

Forming School Communities



*The renewal of
the social organism*

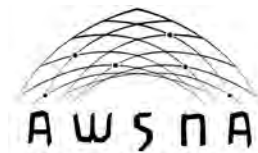
Matthias Karutz



FORMING SCHOOL
COMMUNITIES:
THE RENEWAL OF THE SOCIAL ORGANISM

by

Matthias Karutz



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EDITOR'S NOTE

The questions of school governance and the cultivation of a healthy “social” life in the mantle of warmth around and within each Waldorf school continue to call for attention and consciousness.

This book was written by Matthias Karutz, a colleague at the Kräherwald Waldorf School in Stuttgart, Germany. Karutz was born in Lübeck in 1928. He attended the Waldorf schools in Stuttgart and Dresden, until they were shut down by the Nazis during the start of World War II.

He completed his high school diploma in Dresden and then went to Marburg to study law and political economics. He terminated these studies to study the technology of the paper industry in Munich. In 1959 he joined the faculty at the Rudolf Steiner School–Kräherwald as a high school teacher of technology, mathematics, and physics.

We are pleased to introduce his thoughts to the English-speaking world.

– David Mitchell
Boulder, CO
September, 2001

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

With deep gratitude I would like to acknowledge the great help which I received from John Armstrong in translating this work into English. I also extend my thanks wholeheartedly to Robin Blackmore for typing the manuscript and so making it available for further printing.

I hope that this thoughtful and thorough study which arose out of practical application of the "Threefold Social Order" and many years of experience in working with it will find open minds and active responses.

– Ulrike Brockman

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FOREWORD

Matthias Karutz, a long-standing and faithful colleague at the Independent Waldorf School Kräherwald, in Stuttgart, has concerned himself for decades not only with questions of technology and life studies but also with most diverse areas of the spiritual and social life. This publication has grown out of that engagement. In it he has endeavored to penetrate thoroughly the idea of the Threefold Social Order. In 1919 Rudolf Steiner aimed to make the spiritual life independent and to encourage schools and universities in Württemberg (South Germany) to administer their affairs themselves. Matthias Karutz has developed a capacity to present these considerations in an impressive and living way using the concrete example of a school. He brought these thoughts to a parents' group of his school and met with a positive response. This caused him to write a small publication containing the ideas of the Threefold Social Order, as well as the thoughts which are fundamental for the administrative organization of his school at the Kräherwald.

Self-administration can be practiced in very different ways. A school which wishes to reflect three socially functional circles according to the legal, economic, and spiritual life needs organs or teachers' meetings which can accomplish the corresponding tasks. This has been worked out at Waldorf schools, quite rightly, in manifold ways. In the example put forward here we see a clear representation of the threefold order. This example can be helpful and instructive for communities who are seeking their form.

We wish this publication widespread success and stimulating results!

– Stefan Leber

INTRODUCTION

Wherever founders and members of communities are concerned, the question of communal life and its forms will sooner or later arise. In many cases people within these initiatives will be confronted with problems which go beyond minor frictions and are of a fundamental nature, i.e., how shall we form our community? How can we reach joint decisions? How do we, together, bear responsibility?

It has become apparent that many recent initiatives were started up rather carelessly. Old, customary, hierarchical structures were rejected as outdated, but no one bothered to look for a replacement. Yet one cannot expect that a community can exist without some inner structure. If the hierarchical order is jettisoned, then another system must be created which gives inner firmness to the community.

This involves laws. Any neglect of these will be punished. But one must know them if one wants to act in unison with these laws. We should, therefore, concern ourselves with the ideas of the "Threefold Order of the Social Organism" by Rudolf Steiner.

We often hear it said: "It is impossible for me to concern myself with the Threefold Social Order as well." The day to day running of the institution demands every scrap of energy. Workers are stretched simply to cope with the essentials.

This is so regrettable because the Threefold Social Order holds the keys for new structures which every community needs. What might perhaps at first look very theoretical may turn out to be very practical later. It will not only help to save labor and working time but also bring new life to the productivity of every member in the community and become a central source of strength.

At the heart of the following exposition lies the description of the structure of an independent Rudolf Steiner school. This is embedded in a brief sketch of the basic ideas of the "Threefold Social Order," so we can study both theory and practice in the example of a Rudolf Steiner school which has, after all, proved viable over twenty-eight years.

Although we are concerning ourselves here with a specific case of a school, this has a more general significance because the laws for cooperative communities are the same everywhere. So everyone seeking to form a community of any kind can draw encouragement and possible inspiration from this little book.

– Matthias Karutz
Stuttgart, Germany

WHAT THIS PUBLICATION ENDEAVORS TO PROMOTE

Every community has—metaphorically speaking—a living body and a spiritualized soul. As in man, the intentions of soul and spirit give impulses to the life of the body; this is also the case with a group of cooperating people. They have joined for a task, an aim. On the one hand the soul and spirit of a single human being are quite individual; on the other they reveal objective laws. The same holds good for a community. If one gets to know it, one can describe its individual being, often over a long span of time, even if people withdraw and others join.

This being needs a body, an “instrument,” to be able to work. It also has its individual form, filled with pulsating life. And although shaped individually, it also succumbs to objective formative laws. What is their nature?

Our human form is a gift from God. The form of a community has to be shaped by ourselves. We can only approximately solve this task if we become conscious of its formative laws. In his comprehensive plan of the Threefold Social Order, from spiritual insight Rudolf Steiner has given us help to achieve this. What has been presented in it for the mutual life of the whole of humanity holds good also for smaller communities, although naturally in a changed form.

It is, therefore, my endeavor to trace the laws working in an organism and to do this from the background of everyday experiences, for example in a school community. Thus, we are concerning ourselves with the task of forming a body through which soul and spirit can work.

The constant development of this soul and spirit nature itself as a presupposition for a bodily form cannot be the claim of this brief publication. It would entail questions of individual training in connection with forming community consciously through daily life. With regard to school communities it applies specifically to teachers' meetings. Splendid impulses have been given to this theme during recent years. I would like to mention here only the publications of Jørgen Smit and Heinz Zimmermann.*

Every organization is threatened by rigidity, by death forces. Yet in an organism forces of life, uplifting qualities, and metamorphoses are at work. To stimulate them in order to form and keep the body of a community healthy is the endeavor of this publication.

*Jørgen Smit: *Der Werdende Mensch – zur meditativen Vertiefung des Erziehens*, Verlag Freies Geistesleben, 3. Auflage, Stuttgart 1990. Jørgen Smit and others: *Erziehung und Meditation*, Verlag am Goetheanum, 1983. Jørgen Smit and others: *Freiheitsruben*, Verlag Freies Geistesleben, Stuttgart, 1988.

Heinz Zimmermann: *Speaking, Listening, Understanding: The Art of Creating Conscious Conversations* (available from AWSNA Publications). Heinz Zimmermann: *Von der Auftriebskraft in der Erziehung*, Verlag am Goetheanum, Dornach, 1997.

THE SPHERES OF SOCIAL LIFE: ECONOMY, STATE, AND CULTURE

It is unpleasant to talk about political questions to-day because generally speaking there exists disgust with political circumstances and the politicians. This is not quite unjustified, for every day a lot is promised, retracted and promised anew, while conditions do not get better, so that one loses trust in the ability of politicians to build and improve. Everywhere one sees only administration.

Strangely enough, circumstances are apparently rather independent of the ruling political powers of the day: in the "states" in Germany ruled by the CDU or CSU, as well as in those ruled by the SPD, there exist an enormously high public debt, unemployment, and economic stagnation, if not recession. Only in a few branches of the economy are things moving upwards again. This means increasing orders and turnover, but neither of these have anything to do with the ruling parties. This is the case world wide; whether conservatives or socialists are in power, the problems are the same. And it is a world-wide fact that state finances are in disorder, that the rich individual businesses and banks are becoming ever richer, but that the poor and lower middle classes are becoming relatively poorer. Of course, everyone sees this, although the circumstances are being denied, as is the annoyance with politics.

Now we could once ask ourselves what Rudolf Steiner would say today about our state of affairs. It could be that he would remind us of a sentence from the year 1919:

Either one must deign to submit one's thinking to the demands of reality, or nothing will have been learned from the debacle, and this self-inflicted misery will be endlessly perpetuated and compounded.

– Translated by: E. Bowen-Wedgewood
and Bruce Mariott
Revised by Frederick Amrime

This is the final sentence of Rudolf Steiner's famous "Appeal to the German Nation and to the Civilized World" from March 1919 through which the Threefold Social Movement was made public. In a truly democratic way Steiner addresses the German people and all those who feel responsible for civilization. The appeal begins thus:

Germany believed herself secure for time without end in her empire, which was founded half a century ago. In August 1914 she thought the war she was faced with would prove her invincible. Today all she can do is look upon its ruins. Such an experience calls for self-reflection. For such an experience proved that an opinion held for fifty years, and especially the ideas that had prevailed during the war, had been a tragic error. Where can the reasons for this fateful error be found? This question must now call forth a process of self-evaluation within the soul of every German. Will there be enough strength left for such introspection? Germany's very existence depends upon it. Germany's future also hinges upon the sincerity of the questioning mind—how did we fall prey to such fatal misconceptions? If reflection upon this inquiry starts immediately, then it will come in a flash of understanding; yes, we did found an empire half a century ago, but we neglected to give it a task springing from within the very essence of its national spirit.

This thought—that a newly founded state must be given a task—touches us strangely. Thinking of the many states which have arisen in the world since 1945, we may ask: to which of them has a task been allotted? What about Israel, or the Palestinian State? Let us think of those states which arose out of the broken up Yugoslavia. Where do specific tasks lie? Let us think of the Baltic states, of the Czech Republic, Slovenia, or Chechnya: tasks? Certainly desires for restoration of the former sovereignty, for independence from other states, for freedom, but tasks? Do the many endeavors to found new states grow out of real tasks, for example, in the Basque country, or in Corsica, in northern Italy, in Kurdistan? And what about the task of the new state of “Europe?”

To set a task to a state which “arises out of the inner essence of its folk soul” is a thought which today must seem almost absurd. A state is “a community of people which is organized as a political unity and endowed with governmental authority within a certain spatially-bounded territory.” If one sees tasks of this state, then they are surely such which serve above all the individual. This applies equally for every state. The main task of a state is considered to be the setting up and guarding of standards of law. These shall secure private ownership and freedom of contracts in order to guarantee free play of the economic forces which we call “market economy.” Yet the individual shall be protected from exploitation (social market economy). This role has been characterized by Ferdinand Lasalle (1825–1864) as “night watch role.” A night watch is always vigilant but remains usually invisible for the good day-working citizen. If the public organization (administration) puffs itself up and leads too much its own life, then a critical attitude of the citizens towards this government grows. Yet tasks which arise out of the nature of the folk soul can only be seen or accepted by someone for whom the nature of a folk soul is a reality. To whom does this apply today? Such a person will then have to help bear responsibility. This is exactly what Rudolf Steiner

addresses here; for him the state is not an abstract entity which governs people but the totality of the living citizens, which itself is alive.

Now the idea of the task is expressed even more distinctly:

The empire was founded. During the first years of its existence, care was taken to shape its inner possibilities according to demands posed, year after year, by old traditions and new endeavors. Later, progress was made to safeguard and enlarge the outer positions of power that were based on material resources. Linked to it were policies regulating the social demands of the new era, policies that did take into account the requirements of the day, to some extent, but lacked a greater vision.

A goal could have been defined had there been enough sensitivity to the growing needs of the new generation. Thus, the empire found itself in the larger world arena without an essential direction or goal to justify its existence. The debacle of the war revealed this truth in an unfortunate way. Until the war, other nations saw nothing to suggest that Germany had a historic world mission that ought not to be swept away.

Now one is, of course, curious to hear what Rudolf Steiner means by this mission. "Human society needs organizing into three systems, economic, political and spiritual creativity, in short: Economic Life, Legal Life, and Spiritual Life."

Reading or hearing this, one could be disappointed, for it does not seem especially new and world moving. That the social life consists of these three spheres is something one can hear often nowadays. One might perhaps also remind oneself of the medieval triad of nobility, clergy and the

common people who essentially were the peasants, craftsmen and merchants, that is the population working in the economic sphere. Perhaps one even knows that this triad was already mentioned by King Alfred, "the Great"—as he is called—English commander and statesman, who banished the Vikings from England and who was the founder of English administration and rule of justice. He said: "There are men who fight, men who work, and men who pray." This was long ago. King Alfred, "the Great," was born thirty-five years after the death of Charlemagne (849) and became an English king exactly one thousand years before the foundation of the second German Reich. One can say that the idea of this social triad lay at the base at least of the thousand years from 871–1871. So it is really not new, but there is something else which is.

Initially, Rudolf Steiner broadens our horizon merely quantitatively over the whole earth. Then he broadens it qualitatively, because he draws our attention to the fact that the living population is something different from the sum of the states and approximately six billion earth citizens. It is a unity which means a being, and this being, this unity—even if we cannot really think it initially—has its own organism. That is the social organism.

Now Steiner characterizes this and says: the social organism of mankind is arranged according to its functions in the same way as the natural organism of man. The human organism deals with thinking through the head, not through the lung, and breathing not through the head or nervous system. Health is there where the nerve-sense system and the rhythmical system of blood and breathing coexist independently and work together in a living way. The economic and political systems must equally remain independent of each other. They must not be governed by the same legislative and administrative organ but must each have their own legislation and their own administration, and these have got to cooperate with each other.

Quite independently, a third system now joins the previous two: it is that of spiritual creativity. Just as in the human organism the metabolic and limb system exists as a third member beside the nerve-sense system (head system) and the rhythmical system (blood and breathing system), in the same way the third member of the social organism has to be independent and has to have its own legislation and administration. Only then can a healthy cooperation of the three members of the social organism be achieved.

The organism of mankind consists of three functioning systems: the economic life, the political and legal sphere, and the realm of spiritual production. These three systems have to work together. However, they can do this only if they are independent, if they can develop according to their own forces and laws, and as long as they do not interfere with one another.

Initially, it seems quite evident that independence and equality are necessary for cooperation; people, too, can work together properly only if they have equal rights. Subordinates can give their services only within a certain framework, and a superior who also bears the responsibility can never forego his right and duty to give orders. Yet if we look more closely, we shall at once come up with a host of questions. For example:

What about the responsibility in cooperation?

What about the three independent legislative and administrative committees? Would they not mean a colossal expense?

How do the particular forces and laws of the three systems differ from one another?

The longer and more intensely we study the subject, the more questions arise in us.

Let us look at the first question. For a long time our thinking has been molded by hierarchical structures. The governmental administration, the military, industry, and churches are all governed by the vertical principle. Whoever

occupies a higher rank has the right to order. Whoever takes a lower rank has the possibility for independent and responsible actions usually only within a certain framework. In cases of conflict he has to give in, even if he is right.

A memorable breaking up of this hierarchical thinking took place in 1949 when the constitution (Grundgesetz) of the German Federal Republic was created. A courageous and clever woman, Elizabeth Selbert (1896–1986), formulated the “timelessly revolutionary sentence” [Sibylle Thelen], that “men and women have equal rights.” Since one cannot expect perpetual harmony, for example, in a marriage, the question arises: What should happen if disagreement, perhaps in the education of children, becomes a problem? The hierarchical thinking demands an addition to the quoted sentence which reads: “In cases of doubt the man will decide.” Elizabeth Selbert managed to convince the other “fathers and mothers of the Constitution” that this concluding sentence is an absurdity. So it was dropped and the formulation of Frau Selbert has remained in Article 3, Paragraph 2, of the German Constitution “without qualification” ever since.

Cooperation of people with equal rights simply means that they have to come to an agreement. How to achieve this is the task of the people involved. Those who are not involved, including government, the law, have to hold back. Once they have developed trust in the ability of both parties to find a consensus, then this ability will be strengthened.

It is essential to realize that trust will always have an enlivening, enthusiastic effect which will awaken capacities. A domineering superior, on the other hand, can kill any motivation in his subordinate. One has to keep this in mind—for in contrast to professional and public life, the capacity to come to an agreement is constantly demanded in private life: of couples, parents and their growing children, friends, neighbors, participants in traffic. But how can it be learned and practiced if it is stipulated from the start who has the last word in cases of conflict?

As to the second question, what about the three legislative and administrative committees which are independent of one another with regard to expenditure and costs? It need not lead to a greater expenditure, although, of course, it might. Firstly, the legislative committee of the "state" would only have to deal with a third of the tasks it had to attend to hitherto, as economic and cultural issues would be separated off. Secondly, the delegates of the "economic parliament" and the "cultural parliament" would be concerned only with their problems. Today a substantial percentage of delegates (members of Parliament) are lawyers and many are teachers. As newcomers, both have got to familiarize themselves with economics and the lawyers also with cultural concerns, for example, education. It could, therefore, be the case that three parliaments work even more effectively than one if they are specialized in those three social spheres. The same is true for administration. So from the point of view of effort and cost, the triad of legislation and administration is not impractical, nor is it more expensive than a unitary organization.

THE DIFFERENT LAWS OF THE THREE SPHERES OF THE SOCIAL ORGANISM

The third question—How do the particular “forces and laws” of the three systems differ from one another?—leads us to a decisive point. We must again look at history, this time at the French Revolution. Two hundred years ago three ideals were proclaimed. None of them was new, but in their combination and as political goals they became a public theme, so to speak, only in 1789: freedom, equality, fraternity. These three ideals inspired everyone, at the time, particularly the younger people. Never has anything like it happened since. The idea of freedom was mostly active in the founding of modern states but nearly always in the sense of independence: independence from the English crown, from the other colonial mother-countries of Europe, such as Austria, France, Spain, Portugal, Holland, Italy, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Russia; independence from royal restrictions, from the guardianship of the church and in the economic sphere. The enthusiasm for the three ideals of the French Revolution was of an intoxicating, emotional, but also questionable nature. Voices of criticism which told the enthusiastic youth that the ideals contradicted one another and that in spite of their sublimity they were not applicable to politics were not absent. For example, the ideal of equality for all people, ending absolute royal power, contradicts the freedom of just those sovereigns who are also human beings and feel the need like all other people to develop individually and go their own way in freedom. And vice versa, if a

big businessman built up a colonial empire, he did so by exploiting his freedom to the full and ignoring that of the “natives.” The most shattering example in our time is surely the policy of apartheid in South Africa.

When the mood of exuberance from 1789 vanished, somehow in the chaos that followed and, when moreover the freedom of a great number of states had been crushed in the Napoleonic wars, a formula was found to define, demand and guarantee certain liberties. This is basically still the case today if we think of our “fundamental rights” which are confirmed in Articles 2 to 17 in the German Constitution. And finally it was postulated that the liberty of one individual ends where his neighbor’s begins (Article 2 GG). This is understandable socially but does not touch on the real nature of freedom. It would mean that freedom increases with space (compare deserted areas with densely populated ones).

If one looks around the world, one sees how the concepts of “liberty” and “equality” have in no way become universal property, as they are often interpreted arbitrarily. For example, how often was Alsace Lorraine “liberated”? In 1871 the Germans liberated it from the French, in 1918 the French from the Germans, in 1940 again the Germans, in 1945 the French in a new liberation—and gradually such a concept becomes worn and ridiculous! Take equality—many Germans still regard themselves as superior to the foreign guest workers despite car stickers which read, “Everybody is a foreigner almost everywhere.” Many men still regard themselves superior at work to women, although women usually work more and receive lower wages than men. The concepts are often weapons for propaganda rather than aims and ideals, or even commitments.

Most difficult to grasp is probably the third concept of “fraternity.” This originates in instinct and somehow lives in all of us. The more we think about it, however, the more this concept fades into a general philanthropy and into the

feeling “we are all human beings,” or “one must help the poor,” and so forth.

According to rank and character, either an element of class fighting (when Adam delved and Eve spun, who was then the gentleman?) or a streak of charity and compassion prevails. This in turn puts others off, particularly the convinced “social Darwinists” who represent the maxim, “We are no charity” when talking of their business.

Fraternity is often translated into “solidarity” and becomes, as in the “Solidarnosz” of Poland, a class fighting party program. How difficult it is to approach this concept is also shown by those women’s groups who in this context miss the word “sister” and who, therefore, resent the word “brother,” while in reality he stands for all fellowmen. If one could conceptually combine brother and sister, one would arrive at “sister and brotherliness” which does not only sound quite unusual but would lead back into family links and kinship, which should be overcome by a true fraternity. So we see that the three ideals from the French Revolution are permeated with enormous emotions.

Into this whole realm Rudolf Steiner has brought clarity of thought. Starting with the ideal of equality, he also says that all human beings, initially all adults, must be equally placed before the law—leaving open the eligibility to vote and the age of legal liability. Yet he carries this thought further beyond the generally accepted form by stating two points: firstly, that equality on the whole is the principle of the legal-national-political sphere, and, secondly, that equality belongs to this sphere only. It does not belong to the sphere of the spiritual life, i.e., the sphere of spiritual production, nor does it belong to the economic life (the market place)!

What happens if equality is practiced in the spiritual life? Everybody’s individual nature expresses itself in his or her entirely personal style. If someone writes or paints like another person, then his individual creative power is very

weak. This applies to forgers who are able to produce the style of others perfectly but cannot nor want to develop their own; they cannot participate in a general development which will bypass them. One knows this also from the so-called "letter author," who teaches how to write a condolence letter, an application or even a love letter. This procedure should only be a beginning as long as one learns. By trading conventions one remains at the state of an apprentice, instead of becoming free for further development.

The essential of a spiritual production is its uniqueness, the individual nature, the novelty, the inequality. Inventions, compositions, poems, paintings are all as manifold as human biographies or fingerprints.

The ideal belonging to the realm of the spirit is not equality but liberty. An adult must decide freely which profession to choose, where to train, if and how he will specialize, whether he will take further education or keep to a routine of the achieved level of knowledge; whether he will broaden his horizon, whether he will keep a diary or not, whether he will write about his life experiences and publish them as a book, and so forth. The legal framework should do no more in all this but to supply the freedom in which the spirit can act. In other words it should guarantee liberty, for everybody has the right to become what he likes irrespective of his sex, color of his skin, his political or religious convictions, and so forth. The rules of law must make sure that a passed examination is recognized, that a title or patent or author's copyright is protected, and that violations of these rights are prosecuted and punished.

Wherever the rule of law, that is the state or its administration, intervenes in the content of the spiritual life, it abuses its powers. When in the Third Reich the works of Emil Nolde were classified as degenerate and when he was forbidden to paint, then that was a typical example for this

infringement of the spiritual sphere. Cultural progress was impaired. For many years in Germany, and for generations in Russia where similar censorship applied, artistic expression was perverted.

In the political-legal sphere equality as highest ideal is justified. It means security before the law which the creative individual needs. It forms a frame within which creative development can take place. It can, of course, also generate great penetrating effects, especially in the military. The marching in step can be seen as a visible picture of this.

Let us throw a glance at the economic life. What effect has liberty here? It is the fundamental idea of the Liberals, the initiators of business who are fortunately still in existence. In retrospect of history, however, one has to say that the combination of liberty and economic life led to colonialism. It caused suppression and exploitation of millions of people, even extermination on a large scale and irretrievable destruction of numerous cultures over the whole world. In capitalism and industrialism this combination has also led to suppression and impoverishment, to people leaving the land and to the destruction of old social-cultural links and family ties. It formed the proletariat in the nineteenth century and the slum culture of our century. It led to the greatest wars ever, destruction of pre-capitalist economies, and, as a result, to further destruction and pollution of land, rivers and oceans. The cutting down of rain forests, dying of species in plant and animal kingdoms, enormous natural catastrophes and raging expansion of deserts are all results of this liberty within the economic life.

What happens if the point of view of equality becomes dominant in economic life? We have experienced this where states introduce planned economy: the economic sphere loses its life-force. Everything moves on at a steady pace—but steadily downhill. Such states live off their capital earned in earlier times, and after one or two generations they are

ruined. This seems to have been realized in the meantime by all former communists, except the North Koreans. They now promote individualism, yet only in the economic field, and they believe that one can do this with people forever.

If the main aim of the political-legal sphere is equality and of the spiritual-cultural life liberty, and if neither suits the economy, then fraternity must rule. This surprises us, as we appear to experience everywhere and constantly anything but fraternity. Even in the use of language the human element is missing: eg., competition, price war, pressure on output, fight for survival, monopoly, icy social climate

Should this be the sphere in which fraternity is the highest aim? The difficulty in understanding this link lies surely in the interpretation of the concept "fraternity." We feel always inclined to see something charitable in it, something of a deliberate will to sacrifice. Who is brotherly? Is it, for example, Saint Martin who shares his coat with a beggar? I certainly do not want to say anything against Saint Martin and the great picture of his deed, the knight on his horse who shares his cloak with the beggar at the muddy roadside. And yet, for an understanding of how the economy should work, this image is quite unsuitable. One can understand that a sober businessman cannot choose Saint Martin for his ideal—at least not from Monday to Friday! Fraternity in the economic life points to something different, and this fortunately is so prosaic that business people especially ought to understand it.

Let us consider the production process of goods, for example, a suit. A farmer in Australia has 100,000 sheep. They are shorn in December by contract shearers. The fleeces are bought by traders and driven to the coast in gigantic trucks. There they are stored in huge warehouses and auctioned. They are then shipped away and perhaps taken half-way around the world to Europe. In Bremen they are auctioned again and obtained by importers or textile factories direct.

Now the fleeces are transported by rail, canal or road to the factories. The manufacturing begins, possibly at different places: the wool gets sorted out, washed, spun, dyed, treated and woven. The fabric then reaches the tailors and outfitters. There suits and coats are made which finally are offered in the shops where we can buy them for, say, \$350. To make this possible the most varied specialists are needed, plus trucks, ships, storerooms, auctions, washing powders and dyes, spinning machines and looms, designers and advertising experts, salesmen and tailors, decorators, and lastly, shop assistants. There have to be petrochemical plants, automobile industries and shipbuilders, dozens of machine and paper factories, printing industries; there must be roads that have to be maintained, traffic police, ports with stevedores, cranes, harbormasters, pilots, lighthouse keepers. Accident stations and hospitals, banks and insurances, and so forth, are all necessary. We realize if we look only at one single product, we are immediately landed in a net of connections spanning the whole earth in which are involved tens of thousands of people from hundreds of different professions in thousands of various industries in dozens of countries. It is probably impossible to uncover this web completely. It makes us dizzy, particularly when we consider its constant movement: the wool grows on the backs of the animals, but a little different every year; sheering tools, transport vehicles, machinery, fashion colors—everything changes and develops constantly.

It is often said that these manifold procedures are regulated by supply and demand. What does this really mean? A person needs something which he has not got, and he obtains it from somebody who has got it but does not need it. Having acquired it, he fashions it further and becomes himself someone who owns something which he does not need and who sells the product to another person who needs it but has not got it. This procedure lies at the foundation of the whole network of "economic life," if one disregards the

ancient principle of self sufficiency which is practically extinct. In short, in economic life one receives from others what one needs, and what one produces is for others. This holds good for everyone. This is the brotherly principle. Whether one buys something or receives it as a gift or borrows it, whether one reciprocates a service or not is a secondary question and has nothing to do initially with the mutual dependency. This brotherly principle is so attractive because it is absolutely objective and “matter of fact,” and one can live and earn! Moreover, the more people or firms involved in this net, i.e., the more the work is divided, the better.

Summarizing we can say:

The triad of systems in the social organism corresponds with the three great ideals of the French Revolution:

- Freedom corresponds with the sphere of spiritual creativity, the spiritual life.
- Equality corresponds with the sphere of law, the state, politics.
- Fraternity corresponds with the economic life.

Each ideal brings its own sphere of influence to life but will weaken, perhaps fatally, if carried over into the other two spheres. For example:

- If freedom dominates the legal sphere, then all rules are undermined, bringing insecurity and chaos.
- If freedom prevails in the economic sphere, it will lead to irresponsible exploitation of man and nature, to annihilation, pollution and destruction.
- If equality in spiritual life becomes the most important aim, it will lead to the paralysis of

spiritual, creative forces. The result is stagnation and decay.

- If equality enters economic life, then the productive forces will be suffocated by the bureaucracy of a planned economy.
- If fraternity dominates spiritual life, this will also lead to paralysis of individual forces and quickly to formation of closed circles and lodges, to separation into brother and non-brother.
- Fraternity in the sphere of law can easily develop into lobbying, favoritism, corruption and thwarting of true justice.

THE INTERACTION OF THE THREE AREAS OF THE SOCIAL ORGANISM

If we try to enter more deeply into the subject, we have to proceed very cautiously. It is not by chance that Rudolf Steiner compared the social organism to the natural organism; both are living systems. That kind of thinking which people use as a rule when observing, studying and forming political events is a thinking which was developed from physical mechanics and which regards events of the social life in actual fact as mechanical processes. However, to understand organic developments and organic life is something different from grasping, for example, construction elements in static building or the theory of solidity.

Let us consider, of the three systems of the social organism, the spiritual-cultural one. We stated that in it freedom is and must be the decisive principle. For our further deliberation we may start with an example which is nearest to us: in as far as we are sitting here together, we live within this element of freedom. You have come here of your own free will. You are absolutely free to decide whether you like to think along our lines or not. Whether or not you do will have no further consequences. You are entirely free in the way you treat the thoughts expressed here, whether you will develop them further, discuss them with others, enrich them with literature and deepen them. Whether you might begin to see a problem differently in view of these thoughts, or whether you feel that you have to form the judgment is all nonsense, contradictory in itself and unacceptable, because we only have one life, so we must bathe in the freedom of it.

There is no institution in the world which could impose on us any fundamental restriction within this framework of liberty, and there is nobody from whom we need to accept such restraints. However, that is not quite true, as there is one. I do not refer to God but to ourselves. We can force ourselves to come here even if perhaps we are tired or unwell. We can force ourselves to be punctual, to join in thought. But we do not regard this as directed against freedom; on the contrary, the fact that we can willingly overcome physical and psychological obstacles like our state of health, moods, emotions, and so forth, in favor of a once-taken decision means that here is based the very nature of our freedom.

Now let us assume the following: this circle here, or any group of people which concerns itself with some academic study, would decide to do something, to found or produce something visible. It may be a garden party or a permanent institution like a kindergarten, a free school or any other institution of the cultural, spiritual life. All free schools, for example, have come into being in this way.

If such an initiative should happen and each co-founder—as is right within a study group—acts in boundless freedom, what would arise? The planned institution would probably not come into being but be only an empty whirlwind, only chaos. It is essential now that the free actions of individuals be guided and pooled. If an initiative is born, it must be perceivable from without by other people and institutions. They must be able to address it as such, and it must be sound and reliable. What comes into being is a continuous entity, in reality a “legal person” (in contrast to a natural one), although lawyers speak of one only after it is legally registered.

What happens here—if looked at organically—is a birth. Something appears which was not there before, even if conceived conceptually. To appear means that also those who do not belong to the founder group can perceive this initiative through its name and the place in which it resides. There

are two examples of the fact that the new initiative, having been founded, will immediately grow beyond the realm of the spiritual sphere into the legal and economic spheres and into the life of the law, insofar as the initiative becomes the bearer of rights and duties (with name, bank account, membership of a charity and other associations). It goes into the economic life as it becomes a consumer (of water, electricity, heating, telephone). The question can now be asked how the founder group handles the fact that the new institution which originated in the spiritual sphere grows into both the other spheres. One must realize that its connection with the legal system is a twofold one: on the one hand, the initiative as a legal person has joined those legal persons who were there before and has to come to an arrangement with them in the right way. On the other hand, the sphere of the law extends also into the inner life of the new institution insofar as the people in it work and live together. One could speak of an outer and inner relationship. For each one I should like to give an example to clarify what I mean. Both have in fact taken place.

In a social institution—which came into being in a similar way as the one described hypothetically—two female pupils of our social-practical stream took a work practice. Since this is part of the particular curriculum, the pupils are entitled to receive an appropriate certificate. The school is obliged to issue such a paper. Since the work took place outside the school, it had, of course, to be certified by the institution where the girls worked. The task of the school consists in administering this process correctly.

This is what happened: The pupils did not get a report as was customary on the last day of their work practice. Nor did they get it later, not for months. Finally, their class guardian intervened and asked for the reports, assuming that they had been mislaid. The result was that still nothing happened. A renewed polite reminder did not bring the reports.

A necessary intervention actually produced them two days before the end of the school year. Was it now settled? Far from it, for the reports were invalid, since they were lacking place and date with the signature and were useless because the time and length of the work practice were not stated. After a new reclamation and waiting time, everything was settled at last, and the girls received their reports and were able to forward them to the places of further training to which they had applied long ago.

What does this example show? Firstly, two institutions, even of the spiritual sphere, cannot work with one another in this way. The freedom to commit or omit something has to yield precedence to the right behavior with one another, as defined by law. Here equality rules, also the equality in traditional inter-institutional behavior. These rules are that a work practice has to be confirmed: 1. for the students as proof that the work had taken place; 2. for the school as proof that it carried out its curriculum; 3. for the files of the workplace in case of later inquiries. An assessment of the work is not necessary but typical, if work and effort deserve praise. What used to be self-evident but is no longer today is a thank you for the work and good wishes for further steps in life and profession. This was usually combined with a recommendation of the report's owner to all future employers.

A social relationship recommends handing over the report on the last day of the work practice in order to terminate this, not only factually, but also administratively. Moreover, the punctual issuing is practical in case it contains an assessment, as the impressions are still fresh. The longer one waits, the paler it becomes.

A social relationship recommends that letters, especially reminders, are answered, unless they are rude attacks. And lastly, it rules that reports or acknowledgments have to be carefully issued. Had one omitted this, an apology would not be amiss as loss of time, costs and aggravation

were caused. It is understandable that business behavior like that described has its consequences: the work practice place would have to be exceptionally good if one would want to use it again and put up with the aggravation.

A second example: about the inner relationship.

It is necessary for the buildings of an institution in our densely populated Germany to be locked. Teachers, for example, must have keys as they often enter the premises in the evenings or on weekends when the caretaker is off duty. A new teacher who joins the school receives a key, and when he leaves, he returns it. This is a sensible arrangement, observed practically everywhere.

If a departing teacher does not return his key, one has to assume that he simply forgot it. The colleague responsible for keys will remind him and receive the key back, and the affair is settled, albeit a little late.

Well, life experience has shown that even such a trivial event can become a serious problem. For there are personalities who deliberately do not return their keys when they retire. It means more to them than a tool for carrying out their work. By handing over the key they feel shut out of "their" school to which they had devoted their whole work for years or decades. This matter has led to moving conversations. According to temperament keys were returned with resignation, or not at all. But there always arose ill feelings on both sides.

Ill feelings lie in the emotional sphere of the soul. Although they are very regrettable, much worse is what happens on the spiritual plane—a misinterpretation of the concept of freedom and of the law. The freedom, which should determine the spiritual life, must not get mixed up with a triviality like free movement in and out of a building! Taking the liberty to keep a key, the ownership of which has no objective justification, means to practice freedom within the sphere of law. It is a kind of self-justice.

One can, of course, be of the opinion that such misunderstandings should be avoided and too strict an observation

of agreed principles be renounced. The ex-teachers should be permitted to keep the keys if their possession means so much to them, and the community should trust that no misuse will occur; after all there are more important matters.

This is most understandable and is exactly what happens in most cases out of wise pragmatism. It might work well—especially as the institutions of the spiritual life are mostly of a size which is surveyed easily. Everybody knows everybody, and possible difficulties can be dealt with humanly and settled once and for all.

If, however, we try to trace the laws which lie at the foundation of the three realms of the social organism, then we would value the story of the key as an example which could easily be substituted by others. It is exactly in the spiritual sphere, where many liberal personalities work, that small liberties within the community are taken. Each incident may be insignificant and can be smoothed over by individuals or the community. If, however, they add up, many small trivialities can disturb the working climate considerably. This can lead to paralysis of the work and life of such an institution.

And even if it survives, endless forces are used up through the constant apprehending, settling, encouraging and smoothing over of a thousand small egotisms, instead of being available to use for more important matters. The example with the school key shows on the small scale of an institution what on a large scale constantly creates the greatest social difficulties in society as a whole. They arise through the illegitimate penetration of one sphere with its principle into the others which obey different ones. A comparison could be made: a few boils can easily be dealt with; but if always new ones occur, it would be only right to recognize the symptoms and treat the cause. To practice in a small way our observing, thinking, judging and acting will enable us to act and create correctly on a large scale later on. Here lies a significant chance to train.

If both spheres with their principles are mixed up reversely, i.e., if the legal sphere with its equality principle dominates the spiritual life then we become aware of it more strongly. One example for this will suffice; part of the legal life is prosecution and prisons:

The prison does not only rob man of his freedom, it also seeks to take his identity. Everybody wears the same clothes, eats the same food, adheres to the same time-table. By definition a prison is a purely authoritarian state which tolerates neither independence nor individuality. As a freedom fighter and a human being one has to fight against the attempt of the prison to rob the inmate of these qualities.

– Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*,
after serving twenty-seven years as a
political prisoner (1963–1990)

Equality, which in the legal sphere is and must be the uppermost principle and ideal, is the equality before the law. If, however, people, also when sentenced, are deprived of their identity, then this principle of equality is applied in the wrong field. Deed and perpetrator are mixed up. The procedure does not only go against the social laws of the legal and spiritual spheres, it is even counterproductive. For if one takes the view that imprisonment should result in the improvement of the convicted, then one has to turn to the human being himself, to the individuality. If the prisoner is treated as a number, then he will hardly be able to find his way back into the community.

In both examples about the outer and inner relationship of an institution belonging to the spiritual life, the ideals of freedom and equality are wrongly applied. They demonstrate that Rudolf Steiner's clarity of thought helps us to look through many confused and muddled situations which our

feelings alone might misconstrue. It is essential to practice correcting these feelings through new insight.

Unfortunately, comparable cases occur often since the principles of freedom and equality are seductively prone to misinterpretation. One needs clear knowledge of the laws of the social organism to withstand this.

Rudolf Steiner states: equality (the principle of the legal sphere within the threefold social organism) is effective also in the system of the spiritual life. In it, equality becomes, so to speak, the "work principle," without canceling the freedom of the spiritual life.

This is the case in all three spheres of the social order, for they interact constantly with each other. One could also say that each of the three spheres is in itself again divided into three. The ideals of the three spheres occur in the other spheres, where they form the corresponding partial system; there they become work principles. In the question of the "right way of working with one another," the legal sphere reaches into the spiritual sphere and, of course, also into the economic sphere and has to call for the principle of equality when appropriate.

I would like to stress that no one should feel exposed here. The criticism does not lie on a personal level. In both cases our feeling for justice, our social instinct, rebels.

Lawyers have the concept of "good manners." Although their definition is not easy, we all know more or less what they mean. Good manners used to be taught at home, at school, during apprenticeship, in short, very early. One learned them from people who themselves had learned them during their childhood. But mostly they had not understood these conventions, which is evident in the answers to questioning children: "One simply does not do this," or "This has to be done in that way," or "This has already been handled like that by Grandfather," not satisfying the intellect, but comforting the morale of a child.

Such education has ceased to exist, in businesses as well as in homes. Especially young and enlightened parents rebel against it. One wants to explain, not command. And where one cannot explain, one also drops the commanding, because one wants to be honest and not cause any neurosis. One can think about this in various ways; yet this approach has caused great impoverishment and loss of conventions in relationships between people. A good education at home is a rarity today. To identify this does not mean to speak for conservative convictions. On the contrary, to give up maxims which one does not understand is also a positive and liberating move. Old social instincts must give way to new ones. However, new forms arising from a new understanding of the social structure must replace the old ones.

The fact that we do not know at the end of the second Christian millennium what it had meant for centuries to teach children to show respect for old people does not prove such a tradition senseless. One could collect many kinds of good manners and think them through. One would find that they were introductions into the sphere of law. They were remedies for human relationships; they were education, and in that way a social culture came into being. An essential cultural factor was the mother. Where family relationships are dissolved, this culture is lost. It is immaterial whether this dissolution is brought about by brutal wars—uncalled for—or by self-inflicted events like divorce and employment of the mother, because in both cases there is loss. If now, from a new understanding of the social laws, there do not grow new forms of relationships, or the old ones do not become newly understood, then a turmoil of unpurified human emotions will creep into this vacuum. We experience this today especially in child criminality. One should ask the question, how did it come about that a rule of behavior like the respectful greeting of old people can be found over the whole earth in all cultures and independent of race and religion? To think of purpose, power integration or possibly chance is just as clever

as to assume that the building stones of a cathedral had joined themselves into the present form by chance, or were put up by masons without a fundamental plan. No, if we do not let our view be blocked by such primitive assumptions, we can discover that here we can behold the social workshop of the being “mankind.” This being had to build its organism. Men had to be trained and prepared for it by their customs. These were cultivated over thousands of years and became instincts.

These times have elapsed:

The present crisis in the history of mankind demands the development in every single human being of certain faculties of perception and sensitivity, the first rudiments of which must be started at school like the first four rules of arithmetic. Hitherto society was molded by traditional ways that never entered consciously into the life of the human soul; these will not apply in the future. Fresh evolutionary impulses are coming in and from now on will be active in human life; and every individual will be required to develop these faculties of perception just as each individual has long been required to have a certain measure of education. From now on, it is necessary that the individual should be trained to have a healthy sense of how the forces of society must work in order for it to live.

– Rudolf Steiner in *The Threefold Social Order*, Chapter 2

and:

But the social organism cannot afford to wait, either for the right views or for the right practice. Here an understanding is necessary, if only an instinctive one,—of what the social organism needs—and not merely an understanding amongst a handful of

experts, but in every single human soul for every human soul must take its own share in the general working of the social organism.

– Rudolf Steiner in *The Threefold Social Order*, Chapter 2

In order that we do not get paralyzed by these extraordinary demands formulated by Rudolf Steiner, I would like to describe now how the College of Teachers at the Freie Waldorfschule am Kräherwald tried to give its contribution to this question. (In Goethe's words, "Whilst beholding the mountains we gladly walk along on the plain.")

THE FORM OF SELF-ADMINISTRATION
AT THE KRÄHERWALD WALDORFSCHULE
STUTT GART, GERMANY

We have seen that every institution, that is, every “legal entity” which was created within one of the three areas of the social organism immediately reaches into the two other areas. In every “legal entity” the three areas of the social organism permeate each other, just as the three systems of the natural life permeate each other in every individual.

In this permeation the three ideals of the French Revolution remain unchanged as the three main principles: freedom in the institutions of spiritual life, equality before the law, fraternity in economic life. The way these ideals are bound to the systems is functional, not constitutional. The legal system “takes its principle of equality along” where, for example, it reaches into a spiritual institution; there, too, equality becomes the working principle in all legal questions.

It is not the case, therefore, that the principle of freedom within a spiritual institution is allowed to take on the legal questions, or that the principle of equality within a legal institution can seize upon questions of the human individuality, as is often wrongly assumed.

We have worked out how one must adhere to binding rules when relating legally to one another: to laws, contracts, conventions, customs. This also applies among spiritual institutions, such as in their relationship to the outside and among workers within one institution. It was demonstrated by the examples—the one about the correspondence and

reports and the other one about the unjustified keeping of the school keys.

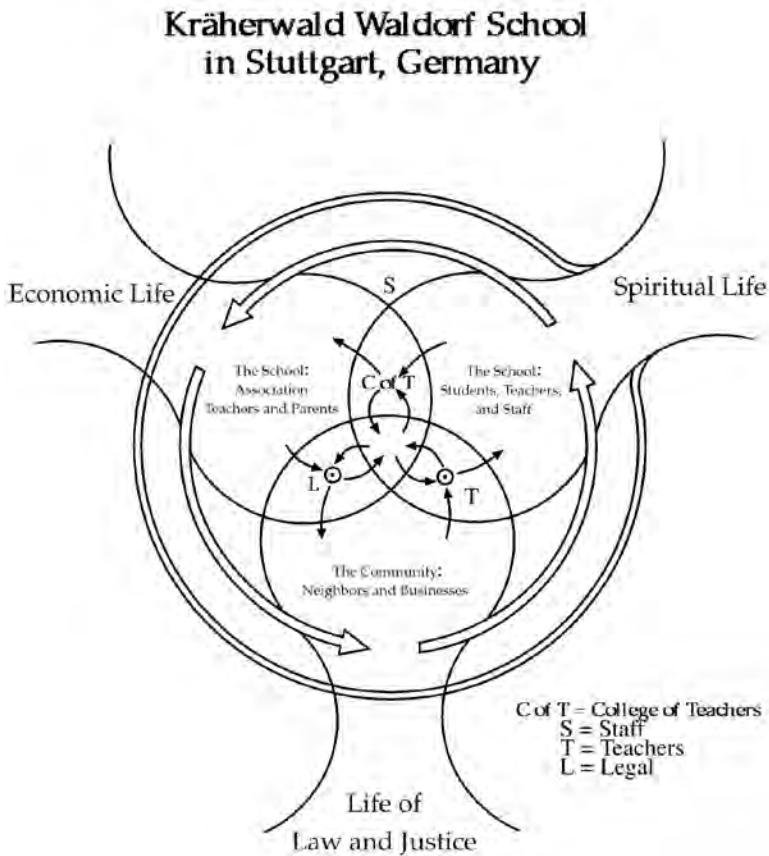
At first it seems astonishing that problems can arise at all, seeing that the described behavior contradicts good manners which we assume to be accepted norms, as other behavior confirms. Looking more closely at the interaction of the three systems and their principles, however, we can understand that the principle of freedom or liberty is enormously powerful. It exercises a tremendous suction and wants to draw everything into its own sphere of influence. A clear perception is needed, especially in people who work in areas of free spiritual initiatives, to keep freedom within its proper boundaries, beyond which only chaos can result. One can often observe the danger of chaotic conditions in institutions of the mind and spirit, in associations of artists, in free initiatives like independent schools, in short wherever a hierarchical order is missing.

The principle of equality works strongly, too, and strives to draw everything towards itself within institutions of the law. This we see in prisons, offices of all kinds, the military. Anything individual is leveled out wherever possible—uniforms, omission of names, at least Christian names, bare interior rooms, dull architecture for the administration. In short, a dreary and soulless civilization is the result.

It is still conceivable that habits and customs fostered an education towards disciplined relationships between people. Yet a special effort of our thinking is needed to see the origin of customs in the working of that being “mankind” which prepared men to gradually give the social organism its appropriate structure. Where the old customs fade and disappear the inner approach dies with them. It is, therefore, necessary to understand the old customs, to revive them through new insight, or else to replace them with new and better ways.

I shall now try to sketch out the structure of the self-administration of our school. This structure is not meant to

be an organization scheme even if organizational structures become evident. Rather shall the endeavor be made to trace the currents of consciousness with which those people who are involved with the self-administration try to solve the occurring problems with an understanding of the Threefold Order. They work with the various soul forces. We could, therefore, call the diagram below: A force flow, polygram or a consciousness-knot. Let us try to read this drawing.



Three independent members of the social organism permeate each other in every single institution including this one. In order to express it in a graphic way we could also say that each of them balloons out and then permeates the other. They do this in such a way that two areas overlap each other forming a kind of lens. The three lenses then overlap one another as well, and a triangular core or center occurs which belongs to all three areas. Outside each lens remains a field which is not covered by the other two areas.

That field which extends out of the spiritual sphere could be called "the school as such." It represents the idea of the school which preceded its founding. Here the purpose of this founding idea is transformed into uninterrupted action. Here is acted out the school pedagogy, the school education which lives between teacher and pupil.

In the second field, which extends out of the economic life, something different takes place. Here, educational theory must be transformed into reality by parents providing well-equipped and lockable classrooms with heating, lighting, cleaning. Here then are things and goods supplied by parents who do not need them to teachers who do in order to teach. This second field carries the economy of the school.

The peculiar feature of the Kräherwald school is, however, that the administration is responsible for both the day- to-day running of the school and its legal status. It is a registered association with the designation. The Association of the Freie Waldorfschule am Kräherwald, Stuttgart, the legal and economic administrator of the school. Normally a registered association which is a "legal entity" belongs to the sphere of the law. Seen from the angle of the school, however, this is no problem.

Parents come to the school wishing to have their children educated. Most of them do not take any interest in this association (usually only approximately ten percent of parents attend members meetings). Later we shall look at this school association in its legal, juridical role. We may still leave

open the question of whether an organization is conceivable which fulfills economic and legal tasks separately.

While the school, as such, is a joint group of pupils and teachers, on the one hand, and the school association is a joint group of parents and teachers, on the other, the third field presents certain difficulties. Yet if we consider that the school does not exist in a vacuum but is embedded in a social surrounding, then this third field becomes clearer. Whom does it embrace? In the widest sense it embraces the neighbors: geographically, the owners of properties adjacent to the school estate; people living along the school paths of the pupils; drivers and passengers of buses and trams which the pupils use; host parents of homes and hostels in which classes lodge during outings or practical training courses; the private music teachers; the authorities; the other Waldorf schools; and other schools in Stuttgart whose teachers hold examinations in our school. But also it embraces the more inwardly connected "neighbors," friends and relatives of our pupils from the grandmother or the godfather right to the sports companion in a club. Lastly, it encompasses friends and neighbors who are removed from us in time: our former pupils, as far as they have not yet become parents of pupils themselves, and our future teachers and pupils with their parents whom we have perhaps not even met.

We could say, in short:

- In the first field teaching is carried out
- In the second field teaching is made possible
- In the third field teaching is observed

Looking at the center field we realize it is a picture of the teachers' meeting. Its three sides symbolize that also in this meeting the threefoldness of the social organism is reflected. In order to carry out work in the teachers' meeting in accordance with the laws of the social organism, the College of teachers has formed three administrative circles consisting

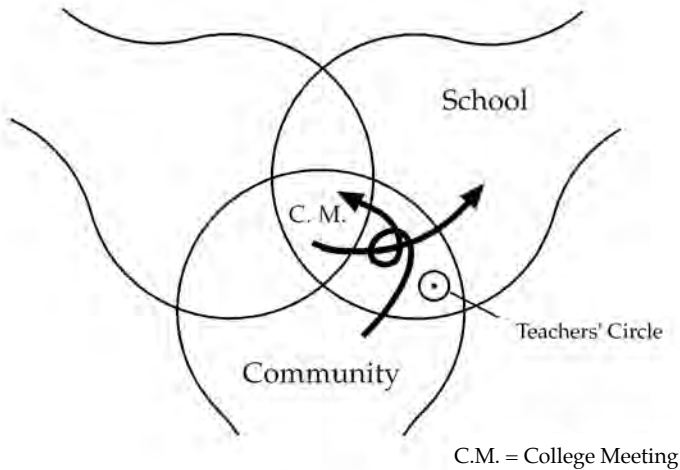
each of three to four teachers. The task of these circles is to direct the consciousness of the school as an institution towards the three spheres of the social organism. These circles are: the Teachers Circle (T), the Staff Circle (S), and the Rights and Legal Circle (L).

Questions and problems which either reach the school from outside or occur during the daily routine always belong to one of the three spheres of the social organism, either exclusively or in their main aspects. The appropriate circle takes up these questions. If they are of a routine nature which can be dealt with by a single delegate representing the College, then he will do so. The whole teachers' meeting need not be drawn into them; instead it trusts the delegate who is familiar with the subject. If, however, more important matters are involved, then the appropriate circle prepares them for discussion and decision in the full teachers' meeting. Here the problem will be described, debated and decided upon (either immediately or more often in a later meeting), within the corresponding part of the teachers' meeting. This has three parts: pedagogical meeting, technical meeting and legal or College meeting. Each of them is led by one member of the three circles. Although a decision is taken by the whole teachers' meeting, its carrying out falls again into the field of tasks of the responsible administrative circle. It may be that a single teacher will be asked to carry out the decision; then he acts under the instruction of the corresponding circle which has to keep the matter under consideration until it is closed, filed and laid aside in an orderly way.

The Teachers' Circle concerns itself with the general situation of society: which peculiarities has the age group that will form the next first year, which peculiarities does the next generation of pupils show? Which changes do they call for with regard to the pedagogical work? The questions will be brought to the whole teachers' meeting, having been reduced to their essentials. If the meeting comes to the decision that in the everyday pedagogical work or in the basic concep-

tion of the school something ought to be changed, then this resolution will be carried into the school (in a more narrow sense) and will be put into practice there. Some examples:

The general situation of young people makes it more difficult every year to awaken interest in the Oberufer Christmas plays. Many pupils simply stay away from the performances. What is to be done? Ignore the problem and leave everything as it was? Make the visit to the plays voluntary? If so, from which class upwards? Or should the plays be dropped altogether? Perhaps they are out of date? Or shall we choose new music? Shall the cast be taken over by parents or pupils? Or are the performances simply not good enough; is something wrong with the inner preparation?



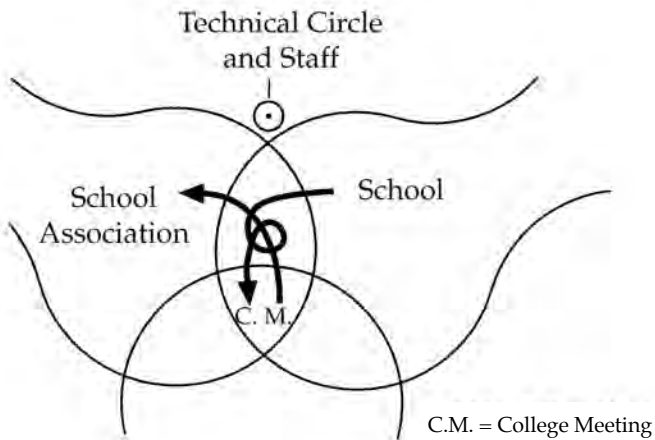
This example shows that the questions concern all teachers and that all of them have to participate in the discussions. And someone must minute these in order that:

- a.) the problem is really taken up and does not only remain within the private staff room chat well-known for its "one should...."
- b.) the whole school reacts to them.

Another example: years ago the coming of age was brought forward to eighteen years. What were the consequences of this for the school? What about school attendance, who will now write the apologies in case of sickness? Might this necessitate a contract between the pupil of age and the school? The question of membership in the school association may arise. Are the pupils of age now allowed to attend parent evenings?

This problem concerns directly only the top classes. And yet it is essential that even the kindergarten teachers take part in the debate in order to be in touch with what is happening in society and what might come up in conversations with parents.

A third problem: what has become of our pupils? What have we done well in their education, where have we failed? What must we change? These questions are far too essential to be left only to the social gathering of an alumni meeting.

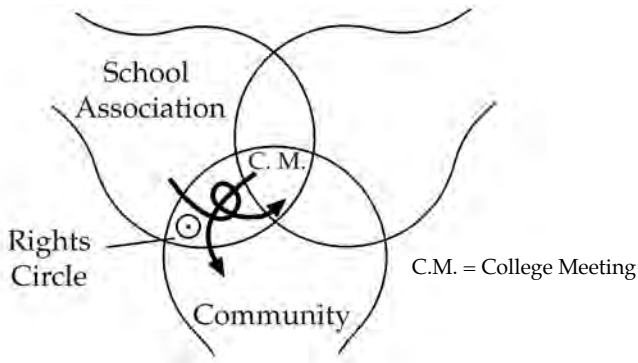


Problems, wishes, needs occurring in the running of the school are all received or even found out by the "Technical Circle and Staff. It prepares them for discussion in the

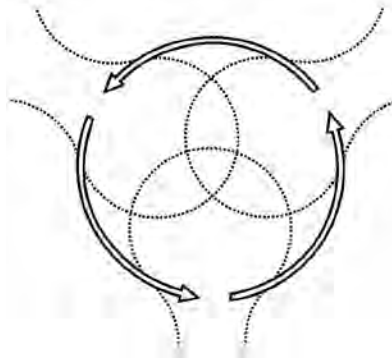
technical meeting and, if a resolution is taken as a result of it, this is passed on to the school administrator. To carry out a decision often costs money (economic sphere), or there occur questions of insurance or legal matters (rights sphere) with any new undertaking which has to be clarified.

To illustrate: a new climbing net should be provided for the playground. Nobody objects to it, and the question at this point is merely the cost. If the school association supplies the necessary \$100, the plan can be realized. Now, for the upper school a new microscope has to be acquired. The process is the same as with the climbing net but for the cost (perhaps \$1000 in this case). Therefore, the administrative board may not authorize it at once. It is even more likely to take longer if new desks are needed or a gymnasium has to be built. Another case is conceivable: because of increasingly difficult behavior of the pupils, the College of Teachers has to take the decision to reduce the sizes of the new intake. This does, of course, cost nothing, but the contributions from the parents as well as government subsidies are reduced—a change which the school association has to take into account.

Lastly, in the Rights and Legal Circle new staff applications and retirements are debated, while the actual appointments and dismissals will have to be dealt with by the administrative board of the School Association.



Questions which occur in the economic and legal field may also have juridical implications and belong to this circle. Such matters could arise when contracts are drafted, salaries settled, with pensions, social funds for emergency needs, relationships to “godparent” schools, perhaps even in the approach to new laws, such as the law for private schools, pupil promotion, etc. Resolutions embodying new ideas about the rights and legal sphere may reach out beyond the school into society, into other Waldorf schools, other free institutions, and even further afield. Perhaps they get imitated elsewhere, perhaps not, but they are being observed and taken more seriously than is at first apparent. In any case, they awaken awareness. Looking at the process of working with problems, parallel to which the human consciousness runs, a movement is perceivable, a rotation; each teachers’ meeting has three parts previously described. These correspond to the three spheres of the social order and the three ideals working in them. The participants of teachers’ meetings have, therefore, an almost inexhaustible field of practice with regard to the Threefold Order.

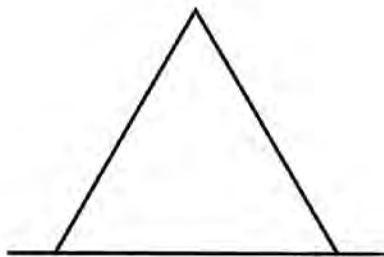


If they work in the administration with their consciousness in the way the organic structure (see first diagram) demands it inwardly and enables it outwardly, they must, of course, want it and really do it, for by itself the work does not comply with any order.

This has to be emphasized. No raised forefinger should remind participants to arrive punctually for the start of a meeting, or that they follow its procedures in an awake state and presence of mind (instead of preparing their next lesson or correcting exercise books). This dynamic procedure demands a dynamic and disciplined response.

What is meant by this? Institutions of state and economy are mostly organized in a pyramidal form with a hierarchical principle. Regarding the consciousness within the institutions, it is always oriented from above downwards. It is true that every individual has some scope for decisions, but he knows that obeying orders is the name of the game. Such a system is ancient; it dates back to the great old cultures of pre-Christian times. Its archetype is the cone or—increased magnificently—the Egyptian pyramid. Just as its formerly gilded tip was the first to reflect the sunlight in the dawn before the sides gradually grew sunlit towards the earth, until the sun rose also for the last fellow, so was the Pharaoh at the helm of his people the first to be enlightened by divine wisdom. From him streamed this light of wisdom gradually towards the hierarchy of priests and governing officials down to the simplest soldiers and peasants, to women, children and slaves.

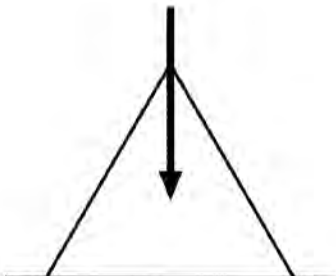
A pyramidal administration is so stable that it is practically impossible to overthrow; this is its enormous strength. Its stability remains intact even if there are failures; and even if the top fails or is missing, we get static, calm, unshakability for thousands of years.



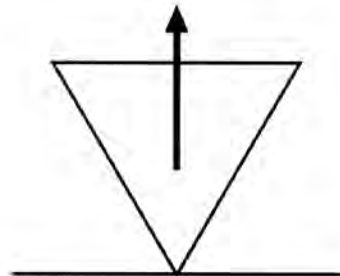
Like fossils from those long-past times, such pyramids of consciousness stand around us everywhere: in the legal-political realm, in the economic field, in the spiritual sphere. We have become so used to this lifeless form of the social landscape. Without great difficulties politicians can start to build a new gigantic administrative and bureaucratic pyramid—the EU. This abbreviation stands for European Union, but it could give the impression as if behind it is hidden Eternal Untimeliness or Eternal Unreason.

Today a war cry has become fashionable. The other side has to give way. This call comes from the unions, the employers, the politicians of governments and opposition parties. But nothing moves. And the answer from all sides is a constant further building of consciousness—and administration pyramids, large and small.

The unshakable steadfastness of an established pyramid has today become a weakness and a tragic obstacle on the way towards a humanized future. Necessary for the future are forms of administration which depend on the wide-awake consciousness of people, forms which would become ineffective as soon as people are no longer actively involved. The future can no longer make use of sleeping authorities. The right future administration must fall if the managing individuals are not awake, just as a natural organism collapses when man loses his consciousness.



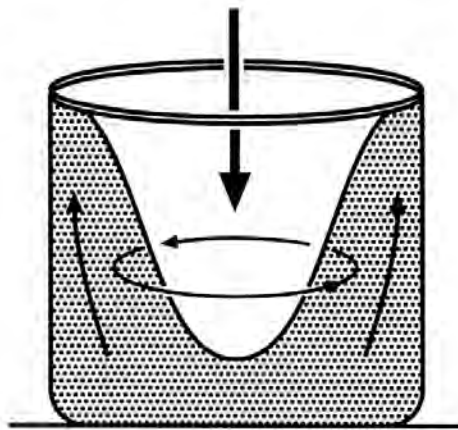
*Pyramid:
calm, gravity*



*Top:
movement, uprightness*

Here we have such a form in front of us. It is the exact reverse of the pyramid form of the cone. What happens if one turns a cone upside down? The cone stands on its tip, that is, it does not stand; it falls over. What has to be done so that it remains upright and does not fall? It has to rotate. The opposite to the resting cone or the pyramid is the dancing top! This is why the described self-administration is dynamic: only if the consciousness of all participants in a teachers' meeting remains in movement as implied by the threefoldness of the social organism, only if it is dynamic, vigorously moving, then the self-administration stands and is capable of living.

Some people might take umbrage at the picture of a top; it is hard, firm material. This is correct. And although the picture is not wrong, we can put another one in front of us. Take a glass of water and by stirring move the water. This—which, of course, is matter—is then pressed outward to the rim through the centrifugal force and rises. In the center of the moving current a water free space, a vortex, a whirlpool, is created simultaneously; here arises suction.



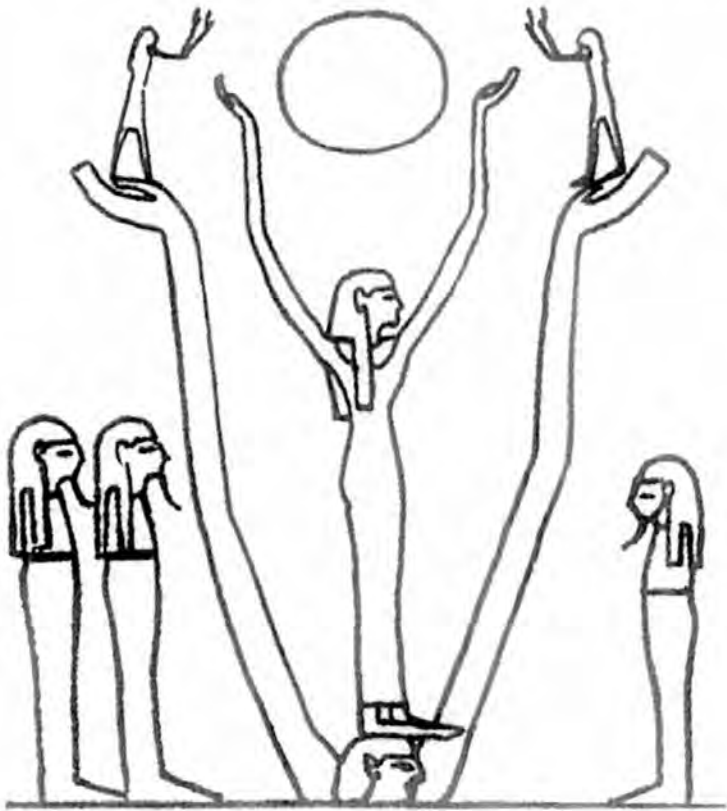
*During rotation matter rises and forms a gesture of adoration
in the vortex into which spiritual substance can stream.*

When we spoke in our teachers' meeting about this form of self-administration for the first time, one of the objections was that what had been described could only be a foundation, it was not yet a building. The colleague was, of course, right. Yet this is not really an objection, as it is always essential to have a foundation before beginning to build. Maybe it did not occur to the teacher just how right he was. The necessary building process here is the rotating of the consciousness. The rising of the water and the vortex formation in the center can remind us of an archetypal gesture: the forming of a bowl by our hands at a mountain brook. Then the bowl, the mug, or the cup has become matter and can hold what has been poured into it.

Today hundreds of cups stand in clubs and bar rooms—but they are all empty. At the moment of presentation they may be raised but then put aside and only looked at, having become mere show.

Maybe the reason for this lies in the fact that cup and bowl are a picture for the old gesture of adoration, of asking for help—the gesture of the raised hands. This also disappeared into oblivion.

In our case the request for help in the building of the social organism of mankind refers to help from the spiritual world, to which also belong the departed. We could say that a modern community “prays” when it works spiritually in the right way. This is the future form of the medieval *ora et labora*, “pray and work.” The proper dynamic work on the horizontal plane draws down the vertical impact from the spiritual lights.



Two gods adore the sun

*Mural painting, Tomb Ramses VI Thebes
Twentieth Dynasty + 1100 BC after Heinz Demisch:
Erhobere Hande Verlag Urachhaus, 1984*

THE PROCESS OF MAKING DECISIONS IN THE TEACHERS' MEETING

Let us remind ourselves again of the structure of self-administration at the Kräherwald school. The tasks to be dealt with by the Teachers' College are worked through in its weekly meetings. Since the tasks always belong to one of the three spheres of the social organism—either exclusively or in their main points—the meeting is divided into an educational, a technical and a legal part. These three parts are prepared, led and worked through by the three administrative circles, representing the three spheres. This structure is transparent. It dispenses with secret coteries and cliques. This has to be emphasized, as the third part of the teachers' meeting is still called the "internal" or "College" meeting, which is easily misunderstood. It merely means that not all teachers participate in it but only those who have decided to serve the school for a longer period. New teachers who are still on probation or observers and student teachers, do not participate; neither do such teachers who have expressed their intention to leave.

This restriction makes sense, as some agenda items include questions of staff, that is, new hirings, dismissals, as well as evaluations of new colleagues during their trial periods. This must be explicitly stressed, since many people still think this "internal conference" is devoted to esoteric or occult matters.

Since the name "internal" or "College" meeting is so easily misinterpreted, a better name has often been sought to describe what happens here. There are a number of schools

who have chosen the name school management meeting. Wherever this designation expresses the conviction of the teachers and the customary procedures of their school administration, it shows an error, the grave consequences of which we can perceive in such a school. For if the internal or College meeting becomes the school management meeting, then the educational meeting becomes a kind of educational study group without any commitment, as we have seen at the beginning of our deliberations, and the technical meeting turns into a kind of mere "shoe polishing," which many supposed intellectuals dislike for fear of getting dirty fingers.

We hope this has made clear that the management of our school is realized through the teachers' meeting and that its three different yet equally authorized parts correspond to the three different but equally authorized spheres of the social organism. Yet we see clearly that the transformation of the social organism is not achieved simply by creating outer structures. This would again mean thinking statically. Rather it is necessary that all participants live the new ideas.

- Out of a thinking awareness laws and their interplay must be understood.
- We must develop a feeling for the healing effect of their use and for the sickening effect if they are not applied, and
- We must then apply what we have understood and experienced as blessing.

To apply means practice, practice, practice! One must practice as intensively as one does when learning a craft, an art, some sport. The ability must not only increase but become an available capability which can be drawn on instinctively at any time. It must become securely rooted, a new instinct. And in the same way one has to practice within an organic

social process in order to allow mere abilities to develop into instincts.

The dividing of the work into a threefoldness carries with it the danger that the teachers' awareness disperses centrifugally. To counteract this, three arrangements are in place which must not remain unmentioned.

1. A teacher belongs to an administrative circle for the limited time of three years. If possible only one member should change at any one time. This brings "fresh blood" into the circle and yet guarantees the continuity of the circle's awareness.

2. One member of each circle together form the administrative council. This is, so to speak, the internal awareness of the institution. Its members, who meet weekly, make up the agenda for the teachers' meeting and so form a centralizing consolidation. They represent the school to the public. They sign the reports for pupils and leaving teachers, receive the mail and distribute it to the appropriate people. Membership in the administrative council should last longer, approximately five years, as it takes longer to find one's way into the tasks. Should someone question this arithmetic, as somebody once undertook in a minute calculation, one can only say that he is looking at things in a rigid, mechanical way and not a living organic way.

3. There is the three circle session of members of all three administrative circles. This meets when the need occurs, not regularly. One task of this committee is, for example, to match, in good time, needs and possibilities for filling vacant positions.

Let us now turn to the important question of the decision-making process. In order that we trace down the

laws here, too, a concrete example may stand as the point of departure.

Once I was given the following case. A class teacher found himself in such a bad state of health that he had to make the difficult decision to lead his class only to the end of the current school year. During the Christmas holiday he asked the colleague who was going to promote his Class Eight into the upper school at the end of the school year whether he would be prepared to take on his class for the remaining years of the class teacher's period. This teacher agreed, and both told the teachers' meeting of their decision. Has the process of decision-making been correct?

We shall follow the procedure step by step. The condition of his health caused the sick teacher to think about the future of his class. He was concerned about the smooth continuation of his educational work after his retirement. We can suppose that the teacher had been worrying for some time before he acted at last. It is to be viewed positively that he had these worries. It is also to be viewed positively that he felt responsible for his succession. He had obviously looked around for some time before he decided on the Class Eight teacher. His inquiry, therefore, was most probably well thought through.

It is also positive that he tried to relieve the teachers' meeting by his action, as the questions of succession and new appointments are usually time consuming items of a meeting. The action of the teacher shows clearly that he does not only feel responsible for his class but for the life of the school in a wider sense.

And yet we have to look at the approach and action of the sick teacher critically, especially from the point of view of the collegial school management, which he recognizes and for which he tried to act. For what he did not realize is the fact that unintentionally he acted against the college of teachers at the moment he approached his colleague. He may

reply to this that he only asked him and that, naturally, the final decision lies with the teachers' meeting which he did not intentionally prejudice. Yet he has done so. The colleague whom he asked, also a member of the internal/ College meeting, was informed initially, thought about it, and prepared himself inwardly for the new task, which he was willing to take on. So facts were created which made a different decision for the teachers' meeting, very difficult, if not impossible. It had not occurred to either teacher that the whole teachers' meeting might arrive at a different decision in this matter on the basis of views or insights, which the sick teacher and the one whom he asked neither had nor were able to have. The following is conceivable:

1. The majority of the teachers' meeting cannot accept the Class Eight teacher because he was meant to take on another vacant job.

2. The majority of the teachers' meeting does not regard the Class Eight teacher as the best solution for continuing the orphaned class—for which the most varied reasons can be found, that is, he might increase the existing one-sidedness of the sick teacher.

3. The teachers' majority does not even want to keep the Class Eight teacher or has not yet taken a decision on it.

Other reasons are also conceivable which speak against the solution of the two teachers in question. All points should have been clarified before a personal talk took place. Once names are given, it is much more difficult to proceed in the matter. The teacher who had been asked might well take all reasons given for another choice as directed against him; perhaps he would sense conspiratorial motives. Mistrust could arise which would be hard, if not impossible, to

remove, especially if the talks are not carried out with the greatest tact and sensitivity. Ill-feelings and even offense may occur, as well as unnecessary waste of time and energy. More frequently than is realized, rivalries can form, or existing trenches between “camps” can be deepened.

All this was, of course, not intended by either the ill teacher nor the other teacher. They will, therefore, not conclude that such difficulties could have resulted through that action but look for the causes in others. Neither will the situation in the mutual talks be eased if “the others” react only emotionally, perhaps from correct feelings but without clear insight into the logical steps of the decision making process. Without such insight the arguments cannot convince and be accepted. In conversations, the field of opinions will not be overcome, which will remain in the realm of sentiments flowing to and fro. These will be justified by a sharp intellect in one way or another. One remains on the level of the intellect—or mindsoul.

We can, of course, acknowledge that the sick teacher knows the situation in the school so well that he had premeditated his move thoroughly until he found the best solution, and that the College could not have found a better one either. In this way he generously saved the College meeting time and work, and in that case the result is a happy one.

But we should be careful not to see in it an example for the correct process of taking a decision within a community. The end does not justify the means.

THE PROCESS OF MAKING A DECISION IN A COMMUNITY

To continue, the sick teacher acted as a single independent person would have done. It did not occur to him that the question of his succession does not concern only him, that it is no longer his sole responsibility, and must, therefore, not be dealt with only by him. The decision of his succession has its consequences beyond his time at the school. Others will have to carry the outcome of his action. The whole teachers' meeting, therefore, has not only to confirm the decision of his succession but consider every aspect beforehand.

This case is tricky, because the sick teacher acted out of a deep sense of responsibility. And yet, he has to realize that making a decision as a single person for himself, and making it as a member of a College for a wider circle of people are two quite different things.

As a member of a College he is one of many equals. The presupposition for such an equality is having mutual information as the basis for relevant judgment of the problems, as well as for counseling and deciding. Consequently, it is the task of the sick teacher to provide his colleagues with his knowledge and describe the problem clearly:

The timing of his withdrawal, particular situation of his class (difficulties, talents, special destiny of the class through change of teacher, through particular parent situation, what he has achieved with the class, perhaps special accents, what he might not have

achieved, which were his further aims and why, and so forth).

Through such an exposition the teachers' meeting will be able to gain complete clarity of the case on which they have to decide. During this phase no name must be mentioned, which is as yet not even necessary.

Only when the whole administrative meeting ("internal" or College meeting) has officially been put into the picture, can it begin to address the solution of the problem. The ill teacher can now be asked whether he would like to make a suggestion towards a solution, and he can now mention his preferred candidate. However, it is possible that he declines to do so, because he realizes that his intended solution is not the best one after listening to the comprehensive discussion of the situation in the teachers' meeting. Through the to and fro of arguments, and the pros and cons of individual suggestions for a solution, the whole vitality of equal members of a community is clearly expressed. After thorough debate has taken place, the conversation in its full openness cannot be felt as hurting anyone's honor. It can then be very fruitful.

At some point in time the teachers will agree to a solution, that is, a name, and the phase of debating is over. Now the decision has to be carried out. The chosen teacher must be asked if he agrees. It does not matter who asks him: the chairman of the teachers' meeting or someone who is responsible for appointments or any other member of the College. However, it should not be the most awkward or naïve fellow, as the conversation might include concerns, queries or even conditions by the chosen teacher and possible arguments which have to be brought into a mutual understanding. The teacher who leads these negotiations for the College must, therefore, be able to do this in everyone's best interest. When negotiations lead to a positive result, then the situation has essentially been settled. Looking back on it, can we recognize superior laws in it?

At the beginning lies the fact of a health problem which the sick teacher has to realize and face up to. Then follows a phase of consideration, weighing and debating inwardly, until finally a resolution emerges which leads to action: he informs the teachers' meeting.

For this the information is a fact which they on their part have to recognize. Neither the faculty nor the teacher can alter the facts but they have understand them as exactly as possible. Then the deliberations can begin in the meeting: suggesting and rejecting, changing and suggesting anew, mutually advising, before a decision is taken here, too, and put into action.

In both cases one could call the phases:

1. phase of recognition
2. phase of deliberation
3. phase of action

As in the first phase thinking is particularly engaged and in the last one the will, so it is the feeling of man which is engaged in the second phase. The point here is, of course, not sentimentality and emotions. What is necessary is an objective heartfelt feeling which includes many areas and weighs them against one another. To make this possible the greatest clarity during the cognition phase is desirable; no facts should be concealed or told incompletely for whatever reasons—everything significant for the solution has to come into the open.

Following the decision making process further towards a solution to the problem, we have to look also at the person who is chosen by the teachers' meeting as the successor for the leaving teacher. When the College of Teachers calls him, it is for him a given fact. He has to take notice of it and think over as clearly as possible its extent, difficulty

and demands. If the school's call is not formulated clearly enough, or if he has special questions, he must find answers.

Strictly speaking, he can only now ask himself how he sees this offer. If he believes that he can cope with the task, what significance will the take-over of the class have for his life, his plans, his family? Only after a thorough weighing of all pros and cons should he make his decision and inform the school.

It is clear that he also goes through the three phases of cognition, deliberation and action—even after having participated fully in the three phases of the decision-making process in the teachers' meeting as its member.

Even if the intellectual comprehension and the weighing of his feelings are slightly confused, in the individual as well as in the College of Teachers, nevertheless, the whole process is concerned with the threefold steps—in our case the threefold threefoldness.

And yet a difference exists between the various threefold steps. The teacher who recognizes his illness, considers the consequences, and makes his decision acts as an individual. Even if he confers with others, nobody can relieve him of his free decision.

The single members of the College who confer with one another are of course also "free spirits"; but what takes place in the teachers' meeting as a whole is marked by the exchange of thoughts and feelings of equal members. The sharing of individual opinions and sentiments and the appraisal of what is important and what is not, this whole process exemplifies the ideal of equality in the sense of equal rights before the law. People with equal rights speak with one another; the most differing arguments initially meet with equal justification. Gradually, the most significant points of view crystallize out of the deliberations, and the problem is solved.

The teacher who was offered the vacancy is governed by other considerations; of course, he, too, stands in

the decision-making process as a single, free individual like the sick teacher. Yet, in contrast to the latter, his future is directed towards collaboration with others, for or against which he has to decide, while the sick teacher is beginning to withdraw from them. The decision, therefore, is concerned with the question of whether he will recognize and accept the brotherly, collegial element; does he want to enter the community—either from quite outside or, if he was a member of the College before, with an entirely new function?

The College of Teachers, too, looks at both individuals in different ways. They see the one disappearing into the “freedom” of retirement, so his “equality” status will end. The other one they perceive approaching their circle in a brotherly way, hoping that in the end he will help to carry their work and responsibility as an equal with them.

The steps of the decision-making process schematically ordered are:

Problem: illness and necessary succession of a Class teacher and College member.

I—An individual (A)

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Given fact (illness) is recognized. | recognition phase (thinking) | } freedom |
| 2. He consults with himself. | deliberation phase (feeling) | |
| 3. He makes a personal decision. | action phase (willing) | |

II—College of Teachers

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| 1. given fact (decision of A) | recognition phase (thinking) | } equality |
| 2. joint work at solution | deliberation phase (feeling) | |
| 3. joint decision | action phase (willing) | |

III—An individual (B)

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. given fact
(call by the College) | recognition
phase (thinking) | } fraternity |
| 2. He consults with
his colleagues. | deliberation
phase (feeling) | |
| 3. He makes a
decision. | personal action
phase (willing) | |

If we look at the whole evolving process of decision-making in its subtle interacting of freedom, equality and fraternity—both in the individuals and in the community of all persons concerned—then we shall not find unnecessary repetitions in the treble threefoldness of the steps, but a harmonious growing process, at the end of which stands a decision which was able to ripen as a fruit of common efforts.

We also realize what it means for the social life if the decision-making process is shortened as described at the beginning. The sick teacher left the sphere of his individual free decisions and interfered, prejudging the community within which he belonged to a different law among equals. The teacher who was asked also left the sphere of his own free decision. He intruded into the realm of brotherly community before he was asked to do so.

We must also be aware that in this case the decision came about after a comparatively short time. If we consider that many members of the College may feel bypassed and therefore annoyed, that they cannot articulate this annoyance, and that it may prove “sand in the works” which will grate into other problems and impede a trusting cooperation, then it is clear that no time or labor was saved in this “shortened procedure.” A process with an organic succession of its single steps, which each participant can clearly see through, will work soothingly and healthily on the social structure in addition to dealing with the immediate problem. It will also act as an education, since after this successful learning process,

the next problem to confront the College community will be dealt with better and solved more satisfactorily.

The precondition is, however, that all participants want to understand that, in the life of social structures, certain laws are at work. They can be understood. It will become more and more important in the future to act in agreement with and not against them. After having understood the interplay of the human soul forces, thinking, feeling and willing—in the individual as well as in the group—we have to develop a feeling for it, which will gradually enable people to do and act out of new, true instincts.

The chairman of the College meeting is confronted here with a special task. If the recognition and deliberation phases are not clearly separated, then endless rignaroles will ensue which will hamper progress; the action phase might even be missed.

If we push too early into the action phase before objections or even questions have sufficiently been addressed and clarified, then we can be certain that transformation into action will be carried out by many teachers only half-heartedly; further decision processes will be rendered more difficult, and objective differences become personal tensions and will impair the strength and effectiveness of the whole community.

If the recognition phase is missed, the deliberations become emotional and sentimental; the action phase can in that case slide into sheer posturing. This danger exists if young people are drawn too early into responsibilities. Sometimes this proves difficult in working together with pupil representatives who constantly urge decisions and actions.

As personal decisions do not always play a part in those of the community, these may not need the three times three steps. The triad of cognition phase, deliberation phase and action phase does, however, exist in every decision whether of communities or individuals. To learn within the

community that and how these phases have to be separated from one another and follow in succession can also be helpful for individual teachers. They can, for example, practice and demonstrate it when a students' club plans an outing, an activity for a gift market, a Christmas celebration, or perhaps an end of term ball in conjunction with other classes. The laws can be practiced long before they are understood by the young people; in this way they lead to new social instincts. This is the task of the educational system as required in "Threefold Social Order"—no preaching, no talking about the matter, but doing it.

A LOOK AT ECONOMIC LIFE

Without exception all people belong to the economic life through their needs for goods. They are consumers from their first day to their last.

If we look at the “economy” as consumers, then we perceive it at first as that area in which what we consume is produced. In agriculture our food is produced, in forestry the Christmas trees (for example), in the textile industry our clothes, and so forth. Yet what we buy (in order to consume), we hardly ever obtain from the producer but in shops or a market, i.e., from middlemen. So initially we can conclude that the economy is the production of goods, their trading and consumption.

Rudolf Steiner says this too; but he says a tiny bit more, namely that the economic life has to do *only* with production, circulation and consumption of goods. (See *Threefold Social Order*). If we do not overlook this tiny word “only,” then we are surprised by this definition of Rudolf Steiner’s because it runs against the present view of economy and the economic practices. At present we count everything as belonging to the economy which has to do with material values of any kind. Is this a misunderstanding of the word “goods?”

By “commodity” I mean everything which through human activity has acquired the form in which it is finally brought by man to its place of destination for consumption. Things in the view of the law are only bodily objects.

– Rudolf Steiner, *The Threefold Social Order*

For Rudolf Steiner the economic life means dealing only in goods. We contrast this definition with another one:

People working for others constitute a commodity which can be purchased just as sugar or coffee. ...
I pay more for it than for anything else under the sun.
– John Percy Davison Rockefeller,
1839–1937, founder of Standard Oil
Company

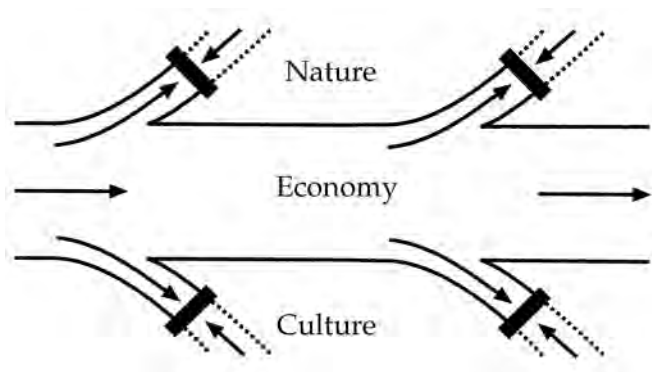
A greater contrast is hardly conceivable. For Steiner the characteristic description of commodity is their production, while for Rockefeller it is that they can be purchased.

In the course of modern times, especially through the development of capitalism and industrialization, the economic life has expanded more and more. It developed an almost irresistible suction and drew all areas of life into itself, like a whirlwind which races across the land. So everything which it sucked up took on the character of goods and became marketable goods. Even the general opinion succumbed to this suction. A decisive thinking process is needed in order to recognize that through this suction, disorder and disaster will arise in the economic life. We must recognize that not everything can be for sale.

Extreme cases can best clarify the situation. According to Rockefeller a person can well be a commodity, either partly or wholly, and the fact of the purchase price is proof, even today. Our feeling rebels against it but has too little power against the Rockefeller thinking. It is only Steiner's definition of commodity which excludes unequivocally that man could have the character of a commodity: he/she is not a thing which has become what it is through human activity and which is taken to any place for its consumption. Our feeling can breathe freely. There is something which our sentiment rejects, not because it is not beautiful but because it is wrong. Some slaves fared worse after their release than before, and yet slavery is wrong.

Once the extreme case of slavery has made us aware, we can discover that there are more things in the economic life which are treated and traded as a commodity, although they should not be. Land and soil are examples. It was neither made by men, nor taken anywhere, nor consumed there. Land and soil—not peat or sand, gravel or coal, and so forth—have always been common ground in all ancient cultures. Whenever they became property, that is, a commodity, the decadence of that culture began.

Human rights are another example. Even these are traded today: if a soccer club pays another one a transfer fee, then it buys the right which stipulates that a certain soccer star can only kick for the paying club. Here, too, our sentiment rebels, yet being short of clear thoughts everyone resigns himself to such facts. And what can a sentiment achieve against a cold “why not?”



Both these examples are meant to show that a healthy economic life has to be kept within its boundaries. One of the constraints is already set by nature, e.g., in Alaska one cannot grow pineapples, in the lowlands one cannot grow arnica, in the Sahara one cannot build a hydroelectric power station. The other constraint has to be set by culture or law.

In protected landscape areas one must not build. Weapons must not be supplied to areas of crises. Polluted waste water must not drain into rivers. Economy spreads unchecked where it is not given boundaries. And these will have to offer in the future much more protection from the greed of an economy which steamrollers along in the Rockefeller way, partly trampling, partly creeping.

People often talk of “self-purification forces” of the economy. This is a phrase which those will not use who understand that the economy cannot but develop the endeavor to constantly overflow its boundaries.

There is another point of view which I would like to mention, as it is especially noteworthy when the so-called tariff parties can again not agree. Within a healthy, and most of all, really social economy, not only outer boundaries should be fixed by legal regulation, but also inner changes within structures of responsibility have to be made. Not all decisions on production and price should be left solely to the employers/company directors, whom the employees or their unions will then fight. These duels are no longer fashionable.

Sooner or later employer and employees have to understand that basically they are not enemies, for together they form the production side. Together they represent only a third of all those who participate in and are responsible for economy (traders and consumers being the other two thirds). Representatives of production, distribution and consumption in all branches must join together in associations, to deliberate and decide in a factual, brotherly way. Does the production of one branch still or already correspond to needs? Must work capacities be directed to other areas? Must working times be shortened or extended? Should, perhaps, certain branches which at present make little profit be supported because this is more beneficial for the economy than their scaling or even closing down? Such and numerous other questions could be dealt with more sensibly if the stupid cock-fights of the

tariff partners—who in fact are tariff opponents—would not attract all attention and energy. There is no other way out of the hellish cycle of the price-wages spiral!

Such partnerships exist in small germinal forms only; yet they exist.

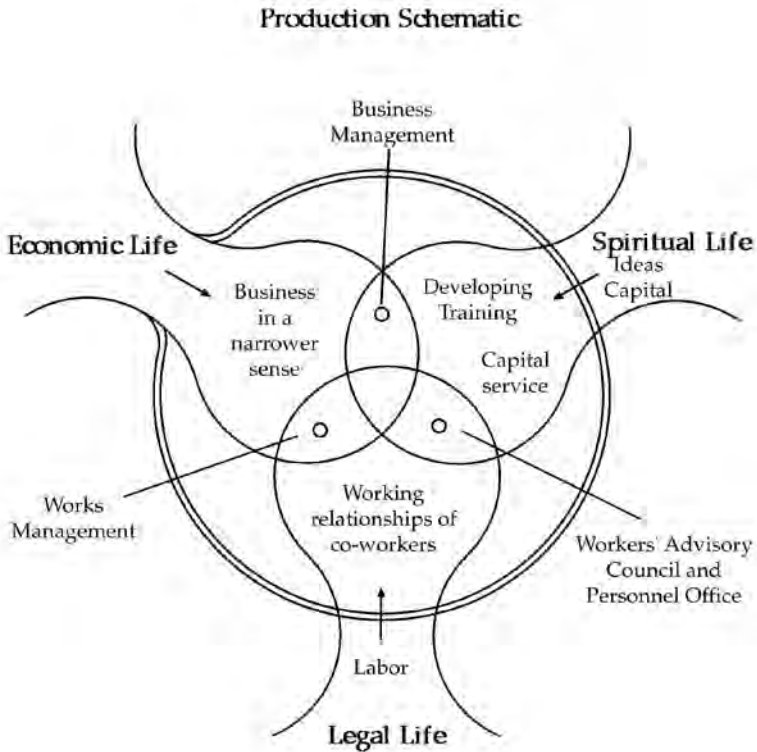
Finally, we shall attempt to draft the interaction of the three areas of the social organism for a business, as we did for the school. Starting again with the three overlapping circles of the three realms of the social organism, we can see business in the narrower view, in the one originating from the economy (like the school in the narrower sense is the extension of the spiritual life). In this extension arrive the natural substances or partly produced goods which are processed and worked at. Afterwards they are sent out from this extension into the wider areas of the economy. Thus, we are dealing here mainly with the first of the three production factors, that is, the basic natural products or raw materials.

The second factor of production is labor. It originates in the sphere of rights through contracts in a more or less orderly way, for employees are people who enter business as partners bound by contract. It is through their capacities to work that commodities come into being and values increase.

The third factor of production is capital. Capital does not arise through diligence or through economy. The word comes from the Latin *caput*, head. Capital arises through head forces which constantly flow into the economic sphere in the form of inventions, new methods of production, and improved labor organizations, or in other words, intelligence, intellect. Economy (careful management) is essential as a principle of restriction in expenditure of material and labor. Yet with regard to accumulation of value it merely corresponds with the activity of adding. The formation of capital, on the other hand, corresponds with multiplication.

Just as innovations originate in the spiritual life, so does capital which flows into manufacturing industries. Expressed differently, the spiritual life has to be recognized

as that realm to which the administration of capital belongs legitimately, not the economic or legal life. Here, also, it is essential to form clear thoughts initially, in order that more and more people can direct their willpower towards the realization of what is spiritually correct, instead of finding it merely nice and interesting.



Regarding the extension of the spiritual life we see that to this area belongs—besides the administering of capital—the development of the enterprise insofar as this undertakes any. Training of co-workers will be placed in this area, from workshops for apprentices to further educational courses.

The lens areas in the center of the diagram could signify: The business management is between the “finance and development” area on the one hand and “business in a narrower sense” on the other. The working management is between the “business in a narrower sense” and the area of “working relationships of co-workers.” And lastly the third lens is a combination of workers’ advisory council and personnel office. This must also be a genuine working committee, not an arena for quarrels over distribution.

Among the production industries are those in which the material or substance side is predominant; in others labor dominates, and in others the capital takes a leading role. To the first group belong agriculture, forestry and primary industries of raw materials such as sand and stone quarries and mines. The second group consists of wage-intensive industries such as horticulture, nurseries, mechanical and craft workshops, precision works like clock and watch factories, and so forth. To the third group belong the capital intensive industries: car factories, dockyards, papermills, the chemical companies, and so forth. Each industrial enterprise may have a slightly different emphasis.

What happens if one of the three production factors is missing? If, for example, the material part is missing does production ever happen?

Sociologists, including anthroposophical ones, agree with “the accepted doctrine,” of the political economists that services also belong to the producing goods. As a comparison we quote again Rudolf Steiner in *The Threefold Social Order*:

It is essential to a right understanding of the composition of the social organism, that one should clearly recognize the difference between the system of “public right,” which can only deal from inner and purely human grounds with man-to-man relations, and the economic system, which is concerned solely

with the production, circulation and consumption of commodities.

So here lies a contradiction; obviously more research is needed. The quotation by Steiner continues:

People must become possessed of an instinctive sense for distinguishing between these two in life, so that in practice the economic life and the life of "rights" will be kept distinct—just as, in man's natural organism, the lungs' function in working upon the outer air keeps distinct from the processes going on in the nervous and sensory life.

The fact that just here, where he emphasizes the separation line between economic and legal life as a future necessity, Rudolf Steiner stresses the word "solely" excludes any supposition that he might have forgotten the services. No doubt services satisfy needs. No doubt they have their value, yet this does not make them into goods. We have to recognize that the economic life always deals with substances. Where this is not the case, then we have manifestations of the legal or spiritual life.

Wherever the rules and regulations reach into an institution of the economic life, they deal with working relations within this institution. If the legal life does not enter fully into an economic enterprise, directing its activity only towards the business, then this activity is a service. In its task to make relationships or processes possible in the right way, no goods are produced, traded or consumed. This task can also be directed towards single persons. We can observe the opposite: an institution as well as an individual can extract certain activities from their organizational sphere of their life. Services then arise (as in fact they came into being historically in the course of divided labor), when an individual goes to

the hairdresser, or a factory gives the task of guarding its production area to some one else (customer service). The cooperation then rests on contracts between partners, as it does everywhere in the legal sphere.

Something corresponding occurs in the third sphere. In the form of credits as well as in the development or educational contents, the enterprise receives strength for its productivity from the spiritual life. Here, too, an enterprise may look elsewhere for planning or development. It might seek advice in financial questions from banks. Co-workers may be sent to external instruction courses. Again, these are services.

When Rudolf Steiner emphasizes again and again that we should differentiate in life in a sensitive way between the three realms of the social organism, then this can, of course, mean that we should also think these differentiations. We are today constituted in such a way that we like to clarify our feelings.

What has been said here of services is offered only as a suggestion. In thinking the subject through we may also observe our feelings.

An example:

From the window of our railway compartment we see a goods train with fuel wagons, refrigerated wagons, tank wagons, tree trunks, diggers, cars, containers, cable-reels, gas pipes, cattle. We see a small sector of the enormous stream of goods which moves uninterrupted through the country day and night in all directions. Goods of the iron industry, mechanical industry, forestry, food industry—all are evidence of endless diligence and great ability, expression of production on one side and need on another, evidence of calm, orderly activity.

We ourselves are also sitting on a train. We, too, are driven from departure to destination on the same net of rails. What do we feel like? As piece goods, as commodities? As objects of the great stream of goods? Maybe we think back

to the War years when endless goods trains drove up and down the country with soldiers or prisoners of war. These people were transported like cattle or goods. We travelers feel different, like passengers, which is how we are addressed. And if we are treated like transported pieces of goods, then our feelings rebel. So it seems that the railway belongs only partly to the economic life and partly outside it.

I suggest that Steiner's statements can be summarized as follows:

- The economic life deals with materials which are turned into goods.
- In the spiritual life creation occurs; here takes place spiritual production, creation through ability and knowledge and imagination.
- The rights sphere has the task to care for order and maintain it, and
- All spheres interact constantly and everywhere.

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE RIGHTS SPHERE

The rights/legal sphere is that area “which can only deal from inner and purely human grounds with man-to-man relations.” (*Threefold Social Order*, Rudolf Steiner) We have already seen at various places that this area deals with the daily, proper and orderly relationship among people through customs and forms of behavior, and to cases of conflicts. We have also seen that in no way is it to be equated with the sum of coded legal statements and paragraphs. These are only the crystallized “final terms” of processes which have come to rest and which constantly play a part in man’s consciousness—sometimes over centuries almost without change and sometimes, as at present, in extraordinarily dynamic ways.

In the personal sphere great changes of consciousness are taking place.

- “Engagement” has practically died; it will only be upheld for conventional reasons when a wedding has to be celebrated in grand style. One sees meaning only in the practical.
- The marriage bans have already disappeared in Germany.
- Marriage is such that more and more people no longer see any sense in the wedding sacrament, let alone in marriage as a life companionship which coincides in time with earth life. Here, too, other points of view play a decisive role or maybe the arrival of a child or possibly questions of taxes. Wherever marriage breaks down, new disorderly situations appear, which demand our

consideration: questions of liability, rights for next-of-kin, questions of inheritance, taxes, disputes at the termination of the companionship, etc.

- Marital status has been extended to people of the same sex, a strange and hard to comprehend mixture of the concept of marriage with the concept of “friendship,” which has so far not existed in a legal sense.
- The right to life—with regard to abortion as well as with incurably ill people.
- The “demanded right” for a place in a kindergarten for every child.
- The question of majority age—in voting as well as in discretion. How does society see juvenile or even child criminals?
- The question of ownership of organs from deceased or dying people.
- One could continue almost at will to name open questions of law.

There are actions which have recently been felt and even formulated as punishable misdemeanors:

- Environmental pollution
- Dangers to health (through radioactivity, CO₂ exhausts, chemicals, over-fertilizing, chemical treatment of fibers, wood protection sprays and others)
- Genetic manipulation—a hotly debated, still vastly legally unclear domain
- Overfishing in the oceans
- Production of “electro-smog”
- Illegal dumping of poisons
- Endangering the earth through space refuse.
- Ownership of raw material on the seabed (e.g., manganese clusters)
- In international relationships new legal concepts are needed

We see how human consciousness cannot keep pace with the ever-changing, new conditions; old "good" customs—legally valid—lose their meaning and break away like an ice reef from the mainland glacier. New facts are being created, yet the adequate legal concepts which would set limits to the economy and create new ethics are missing.

There are also reversions to old forms and ideas when one cannot do justice to the demands of the present. So we have the death sentence in the West, in the Islamic world the sharia.

The practice of legal life—legislative, jurisdiction, executive—is not out of date in its threefoldness. What must be renewed is how we feel and think about justice.

We shall now try to concern ourselves with a particular problem of the rights sphere. In the future, a lot will depend on its solution. Without spending many thoughts on it, most people are of the opinion that man has to work in order to live. More precisely: in order to be able to live, man must work. To the same degree as the "professions" give way to the "jobs," this opinion is taking root as a feeling ever more strongly.

Let us consider a human being's work more closely. Naturally, we people have all kinds of needs which we have to satisfy. A person who lives in a constitutional state and complies with its laws achieves this by buying the needed goods, that is by exchanging them for money. He usually receives the money in return for his work. Therefore, the equation is made: work = money, or rather, as work passes in time, time is money.

The fact, however, is that man has his basic and higher needs not only when he works and is able to pay for them from his salary, but also because he is alive. Of course, it may be said that everyone has to take precautions for times of illness, holidays and age. But by saying this, the real problem is not addressed. If we think of children, particularly orphans, adolescents in their training, invalids who are incapable of

working, pensioners, refugees, and most of all the unemployed—they all have needs and have to have some income.

If we add to our considerations all those people who are active but whose work does not produce value in the sense of commodity production and circulation (like housewives, police, military, prisoners, tramps), then we have perhaps seventy-five percent of the population, probably more. Therefore, the maxim that labor equals money, that one has to produce value-creating work in order to live off its remuneration, holds good for only a minority. This “law” is the exception. Exceptions challenge the rule. The rule can, therefore, not mean that one has to work in order to live.

The rule can only express that labor and remuneration in their nature do not belong together. They are related only insofar as both are involved with man. To consider them equal is a thinking error.

Take an example from another area. As people have to deal with their bodies from childhood on, they know the experience that matter—all material substances—has, among others, two different qualities. One of them is weight, heaviness, the tendency to fall and to accelerate in the direction of the earth’s center. If matter is prevented from falling, it presses on to the preventing base. Equal volumes of different substances press differently. Substances are specifically different in weight; aluminum presses about ten times more strongly than cork, lead about forty-five times, gold more than seventy times as strongly as cork. Yet all substances are heavy and press.

The other quality of matter is the characteristic of its mass. Substances are inert. The tendency of a substance or an object to stick to any kind of movement once begun is called inertia. Substances at rest resist our effort to bring them into movement; those in movement resist attempts to stop them and bring them to rest. Substances are always “against,” whether they shall go faster or more slowly. Whether the direction should be changed, they always oppose. Horrible!

We could sense this in a plain expression of “no.” Yet it could be seen quite differently: inertia expresses the faithfulness of substances towards their movement in space, faithfulness towards their path. As a definition of “inertia” this sounds more neutral than “constancy,” which describes a positive characteristic, even a virtue.

Now we know that the inertia of a piece of matter is greater the heavier it is. Since we need strength both to hold matter as well as to push it away, it could follow that weight and mass appear to be of equal nature. One can, of course, say this, but unfortunately it is wrong. To formulate it more exactly, equalizing weight and mass would originate in a small-minded way of thinking.

The cosmopolitan must think further. Physicists have become cosmopolitans, and so should we. The characteristics of weight and mass have something to do with one another only because matter exists here on earth and at certain spots. If a piece of cork was not here in my hand but on top of the roof or in an airplane above it, or even in space, it would be much lighter than here in my hand or almost weightless. Yet—and this is essential—it will always be just as inert as here and now.

The further I move away from the earth’s center, the less strength I need to hold a piece of cork. If I want to push it away, however, or to accelerate its speed, that is, to change its state of movement, I always need the same strength—even if I am as high as in outer space. And because this is so, we must distinguish exactly between the concepts of weight and mass.

Furthermore, we have to clarify the following: weight and mass have always been of a different nature. Yet the ability of man to think this is only four and a half centuries old. And that men are able to hurl matter away from the earth into space and even transport human beings into space where they emerge out of gravity into a condition for which man was not at all created—that came about only thirty-seven years ago, that is, about half a man’s life span! (Moonlanding, 1961)

Now we return to man's capacity to work and his needs. That man has needs and, therefore, must have an income is a characteristic which belongs only to the earth. The fact that man wishes to learn and work and can do so is a characteristic specific to his nature, which he brings with him to earth when he is born. He comes to earth "naked and bare," as is said in the Oberufer Paradise Play, and leaves all his earthly goods and needs behind when he dies. But his capacity to work, his will to learn and work which he brings with him to earth—that he takes again with him in death. The essential in man is not the extent of his needs but his will to learn and work.

Just as a piece of matter becomes heavy, assuming weight when it falls to earth, so will man develop needs as he incarnates and surrounds himself with a physical body. The extent of these needs varies as do the specific weights of substances. Yet they are not the essential; the essential is the learning and working capacity of man's entelechy, as the essential of matter is its mass, its constancy. It is hoped that it will not take another four and a half centuries for this knowledge to be generally accepted by scientists.

One can, of course, view such an opinion as idealistic, seeing it as the fantasy of people detached from the "real" world. In fact, it is odd in a world which has postulated the wrong law, namely that labor equals money, a world which adores this wrong law for centuries and has almost destroyed our earth through this formula.

As soon as we free ourselves from the compelling thought of this fatal equating of performed human labor and the value of money given in return, then we can suddenly breathe freely! This conception can for many—especially the younger people—cause almost neurotic traits, in that they see themselves as failures unless they can "sell" their work power for an optimum. This conception which often creeps in between man and his task and can stand doggedly in the way of a fruitful cooperation, falls away from us. In our think-

ing we accept the fact which we observe in every child that learning and working is an elementary human expression of will. It is a need and to be able to fulfill it is a joy. It is no sour duty which deserves compensation.

Become like children! Yet, like healthy children! Every doctor, every educator knows that if a child cannot learn, play and work, it is seriously damaged.

The societies of modern industrial states who believe—and want their children to believe—that human labor can be recompensed with value in money are equally seriously ill. The thinking of those people is corrupt, spoiled. The economic life has twisted us into shopkeepers who are only focused towards material values and who allow the greatest gift which we human beings have, the ability to learn and work, to be pulled down to the level of exchangeable goods.

By chaining the human capacity to work to the concept of goods, which is objectively wrong, something tragic happens. In the course of their youth most people forget that they have come into the world with specific aims; they have to work at certain tasks together with other people. No wonder that the deeply felt question arises ever more strongly: why do I live? We can see really catastrophic effects from this one wrong thought that labor equals money, that human labor equals purchasable goods.

While Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, and the World Wildlife Fund are to be thanked for their endeavors directed towards retaining life on earth purely biologically, there needs to be added another dimension of an extended thinking within the field of human rights. Not only nature but man as well has to be freed from a stifling economy which grossly oversteps its competence. The life of mankind must continue biologically and also be enabled to continue spiritually. People should not only live out of their emotions but be able to remember their preconceived aims from before birth. They should be able to develop, and not only in the direction of material values.

Now something quite similar is asked for in the sphere of human rights as was asked around the year 200 AD. Then, at the time of the Soldier Emperors, during which time the Roman state was shaken by internal disorders, a legal scholar added a new statute to Roman law. This man laid down his profound knowledge of Roman law with commentaries in more than one hundred books. His most significant deed, however, was that he included into the law the point of view of forgiveness. [This is, in fact, the only Christian legal statute also in the German citizens' book of law from 1900! (Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch)] In the words of the lawyer, a person commits a deed which harms another one, who can prove the right for satisfaction and compensation. If the wronged person forgives the perpetrator, then he or she foregoes the right for compensation and cannot sue for it later. What does this really signify?

The magnanimous person has drawn a line under the past. The law holds him to it in case he should become fickle. It takes seriously the changed direction of forward looking. So the past cannot burden the future any more. This becomes particularly clear in comparison to the old testamental "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth," which obliges every member of the human community to determine the future through the past.

How much more peaceful would the world look if forgiveness, instead of hatred and revenge, also existed more often in politics where people are not able to forget and, moreover, do not want to forget. How much better it would be if people would find the courage to step out of the shadow of the past!

The legal scholar was Domitius Ulpianus (170–228) from Tyros in Phoenicia, educator and guardian of the Emperor Alexander Severus. He must have been a Christian. Maybe he could not openly profess it in his position, one hundred years before Emperor Constantine tolerated Christianity (306–337). Yet through his action he proved himself to

be a real Christian, whose effect reached far into the future. What is necessary now are new Christian impulses in law. It is eminently Christian to seriously acknowledge man as a spiritually endowed being who must not be partly enslaved by the saleability of his labor. Here the law must protect people.

Let us once more think back to the widely accepted view that services naturally belong to the economic life. We can then sense how far we have to go until the way of thinking belonging to the "consciousness-soul" will have asserted itself, and how urgent and necessary it is that it be worked on in schools, in Waldorf schools. Where else?

The right sphere must set boundaries for the economic life. Man must be protected and equally the whole of creation. Here, too, man who has been corrupted by the purely economic life exploits all creatures as mere profitable objects. How many centuries will it take until the animal, too, is not seen anymore as only a thing in the legal sense but as "brother animal?"

Coming back to the school and the structure of its self-administration, let us try to find the purpose of the school association. It sees itself as the legal and economic administrator of the school. As we take a closer look at it, we view it with the eyes of the parents, while earlier we saw it with the eyes of the teachers.

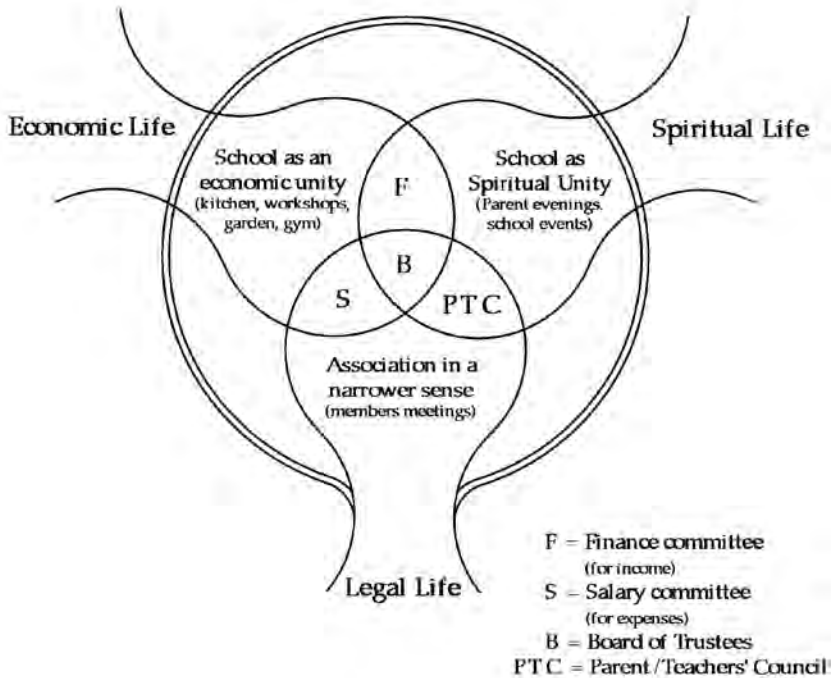
Again we see that the three spheres of the social organism overlap one another and form a small social whole. This is a registered association, a "legal person," which means an institution of the right sphere. Its members have joined together to give the Kräherwald Waldorf School a secure place. That is the purpose of the association. Its members are parents of the pupils, teachers, and co-workers. People who are interested in the existence of the school without having children in it, possibly ex-parents, old scholars or other friends of the school can also belong to it.

This membership forms a grouping of the legal sphere. It comes together at the annual general meeting.

Apart from this, no “club life” unfolds, for gatherings occur in school only in connection with classes, at school festivities, at the annual Christmas plays and other performances. Member meetings are called occasionally if the situation demands.

Let us look at the two other fields in our diagram. The one ballooning out from the spiritual life is the school as “spiritual unity” and the one from the economic life is the school as an “economic unity.” This it is, of course, in the short term, mainly as a consumer of water, electricity, gas, heating oil, cleaning utensils, and, in the longer term, furniture, and so forth.

Association of the
Freie Waldorfschule Am Kräherwald
Stuttgart, Germany



The workshops do not produce goods which flow into the economic circulation. They only work with wrought or semi-wrought materials like planks, glass-sheets, glue, putty and paints for their own use as the final consumer. Equally materials like chalk, paper, clay, wood, and wool, for lessons are mere consumer goods. Only the products from parents' working groups, which are sold at the Advent bazaar, belong in a certain sense to the production criteria. The overlapping of the three balloons in the center represents the Board of Directors, including the administration. In the three lenses, or rather their outer three-sided parts, one can recognize the finance committee (between school as a spiritual unity and school as an economic unity), as well as the salary committee (between economic unity and the members' association in a more narrow sense).

"Finance committee" and "salary committee" are designations of the Kräherwald school; other schools may call them differently. The main task of the finance committee is to care for the income which is needed for keeping up the running of the school. The main task of the salary committee is the stipulation of financial expenses according to the possibilities of the financial situation, not only the amount of the salaries or of a possible extra Christmas bonus, and so forth. Naturally both committees cannot work entirely separately from one another; their mutual dependency is balanced by the Board and by the administrator, who belongs to both.

Looking at the diagram we could call the finance committee, the "income committee," and we could call the salary committee the "expense committee." However, these names would not be quite correct at present, since income and expenses are dealt with in both committees.

Both committees could also act for temporary working groups (e.g., a "building donation circle" on the income side, a "building circle" on the expenses side).

Between the "members' association" and the "school as spiritual unity" stands the "parents' council," the parent-

teacher council, the parents trust, or however else one likes to call a group of particularly active parents. This group keeps in close contact with teachers and also serves in an advisory role.

The school association in its threefoldness as shown in the diagram can be structured in this way or differently, as can the school as a spiritual unity. However, in search of the right forms for functions the interacting of the three spheres of the whole social organism must always be observed, since it does in fact happen whether we are aware of it or not.

THE COOPERATION OF PARENTS IN AN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

As new parents come to the school, they are always asked explicitly to cooperate and assist. This meets in some with nervousness, in others with cheerful activity. Sooner or later, however, there often arise disappointments. Parents are prepared to bring their great life and professional experience to help shape the school organism. Yet in many cases this readiness does not seem to be desired. Frustrations and feelings of resignation often occur.

The question arises: in which areas does a school urgently need the cooperation of parents, and where and when must the teachers' meeting make decisions alone? Only clear thoughts and distinctions can help to avoid parental ill-feelings, which paralyze valuable and precious resources.

Looking initially in a pragmatic way at the life of the school, we see how parents are active in various ways, helping with the planning and carrying out of new buildings and with converting or decorating, even cleaning; with landscaping of a school site; with preparations for a bazaar and its sales; in the school kitchen; or with obtaining necessary materials. These are only a few examples. It strikes the eye immediately what "capital" is offered here. The enormous potential of experience and skill from the sphere of economic life, with all its qualities of enterprise, can mean a great treasure for a school.

Furthermore, there are parents who bring great capacities from the area of social concerns. Questions of political

life, negotiations with authorities, the unfolding and leading of social processes, belong here. We can also think of the caring for neighborly contacts or assistance in solving human tensions. Many schools have “ombudsmen” from the parent body who will—partly in conjunction with teachers—take on such tasks of settling disputes. These examples show the activity in the area of human inter-relationships as one belonging to the rights/legal sphere.

Where in the area of the spiritual life does cooperation with parents occur? Only now do we come to the actual starting point of the question.

Every fruitful and responsible action is only possible if its aim is being kept in mind. In the educational area whether a building is to be put up or whether a new law has to be fought for, the question always arises, how must it be shaped so that it corresponds with the idea of the education. At the basis of all schools that work out of Rudolf Steiner’s pedagogy lies a comprehensive understanding of man. This means insight into the great and general human laws of development. All action should keep in line with this insight, especially, of course, the immediate educational one. This still allows great freedom for an individual, an imaginative forming and acting.

Without being able to survey the entire picture of child development, we cannot do it justice in detail. How then can parents attain the knowledge which acts like a guide in various fields? Some parents come to the school with some knowledge. This may have been obtained through literature, for example, from the kindergarten or the children’s doctor who recommended the choice of school. The first years of the child might have demanded a high degree of educational guidance from the parents. Kindergartens and schools regularly arrange parents’ evenings at the center of which are featured questions of human development. However, they address primarily the age group at hand.

Parents can gain more insight through parents' evenings, lectures and so-called pedagogical weekends. Especially helpful is practice in the artistic and practical fields; this will build experience in one's own body and self. Continuous seminars for parents have proved most fruitful. They can become opportunities for a lively exchange of thoughts and experiences, following informative introductory talks. Here it is important and beneficial if parents of different age groups of children contribute. What is already an experienced past for one becomes an aspect of the future for the other—and so a comprehensive view of the whole "Pedagogical Province" (Goethe) unfolds.

In this way, a good cooperation of home and school education is promoted, and both sides toe the same line for the well-being of the child. It is so hard for a child if they contradict one another. Yet if agreement exists out of insight, a child can be helped in astonishing ways.

Moreover, every class needs the inner and outer accompaniment of the parents. Mutual help in families is often necessary. If, for example, conflicts arise between children or with a teacher, these can only be settled through mutual understanding and trust. Further, it is important for the forming of a class community that parents help with the various events. Points of contact will arise between school and home, for example, in the question: how can we celebrate a young child's birthday or later a party? These are again only details taken from a large complex of life.

Beyond these examples there are tasks and problems of the school as a whole. They can have a more internal character, or they may have been caused by social or school, political changes. Apart from the Board and teachers' meeting, the parent-teacher council also concerns itself with these issues. Parents' representatives commit themselves to work with this council for a longer period. The questions here can include the "free Saturday," the number of years up to the Abitur (national test given in Germany at the conclusion of

high school), the change in the majority age with all its consequences, and also criticism of the running of the school. Here, too, solutions can be found only through practice rooted in the understanding of the *Study of Man* by Rudolf Steiner and his comprehensive picture of the art of education.

The radius of tasks can extend beyond the single school; special committees of parents' representatives, teachers, and specialists can concern themselves with situations in the federal states (the bearers of cultural sovereignty) within the Federal Republic and on an international level. These are mainly committees of the Federation of Independent Waldorf schools.

The educational concerns—rooted in the spiritual life—grow ever more strongly into the legal and economic life. With the latter, this happens mainly in single schools, as each one is economically independent. Naturally, negotiations and assistance among schools take place as well.

Although this representation does not claim to be complete in any way and, to the contrary, is to be understood rather as exemplary, it may yet transmit an impression of the manifold possibilities of cooperation in the realization of the being of a school.

Yet where must the College of Teachers carry out its work within an internal framework? Advised and supported by parents, it must ultimately make decisions alone.

In the case of a single teacher, this concerns mainly the methodical treatment of subjects and his didactic ability, both with roots in the study of man. He has to carry the full responsibility for everything that happens in the lesson and lesson-connected events.

For the whole teachers' meeting, too, there are initially the methodical didactic questions which have to be dealt with: further training of teaching staff; building up of the school year; planning, forming, taking account of past school work, of festivals and celebrations. Then there is the perception of individual pupils, groups of pupils, classes and

possible particularities of age groups, their needs and their achievements, plus the changing forms in the educational concept of the school, timetables and much more.

Furthermore, there are questions of proper human relations, in fact legal questions as dealt with in the College of Teachers. These include distribution of teaching mandates, pupil admission, appointment and dismissal of teaching staff by the Board as employer, temporary relief of teachers, and so on.

Lastly, there are also economic-technical questions, mostly, of course, which have to be decided by the College, such as the choice of teaching material, choice of furniture, or shaping of a school stage. Although the College of Teachers must have the ultimate authority for making such decisions, this does not exclude earlier consultations with parents wherever sensible.

If areas of competence can be clarified through knowledge of the school structure, it will help to avoid disappointments. These originate in feelings which can be raised into consciousness. In their feelings teachers may experience parents' will to act as attempted intrusion. On the other hand, parents may believe that teachers take on and defend positions of power. For neither feeling is there any reason. As in all human relationships, a decisive part is played by the way people deal with each other. A person who endeavors to work on him/herself and to overcome personal ambitions in order to serve an objective course can have quite a different effect than someone motivated in the depth of his soul by ambition, desire for power or the urge to realize his/her own self.

These considerations lead to another theme: what is the essence of the soul-spirit nature which enlivens an organism? The ultimate task is inner training of the individual human being who works in a larger organism, be he a teacher or parent. To enter into those questions would—as indicated in the opening chapter—exceed the task set in this publication.

SOCIAL AND NATURAL ORGANISMS: HOW THEY CORRESPOND TO EACH OTHER

As Rudolf Steiner compares the social organism with the natural organism of man, there must exist a relation between the three systems of each. It is immediately evident that the rights sphere corresponds with the rhythmic system. The careful weighing up of points of view which speak for or against an opinion corresponds to the same to and fro swinging that pulsates in our blood and breathing system. The regulating and ordering guidance of people in social life is of the same health-giving force as the one working in our central and rhythmical bodily system. Both systems intercept extreme situations again and again and have a harmonizing and health-giving effect.

It is more difficult to pair the other two systems with one another. To associate the economic life with the metabolic system seems obvious, as in both of them raw materials are refined. So it is with the spiritual life and the head system. If we look at the functional cooperation of the systems in the social and natural organism, other laws move to the foreground. While the working of organs in the metabolism begins with the chewing up and dissolution of the natural substances taken in, it leads on to a metamorphosis of the substances and to the building up and sustaining of the whole organism. Although consumed substances are secreted and thrust off, the essential of the digestion is surely that the substances are not actually used up but are integrated into the whole organism. The forces active in the living organ-

ism continually raise the substances out of matter, out of the realm of physics and chemistry, into that of biological, or etheric forces; like the blossoms of the sea lily, they reach out of the lake of substances. Only at the organism's death do the substances succumb again to gravity, to the laws of physics and chemistry, until they are dissolved gradually in the metabolic process of the whole earth.

If in economic life, in industry, earthly substances are separated from their physical connection in order to be made into commercial goods, then the etheric forces play a role only in the food products. With other goods predominantly their raw material characteristics are decisive when natural substances are brought into the economic circulation and made into goods. During their manufacture the reduction and refining process continues with the formation of waste (shavings, scoriae, etc.), until finally only the consumer goods are left (which are intended for consumption). In manufacturing energy is used and other substances too. The concept of the grade of efficiency stands above all manufacturing processes as an infallible sign of this decline and consumption. This can vary in strength yet it is always smaller than One. There has always got to be "invested" more than can be gained afterwards. The fact that values can be increased in spite of the constant loss of substance and energy is solely due to spiritual forces which flow incessantly into the economic processes. They come in the form of capacities, knowledge, imagination and human labor (which, of course, is no commodity!).

The declining process on the substance side in the economic life—we should really call it the process of exploitation—has the tendency to overflow and to reach out into advertising. Also, our language is declining; it is split up and put together into meaningless word formations which are not sentences any more. Here are a few examples from supplements of a newspaper from one single day:

Sweets (candy) as colordots—sweets are becoming a sluggish catch of glance through the new trendy colors.

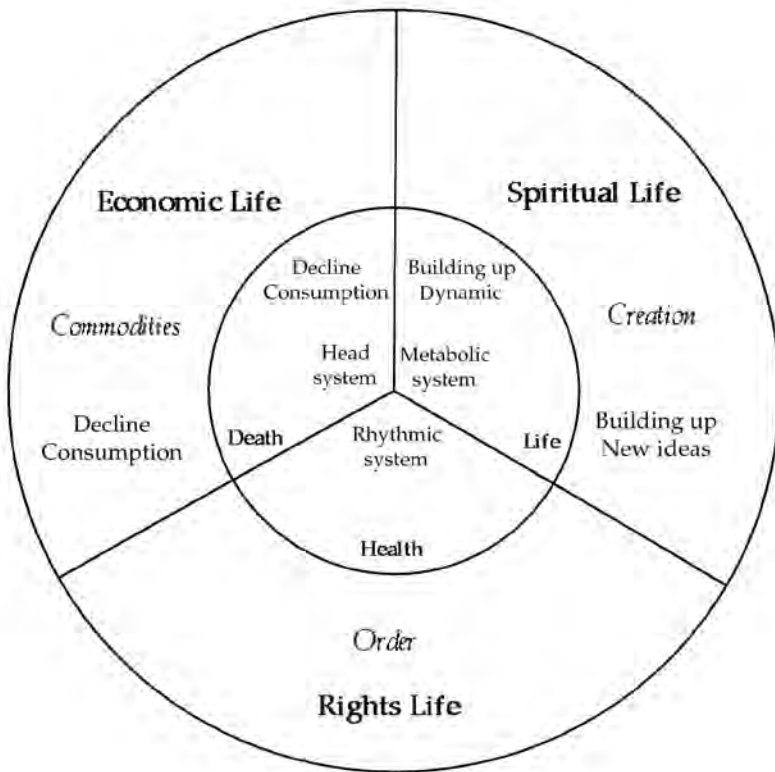
What do the stars tell us? Who knows what anyway? Only one thing is certain, laundry is the constellation look—a really heavenly gift

Inline skate in trendy street—optic Doc Vashon, etc.

We meet such examples daily innumerable times, where a spiritual impulse is missing, and be it ever so modest, people live off the substance, hack it and “build up” “slackly” any talk which is entirely insignificant. With color and tone they proceed similarly until usages of the economic life dominate even the promotion of art. Economic life shows decline and destruction on the substance side. Seen from the substance side it needs subsidizing, and in that way it is exactly the opposite of the metabolic system in the natural organism.

However, subsidized “business” also exists in the natural organism: it is the nerve-sense system. It is not life that rules here but decline. If “godfather death” stands at the head of an ill person, he or she will recover as it is told in the Grimms’ fairy tale of “Godfather Death.” Here death belongs rightly. In order that nerves and senses can work properly, they have to be nourished by the metabolic system, just as in the social organism the economic life can exist only if a constant stream of extra-terrestrial energy continuously enlivens it. Physically, it is the solar energy, without which the earth would be deeply frozen and entirely without life after three weeks at the most. In the soul-spirit sense they are the forces of the spiritual life, without which the economic life can only live off the substance and will collapse after one or two generations.

So we have the glimpse of a correspondence of the three systems of the social organism (outside) with the natural organism (inside).



SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES TO THE ASSOCIATIONS

The economic organization will assist the formation of Associations among people who from their calling, or as consumers, have the same interests or similar requirements. And this network of Associations, working together, will build up the whole fabric of industrial economy. The economic organization will grow up on an associative basis and out of the links between the Associations. The work of the Associations will be purely economic in character and be supported from a basis of “rights” provided by the rights-organization.

– Rudolf Steiner,
The Threefold Social Order

It is still the economic advantage that is the basis or stimulus for work which prevails in plain civil thinking; the egotism of the individual is directed towards economic values. Conversely, all economic processes are thereby seen from the point of view of advantage, not of necessity.

Rudolf Steiner speaks of a different motivation for the practicing of individual capacities. This motivation must be grounded in a social understanding emanating from a healthy spiritual life (*Threefold Social Order*). It is worth thinking thoroughly about this concept of social understanding. Its content is more than “altruism.” Whoever has social understanding stands above egotism and altruism; he understands both attitudes, knows that both are necessary and can, therefore, conciliate between the two in a concrete case. Such conciliations

are, thus, more than compromise. While the latter represents more or less the arithmetic mean between two points of view, a social understanding embraces the vast environment of the social organism in its concerns and decisions. Such “social understanding” must be the fundamental attitude on which the work of the associations builds.

To this inner condition, outer ones must be added:

1) The separation of land from development speculation, that is, from private ownership.

This must not happen in the communist way, wherein the political system would take over the administration. Rather, the land should be given to capable individuals who would manage it as if it were their own. But inheritance is not possible; the successor must be a capable person.

The same must hold good for businesses. The most efficient people must run them as if they were the owners.

2) Money reform.

Money represents goods which can be bought with it. All goods have the characteristic of aging and losing value. Therefore, it is not only necessary but also absolutely sensible that money succumb to a certain aging process—yet a guided one. In this way inflation can be counteracted, which is nothing else than the result of the fact that it is believed that money could forever increase through interest.

This may arise, however, with a personal credit which is offered to a capable man or woman, who will capitalize it. Everyone will agree with this. But it is equally understandable that not all monies can constantly produce profits. An example is through bad management of a small business, and likewise through wrong procedures in the political economy of a country or even world-wide. There will always occur “lean years,” even without human failure, and the capital owner must not sneak away from their repercussions.

3) The transition from private property to general property is regulated legally for spiritual achievements.

The spiritual achievement which a person has accomplished may be as great as can be. After a certain time it becomes general property; the copyright and the patent expire, a composition might become a "folk song." One can only fight over the duration of the protecting rights, as the correctness of their time limits is controversial.

What holds good for the spiritual achievements in art and science must also apply to the economy. Capital generated here must also become community-owned after a certain time. Should it remain personal possession and left to the heirs, who simply use it and whose personal achievements represent at best the administering of the wealth, then, though it may be personally pleasant for them, in the social connection it is not a healthy process, but a rotting process.

It is easy to understand that such outer changes will meet with bitter and decisive opposition from all those who would be economically disadvantaged by them. Therefore, it is most essential that social understanding be developed and practiced and cultivated:

Strong in the freedom of the spiritual life, a man's education and schooling will send him forth equipped with impulses that will lead him, thanks to this social sense, to realize the bent of his personal abilities.

– Rudolf Steiner,
The Threefold Social Order

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