

Annual Meeting of the Economics Conference Michaelmas 2011

The annual meeting of the Economics Conference of the Goetheanum, part of the Section for Social Sciences, took place with 19 participants from New Zealand, South Africa, Brazil, the USA, Romania, Netherlands, Germany, Great Britain and Switzerland. The gathering was again held at L'Aubier, Neuchatel, Switzerland, this time in the context of celebrations marking 100 years since Rudolf Steiner gave the lectures in Neuchâtel as a consequence of the founding at that time of the Christian Rosenkreuz Branch. It was this that also gave this year's theme its cue: Rosicrucian Aspects of Economic Life.

The meeting was prompted by a consideration of the international situation and the failure – in the view of many economists – the failure of their intellectual foundation: the 'efficient market hypothesis', a fact reflected in the founding in May 2011 of the 'World Economics Association'¹ to rescue or restore the reputation of the economics profession. Remarkably, there are already 6,000 members.

The Rosicrucian path was characterised as being the ground for the development of the New Mysteries. It is here that the spiritual world is found through the relationship the I has to the field of its manifold senses; a way of understanding that leads step-by-step to enlarged perception. The contents of the 12th and 13th First Class Lessons of the School of Spiritual Science added valuable insights to these considerations.

Reviewing its three important preparatory steps in the 13th, 15th and 17th centuries, the path of humanity's greatest martyr was characterised "through his way of acting" in relation to "the great difficulties truth has to go through".² This – standing for the truth in one's work – is surely part of the essence of the Rosicrucian path. How, therefore, can such authenticity appear in today's economy life, as regards to both theory and practice?

Next, came a consideration of the fourth step, the founding on earth of the New Mysteries at and through the Christmas Conference in 1923. There, at three moments only, Rudolf Steiner spoke of the economic basis of the newly founded organism of the worldwide Anthroposophical Movement. First, the freely-couched but nevertheless stringent formulation of Statute 12 with its free-but-responsible approach to membership dues (each national society owes the General Society a part of the General Society's budget pro rata the number of members in its country; but how it meets that amount is up to it). Then the remarkable way he speaks of the enormous funding necessary for research (50-75 million Swiss francs *at that time!*). Finally, the question of founding a future organization for the many people who value the fruits of anthroposophy, but have no need to become members of the Anthroposophical Society.

Towards the end of the meeting 'Project 2023' was described in a way that resonated with the participants. We have 12 years slowly but surely to bring to life the seeds quietly sown in 1923 in order to reach a healthily financed worldwide organism for the Anthroposophical Movement grounded in the Goetheanum. In this way – homeopathically, as it were – the Anthroposophical Movement could also contribute to the healing of the world economy.

Montezillon, October, 2011 / Marc Desaulles

¹ www.worldeconomicsassociation.org

² Rudolf Steiner, 17 June 1912, Hamburg (GA130)