creative spirit in all forms of nature and the human world. In every faculty, in every aspect of teaching and researching, the task will be to advance human life towards an understanding of the world as a manifestation of spirit.

For this reason the orientation of the new university is fundamentally phenomenological. This is the method which is taught, guided and inspired by what others have perceived in this way. Modern individuals need to learn to see for themselves.

Seeing is grounded in physical perception, in what appears to us in the world (phenomenon literally means – “what appears”). But physical appearance hides what is invisible and essential. When teaching and researching focuses one-sidedly on the physical we have everything technical, the approach which considers what is “real” as only observable, empirical phenomena. Academic thinking then becomes highly materialistic and objective. However, when teaching and learning reaches through what appears to us physically, it rises to the artistic through a

“knowing of the heart”. In the works of the later Heidegger and the later Merleau-Ponty we have the vision of the invisible within the visible. We find that “more appears than appears to appear”.* The appearance hides the innate idea (*eidos*) which may nevertheless come to presence through the pathway of phenomenology; this innate idea Plato equated with *to ekphanestaton* (“what properly shows itself as the most radiant of all is the beautiful”).

The new university is focused on a highly practical, applied phenomenology, on all the phenomena which come within the scope of the different faculties. Different minerals and soil forms; plants and animals; the forms and structures of the human body and human consciousness; the different stages in the growth of children, their different soul gestures and temperaments; all the disease and health appearances; social forms and social processes – and so on. For this advanced practical phenomenology, we look mainly to the indications of German philosopher and artist Rudolf Steiner, who in turn drew greatly on the artistic phenomenological natural science of the poet Johann von Goethe.

Editor

* R. Bernasconi, “The Good and the Beautiful” in *Phenomenology in Practice and Theory*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Dordrecht, 1985, pp.179-184.