



Looking to Europe from the West

Documenting latent possibilities

chb / 23 October 2023

Together with Lorene Allen, I recently undertook a ‘tour’ of the USA, visiting Ann Arbor, MI, Fayetteville AR, Santa Fe NM, Portland OR, Sacramento CA and Harlemville NY.¹ The tour began with a special event, held within the *Telling a Different Story* meeting of the Economics Conference² at Rudolf Steiner House in Ann Arbor, 21-24 September. Alongside the existing EC Fund account within the ASA, we inaugurated a new group or branch account for the Economics Group, which could serve as a model for other groups and activities (see Appendix 2: Conditions of having an account within the Anthroposophical Society in America). The account was designed and arranged with Eddie Lederman, the Director of Finance, and Mary Adams, General Secretary designate,³ as witness. Several members of the Economics Group were present and the moment was marked by a brief ceremony with 12 + 1 candles and the reciting of the entrepreneur’s prayer ‘Christian Rosenkreutz, Protect us’.

Our visit to Santa Fe coincided with the closure of the Santa Fe Waldorf School and a touch-base with Micky Leach and her husband, Eric. This was unplanned but provided a moment to reflect on the ongoing challenge to find a way to fund Waldorf education other than as private or charter schools.



¹ See Appendix 1: The Seminars’ Rubrics.

² Although a stand-alone event, its material and focus provide the details of the overall background for such endeavours in the USA today (see <http://associative-financial-literacy.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Telling-a-Different-Story.pdf>).

³ I am adhering to ‘General Secretary’ because (a) the current documentation and habit life uses that expression, and (b) I am dubious about the proposed use of Country representative instead because I think that term flirts too closely with democracy and politics, especially in the USA. I think it would be better to research the roles and task of the General Secretary and find a word that better reflects those.

From Santa Fe, we flew up to Portland, close to where Walt Whitman said,

Facing west from California's shores,
Inquiring, tireless, seeking what is yet unfound,
I, a child, very old, over waves, towards the house of maternity,
the land of migrations, look afar,
Look off the shores of my Western sea, the circle almost circled;
For starting westward from Hindustan, from the vales of Kashmere,
From Asia, from the north, from the God, the sage, and the hero,
From the south, from the flowery peninsulas and the Spice Islands,
Long having wander'd since, round the earth having wander'd,
Now I face home again, very pleas'd and joyous,
(But where is what I started for so long ago?
And why is it yet unfound?)

This report replicates themes shared initially with members of the Portland Branch. Illustrated in the opening main image, many were reiterations of those shared elsewhere and previously – in Quito, Sao Paulo and various places in the USA: Chicago, Great Lakes, Pasadena. This material is available on the *hope.springs.eternal* website and so is not replicated here.⁴ instead, the focus is on ideas that arose in response at the end of the Portland gathering. For those participants they were paused, but for me they continued especially at the next stop in Sacramento with members of the Faust Branch present. This is replicated below, but prior I would like to share two poems read out at the second Sacramento session. Dating from Montreal in August 2004, I was reminded of the first by my host, Keiko Papic; the second⁵ was written in one write on the day and echoes the optimistic mood I am encountering more and more when these kind of clarifications are brought about the Society and its finances.



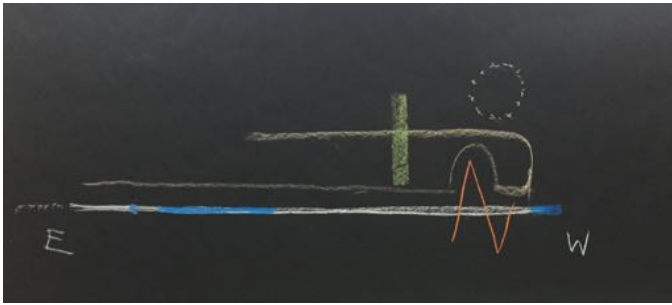
To the air now, Oh, Dove
'Tis now or never
Lest the wellsprings of freedom
Are tainted forever
Dark night is descending
'Til envelope us all
Unless thou ascending
Free us from our thrall.



May the sun that now glows	A subtle correction
On those who now know	To his navigation
Reveal what it shows	Now lost in translation
For those nursing woes	If discovered afresh
From turnings wrong made	We can unknit the mesh
That led into shade	That entraps our intents
Dead end, so it seems	In what was not meant
The sad death of dreams	And frees us in time
And yet maybe not	To renew now our climb
We need a new plot	To the heights he expected
A brand new direction	When too early he left us.

⁴ See <http://www.hopespringseternal.world/commentaries/> Especially, 10, 12, 14.

⁵ The first line is a reference to an image from Rudolf Steiner (see beside poem) before the start of the Christmas Conference on 25 December 1923 that Keiko had replicated and that accompanied my blackboard presentation. It was illustrated by Henni Geck, and 'reappeared' unannounced on the wall of the Wagner studio at the following seminar in Harlemlville.



From Sacramento, we headed east to Harlemville, beginning our journey back from the wild, willed West, over the Rockies and through the ‘Wall of Transformation’, built of the 1886 ruling on corporations, Milton Friedman’s views on profit maximization, the Pacific northwest ‘new philanthropy’ phenomenon of Starbucks, Nike, etc., the more recent Uber-style algorithm systems, Silicon Valley, endemic day trading, the ‘revolving door’ between Wall Street and Washington, the

Federal Reserve and modern monetary policy.⁶ And so returning to Europe with the glad tiding that we are learning how to ‘stop denying the spirit in economic life’, to paraphrase Rudolf Steiner, by affirming the spirit through and out of modern finance and accounting. ‘Money as bookkeeping’ given concrete expression in the way the finances of the Anthroposophical Society itself can be conceived and conducted.

ASA What if a branch looked like this?

Inevitably cryptic on first reading, the following concept is shared in a ‘what if?’ mood. What if a branch of the Anthroposophical Society, whether linked directly to the Goetheanum or belonging to a Country Society, were conceived as follows?

The Anthroposophical Society in America in Harlemville

Part of the refounded Anthroposophical Society, host to the School of Spiritual Science and heart of the anthroposophical movement in the Harlemville area.

Carried by the ‘XYZ’ Association, a 501(c)(3), whose accounts match the chart of accounts⁷ used by the Circle of Treasurers, and whose finances are conducted mindful of the Treasurers’ Guidelines.⁸

In this way and by these means, any disconnect between members of the Anthroposophical Society anywhere in the world and the Society’s ‘centre’ at the Goetheanum in Switzerland can be overcome. Likewise, when we understand the Goetheanum not as a building in a distant place, but as wherever a member of the Anthroposophical Society in his or her capacity as also a member of the School of Spiritual Science, represents

anthroposophy through his or her practical and professional activity (as a teacher, farmer, etc.) and, whether in an overtly ‘anthroposophical’ setting or in society at large.⁹



This image accompanied the development of this concept. The sister organisation (the underneath crescent) is run by ‘representants’, who represent anthroposophy through the way they conduct their organisation in service to the Anthroposophical Society.

⁶ See ‘The American Experience (of Money)’, Christopher Houghton Budd in <http://associative-financial-literacy.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Telling-a-Different-Story.pdf>

⁷ See Appendix 3: Chart of Accounts.

⁸ See Appendix 4: Treasurers’ Guidelines.

⁹ That is to say, as a ‘representant’. See

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

paid), yet the president, secretary and treasurer are also described as officers. Nor is it clear how the leadership team is constituted. Nor, to me, does it seem to be the proper place of leadership, which belongs with the Board. Officers should no more lead a board than tails should wag their dogs.

The notion of regions also strikes me as odd; more linked to time zones than to the disposition of the branches as centres or areas where anthroposophy is active. Likewise, the Council of Anthroposophical Organisations (CAO) seems to be shadowing what ought to be ‘anthroposophical institutions’, here meaning organisations which are the responsibility of ‘representants’ whose public, anthroposophically-based institutions are the clothing or vehicles of.

I would suggest instead that the Board be reconceived as shown here. Mirroring Rudolf Steiner’s idea of an extended Vorstand,¹⁰ the Board would then meet regularly *in colloquium* with representatives of the ASA’s branches (which have a more formal and spiritual ‘status’ than groups), as also with those who carry the work of the School of Spiritual Science in the USA (in whatever way that is conceived and conducted).

Its governance would then become a true heart for the ASA, as would the ASA for the overall movement in the USA – reaching ‘up’ into the spirituality of the anthroposophical movement as a whole via the interweaving activity of the General Secretary, and ‘down’ into the Balance Sheet, provided by the Treasurer, but the signing of which is the joint and several responsibility of every board member (albeit ‘fronted’ by a president).



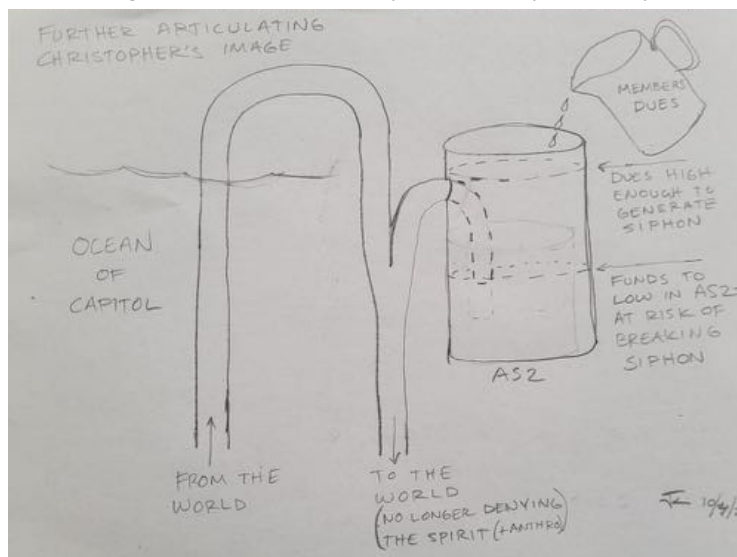
Siphon Finance

All the seminars had the format of a presentation and follow-on workshops, a key part of which was detailed consideration of the finance and bookkeeping of a branch. In *Rudolf Steiner, Financial Genius*¹¹ and in various finance and treasurer meetings, I have used the idea of siphon finance,¹² using the stream of funding from members’ fees or contributions¹³ to draw funding from the world at large into the Anthroposophical Society for the work of the School of Spiritual Science. I always prefaced this by mentioning that I left school early and so may be ‘rusty’ when it comes to physics. Once, when I drew the smaller pipe entering the larger one at a right angle, a

colleague corrected my sketch, pointing out that it ought to be at a slant.

In Portland, Timothy Kennedy likewise amended my drawing and then sent the following more detailed sketch.¹⁴ If read in link with *Rudolf Steiner, Financial Genius* and subject to the following three explanatory comments, the sketch speaks for itself.

1. ‘AS2’ refers to the Refounded Anthroposophical Society.



¹⁰ In two instances at the 1923 Christmas Conference, Rudolf Steiner describes how the Vorstand enlarges itself. Firstly, the General Secretaries and other officials of National Societies are “advisory members” of the Vorstand, meaning equal members of the Vorstand when in Dornach (64). The General Secretaries are an externally supporting Vorstand, exactly equal to the central Vorstand (at Dornach) (115). Secondly, the leaders of the sections are “advisors” to the Vorstand (60). CW 260.

¹¹ https://economics.goetheanum.org/fileadmin/economics/Articles_and_Papers/EC_Paper_2021_CHB_Hibernia_Currency.pdf (see p.3.)

¹² The idea is behind the distinction made in the Chart of Accounts between Society and School, see Appendices 3 and 4.

¹³ con-tribution: the shared voluntary provision of finance by a populace, instead of the tribute imposed by a lord or king.

¹⁴ We continue to be in touch about this.

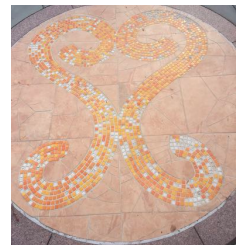
2. Timothy notes the importance of the fees being a permanent flow and of a certain amount if the siphon is to work.

3. I would add that, while the flow of capital will originate in the world at large (the as yet 'ungen' funds in the financial markets), it will flow to where the work of members of the School of Spiritual Science (representants) are active in a public and authentically spiritually scientific way.

I hope that in the future there can be a working conference of all branch treasurers together with the next treasurer, Director of Finance and General Secretary, to research and elaborate this work further. As a possible prompt, Gayle Davis from the Faust Branch said her inspirations in finance were the Last Supper and Melchizedek.



At the end of my trip, I came across this image in Portsmouth, NH, commemorating African souls who lie buried there.



Addendum



Three other themes were part of this tour. One was the appearance of Joan of Arc in Portland.

A second was the background to finance, beginning in Genesis (!) with the research of Virginia Sease and Manfred Schmidt-Brabant in their book, *Paths of the Christian Mysteries – From Compostela to the New World* (Temple Lodge, London 2003).

A third, more personal, if I may, was my own moon node story. In Sacramento, Keiko reminded me that my last visit there, to do a workshop on the Guardian, Michael and Christ (!) was one moon node earlier. And in Connecticut, Lorene and I sought out the boat that brought me to the USA for the first time in 1967. I boarded that boat

exactly at my first moon node and it was exactly three moon nodes since I left her. Not quite true: in April 1969, I went back for a short visit in the Bahamas, where in an Outer Islands yacht club I received my mission to metamorphose capitalism.



I also called in on Bretton Woods (also a moon node away) to commune with whatever took place there in 1944 and to seek guidance for the way forward with my current MSS on Hayek, Keynes and Steiner.

Appendix 1: The Seminars' Rubrics

	100 years on. What shape are we in? Reaffirming the Anthroposophical Society <i>29 September – 1 October 2023</i>		
	A workshop with Christopher Houghton Budd* Hosted by the Portland Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in America Sponsored by the Economics Group of the Anthroposophical Society in America		
	Fly all the way to Dornach, or spend the weekend in Portland! Not everyone can afford the time and expense of going to Dornach. Plus, one hundred years ago in the run up to Christmas, Rudolf Steiner encouraged the formation of country societies out of which the General Society was born. As prompted by Peter Selg, this is the centenary event we should first be celebrating. Not only celebrating, but reiterating, starting over in terms of current realities, especially as regards the outer skin of karma – our finances.		
	Friday 29th	Saturday 30th	Sunday 1st
09:30	* Economic and monetary historian, participant in the Circle of Treasurers, board member of the Goetheanum Fund <i>Worldwide</i> .	The Anthroposophical Society and the School of Spiritual Science Their nature and purpose	Financing 'the Goetheanum' <i>Rebooting our finances</i>
10:30		Pause	Pause
11:00		Continued.	2023 – 2223 Will we drive our denial of spirit out of economic life?
12:30		Pause	Pause
14:00		Country Groups and the Anthroposophical Society in America	
15:30		Pause	
16:00	Welcome Introductions and Preview	The Wild, Willed West! What, where and why is that?	
17:30	Supper	Supper	
19:00	1923 – 2023 The first one hundred years Two bodies that a third may be	!!! Rudolf Steiner's Financial Genius and Milton Friedman's 'own lights' theory	

Back to Back

Folk Souls as the 'Own Light' of a People

An enquiry into the historical role of Country Groups of the Anthroposophical Society

1923 marks a double centenary. The founding of autonomous country societies (see Peter Selg, etc.) and the need for nations to find a ground other than economic prowess or some kind of ideology or spiritual identity if a one-world economy and a threefold society were to come about. Now, 100 years later, do we have a second chance to look at this situation which, in the world at large has become stuck. Can the Anthroposophical Society offer some first movement in this regard – relevant both to its own development and that of humanity as a whole?

Hosted by the Berkshire-Tacomic Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in America

Sponsored by the Economics Group of the Anthroposophical Society in America

Appendix 2: Conditions of having an account within the Anthroposophical Society in America
(in the case of the Economics Group)

1. The Group will appoint a member of the ASA – Stephen Vallus – as the person responsible for ensuring the following conditions are met at all times and to be the point of approval of disbursements, coding, release of restrictions and other mandated compliance.
2. Its activity must be on-going, not a one-off event.
3. It will maintain connection with the ASA (e.g. send reports of events, list events on ASA website, etc.)
4. The Group undertakes to ensure its activities are positively funded: i.e. it is responsible for funding its work and does not use or rely on the Society's funds.
5. The account opens with and maintains a 'float' of USD 5,000 to provide a buffer for liquidity.
6. Amounts must not be trivial.
7. Transactions will be effected for a fee to be determined by ASA.
8. The account will be managed so as to remain always positive.
9. The group will abide by conventional accounting principles and practices.
10. In all its dealings, the Group will remain compliant with the legal, tax and other regulations that the ASA – in its capacity as a 501(c)(3) – is required to comply with and will not contradict or contravene those constraints.

Dated: 23 September 2023

Signed:

Lorene Allen

Daniel Osmer

Meg Freeling

Patrick O'Meara

Kim Chotzen

Stephen Vallus

Susan Gravelle

Mary Adams (General Secretary Elect)

Appendix 3: Chart of Accounts for Branches of the Anthroposophical Society in America

INCOME	EXPENSES
SOCIETY	SOCIETY
Dues / Contributions	General
from direct members	Events, Lectures and Workshops
from branches	Internal Travel
- transferred to GAS	Foreign Travel
Sub-total	TE Fund
	Office costs
AGM	Rents and Premises costs
AGM	Social costs
- AGM costs	Council Costs
Sub-total	Honoraria & Remuneration
	Depreciation
Journal, Website, Library	Taxes
Subscriptions Journal	Website
Subscriptions Website	Journal, Library
Subscriptions Library	Telephone and Utilities
Sub-total	Publicity
	Bank charges, interest, etc.
General	Professional Fees
Events, Lectures and Workshops	Insurance
Book sales	Book Purchases
Rent received	Postage
Interest, Dividends, etc. received	Accounting
Other	Other
Sub-total	
Total Society Income	Total Society Expenses
SCHOOL	SCHOOL
Events, Lectures and Workshops	General Secretaries
From non-Anthroposophical sources	Class Holding
From anthroposophical institutions*	School & Section meetings
Free gifts*	<i>Projects and Initiatives</i>
Legacies*	Other
School & Section meetings	
<i>Projects, Initiatives and Research</i>	
Other	
Total School Income	Total School Expenses
* Not used for insufficient membership income.	
Total Income	Total Expenses

Appendix 4: Guidelines as basis of collaboration between the General Anthroposophical Society and the Country Societies

Treasurers: Justus Wittich (Goetheanum), Pim Blomaard (Netherlands), Klaus Bohne (Great Britain), Marc Brosius (France), Silke Carter (New Zealand), Marc Desales (Switzerland), Dwight Ebaugh (United States of America), Sergio Andres Gaiti (Italy), Daniel Hakanson (Denmark), Christopher Houghton Budd (Ireland), Erland Kornfeld (Sweden), Yrjö Maenpää (Finland), Grant Ovenstone (South Africa), Julian Schily (Germany), Elizabeth Wirsching (Norway), Roger Wynants (Belgium)

Assistants: Oliver Conradt (Goetheanum), Alexander Thiersch (Germany).¹⁵

London, 11 November 2018, amended in Dornach by the Conference of the Councils and Treasurers of the country societies on 11 April 2019.

1. The councils of the country societies (hereafter ‘councils’) confirm that, since membership of the Society entails a contribution from each member, membership dues are not free donations.¹⁶
2. The councils will strive for a common awareness of our worldwide financial flows.
3. The councils will collectively contribute to a travel equalisation fund set up to enable *every* treasurer to meet once yearly.
4. The councils will not condition what should be done at the Goetheanum, or withhold membership dues because they disagree with what is happening at the Goetheanum or consider their own needs more important.
5. The councils aim to transfer to the General Society a yearly minimum of CHF 90¹⁷ per member or a minimum 50% of the membership dues income in their country.
6. The councils collectively aim to underwrite the needs of the General Society as identified by the Vorstand.
7. The councils agree that it is not for the Sections to find alone the funds needed to carry out their work.
8. The councils will aim to include infrastructure when presenting the financing needs of the Sections.¹⁸
9. On receiving legacies, the councils will consider sharing these funds with the General Society and/or other country societies.

¹⁵ Those present represented about 80% of the members if one takes 43,000 as actual ‘live’ membership base.

¹⁶ In the spirit of Statute 12 (“Membership dues shall be fixed by the individual groups; each group shall, however, submit 15 Swiss Francs for each of its members to the central leadership of the Society at the Goetheanum”), the amount individual members contribute is left open, but the amount due per member by a country society or group to the General Society is an obligation.

¹⁷ CHF 90 is the 1923 amount of CHF 15 updated per Swiss National Bank computations.

¹⁸ This accords with the role of the Society as the earthly juridical body of the School.