

The Three-Membered Organization
of the Social Organism
(The Threefold Social Order)
In the Context of the 21st Century and America
and its Individual and Group Realization

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This preview includes:

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- Introductions
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Preface

In developing this book together, we both have come to a deeper understanding of Steiner’s body of work on ‘the social organism’ through our direct study of his books and articles on the subject. Besides illuminating the richness and complexity of Steiner’s concepts themselves, our study has also revealed the necessity of striving for clarity in relation to the concepts he originally used, a clarity born out of seeking to adhere closely to the German. We find that only then is it possible to begin to grapple with interpreting them with sufficient success, to apply them.

One of the first things to note is that while the term, ‘the social order,’ has been widely adopted in our English translations and writings about the topic (it was coined by early translators), Steiner wrote and spoke of it most often as “the social *organism*” – the living, evolving organization of human social relations – and much less often as an ‘order’ (“Ordnung” in German). As an ‘organism,’ the social order is *not* a fixed or arbitrary ordering of our affairs as yet another program to be imposed upon our common social life. In this book we will grapple again and again with how to express this livingness adequately.

Steiner called this organism, “die Dreigliederung des sozialen Organismus.” Our sense is that the translation of this as ‘the threefold social order’ is not adequate. To say that something is ‘threefold’ firstly summons an image of a simple triplicate of something, a multiplication perhaps of a single attribute or thing, rather than the image of a living structuring of human social activity according to its three members, each bearing its own characteristics. The German would translate more literally as “the three-membered organization/structuring of the social organism.” ‘Glieder’ means a member, limb; ‘Gliederung’ means an arrangement of the members, their organization, their structuring.)

Those who are acquainted with Steiner’s work on the subject of the social organism will notice that we are not using the term ‘sphere’ in reference to these three members of our social life. This book moves away from the term ‘sphere’ and instead uses the term ‘domain’ (‘realm’ would also work) except when ‘sphere’ appears in quoted material. There are three reasons for this. First, the Collins Dictionary defines ‘sphere’ (as used in this context) as its second usage: “A sphere of activity or interest is a particular area of activity or interest.”¹ Contrast this with the Collins Dictionary definition of ‘domain’: “A domain is a particular field of thought, activity, or interest, especially one over which someone [or *something* – as we shall see in this book] has control, influence, or rights.”² This definition of ‘domain,’ at least from the perspective of the Collins Dictionary, is more encompassing of the concepts that pertain to what manifests as rights, economic cycles, and culture within the social organism. Second, the German noun that Steiner used is, “Gebiet.” This word translates more directly to the word, ‘domain’ (1910 dictionary). The verb form to which ‘Gebiet’ is related is ‘gebieten’ – to order, command, dictate, rule over, govern, control. As an image, one could say that in the social life *a domain is characterized by that which holds sway within it*. Thirdly, when we imagine a sphere, we usually imagine a three-dimensional object with a clearly defined boundary relative to a physical center. By contrast, the term, ‘domain,’ generates an imagination that is more nebulous, possessing the character of interacting with and having its own particular influence within other ‘domains.’

¹ <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/sphere>

² <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/domain>

With regard to interpreting, it is important, for instance, not to construe concepts such as ‘free disposition’ (freie Verfügung) to mean ‘free access.’ In Chapter 3 of GA 23, Steiner wrote (F. T. Smith translation, Steiner’s italics): “At this present stage, a fertile activation of individual abilities *cannot* be introduced into the economic process without free disposition over [freie Verfügung über] capital. If production is to be fruitful, this disposition must be possible....”³ The right disposition of capital is actually one of the core points in GA 23. The verb, “verfügen” is a rich concept. It means to arrange, prescribe, order, decide, decree, ordain. And the verb expression, “verfügen über” means to dispose of, as when we tell someone, ‘I am at your disposal,’ or, ‘at your command.’ This image is more complex than simply making ‘use’ of something (‘benutzen’ in German). In the F. C. Heckel translation, this ‘free disposition over’ capital became ‘free access to’ it. From this striking shift in meaning, it is then an easy step to characterize this free access to capital as ‘free of charge’ – as we find in literature about the three-membered organization (aka ‘threefolding’). This then sets the reader into the mindset of pay-to-play arrangements, where this new arrangement would basically mean no longer having to pay to get capital, that one can freely get it and that it’s free for the asking. But that is not the point. With Steiner’s use of the concept, “free disposition,” and his discussion of it, our thinking is opened to four questions: how can capital – which includes means of production – be used appropriately on behalf of the entire social organism, who is to be granted the right of disposition over it (i.e., the right to have it at their free disposal and command), how is this right of disposition to be determined, and under what conditions is this right of disposition revoked, reassigned and transferred? The three-membered organism very much allows for private ownership and use of property rather than putting all property into the public domain; but this property right is newly-framed, bounded. To this point, Steiner wrote (Kate’s translation):

The rights-state will not have to prevent the formation and management of private ownership of capital as long as individual capabilities remain so connected to the capital base that the management represents a service to the whole of the social organism. And it [the rights-state] will remain a rights-state over against [facing, in contrast with] private property. It will never take private property into its own possession, but instead, at the right point in time will cause it to pass over into the right of disposition [Verfügungsrecht] of a person or group of people who can again develop a relationship to the property that is conditional upon their individual circumstances. Through this, from two completely different starting points it will be possible for the social organism to be served. From the democratic subsoil of the rights-state, which has to do with what affects everyone in the same way, it will be possible to be wakeful, that property rights do not turn into property wrongs. Through this, that this [rights-]state does not manage property itself, but takes care of leading [it] over to individual human capabilities, these capabilities will unfold their fruitful power for the entire social organism. So long as it seems expedient, through such an organization the ownership rights or the disposition over them will be able to persist in the personal element. One can imagine that the representatives of the rights-state will at different times make very different laws about

³ *Towards Social Renewal: Basic Issues of the Social Question*, GA 23, translated by Frank Thomas Smith, London, England, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1977. The online version is under the title, *Basic Issues of the Social Question*, but the text seems to be the same as the 1977 book, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c03.html, about 1/3 into Ch. 3 (p. 98)

the transfer of ownership from one person or group of people to another. In the present, in which a great mistrust of all private property has developed in wide circles, a radical conversion of private property into common property is contemplated. If one were to go far in this way, one would see the possibility of life for the social organism drained thereby.⁴

Correct disposition of capital and individual ability are to be determined by the cultural domain, not the economic domain; and once these are determined the disposition of the capital is considered 'private.' Steiner also went into considerable detail regarding the transfer of capital when deemed necessary to ensure the benefit of the community.

The reader is encouraged to compare the published translations of what Steiner had actually written or said in lectures with what others have later interpreted in relation to given terms, phrases or sentences. This book is no exception! For English readers, consulting different translations is useful; and of course studying the original German text is ideal, if one can do this.

With regard to translation, we are confronted with three things. First, there are words in German that embody concepts that do not readily translate to English. Steiner published his book on the 'social question,' *Die Kernpunkte der Sozialen Frage*, in 1919 (GA 23/CW 23). It was published in English in 1920 as *The Threefold State*, and then in 1923 as *The Threefold Commonwealth*, and in 1966 as *The Threefold Social Order*, and then also as *Basic Issues of the Social Question* (date not stated online), as *Towards Social Renewal: Basic Issues of the Social Question* in 1977, and as *Toward a Threefold Society: Basic Issues of the Social Question* in 2019. **We will simply refer to this book as 'GA 23.'** Seeing these disparities, Kate turns to the large, dense, two-volume 1910 German-English and English-German dictionary (Muret-Sanders, abridged encyclopedic) to better understand the meaning of the words that Steiner used in his early 20th century context. Second, when attempting to convey a certain concept, translators might inject words or phrases, i.e., additional concepts that are not present in the German text. Even the titles of the work in English, *The Threefold Social Order*, or, *Towards Social Renewal*, *Basic Issues of the Social Question*, contrast with the Steiner's original title, *Die Kernpunkte der Sozialen Frage in den Lebensnotwendigkeiten der Gegenwart und Zukunft*, which translates more directly to 'The Core Points of the Social Question in the Necessities of Life of the Present and Future.' To translate the word, 'Kernpunkte,' as, 'Basic Issues,' is to mute the germinal power ('Kern") and significance of the points Steiner aimed to present. 'Basic' is more broadly foundational – 'grundlich' in German – whereas 'Kern' signifies the kernel, the core of the matter. And 'issues' has a vague, diffusing quality, quite unlike the focused quality of the word 'Punkte' – 'points.'

To further illustrate, Steiner used the German noun, 'Empfindung,' a great deal. It translates to 'feeling,' 'sensing,' 'perceiving' – three different meanings, though all of them are acts of human perception. The verb form is, 'empfinden.' Its closeness to the verb, 'finden,' is clear, and so it bears in it the quality of *finding* something by means of feeling-sensing perception. But there is no corresponding word in English that encompasses all three of these rather divergent meanings at once, so translators usually choose only one of them, giving the reader a single word, such as 'feeling' or 'sensing.' However, there is a

⁴ Ibid, GA 23, Smith translation for reference in relation to Kate's translation, about ⅔ into Ch. 3 (pp. 101-102, "The rights-state will not have to prevent....")

noun for just feeling: ‘Gefühl.’ Steiner used this word much less often than he did the nouns, ‘die Empfindung’ or ‘das Empfinden.’ And in particular, in reference to the soul faculties that we typically call, “thinking and feeling,” these are “Denken und Empfinden” in his GA 23 text; i.e., thinking and feeling-sensing-perceiving, not narrowed simply to feeling. And Steiner’s manner of using this noun and its related verb, ‘empfinden’ (to feel-sense-perceive), repeatedly suggests to us that he was urging our development of this faculty of the soul, our *Empfindung*, as a *conscious* activity. In light of this, it is also unfortunate that in the translations provided by Heckel and by Barton, a merely instinctive sense replaces or is added into the meaning of ‘Empfindung.’ Through this, Steiner is construed to advocate instinctive activity, for example in the following translation by F. C. Heckel (the word, ‘sense,’ here is the word, ‘Empfindung,’ in the German):

People must acquire an *instinctive* sense that enables them to distinguish between these two [the rights and economic members] in life. This is essential so that in practice they will be kept as distinct as the work of the lungs is distinct, in the body, from what goes on in the nerves and sensory life.⁵

Here is Smith’s translation, which preserves the *Empfindung*-sensitivity at least in its sensing aspect, as something quite different from instinct:

It is necessary to sense [empfinden] this difference [between the rights system and the economic system] in life in order that, as a consequence of this sensitivity [Empfindung], the economy be separate from the rights member, as in the human natural organism the activity of the lungs in processing the outside air is separate from the processes of the nervous-sensory system.⁶

After reading all of what Steiner wrote about needing to awaken *out of* instinctive social arrangements, Heckel’s addition leads the reader to confusion. What Steiner had to say about this urgently needed awakening culminated in the following (Smith’s translation):

The task of our times is to ... [find], in the primal thoughts, the direction to be taken in order that events be consciously guided. For the time has passed in which humanity can be satisfied with what instinctive guidance is able to bring about.⁷

In his original German, Steiner italicized the word, ‘consciously’: ‘*bewusst.*’ By contrast, to be ‘bewusstlos’ is to be unconscious, instinctive. The book edition of the Smith translation preserves them, and it does not inject ‘instinct’ into the meaning of ‘Empfindung.’

In school, one is to develop toward this ability to transcend what moves in us as mere instinct, in order to achieve the necessary social sensitivity (‘soziale Empfindung’). This is a top priority for the health of the social organism (Kate’s translation):

⁵ *The Threefold Social Order*, GA 23, translated by Frederick C. Heckel, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1966, 1972, https://rsarchive.org/SocialIssues/GA023/English/AP1972/GA023_c02.html, about ⅓ into Ch. 2

⁶ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c02.html, Smith translation, about ⅓ into Ch. 2 (p. 59)

⁷ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c03.html, Smith translation, about 3 pages into Ch. 3, (p. 85)

The anti-social conditions are brought about by the fact that due to their upbringing and education, people enter social life who are not socially sensitive [sozial empfindende]. Socially sensitive people can only emerge from a method of education that is directed and administered by those who are socially sensitive.⁸

Not to belabor the point regarding translations, but it is important. In Steiner's statements concerning "primal thoughts," as referred to in one of the quotes above, the word he used for "primal thoughts" is "Urgedanken" – 'Ur'-thoughts. 'Ur': first, original, primal, archetypal (the original from which other manifestations or expressions are unfolded or are copied); and 'Gedanken': thoughts, conceptions, ideas. Here is one of Steiner's statements (Kate's translation, his italics):

Today, however, it is necessary to see that one can reach a judgment that grows out of the facts in no other way than through going back to the *primal thoughts* that underlie all social institutions.⁹

Several translators have inserted an additional concept into their rendering of the word, 'Urgedanken,' to make it read, "primal creative thought," for example, Heckel's 1966/1972 translation:

Today, however, we need to see that no adequate judgment can be formed without going back to those primal creative thoughts that underlie all social institutions.¹⁰

The injection of 'creative' into this simple concept of primal or original thoughts can lead the English reader astray in the direction of whatever their view is of what 'creative' means. Two paragraphs later Steiner wrote of "the life of the impulses carried by these thoughts in human souls" – the life, "das Leben," of these impulses – not defining them more specifically as creative or shaping.

This book cannot take into account all of Steiner's books, articles, and lectures regarding the three-membered organization. Nor can it take into account all the numerous derived works that others have produced. The primary influence of this book has been GA 23). As Mark Fisher wrote in a 2017 interview: "PhD work bullies one into the idea that you can't say anything about any subject until you've read every possible authority on it."¹¹ While this book does not pretend to be PhD level work, it takes into consideration the difficulty of writing about a subject which has already been covered by a large body of material. Therefore, rather than being a concluding point, this book means to be a renegotiated starting point for further work and discussion. The historical references, issues, and questions presented in this book will hopefully create just such discussions between individuals and groups.

We want to add an important note concerning the use of the word, 'man.' In the German of Steiner we encounter two words which refer to humanity in general. The German word, 'man,' means an unspecified person or unspecified persons of any gender, and it often translates as, 'one'; e.g., 'man

⁸ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_pref4.html, Smith translation for reference in relation to Kate's translation, about 3/7 into the "Preface for the 4th edition, 1920" (p. 14) "The current anti-social state of affairs..."

⁹ GA 23 in the original German, *Die Kernpunkte der sozialen Frage in den Lebensnotwendigkeiten der Gegenwart und der Zukunft*, <http://anthroposophie.byu.edu/schriften/023.pdf>, see 'Urgedanken,' 2 pages into Ch. 3 (p. 54)

¹⁰ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/SocialIssues/GA023/English/AP1972/GA023_c03.html, Heckel translation, 2 pages into Ch. 3

¹¹ <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3051-they-can-be-different-in-the-future-too-mark-fisher-interviewed>

denkt' – 'one thinks,' or, 'somebody thinks,' or, 'people think.' 'Mensch' and its plural, 'Menschen,' both refer to human beings without regard to gender. But in English these have often been translated as, 'man,' or, 'men.' In our time, this would be all right if our word, 'man,' had continued to be a gender-less designation, *as it used to be*. Perhaps we can restore that gender-less meaning and add in *all* genders, too, when we encounter 'man' in the passages in translation that are cited in this book. Think of 'man' as 'Man' with a capital m, and thus indicating the most inclusive designation, encompassing all human beings.

Regarding our footnotes: while many of our footnotes reference the works of Rudolf Steiner, there are also numerous footnotes on current events and other contextually relevant citations. As much as possible, we have attempted to work with online resources as these provide immediate access for further investigation. The reader is encouraged to explore the footnotes so as to supplement their understanding of a particular topic, delve deeper into the topic and even discover counterpoints to the points made in this book. One advantage of the PDF version of this book is that these citations, as Internet links, can be immediately 'clicked on' to open the citation directly in one's browser.

Our process of grappling with the primal thoughts of the three domains and their living workings and interpenetration is certainly ongoing. We welcome readers' questions, comments and ruminations in response, to further the process of grounding these ideas in practice.

Introduction by Marc Clifton

The purpose of this book is to revisit GA 23 in the context of the 21st century and in relation to the political, economic, and cultural changes that have occurred in America over the last century. Since Steiner's publication of GA 23 in 1919, we have seen significant changes with regards to agriculture, science, medicine, education, social reform, warfare, and media (to name some of the major ones.) The Nineteenth Amendment,¹² passed by Congress in 1919 and ratified in 1920, finally gave women in the US the right to vote. The transistor was invented in 1947.¹³ Important civil rights legislation prohibiting discrimination, protecting people with disabilities, and protecting the rights of minorities, was passed in the 1960's.¹⁴ Banking regulations¹⁵ such as the 1980 Monetary Control Act¹⁶ have affected banking and commerce, theoretically for the better. The Internet was "born" on Jan 1, 1983.¹⁷

While legislation and social, economic, and technological advances have been significant, they have, if anything, created an environment that is even more inflexible to change now than in 1919, particularly when one considers international interdependencies in production, distribution and consumption and how technological advancements in communication bring heightened and immediate information of cultural disparities, particularly concerning human dignity. Furthermore, we see inappropriate influences of one domain on another domain – for example, special interest groups in the domain of economics lobbying to influence legislation in the domain of rights.

Making the significant changes outlined in GA 23 will require global change and that global change can only occur if either people willingly call for these changes, or under the duress of a true global crisis, people are pressed to demand them.¹⁸ However, barring global catastrophe, in today's world attempting to make deep system-wide changes all at once is the wrong approach. As Steiner wrote (Kate's translation, Steiner's italics):

One need not do away with state schools and state economic institutions overnight; but from out of perhaps small beginnings one will see the possibility grow up that a gradual dismantling of the state education and economics will take place. Above all, however, it would be necessary that those individuals who are able to permeate themselves with conviction concerning the correctness of the social ideas presented here, or of similar ones, attend to their dissemination.¹⁹

¹² <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/19th-amendment>

¹³ <https://www.ericsson.com/en/about-us/history/products/other-products/the-transistor--an-invention-ahead-of-its-time>

¹⁴ <https://www.adainfo.org/ada-information/history-of-the-ada/>

¹⁵ <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/011916/brief-history-us-banking-regulation.asp>

¹⁶ <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/monetary-control-act.asp>

¹⁷ https://www.usg.edu/galileo/skills/unit07/internet07_02.phtml

¹⁸ *The Challenge of the Times*, GA 186,

https://rsarchive.org/SocialIssues/GA186/English/AP1941/ChaTim_index.html (the online version has many more lectures in it than the book does), Lecture VI, "The Innate Capacities of the Nations of the World," a bit under 1/3 into the lecture – about the necessity of total exhaustion, such as wars that would end with no nation as victor

¹⁹ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c03.html, Smith translation for reference in relation to Kate's translation, a bit over ½ into Ch. 3 (p. 108)

It is my view that even changes “from out of... small beginnings” are unlikely to happen unless we begin the practice of the three-membered organization, in a balanced way, individually and in small local group activity, which is discussed in the section ‘Individual and Group Realization of the Three-Membered Organization.’ Governments and corporations will not universally impose changes of this magnitude on the political, economic, and cultural domains. Steiner wrote (this quote is slightly out of context):

...people say constantly, ‘to realize the threefold order, human beings must be different than they are now.’ No!²⁰

It is absolutely possible to work with the three-membered organization right now. In an article on Sept 9, 2022 posted by *The Guardian* regarding Kohei Saito’s book *Capital in the Anthropocene*, Saito points out how the COVID pandemic has demonstrated that rapid change is actually possible, particularly in the context of the environment:

The response to Covid-19 had shown that rapid change is not only desirable, but possible, he [Saito] says.

“One thing that we have learned during the pandemic is that we can dramatically change our way of life overnight – look at the way we started working from home, bought fewer things, flew and ate out less. We proved that working less was friendlier to the environment and gave people a better life. But now capitalism is trying to bring us back to a “normal” way of life.”²¹

Caution however is advised. Ironically, the social, economic and technological advances have enabled a ‘giving of voice’ to anyone with Internet access: podcasts, blogs, Twitter, YouTube videos – these and more are the modern salon²² for inundating each other with ‘opinion overload,’ much of which criticizes the very technologies and infrastructure that enable the individual to even have a voice beyond their community. As often as we complain that the mainstream media lies to us, we can be easily overwhelmed with the task of determining the truth (or not) of *each other’s* opinion on a particular topic. Especially with social media, “Confirmation bias occurs, when users encounter information that reinforces their pre-existing beliefs and attitudes.”²³ To mitigate this, we must consciously engage in the activity of thoughtful discernment, both with regards to our own viewpoints and discerning the viewpoints of others as we explore the three domains of our social life.

²⁰ *Renewal of the Social Organism*, GA 24, translated by E. Bowen-Wedgewood and Ruth Mariott, revised by Frederick Amrine, Anthroposophic Press, 1985; article, “Ability to Work, Will To Work, and the Threefold Social Order,” https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA024/English/AP1985/GA024_c06.html, last page (p. 83)

²¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/09/a-new-way-of-life-the-marxist-post-capitalist-green-manifesto-captivating-japan>

²² [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salon_\(gathering\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salon_(gathering))

²³ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10796-021-10222-9>

Introduction by Kate Reese Hurd

It is heartening to realize that the social organization that Rudolf Steiner referred to as a “Dreigliederung” – a ‘three-membered-ness’ – of the domains of human social life *is something that is emerging directly from within ourselves, from within human beings in our time*; and that it has in fact been pushing toward emergence for the preceding centuries. We are unfolding our human faculties and capabilities in yet new ways. Steiner perceived and understood this, and over the course of quite a number of years he was able to elucidate the new social impulses that are pressing toward unfoldment.

As Steiner said, the trend of human development is such that we are becoming ever more individual and able to ‘stand on our own feet’ within the flux of life. Yet one of the aspects of these developments – an overlooked aspect – is that in counterbalance to this increasing ‘standing on our own,’ separate from each other, is also a sense for social life – a sense of our need for social life and for how to come together in a healthy way nevertheless of our separateness.

What Steiner described as this ‘three-membered organization’ of social life is not arbitrary, nor was it arbitrary in his time. A sense for the three-ness of the domains that characterize human social relations was very strongly pressing up toward consciousness in the working class in his time, and we find this to be the case in the awareness of many today. The mobilization of the people that led to the French Revolution was inspired by this pressing up of not just one social element or ideal, but of three distinct ideals, whose reality in practice was being sought: equality, fellowship (brotherhood/ sisterhood) and freedom. We feel the same three deeply-human needs in many of the issues brought forth by ‘activists’ in our time. Steiner wrote and spoke of these three aspects as the domains of life of rights, economic life and spiritual-cultural life.

We have a sense for this three-ness that emerges from within us in the form of deeply-implanted “primal thoughts” (as mentioned in the Preface here), archetypes of human relatedness and relationships. Steiner urged that we approach what is sensed vaguely as instinct and begin to feel-sense-perceive it consciously, to acquire a ‘sensibility’ (German, ‘Empfindung,’ as discussed in the Preface) for what it means to be human and to develop as human beings. Steiner pointed to this over and over again. When we are able to share this social sensibility on a conscious level, its resonance can give us confidence and can guide and support a living and cooperative organization of our social life in harmony with what holds sway in these three distinct domains of rights, economy and cultural activity. Founded on the reality of these primal ideals, the variations in the flux and flow of social life can be fathomed and healthy administration of arrangements between people brought about in each of the three domains, even in the smallest setting.

But are we ready? Yes, we are ready, sufficient to begin. Some ask, but don’t we need to overcome egoism first since we do not appear to be ready yet to be altruistic toward our fellow humans? No, we do not. I certainly don’t feel ready if that is the requirement; but that is not required. As Steiner explained, the basis of egoism is our experience of need: “In speaking of egoism, we should recognize

that it begins with the bodily needs of the human being. ... The needs of the human being proceed from egoism. Now we must believe that it is possible to ennoble egoism.”²⁴ He explained further:

[The person] who is truly interested in his fellowmen, need not be less egoistic in life than the other; for his egoism may be precisely his desire to serve human beings. It may call forth in him a feeling of inner well-being, of inner bliss, even of ecstasy, to devote himself to the service of his fellowmen. Then, as far as the outer life is concerned, deeds which are absolutely altruistic to all appearance may proceed from egoism; in the life of feeling they cannot be appraised otherwise than as egoism.

... Much of what we carry out in common with other men is absolutely founded on egoism, and still may be credited to the noblest human virtues. If we contemplate maternal love, we find that it is absolutely founded on the egoism of the mother; yet it manifests itself most nobly in the common life of humanity.²⁵

Hence, It is not a matter of denying one’s needs out of altruism, but of working toward ennobling that egoism to include the needs of others. In his discussion of the growth of the human being from caring for the needs only of the self, to caring for the needs of our family and friends also, and for the needs of our folk and of our nation as well, Steiner described the direction to be taken toward the peoples of other nations. Here something more must arise:

Whereas we grow into our own nation because we are, so to speak, members of it, we learn to know other nations. They work on us indirectly through our knowledge of them, our understanding of them. We learn little by little to love them with understanding; and in proportion to our learning to love and to understand mankind in its different peoples in their various countries, does our feeling grow for internationalism.²⁶

This resonates deeply with what Steiner wrote in his seminal work in epistemology, which concerns how we *know* anything and what foundation we actually have for acting in life and the world, *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* (also under other titles such as, *The Philosophy of Freedom*):

The way to the heart is through the head. Love is no exception. Whenever it is not merely the expression of bare sexual instinct, it depends on the representation we form of the loved one. And the more idealistic these representations are, just so much the more blessed is our love. Here too, thought is the father of feeling. It is said: Love makes us blind to the failings of the loved one. But this also holds good the other way round, and it can be said: Love opens the eyes just for the good qualities of the loved one. Many pass by these good qualities without noticing them. One, however, sees them, and just because he does, love awakens in his soul. He has done nothing other than

²⁴ *The Social Future*, GA 332a, translator not given, online edition appears to be from 1945; page numbers here refer to the 2013 edition published by Steinerbooks, revised by Henry B. Monges (the translation differs from the one found online); Lecture 6, “National and International Life in the Threefold Social Organism,” <https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA332a/English/AP1945/19191030p01.html>, 4th paragraph of lecture (p. 13)

²⁵ *Ibid*, GA 332a, Lecture 6, 4th and 6th paragraphs (pp. 133-34)

²⁶ *Ibid*, GA 332a, Lecture 6, 8th paragraph (pp. 135-36)

form a representation [mental picture] of something, of which hundreds have none. They have no love because they lack the *representation*.²⁷

Opening ourselves to perceive (*empfinden*) and work with the primal thoughts that hold sway in the three domains of the social organism will give us a sense of their living dynamics and structures. And in as much as we are caused to turn to each other for the fulfillment of our egoism of needs, these dynamics and structures can support us in the ennobling process that Steiner pointed to. We hope that our text will elaborate well on the most helpful aspects, so that we may with feelings of assurance begin personally and together to unfold the domains however we can.

²⁷ *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*, GA 4, Rudolf Steiner, translated by Rita Stebbing, Rudolf Steiner Publications, 1963, 1980, also Steinerbooks, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA004_index.html, near end of Chapter 1

What is The Social Organism (The Social Order)?

The concept, ‘the social organism,’ or, ‘the social order,’ encompasses the three domains of human activity: the domain of rights (or political), the domain of economics and the domain of culture, which Steiner often referred to as the “geistige” organization or life. It is important to know that the adjective, “geistig,” refers not only to spirit, but to the mind, the intellect; so in English this domain can be referred to as the ‘spiritual-cultural’ domain.

In general terms, social order exists when individuals, communities, groups, businesses, and governments abide by a shared social contract. As Nicki Lisa Cole, Ph.D wrote: “Social order is present when individuals agree to a shared social contract that states that certain rules and laws must be abided and certain standards, values, and norms maintained.”²⁸

Care must be taken regarding the phrase “social contract”:

Social contract arguments typically are that individuals have consented, either explicitly or tacitly, to surrender some of their freedoms and submit to the authority (of the ruler, or to the decision of a majority) in exchange for protection of their remaining rights or maintenance of the social order.²⁹

Such is the concept of social order and social contract throughout history, including our times. This is in contrast to the three-membered organization idea that the legislation of the rights domain is determined by people (by majority or other means) solely to ensure human rights, human dignity and a “decent human existence” (as Steiner called it), and not at all to surrender the freedom of individuals to develop the potentials within them. The issues of human rights of a *universal* nature and freedoms belonging to each person *as an individual* cannot be glossed over – they are deeply challenging issues as each of us are affected by the laws (or lack of laws) passed in our attempts to address the issues of freedom. Three very charged issues can be mentioned: gun ownership, vaccination, and abortion. It is not for this book or its authors to take a position on these three (and other) issues, but rather to point out that we, as a society, are not properly addressing the deeper, fundamental thinking that is required: the conscious recognition of the tension regarding our personal views of individual freedom and how and in what setting that individual freedom affects others.

Social and Antisocial

Broadly speaking, one could say then that a social person is one that abides by the contracts (including laws) of the society and that an antisocial person is one that does not. An alternate definition of the terms social and antisocial could be viewed from selfless vs. selfish behavior. “Social forces are the result of taking an interest in the thoughts and situations of others. Antisocial forces arise from self-interest and a disregard for the thoughts and feelings of others.”³⁰ Whether a person takes an interest in another person is not a law, but it is worthwhile to consider that ‘social’ can be both of these: a matter of adhering to the law *and* of how we interact with each other.

²⁸ *What Is Social Order in Sociology?* Nicki Lisa Cole, Ph.D, <https://www.thoughtco.com/social-order-definition-4138213>, updated 9/30/2019

²⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_contract

³⁰ *Steinerian Economics, A Compendium*, edited by Gary Lamb and Sarah Hearn, Adonis Social Science Series, 2014, p. 2

Anti-social behavior actually plays a useful and necessary role in our individuation as human beings. Steiner wrote:

Both social and anti-social impulses exist in him [people] and must come to expression regardless of what social structure exists and what social ideas are brought to realization. And as we have seen, the anti-social impulses, especially in our epoch of the consciousness soul, play a special role. In a certain way they have an educational mission in the evolution of humanity in that they cause men to stand on their own feet. They [the anti-social impulses] will be overcome by the reason of the fact that after the epoch of the consciousness soul, there will follow the epoch of the spirit-self, already in course of preparation, whose essential mission will be to bring humanity into social unity.³¹

For the time being and in the future of our epoch, the antisocial impulses in us enable us to challenge existing laws, economic systems and social norms. Of course, the extremes of criminal conduct are not what is meant here and is not condoned. Antisocial impulses also provide us with a necessary counterweight in our interpersonal activities, for example group work. As Steiner wrote:

We live in [an age] in which human beings must become independent. But on what does this depend? It depends on people's ability ... to become self-assertive, to not allow themselves to be put to sleep. It is the antisocial forces which require development in this time, for consciousness to be present. It would not be possible for humanity in the present to accomplish its task if just these antisocial forces did not become ever more powerful; they are indeed the pillars on which personal independence rests. At present humanity has no idea how much more powerful antisocial impulses must become.³²

In the 17th century, Thomas Hobbes argued that without social order, life would be chaos³³ and therefore there must be social contracts to which we agree. Hobbes' solution, to create a government with absolute power (including oppressive regimes if we have agreed to an oppressive regime), is not the intention of the organization of social life which Steiner brought to our awareness. Instead, each domain (rights, economic, cultural) legislates itself³⁴ and adheres to the laws of the rights domain. This concept, the difference between 'legislation' (to make or enact laws³⁵) *within each of the three domains* and the laws that the rights domain *enacts that are applied to the activity of each of the domains*

³¹ *The Challenge of our Times*, GA 186,

<https://rsarchive.org/SocialIssues/GA186/English/AP1941/19181208p01.html>, Lecture VI, "Innate Capacities of the Nations of the World," first page

³² *Social and Antisocial Forces in the Human Being*, single lecture by Steiner on December 12, 1918 (also GA 186, but not in *The Challenge of Our Times*), translated by Christopher Schaeffer, Mercury Press

³³ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan, or The Matter, Forme, and Power of a Commonwealth, Ecclesiastical and Civil*, London 1651; "The First Part, Of Man," Chapter XIII, "Of the Natural Condition of Mankind, as Concerning their Felicity, and Misery," <https://www2.econ.iastate.edu/classes/econ362/hallam/Readings/LeviathanXiiiXv.pdf>. Here is the book:

<https://www.google.com/books/edition/Leviathan/2oc6AAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&pg=PA2&printsec=frontcover> (p. 81)

³⁴ GA 23, "The economic area will form its legislative and administrative bodies in accordance with economic impulses," https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c02.html, about 2/3 into Ch. 2 (pp.64-65)

³⁵ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/legislate>

(including the rights domain itself) seems at first glance to be one and the same thing. This is not the case. The laws that each domain enacts and applies to itself can be viewed with regard to the administration of that domain – for instance in the economic domain, how records are maintained, rules regarding charters, licenses, incorporation, security and information access, minimum liquidity in speculative investments, and so forth. In the cultural domain, for instance, this legislation might involve how the innate capacities of children in school are to be recognized and fostered, what scheduling and supplies make sense and are needed, fostering the development of teachers, etc. The laws of the rights domain are oriented to the correct, decent treatment of human beings and of nature, for example, the treatment of workers, the equality of people and the proper care and use of natural resources. We see these concepts already applied by our government (here we are speaking of the US government) in bills concerning minimum wage and a worker’s right to breaks, anti-discrimination laws and the clean water act.

Fundamental Concepts of the Social Organism

One of the core concepts of the social organism is the primal thought that each domain (political, economic, cultural) treats the human being justly and equitably such that each person can develop themselves as they choose. As Steiner recognized, the three-membered organization would provide in great measure a solution to what was of keen concern of people in many places in his time, a concern which was called by many, ‘the social question’ (German, ‘die soziale Frage’). Hence, ‘the social question’ was not his term. It has also been referred to as ‘the social problem’ in literature on the subject. As described by Andrew Brogan, “the social problem as Steiner identified it was that individuals are prevented from fully developing, but the focus here is not on the end-state of a ‘developed’ individual, but on the process of continual transformation.”³⁶ Relevant also is what John A. Ryan wrote regarding the social question: “A social question is one that concerns society, or a social group. The social question means certain evils and grievances affecting the wage-earning classes and calling for removal or remedy.”³⁷

The ‘social problem’ is also one of human relationship:

[P]eople cannot be social if they do not see the human quality in one another, but live entirely within themselves. Human beings can only become social if they really meet one another in life, and something passes between them. This is the root of the social problem.³⁸

With regards to the three-membered social organism, this is a particularly key point: we need to meet each other in all three domains, in the hierarchy of worker and manager, in the relationship between parent and teacher, and so forth. It is challenging to recognize that we must take an interest in all three domains, even though our calling or interest might be best expressed in one particular domain – for example, the artist in the cultural domain, the lawyer in the rights domain and the inventor in the economic domain.

And:

Not until we are capable of bringing down onto a material level what we think of as being spiritual shall we be able to grasp the actual nerve of the social question.³⁹

This task brings us to another salient point in working with the ‘social question.’ It requires us to feel-sense-perceive – *empfinden* (verb form of *Empfindung*) – something which we “think of as being spiritual,” which we can bring to our work with the issues of environmental and human dignity, rights and quality of life, such that we can take steps in our material life towards social renewal, towards becoming whole human beings.

³⁶ Steiner Shorts 3: *The Social Problem*, Andrew Brogan,

https://www.academia.edu/67073076/Steiner_Shots_3_The_Social_Problem

³⁷ *A Catechism of the Social Question*, John A. Ryan and Raymond A. McGowan

³⁸ GA 191, https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/SocUnd_index.html, lecture, October 4, 1919, “Social Understanding Through Spiritual Scientific Knowledge,” a few paragraphs from end of lecture

³⁹ Ibid, GA 191, close to end of lecture

Steiner asked (his italics), “Does the *true nature* of the social question agree with what is commonly thought about it – or is a completely different way of thinking necessary?”⁴⁰ As Jules Guesde pointed out, at that time it was the question that Marxism and Socialism were trying to answer:

The problem that Socialism sets itself to solve is to be found in a fact, of which it can be said as of the sun: he is blind who does not see it. It is the divorce between the means of production and the producers.

Labour is, on the one hand, more and more furnished by a class; Property or Capital, on the other, held and controlled by another class. Here you have workers without property—the proletariat. There you have property without work—or capital.

It is this separation between the two factors of production which produces all the evils, all the disorders which afflict not only wage-workers but Society as a whole.

The workers without property are excluded from their products, from the riches they create—which accumulate in the hands of the property holders, capitalists and large land-owners.⁴¹

Is it therefore not reasonable to read GA 23 in the deeper context of the primal thoughts of human dignity and the right for individual development? And does not this deeper context of human dignity and rights reveal how this is not just a question of production and producers within the economic domain, but affects the functioning and interaction of all three domains, the cultural, political/rights and economic? Steiner made these key points in his “Preliminary Remarks Concerning the Purpose of This Book,” GA 23: “The ‘social question’ is spoken of in this book as an economic, a legal rights and a spiritual question.”⁴² And, “The labour question cannot be properly integrated into the social question until it is recognized that the production, distribution and consumption of commodities are determined by interests which should not extend to human labour power.”⁴³

Steiner’s recommendation outlined a rethinking of the organization of and interaction between the economic, rights, and cultural domains. Coming to an understanding of the social results of science and capitalism is critical to this rethinking. Steiner summarized the situation this way (with Kate’s addition in brackets): “Contemporary society has become ill due to the impotence of spiritual life – and the illness is aggravated by reluctance to recognize [and acknowledge] its existence.”⁴⁴

As Brogan writes:

It is these three areas of social life and their guiding concepts which are the grounding of Steiner’s suggestions for the threefold social organism as a response to the social problem caused by the unified state. By entering into a process of reconfiguring society with a recognition of the three areas of social life, their distinctions and their roles in

⁴⁰ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c01.html, 3 pages into Ch.1 (p. 31)

⁴¹ <https://www.marxists.org/archive/guesde/1905/jan/x01.htm>, Jules Guesde Internet Archive, 1905

⁴² GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_prelim.html, 3 pages into “Preliminary Remarks” (p. 25)

⁴³ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c01.html, 2 pages from end of Ch. 1

⁴⁴ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c01.html, about 5 pages from end of Ch. 1 (pp. 46-47)

human life, society can begin to transform itself and move to rebalance the tripartite division. In this process of rebalancing politics, economics and culture are untangled from one another, breaking down the artificial unity imposed by the unified state and removing the need for each area to compromise. In this untangling politics, economics and culture are not rent asunder, but establish a complex set of interrelationships in which each supports the other where necessary.⁴⁵

For example, in the domain of economics, corporations should not be able to influence politics through lobbyists. The rights domain should not influence the economic domain through means of commodity subsidies, quota limits, price fixing, and so forth. The cultural domain inappropriately affects the rights domain when, for example, religion seeks to dictate the rights of human beings via the rights/political domains, or determine the products that are produced in the economic domain.

The three-membered organization should not be accepted dogmatically or as being utopian but rather worked with as a continually-evolving relationship that must take into account our evolving society and human dignity together. Steiner made this point (Kate's translation): "The tasks which the present-day social life poses must be misconstrued by anyone who approaches them with the thought of some kind of utopia."⁴⁶

It is also not something that should be continually put off because society is constantly changing. Rather, as Steiner argued (Smith's translation amended by Kate, Steiner's italics):

Certainly evolution must supply the necessary social adjustments; but in the social organism the human idea-impulses are *realities*. When the times are more advanced and what today can only be *thought* is *realized*, only then will what has been thought be contained in evolution. However, it will then be *too late* to accomplish what is already demanded by *today's* facts. It is not possible to consider evolution *objectively* as regards the social organism. One must *activate* [*bewirken*] evolution.⁴⁷

We, as human beings, are responsible for our social evolution and the question 'how do we activate evolution?' is no longer something we can leave to instinctual 'feelings' – as has been previously mentioned, the complexities of our society with regards to freedom, individuality and human dignity requires conscious activity.

Autonomy, Independence, and Interdependence

The three domains must unfold their activities autonomously with regards to each other. As Steiner wrote:

If this social organism is to function in a healthy way it must methodically cultivate three constituent members. ... This economic life must constitute an autonomous member

⁴⁵Steiner Shorts #2 *The Threefold Social Organism, An Introduction*, Andrew Brogan,

https://www.academia.edu/62166396/Steiner_Shots_2_The_Threefold_Social_Organism_An_Introduction

⁴⁶ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_pref4.html, opening of the "Preface to the 1920 Edition" (p. 9)

⁴⁷ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c03.html, 3 pages from end of Ch. 3 (p. 124)

within the social organism. ... The economy [must] be separate from the rights member. ...[and] [t]he third member, standing autonomous alongside the other two....⁴⁸

As has already been discussed earlier, the three domains in our *current* society do not function autonomously. Steiner pointed out that the autonomy of the three domains in a three-membered organization is however dependent upon there being sufficient awareness among people generally – even if only instinctively – concerning the need for a tri-formation of the social organism:

It is often said that ‘socialization’ is needed for these times. This socialization will not be a curative process for the social organism, but a quack remedy, perhaps even a destructive process, as long as at least an instinctive knowledge [die instinktive Erkenntnis] of the necessity for the triformation of the social organism has not been absorbed by human hearts, by human souls. If this social organism is to function in a healthy way it must methodically cultivate three constituent members.⁴⁹

Ideally though, we need to develop a *conscious* knowledge of this necessity. Again, at the heart of this consciousness is the *Empfindung*-sensitivity. (Note, because of the importance of this word, ‘Empfindung,’ we will now adopt it and use it.) This is what is needed in order to comprehend *how* “to function in a healthy way” in relation to human and environmental dignity, rights and quality of life.

The three domains are not mere abstraction: they consist of people *engaged* in those domains. It is incorrect to say, for example, that the US Government funds the Olympic Games⁵⁰ – any funding the US Government provides comes from taxes, therefore it is *the people* that fund the Olympic Games. It is critical that the domains in the three-membered organization are similarly not viewed as abstract systems but are rather viewed as a domain in which human beings are engaged through their work, interest, education and administration. To this end, Steiner wrote about the relationship of each domain with regards to human beings:

The first system, the economic, is concerned with what must be present in order for man to determine his relation to the outer world. The second system [rights domain] is concerned with what must be present in the social organism in respect to human interrelationships. The third system [cultural domain] is concerned with everything which must blossom forth from each human individuality and be integrated into the social organism.⁵¹

Thus we experience three forms of relationship and individuality:

1. Relation to the outer-world (economic domain)
2. Human inter-relationships (rights domain)
3. Individuality (cultural domain)

⁴⁸ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c02.html, Smith translation, about 6 pages into Ch. 2 (pp. 58-59)

⁴⁹ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c02.html, about 5 pages into Ch. 2 (p. 57)

⁵⁰ <https://www.gao.gov/products/ggd-00-183>

⁵¹ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c02.html, about 1/4 into Ch. 2 (p. 59)

Together these three aspects create a vital image that we must hold with regards to the three domains and our activity in those domains. The realization of a three-membered organization requires the recognition of the individual *as well* as the relationship that the individual has to the outer world and to other human beings. This image is deeply impactful. We, as individuals, must always be recognized, in our labor, dignity, quality of life, education, adjudication, and our different points of view. Our societal trend to remove the individual from ‘the equation’ must be reversed. It should be acknowledged though that this reversal, to truly recognize the individual, requires conscious effort on the part of all participants in a three-membered endeavor, which can at times seem like a daunting task. And yet this is also a requirement for the human being to experience dignity.

Autonomy does not mean that the three domains do not *inform* each other. For example:

The economic area will form its legislative and administrative bodies in accordance with economic impulses. The necessary contact between the responsible persons of the legal and economic bodies will ensue in a manner similar to that at present practised by the governments of sovereign states. Through this formation the developments in one body will be able to have the necessary effect on developments in the other. As things are now this effect is hindered by one area trying to develop in itself what should flow toward it from the other.

The economy is subject, on the one hand, to the conditions of the natural base (climate, regional geography, mineral wealth and so forth) and, on the other hand, it is dependent upon the legal conditions which the state imposes between the persons or groups engaged in economic activity.⁵²

Here we see a vital characteristic of the three-membered organization. In specific, the economic domain forms its own legislative and administrative bodies in accordance with its own impulses, and this development affects (informs) the development of the rights domain. Conversely, the rights domain imposes the legal conditions between persons and groups. This can be generalized to also include the cultural domain and its internal legislation and administration with regards to how those internal bodies of the cultural domain inform the rights domain. And of course the cultural domain is subject to the legal conditions of the rights domain with regards to the relationship between persons and groups. In a self-reflective way, the rights domain has this inner relationship to itself as well.

It is we ourselves who unify the three-membered-ness of our social life, not a single political apparatus (or alternatively, not an economic or cultural one either). Steiner described beautifully this unity which arises from out of ourselves:

And the very people who are thus united with that spiritual life and draw their strength from it, those very same people live within the legal and political life, and determine the legal order governing their relations with one another. They establish that legal order by the help of the spiritual impulses which they take in from the spiritual life; and this legal order is the direct result of what has been acquired through contact with the spiritual life. Again, the tie which is developed, binding man to man democratically on the basis of the legal order, the impulse which he receives as the basis of his relationship to other

⁵² GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c02.html, about ⅔ into Ch. 2 (p. 65)

men, he carries into economic life, because there are again the same human beings who have a connection with the spiritual life, occupy a legal position, and carry on business. On the one hand, the measures which the human being takes, the manner in which he associates with others, the way in which he transacts business, all that is permeated with what he has developed in his spiritual life, and with the legal order he has established in economic life; for they are the same men who work in the threefold organism and the unity is not effected by any abstract regulation, but by the living human beings themselves. Each member of the community, however, can develop his own nature and individuality in independence and can thus work for unity in the most effective manner.⁵³

It should also be noted that decisions in the economic and cultural domains are not made democratically but rather by those working in their particular domain and who possess a specific capacity, knowledge and understanding of the interdependencies between their domain and the other domains. As Steiner wrote regarding the economic domain:

The economic life has its own roots and must be governed in accordance with the conditions of its own nature. The manner in which business is carried on cannot be allowed to be judged democratically by every grown-up person, but only by someone who is engaged in some branch of economic life, who is capable in his branch and knows the links that connect his own branch with others. Special knowledge and special capacity are the only guarantees of fruitful work in economic life. Economic life, therefore, will have to be detached, on the one hand, from the political and, on the other hand, from the cultural body.⁵⁴

The need for people in economic life “who [are] capable” in this domain and “know the links that connect their own branch with others,” would surely apply within the cultural and rights domains as well.

The Premises of The Three-Membered Organization

An implicit premise of the three-membered organization is that people want to develop themselves. As Brogan wrote:

...Steiner draws on a specific vision of humanity which is underpinned by a concept of human nature in which humans are naturally drawn to develop themselves along their own particular and individual paths to the greatest of their capabilities and capacities...full human development is not an end-goal in Steiner’s work but an ongoing

⁵³ GA 332a, Lecture 5, “The Cooperation of the Spiritual, Political, and Economic Departments of Life for the Building Up of a Unified Threefold Social Organism,”

<https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA332a/English/AP1945/19191029p01.html>, about 3/7 into lecture 5 (p. 115)

⁵⁴ GA 332a,, Lecture 2, “The Organization of a Practical Economic Life on the Associative Basis. Transformation of the Market and Fixing of Prices. Money and Taxation. Credit,”

<https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA332a/English/AP1945/19191025p01.html>, about 2/5 into lecture (p. 33)

process. It is better approached as a continual becoming or transformation rather than a final condition.⁵⁵

A second implicit premise is that people are interested in being engaged in all three domains. Unfortunately, according to a survey in the UK,⁵⁶ less than a third of young people express any interest in politics. Conversely, even if there is interest, education currently fails – for example, by not providing a basic understanding of economic concepts such as “supply and demand” and “tariffs”⁵⁷ with which to even grapple with existing circumstances.

A third implicit premise, that people want to participate by working in the economic domain, can also be challenged. The motivation (or lack thereof) to participate in the economic domain is in many ways directly related to our ability to participate meaningfully in self-development and in our engagement in the functioning of all three domains. Our engagement in work is also directly coupled to our perception that that work has meaning. The expectation is that participating in this domain primarily means that people work to produce something and that this production sustains their needs and benefits society in general. However:

Over the past two years, young millennials and members of Gen Z have created an abundance of memes and pithy commentary about their generational disillusionment toward work. The jokes, which correspond with the rise of anti-work ideology online, range from shallow and shameless (“Rich housewife is the goal”) to candid and pessimistic.⁵⁸

Is this not a symptom of the improper functioning and interaction between the three domains, and most importantly, that human dignity and quality of life is not a primary consideration of the three domains as they work today?

The Vox article cited above continues with regards to this disillusionment with the ideology of work, pointing out that the COVID pandemic has created this shift:

The pandemic changed that for everyone, not just the youngest workers. In addition to reassessing their relationship to work, people are reflecting upon their greater life purpose. One human resources manager called it the ‘Great Reflection,’ wherein people are ‘taking stock of what they want out of a job, what they want out of employment, and what they want out of their life.’ More often than not, workers are not content with labor that is unsatisfying, low-paying, and potentially harmful. And Gen Z has not been shy about detailing these expectations to employers and on social media.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ *Steiner Shorts #2, The Threefold Social Organism, an Introduction*, Andrew, Brogan,

https://www.academia.edu/62166396/Steiner_Shots_2_The_Threefold_Social_Organism_An_Introduction

⁵⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-26271935>

⁵⁷ <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/teens-think-economics-education-is-important-but-struggle-with-basic-economic-concepts-300953986.html>

⁵⁸ <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/22977663/gen-z-antiwork-capitalism>

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

Steiner wrote about this in an article entitled, "Ability for Work, Will to Work and the Threefold Social Order," for the Newspaper *The Threefold Social Order*. (See GA 24 for a selection of his many articles published between 1919 and 1920):

It should be obvious that a new incentive to work must be created the moment there is any thought of eliminating the old incentive of egotistical gain. An economic management that does not include this profit motive among the forces at work within the economy cannot of itself exert any effect whatever upon the human will to work. And precisely because it cannot do so, it meets a social demand that a large part of humanity has begun to raise in the present stage of development.⁶⁰

This social demand is related directly to the question, 'why am I doing this work?' As Steiner continues:

This part of humanity no longer wants to be led to work by economic compulsion. They want to work from motives more befitting human dignity...If the economic system is to be organized in a way that can have no effect on our will to work, then our will to work must be stimulated in some other way...It [the three-membered organization] aims at establishing within an independent, self-sustaining cultural life a realm where one learns in a living way to understand this human society for which one is called upon to work; a realm where one learns to see what each single piece of work means for the combined fabric of the social order, to see it in such a light that one will learn to love it because of its value for the whole. It aims at creating in this free life of spirit the profounder principles that can replace the motive of personal gain. Only in a free spiritual life can a love for the human social order spring up that is comparable to the love an artist has for the creation of his works.⁶¹

One might simplify this to the concise question, 'do you love your work and see it as befitting human dignity and society as a whole?'

Particularly relevant to this question, and partly from the shift in thinking about work resulting from the COVID pandemic, there is a growing trend called 'quiet quitting'⁶²:

The first thing you need to know about quiet quitting is that it's not actually quitting. Instead, the quitter keeps their job and chooses to do only the bare minimum rather than go above and beyond.⁶³

This is in response to the implicit assumptions between employer and employee, and also driven by competition in the workforce:

The implicit contract for employees goes something like this: I will spend as much time and effort as I can in my job in return for a salary, benefits, job satisfaction, and career

⁶⁰ GA 24, article, "Ability to Work," https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA024/English/AP1985/GA024_c06.html, 2nd paragraph of article (pp. 80-81)

⁶¹ Ibid, GA 24, article, "Ability to Work" (p. 81)

⁶² The term quiet quitting was originally coined at a Texas A&M economics symposium on diminishing ambitions in Venezuela in September 2009 by economist Mark Boldger. – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quiet_quitting

⁶³ <https://www.computerworld.com/article/3673096/its-time-to-quit-quitting-on-the-quiet-quitters.html>

advancement. Traditionally, career-minded employees chose and were expected to go "above and beyond," giving work 100% of their effort. As a result, they often work more than the assumed 40-hour workweek in a competitive employment marketplace.⁶⁴

With regards to the ComputerWorld reference above, the author's view that "Quiet quitting happens when an employee feels used by a company and so, in self-defense, chooses to get back at the company" is poorly expressed with the use of the phrase "to get back at the company." Quiet quitting is not a 'getting back at the company' but rather an attempt to achieve a work-life balance.

And of course the current economic system responds to 'quiet quitting' with 'quiet firing,' "when managers intentionally distance their employees from opportunities to further their career: for example, by obstructing them from participating in special projects, or hindering their chances of a promotion or a raise."⁶⁵

In addition to quiet quitting, the pandemic has spurred a conscious reevaluation of one's labor in the economic domain, which has been called The Great Resignation. The Great Resignation is:

an ongoing economic trend in which employees have voluntarily resigned from their jobs en masse, beginning in early 2021 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the most cited reasons for resigning include wage stagnation amid rising cost of living, limited opportunities for career advancement, hostile work environments, lack of benefits, inflexible remote-work policies, and long-lasting job dissatisfaction.⁶⁶

And:

More than 19 million US workers—and counting—have quit their jobs since April 2021, a record pace disrupting businesses everywhere. Companies are struggling to address the problem, and many will continue to struggle for one simple reason: they don't really understand why their employees are leaving in the first place. Rather than take the time to investigate the true causes of attrition, many companies are jumping to well-intentioned quick fixes that fall flat: for example, they're bumping up pay or financial perks, like offering 'thank you' bonuses without making any effort to strengthen the relational ties people have with their colleagues and their employers. The result? Rather than sensing appreciation, employees sense a transaction. This transactional relationship reminds them that their real needs aren't being met.⁶⁷

Of significance in the quote above are a couple of phrases the authors (Aaron De Smet, Bonnie Dowling, Marino Mugayar-Baldocchi, and Bill Schaninger) use: "the relational ties" and "sensing." Both of these phrases reflect that monetary "quick fixes" fail to recognize the individual as a human being with needs for dignity and appreciation.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ <https://www.zdnet.com/education/professional-development/move-over-quiet-quitting-quiet-firing-is-the-new-trending-topic-in-the-workplace/>

⁶⁶ [Great Resignation - Wikipedia](#)

⁶⁷ [How companies can turn the Great Resignation into the Great Attraction | McKinsey](#)

Similarly, participating in the domain of rights would mean being politically involved – sadly, for example, the US presidential election voter turnout has always been under 50%⁶⁸ except for the 2020 presidential election which had a voter turnout of 66.8%⁶⁹. Participating in the cultural domain would predominantly involve education, self-development, religion and the sciences with regards to how those activities enliven the economic and political domains.

In our current society, one might conclude that we believe that we are helpless to change anything in a meaningful way and furthermore, we intentionally (or not) suppress this feeling of helplessness via our easy access to various forms of entertainment, so that we are distracted from the otherwise dismaying feeling of helplessness. Obviously not everyone believes that, otherwise we would not have movements such as Black Lives Matter⁷⁰. However, in today's times, we cannot disregard the reality that many of us feel despondent when it comes to being capable of making real change, either personally or in society. One might say that people are becoming conscious of what has been an instinctive sense that the existing three domains of society are dysfunctional. The trends of quiet quitting and The Great Resignation are the reactions to this growing, conscious sense.

Developing a Healthy Social Life and its Organization

Fundamental to developing a healthy social life and determining its organization requires work in our thinking, feeling, and sensing. How do we:

- Move from instinctive needs to conscious needs?
- Understand free and ethical action?
- Understand the original ideas (primal thoughts) at work in any social movement?
- Developing and engaging in social life out of our higher sensibilities?

This is a continual process throughout life rather than a destination of total and complete comprehension. Nor does one undertake all of these questions at once; rather these questions are intertwined and the work we do on one of them informs the others.

From Unconscious to Conscious

Successful engagement with the three-membered organization that presses toward realization in our time requires that each person is able to bring to clarity what is usually felt more so unconsciously concerning what being human means and what the needs of human beings are.

Kate's translation from the German:

The present historical crisis of humanity demands that certain *sensibilities* [Empfindungen (plural form)] arise *in every single human being*, that the stimulus for these sensibilities be given/bestowed by rearing and the school system in the same way as that for learning the four types of arithmetic, The old forms of the social organism which up to now have not been consciously absorbed into human soul life will no longer be effective in the future. Among the evolutionary impulses that newly want to enter human life from the present onwards, is that the sensibilities indicated are demanded of

⁶⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voter_turnout_in_United_States_presidential_elections

⁶⁹ <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/2020-presidential-election-voting-and-registration-tables-now-available.html>

⁷⁰ <https://blacklivesmatter.com/>

the individual in the same way that a certain school education has been demanded for a long time. That one must learn a healthy sensibility for how the forces of the social organism should work, in order for it to prove viable, is something that is demanded of man from the present onwards. One will have to acquire a feeling that it is unhealthy, antisocial, not to want to place oneself with such sensibilities into this organism.⁷¹

Not to be dismissed here is that Steiner did not just state that these sensibilities are given or bestowed upon the young by the school system, but also the *rearing* of the child. As a Waldorf parent, Marc has observed that the parent's home can often be quite a contradiction to the tenets of Waldorf education – frequently enough the child's home (particularly for children in Kindergarten through 3rd grade) is pervaded with technology, media, poor nutritional choices, a lack of rhythm, and so forth. How can the child make sense of the contradiction between the Waldorf classroom and their home life? How does this affect the child's development of the *sensibilities* that Steiner described?

This contradiction is present in the public school system as well. Teachers and students alike are dismayed by the budget cuts in the arts⁷² and the reduction of outdoor play time.⁷³ The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has guidelines on media exposure⁷⁴ for young children that often conflict with home media exposure. The AAP also has recommendations regarding the benefits and risks of media for school-aged children and adolescents.⁷⁵ Not to belabor the point, but in the rearing of our children it is our responsibility as parents to educate ourselves concerning our children's home life, regardless of what school they go to.

Healthy Thinking, Feeling and Willing in the Context of Mental Health

The above-mentioned 'sensibilities' are described by Steiner in a previous paragraph from that quote (again Kate's translation):

Healthy [gesund] thinking and feeling [Empfindung] and healthy willing and desiring with regard to the form of the social organism can only develop when one, even more or less merely instinctively, is clear about it that if this social organism would be healthy it must be three-membered, like the natural organism.⁷⁶

⁷¹ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c02.html, Smith translation for reference in relation to Kate's translation, 5 pages into Ch. 2 (p. 57). Also for reference: *Die Kernpunkte der sozialen Frage*, <http://anthroposophie.byu.edu/schriften/023.pdf> (the passage is p.28 in this pdf format)

⁷² <https://www.denver7.com/news/local-news/pomona-high-school-students-participate-in-walkout-to-protest-cuts-to-arts-classes> (one of many citations searching for "teachers protest cut in arts")

⁷³ <https://www.edutopia.org/article/time-play-more-state-laws-require-recess>

⁷⁴ <https://www.pathwayped.com/american-academy-of-pediatrics-announces-new-recommendations-for-childrens-media-use/>

⁷⁵ <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/138/5/e20162592/60321/Media-Use-in-School-Aged-Children-and-Adolescents>

⁷⁶ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c02.html, Smith translation for reference in relation to Kate's translation, 3 pages into ch. 2 (pp. 55-56)

How does one move from an unconscious thinking, feeling-*Empfindung*, willing and desiring to healthy (and conscious) forms of these? We might start first with the question, ‘are we healthy?’ To this question, Steve Taylor Ph.D blogged:

We suffer from a basic psychological disorder, which is the source of our dysfunctional behaviour, both as individuals and as a species. We’re all slightly mad – only because the madness is so intrinsic to us, we’re not aware of it.⁷⁷

And in Taylor’s book *Back to Sanity, Healing the Madness in our Minds*, he wrote: “We will only be able to live in harmony with our planet, other species and with each other when we are able to live in harmony with ourselves.”⁷⁸

The term, ‘healthy,’ relates not just to our physical health but also our mental health. In modern parlance, the phrase ‘mental health,’ which encompasses the relationship between our thinking, feeling and willing, did not formally exist in 1919.

Although references to mental health as a state can be found in the English language well before the 20th century, technical references to mental health as a field or discipline are not found before 1946. During that year, the International Health Conference, held in New York, decided to establish the World Health Organization (WHO) and a Mental Health Association was founded in London.⁷⁹

And:

The APA [American Psychological Association] Committee on Nomenclature and Statistics developed a variant of the ICD–6 that was published in 1952 as the first edition of DSM [Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders]. DSM contained a glossary of descriptions of the diagnostic categories and was the first official manual of mental disorders to focus on clinical use.⁸⁰

In our cultural trend to categorize and quantify the world around us, the DSM has become a standard for diagnosis and treatment of mental health issues and has been co-opted by the insurance industry for standardizing billing, coding and mental health diagnostics,⁸¹ including mandating the amount of therapy an individual can receive. However: “Many critics of the DSM see it as an oversimplification of the vast continuum of human behavior.”⁸²

This “oversimplification of the vast continuum of human behavior” should be a sign-post that something else is needed to truly comprehend the word that Steiner used in reference to thinking, feeling, willing

⁷⁷ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/out-the-darkness/201205/humania-the-madness-the-human-mind>

⁷⁸ *Back to Sanity, Healing the Madness in our Minds*, Steve Taylor, 2012, Hay House UK Ltd

⁷⁹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2408392/>

⁸⁰ <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm/history-of-the-dsm>

⁸¹ “Since DSM-5 is completely compatible with the HIPAA-approved ICD-9-CM coding system now in use by insurance companies, the revised criteria for mental disorders can be used immediately for diagnosing mental disorders.” https://www.psychiatry.org/File%20Library/Psychiatrists/Practice/DSM/APA_DSM_Insurance-Implications-of-DSM-5.pdf

⁸² Nemeroff CB, Weinberger D, Rutter M, et al. DSM-5: a collection of psychiatrist views on the changes, controversies, and future directions. *BMC Med.* 2013;11:202. doi:10.1186/1741-7015-11-202

and desiring: ‘gesund,’ which translates as, ‘healthy,’ but also as, ‘wholesome.’ Its importance for the social organism cannot be overstated. We all need to ask ourselves, ‘how healthy am I?’ and ‘how does my mental health affect my *sensibilities*?’ This question can of course be broadened to include our physical health, as there is an undisputed relationship between physical and mental health⁸³ as well as between spiritual and mental health⁸⁴.

Healthy Thinking, Feeling and Willing in the Context of Spiritual Science

The following will most likely be controversial and stands in opposition to the ‘science’ of the DSM. Rudolf Steiner began to use the word, ‘Anthroposophy,’ to connote the entire body of the science of the spirit and everything upon which it is based. One can see that the word, ‘Anthropo-sophy,’ would refer to ‘human wisdom.’ In particular, what is meant is the objective wisdom that is possible for human beings to seek and grasp directly through their development of inner faculties of higher cognition. Steiner had begun to expound the results of his own spiritual-scientific research. In the November 29, 1918 private lecture given to Anthroposophists, Steiner said:

There is no possibility of our reaching an understanding of the demands of our age otherwise than by acquiring the capacity to understand human beings. This can be achieved, of course, only on the basis of those perceptions that a science of the spirit brings to light.⁸⁵

Steiner spoke of this in the context of spiritual science (our italics added):

What really matters most of all is to learn the truth that human beings must not conduct themselves in one way or another in the various parts of the world according to abstract notions, but that, the moment their conduct may have social consequences, they must choose their course according to how they are impelled to act by the impulses existent in the sequence of *cosmic events* into which man himself is integrated.⁸⁶

And even more directly:

The social question is not to be solved by cliches, programs or Leninisms, but by an understanding between man and man — such an understanding, however, as can be acquired only when we are able to recognize the human being as an external manifestation of the eternal.⁸⁷

That Steiner did not make these points in his book, GA 23, possibly indicates that he was sensitive to the issue of publicly (i.e., outside the Anthroposophical community) stating the requirement for the higher and broader perceptions and knowledge that spiritual science can give us.

Most of us – even those who believe in a spiritual world – do not have the direct, objective perception into the spiritual world that he spoke of in order “to have a healthy sense of how the forces of the body

⁸³ <https://ontario.cmha.ca/documents/connection-between-mental-and-physical-health/>

⁸⁴ <https://www.webmd.com/balance/how-spirituality-affects-mental-health>

⁸⁵ GA 186, <https://rsarchive.org/SocialIssues/GA186/English/AP1941/19181129p01.html>, 6 pages into Lecture 1 (p. 6)

⁸⁶ Ibid, GA 186, 7 pages into Lecture 1 (pp. 7-8)

⁸⁷ Ibid, GA 186, about ¾ into Lecture 1 (p. 25)

social have to work in order for it to live.” We are therefore confronted with a question – how do we still move forward with the core concepts of the three-membered organization? Or more accurately, how do we develop a real understanding of the human being? One answer is that we must consciously bring to bear our *Empfindung*, our feeling-sensing-perceiving, in regard to understanding human beings, human dignity and human rights. One might develop this *Empfindung* through meditative exercises such as the six basic exercises⁸⁸ or the Noble Eightfold Path⁸⁹ and setting aside time to study materials of a spiritual nature. How one develops one’s *Empfindung* is of course a personal choice. Regardless of the approach, this is not an easy question to answer and bears careful consideration.

Free and Ethical Action

Beginning with ourselves, when each person develops more clearly an *Empfindung*-sensitivity for the character and dynamics of fundamental human needs, this sensitivity can grow and be shared among people generally with regard to how these needs must be reflected in the social ordering between people also. This *heightened* sensitivity is what will give rise to and support the free and ethical fashioning of social relationships such that human dignity and a decent human existence is ensured for each individual throughout the social organization. As Andrew Brogan wrote:

At its heart Steiner’s [three-membered organization] is an ethical individualism which places the responsibility of free and ethical action squarely on the shoulders of the individual while maintaining sufficient nuance to recognize the difficulty of such action. Indeed, to be free, to act for themselves, individuals must engage in a continual process of reflection and engagement, approaching actions in the context and immediacy of the moment of action. This is not an approach which is present without practice, and while some might display greater intuition regarding these actions than others, all individuals need to make a concerted effort and pay particular attention to their actions.⁹⁰

The basis for this much more conscious individual engagement with the manner in which we take action – in other words our moral conduct – was examined by Steiner in his book, *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity (PSA) – Die Philosophie der Freiheit* (GA 4). Readers might appreciate knowing that Steiner himself recommended that in the title of the book in English the words, “spiritual activity,” would replace the word, “freedom” (*Freiheit*). We believe that he was correct in this, because it is indeed the case that the freedom we are usually thinking of is *not* the freedom that is pointed to in his book!

In the book, Steiner expounded upon a moral philosophy within which “*ethical individualism*” constitutes the highest level of human activity. Chapter 9, “The Idea of Freedom,” takes the reader through four levels of subjective dispositions and four levels of motives, the aims of our actions. Our personal dispositions provide the driving force for actually rousing to act and our motives are the ideas that serve as the aims behind our actions, our conduct. These ideas might be in the form of mental pictures, thoughts or envisionings that have “a definite reference to what is perceived,” or they might be

⁸⁸ <https://tomvangelder.antrovista.com/pdf/basic.pdf>, “The Six Basic Exercises,” by Tom Van Gelder; and *Knowledge of Higher Worlds and its Attainment*, GA10, by Rudolf Steiner (a bit under t ½ into “Some Results of Initiation”)

⁸⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noble_Eightfold_Path

⁹⁰ *Steiner Shorts 3: The Social Problem*, Andrew Brogan, https://www.academia.edu/67073076/Steiner_Shots_3_The_Social_Problem

concepts and imaginations of a general, “pure” nature, that do not have a definite reference to something already in existence. (See *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*, GA 4, Chapter 9, “The Idea of Freedom.”⁹¹)

Here in brief are the four levels of characterological disposition or driving force from lowest to highest (as best we have been able to summarize them – please do study the chapter):

1. Without thought or feeling our will is stirred in response to instinct and biological needs and urges (likely including the urge to imitate); on a higher sensing level these responses include established habits and “moral taste” or “moral etiquette” – social exchanges without the intervention of thought or feeling;
2. The subjective, personal feelings that we associate with what we perceive stir our will – e.g., upon seeing a starving person, the feeling of pity can drive our action (Steiner’s example);
3. Our store of mental images and thoughts about what we and others have done stirs our will; this level constitutes “*practical experience*” and can gradually entail “purely tactful conduct”;
4. Our will is stirred by concepts which are not (or not at first) related to specific perceptions of things or events; there are no automatic sense-and-do or feel-and-do responses, nor is our action governed by the template of mental images born of past experiences; this is the level of “*pure thinking*,” “*practical reason*.”⁹²

Here in brief are the four levels of motives from lowest to highest. *These are always ideas*:

1. Mental images of personal gain through benefit or pleasure or through avoidance of adversity or pain, as “*pure egoism*,” or gain through refraining from harming others when it would endanger oneself as well, as “*morality of prudence*”;
2. A system of principles set by authority (family, church, state, field of activity) and adopted without questioning the source and validity; “*conscience*” is a result;
3. Principles are examined to determine the reasons behind them, and this knowledge informs our actions; “*moral insight*”;
4. Our motives for acting are determined case-by-case in relation to each perceived circumstance, such that a fresh cognitive grasp of each situation informs each action to be taken; “*conceptual intuition*.”⁹³

At the level of “conceptual intuition” – our direct grasp of concepts through thinking-intuition – motive and driving force become synonymous. Steiner described the nature and importance of this thinking-intuition, and pointed out that “intuition is for thinking as observation is to perception.” And furthermore, our individual capacity for thinking-intuition varies (his italics, Chapters 5 and 9):

⁹¹ *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*, GA 4, Chapter 9, “The Idea of Freedom,”

https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/GPP1916/GA004_c09.html, ⅓ or 5 pages into Ch. 9 (p. 165ff)

⁹² Ibid, GA 4, ⅓ into Ch. 9 (pp. 167-69)

⁹³ Ibid, GA 4, ⅓ into Ch. 9 (pp. 170-73)

In contrast to the content of perception given to us from outside, the content of thought shines forth in the inner being of man. The manner in which the content of thought first appears, we will call *intuition*. Intuition is for thinking what *observation* is for perception. Intuition and observation are the sources of our knowledge. An observed object or event is foreign to us as long as we do not have in our inner being the corresponding intuition which completes for us that part of reality which is missing in the perception. To someone who lacks the ability to find intuitions corresponding to things, the full reality remains inaccessible. Just as the color-blind sees only differences of brightness without any color qualities, so the one who lacks intuition can observe only disconnected fragments of perceptions.⁹⁴

Men differ greatly in their capacity for intuition. In one person ideas bubble up easily, while another person has to acquire them with much labor. ... Insofar as this intuitive content is directed toward action, it is the moral content of the individual. To let this content come to expression is the highest moral driving force and also the highest motive for the one who has recognized that ultimately all other moral principles unite in this content. This standpoint can be called *ethical individualism*.

The discovery of the quite individual intuition which corresponds to the situation, is the deciding factor in an intuitively determined action.⁹⁵

This is the basis for Steiner's statement concerning the source of human moral freedom:

A free spirit acts according to his impulses; these [impulses] are intuitions chosen by means of thinking from the totality of his world of ideas. ... [A free spirit] makes an absolutely *original* decision. In doing so he worries neither about what others have done in such an instance, nor what commands they have laid down. He has purely ideal reasons which move him to single out from the sum of his concepts a particular one and to transform it into action.⁹⁶

This is where *freedom* in human activity is achieved. And furthermore, in the continual unfolding and renewing of the three-membered organization of social life, it is this 'bubbling up' of intuitive content within individual human beings, retrieved by them from the universality of the idea-world, that provides the fresh supply of insights and ideas for the development of our common life. This is what needs to flow from out of a healthy cultural domain into the other two domains. But at the outset these ideas that bubble up (grasped through thinking-intuition, which Steiner appears to have also called, "*moral ideation*" FT Ch. 12, 208) are only related to an intended event or creation in a general way, just as the

⁹⁴ GA 4, Chapter 5, "The Act of Knowing the World,"

https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA004_c05.html, about ⅔ into Ch. 5 (pp. 112-13)

⁹⁵ GA 4, Chapter 9, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA0104_c09.html, about ½ into Ch. 9 (p. 175)

⁹⁶ GA 4, Chapter 12, "Moral Imagination," https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA004_c12.html, opening paragraph (p. 205)

general concept, ‘lion,’ is related to a specific lion (Steiner’s example⁹⁷). Two other steps need to be taken if it is to make its journey toward realization, fruition as a deed or a creation. Through “*moral imagination*” we inwardly create a mental image or “representation” of it. And to this we must apply “*moral technique*” – knowledge and skill in working with the laws that prevail in the realm of the world to which this deed or creation will relate.⁹⁸ It can be the case that those who possess the faculty of moral ideation, in whom ideas bubble up, possess neither the faculty of moral imagination nor the moral technique needed to ground the ideas in earthly reality. But others who do possess these capabilities can receive the ideas and work with them, to envision them and begin to give them form or to take what is envisioned and apply technical expertise. These others might not themselves have the capacity of laying hold of completely new ideas through moral ideation, yet are able to work with them after being given them. A healthy functioning of the cultural domain would no doubt be characterized by this interdependent flow of activity between people to generate possibilities for not only tangible creations but all of the deeds and agreements within and between the domains that will continually renew the social organism.

On self-examination we will typically find that our daily life is a mix of the levels of driving forces and of motives. But in the rise through the four levels of personal dispositions and of motives we can see the outline of our path, leading from a merely instinctive sensing of the primal thoughts that inform the three-membered organization of the social organism toward a fully-conscious grasp of these primal thoughts and how they would rightly hold sway in this organism. We can begin to recognize that our *Empfindung*-sensibility, our capacity for feeling-sensing perception, is just that: *perception*. And as Steiner explained in the earlier chapters of *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* and recapitulated in the first few pages of Chapter 9, as with all perceptions, a grasp of the full reality that these *Empfindung*-perceptions belong to will require us to engage our conscious thinking activity, our thinking-intuition. This is because we need to lay hold of the *concepts* that belong to these perceptions – which can also be called ‘percepts’ – and thus unite concept with percept, as the two halves that belong together and complete each other to make a whole.

Steiner described the utter incompleteness of percepts and their necessary completion through inwardly uniting them with the concepts which belong to them (with additions in brackets for further clarity in our context, Chapters 5, 8 and 13). Steiner made clear that that feelings, too, are percepts:

Let us look at this realm of mere perceptions: it appears as a mere juxtaposition in space, a mere succession in time, an aggregate of disconnected entities [or experiences]. None of the things which come and go on the stage of perception have any direct, perceptible connection with any others. From this aspect, the world is a multiplicity of objects [and experiences and feelings] of equal value. ... Without the functioning of thinking, the rudimentary organ of an animal which has no significance in its life appears to us as equal in value to the most important limb.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Ibid, GA 4, 2nd paragraph of Ch. 12 (p. 206)

⁹⁸ Ibid, GA 4, about ⅓ into Ch. 12 (p. 208)

⁹⁹ GA 4, Chapter 5, “The Act of Knowing the World,”

https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA004_c05.html, nearly ⅓ into chapter (pp. 111-12)

... [F]eeling is an incomplete reality which, in the form it is first given to us, does not as yet contain its second factor, the concept or idea. This is why in actual life, feelings, like perceptions, appear before cognition has occurred.¹⁰⁰

... For reality is attainable for man not through concept alone, but through the inter-penetration, mediated by thinking, of concept and perception (and a feeling is a perception).¹⁰¹

Supposing that we begin to achieve the ability to work at the level of ethical individualism, the question then arises: but can we then be in agreement with each other? Steiner answered this in the affirmative, and here is why: the fact that the world of ideas is “coherent” and “undivided” guarantees for us the possibility of unity” (his italics).

What appears to our observation as single entities, combines, bit by bit, through the coherent, undivided world of our intuitions, and through thinking we again fit together into a unity everything we had divided through perceiving.¹⁰²

The difference between me and my fellow men is not at all because we live in two quite different spiritual worlds, but because from the world of ideas which we share, he receives different intuitions from mine. He wants to live out *his* intuitions, I *mine*. If we both really draw from the idea, and are not obeying any external impulses (physical or spiritual), then we cannot but meet in the same striving, in having the same intentions.¹⁰³

One might also want to ask: but where does love come into this ethical individualism? – for love would surely seem to be the highest ethical conduct. We can consider three entries by Steiner in answer to this. This first entry concerns the nature of thinking itself (his italics in each of the three entries):

No other human soul-activity is so easily underestimated as thinking. Will and feeling warm the human soul even when experienced only in recollection. Thinking all too easily leaves the soul cold in recollection; the soul-life then appears to have dried out. But this is only the strong shadow cast by its warm luminous reality, which dives down into the phenomena of the world. This diving down is done by a power that flows within the thinking activity itself, the power of spiritual love. The objection should not be made that to see love in active thinking is to transfer into thinking a feeling, namely love. ... One who is willing to *experience intuitively* in thinking, will also be able to do justice to what is experienced in the realm of feeling and in the element of will, whereas

¹⁰⁰ GA 4, Chapter 8, “Factors of Life,” https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA004_c08.html, about ⅓ into chapter (p. 155)

¹⁰¹ GA 4, Chapter 13, “The Value of Life,” https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA004_c13.html, about ⅔ into chapter (p. 231)

¹⁰² GA 4, Chapter 5, about ⅔ into Ch 5 (p. 113)

¹⁰³ GA 4, Chapter 9, “The Idea of Freedom,” https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA004_c09.html, about ¾ into chapter (p. 180)

mysticism of feeling and metaphysics of will are incapable of doing justice to the activity of permeating existence with intuitive thinking.¹⁰⁴

A second entry is this:

While I am acting I am moved to act by the moral principle insofar as it lives in me intuitively; the moral principle is united with my *love* for what I want to accomplish by my deed. I ask no man and no code, Shall I do this? – rather I do it the moment I have grasped the idea of it. This alone makes it *my* action. ... I have found the source of my conduct within myself, namely, my love for the deed. I do not prove intellectually whether my deed is good or bad; I do it out of my *love* for it. My action will be “good” if my intuition, immersed in love, exists in the right way within the relationship between things; this can be experienced intuitively; the action will be “bad” if this is not the case.¹⁰⁵

And a third entry (Michael Lipson’s translation, Steiner’s italics, plus our underline to point out the distinction between motives– which are always ideas – and driving force):

This is by no means to claim that all our actions flow only from the sober deliberations of our reason. I am far from calling *human*, in the highest sense, only those actions that proceed from abstract judgment alone. ... But as soon as our actions lift themselves above the satisfaction of purely animal desires, our motives are always permeated by thoughts. Love, pity, patriotism are springs of action that cannot be reduced to cold rational concepts. People say that the heart, the sensibility [Gemüt, soul disposition], comes into its own in such matters. No doubt. But heart and sensibility do not create the motives of action. They [heart and soul] presuppose them [die selben, the same, i.e., the motives] and then receive them into their own realm. Pity appears in my heart when the mental image of a person who arouses pity in me enters my consciousness. The way to the heart goes through the head.

Love is no exception here. If it is not a mere expression of the sexual drive, then love is based on mental pictures that we form of the beloved. And the more idealistic these mental pictures are, the more blessed is the love. Here, too, thought is the father of feeling. People say that love makes us blind to the beloved’s flaws. But we can also turn this around and claim that love opens our eyes to the beloved’s strengths [merits]. Many pass by [ahnungslos, with no inkling of] these good qualities without noticing them. One person sees them and, just for this reason, love awakens in the soul. What

¹⁰⁴ GA 4, Chapter 8, “Factors of Life,” see the “Addition to the Revised Version, (1918)” https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA004_c08.html, at end of chapter (p. 160)

¹⁰⁵ GA 4, Chapter 9, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA004_c09.html, about ½ into chapter (p. 176)

else has this person done but make a mental picture of what a hundred others have ignored? Love is not theirs because they lack the *mental picture*.¹⁰⁶

And if we remain in any doubt about the power and importance of our thinking activity, there is a reason why Steiner advised that the English title of GA 4 would point to “spiritual activity.” He stated that the aim of the philosophical foundation he laid in the book “is to show that a properly understood experience of thinking *is* already an experience of spirit.”¹⁰⁷ In a lecture he enlarged on this:

Nobody could really develop genuine clairvoyance unless he already possessed a tiny bit of it. ... Ordinary thoughts and ideas have always contained the pearl of clairvoyance. All such thoughts and ideas owe their origin to the very same process that generates the loftiest faculties, and it is of the utmost importance to realize that the first stage of clairvoyance is actually something perfectly commonplace. We just need to recognize the supersensible nature of concepts and ideas to get clear on the fact that they come to us from supersensible worlds. This puts them in the right perspective.¹⁰⁸

And with gratitude to Rudolf Steiner and in honor of this powerfully helpful and illuminating work in epistemology, GA 4, I would like to add what he wrote to draw our awareness to an aspect of work of philosophy that is typically not grasped and appreciated: “All genuine philosophers have truly been *artists in concepts*.”¹⁰⁹

Primal Thoughts

Steiner wrote:

Even the first step [in unfolding the three-membering of the social organism] will not be taken in a worthwhile manner if it is not known what relation this step should have to the foundations of the healthy social organism. One who knows this will be able to find the appropriate tasks wherever he happens to be, or wherever he decides to go. Acquisition of the insight referred to here has been prevented by what has passed over, during a long period of time, from human will into social institutions. People have become so accustomed to these institutions that they have based on the institutions themselves their views about what should be preserved in them and what should be changed in them. Their thoughts conform to the things, instead of mastering them. It is

¹⁰⁶ GA 4, Chapter I, “The Fundamental Urge for Knowledge,” find the Lipson translation at <https://www.waldorfresearchinstitute.org/e-books>, end of chapter (or refer to the Stebbing translation at https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA004_c01.html)

¹⁰⁷ GA 4, “1st Addition to the Revised Edition, 1918,”

https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA004_appendix1.html, near end (p. 268)

¹⁰⁸ *The Occult Significance of the Bhagavad Gita*, GA 148, Rudolf Steiner, Lecture II, May 29, 1913, <https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA146/English/AP1968/19130529p01.html>, a bit over ½ into lecture

¹⁰⁹ GA 4, “2nd Addition to the Revised Edition, 1894,”

https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSPI1963/GA004_appendix2.html, near end (p. 284)

necessary today to perceive that it is only possible to arrive at factual judgements through a return to the primal thoughts which are the basis for all social institutions.¹¹⁰

It is not easy to determine, in our ever more complex world with its almost daily new challenges, how cultural, economic and rights decisions are related to “the foundations of the healthy social organism,” with emphasis on ‘healthy.’ This is particularly difficult because our thinking is framed in existing social structures and it is difficult to think outside of the box. One might even need to ask: is a given decision actually based on thinking activity at all, or is it merely a primitive reaction? Consider Article 1, Section 9, Clause 1 of the US Constitution:

The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person.¹¹¹

Besides the ugly use of the euphemism “such persons,” in reference to slaves, the clause quoted above imposes an endpoint for when the importation of black people as slaves must be stopped (1808), which was a concession to “slave-holding interests,”¹¹² in other words, slave owners. Jefferson, who owned over 600 enslaved people in his lifetime,¹¹³ stated in the first draft of the Declaration of Independence: “the African slave trade [is] an ‘execrable commerce’ and an affront ‘against human nature itself.’”¹¹⁴ Here we see the conscious recognition of a primal thought – that the slave trade is counter to human dignity and human rights – and its forced submission and its sacrifice to economic and cultural pressures.

The above exemplifies the complexity of the words ‘primal’ and ‘thoughts.’ And in the context of ‘healthy,’ the challenge is first stepping outside of the box of institutional thinking, then discerning the primal thought and whether it is actually primal and a thought. Only then, as Steiner wrote: “One who knows this [primal thought] will be able to find the appropriate tasks wherever he happens to be, or wherever he decides to go.” This seems rather daunting but it is critical to take up the point in the quote from Steiner at the start of this section. Furthermore, we are challenged with the fact that many of these institutions have very much deviated from their original intention. As Steiner wrote, we must “observe at what point institutions diverge from the forms indicated by the primal thoughts, and ... counteract such divergences before they become dangerously powerful.”¹¹⁵ And lastly, we must become ever more conscious of this rather than allowing this sense of a healthy social order to remain instinctive. Again, as Steiner wrote: “... we need to learn the direction in which the actual realities must

¹¹⁰ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c03.html, 2 pages into Ch. 3 (p. 84)

¹¹¹ <https://www.heritage.org/constitution/#!/articles/1/essays/60/slave-trade>

¹¹² <https://www.heritage.org/the-constitution/commentary/what-the-constitution-really-says-about-race-and-slavery>

¹¹³ <https://www.whitehousehistory.org/slavery-in-the-thomas-jefferson-white-house>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.heritage.org/the-constitution/commentary/what-the-constitution-really-says-about-race-and-slavery>

¹¹⁵ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c03.html, 3 pages into Ch. 3 (p. 85)

now be consciously guided, for the time has gone by in which the old, instinctive guidance sufficed for mankind.”¹¹⁶

A healthy society depends on primal thoughts. They further our understanding of human dignity and human rights and inform all three domains of the corrective action needed. However Steiner described how unhealthy it can be if these primal thoughts are allowed to work “chaotically”:

If adequate sources are not present from which the forces that reside in these primal thoughts constantly flow into the social organism, then the institutions take on forms which inhibit rather than further life. The primal thoughts live on, more or less unconsciously, in the human instinctive impulses however, while fully conscious thoughts lead to error and create hindrances to life. These primal thoughts, which manifest themselves chaotically in a life inhibiting world, are what underlie, openly or disguised, the revolutionary convulsions of the social organism.¹¹⁷

Primal thoughts are not absolute but rather related to the social awareness of the time. Consider the evolution of the concept of gender equality. First we have the Declaration of Independence, 1776, that says all *men* are created equal. In 1923 – but to this day not ratified at the Federal level – the Equal Rights Amendment¹¹⁸ was proposed, designed to guarantee equal legal rights for all American citizens regardless of gender, where the concept of gender was limited to “men” and “women.” In 2022, “Madrigal-Borloz said that in access to health, employment, education and housing, the LGBTQ community suffers.”¹¹⁹ Here we see the sensibility for equality in relation to gender shifting over time as societal consciousness evolves, bringing a shift in the perception of the primal thought, if one has arrived at the conviction that gender equality is in fact a primal thought.

What is a Healthy Social Organization?

This brings us to the question, what is a healthy social organization? Or more concretely, can the vision of a healthy social organization be separated from the context of *the current social organization* in any given place or society in which activities such as slavery are still condoned?

Slavery very much still exists in the 21st century and in various cultural contexts, as pointed out by this CNN article based on a report published on Sept 12, 2022 by the International Labour Organization (ILO), Walk Free and the International Organisation for Migration:

An estimated 50 million people worldwide are believed to be victims of forced marriage and forced labor. ... Modern slavery refers to forced labor and forced marriage, when someone cannot refuse to comply or escape owing to threats, violence and deception ... armed conflicts, and the climate crisis caused “unprecedented disruption” to employment and education, leading to an increase in poverty, unsafe migration and gender-based violence – all risks for modern day slavery.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Ibid, GA 23, 3 pages into Ch. 3 (p. 85)

¹¹⁷ Ibid, GA 23, 2 pages into Ch. 3 (pp. 84-85)

¹¹⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equal_Rights_Amendment

¹¹⁹ <https://www.nbcnews.com/nbc-out/out-news/us-sees-progress-lgbtq-rights-equality-lacking-un-expert-says-rcna45622>

¹²⁰ <https://www.cnn.com/2022/09/12/asia/modern-slavery-forced-marriage-climate-health-intl-hnk/index.html>

These questions confront us. But points of view vary. We might find that many people think society is generally healthy, but is it in actuality healthy? Conversely, we might find that many people think society is generally unhealthy and are asking, ‘how do we make it healthy?’ What parts are healthy and what parts are diseased?

We see that these questions (and many others) are equally valid depending on the viewpoint of the person asking and the question being asked is influenced by the person’s confirmation biases which “indicate why a group of individuals with opposing views on a topic can view the same evidence.”¹²¹

There has always been a lag time between an activity and the consideration of whether that activity is healthy for society. The issues that society must consider have multiplied and accelerated exponentially as a result of rapid technological development. Ironically, the advent of the Internet has expedited the discussion of the ethics of an activity if for no other reason than the awareness of that activity occurs faster and with broader reach than any time in our history. The sheer volume of issues to consider and the complexity of those issues can be overwhelming. “People may experience feelings of powerlessness when considering areas where they feel a lack of strength, competence, or skills to overcome realities in life that have no solution or answer.”¹²² This paints a bleak picture. We can ask ourselves the question: is there really any reality in life that has no solution or answer? We can explore our personal relationship to our feelings of “lack of strength, competence, or skills” when confronted with situations that seem to have no solution or answer. Are there situations where there is truly no answer?

A Heightened Sensibility

To discern the idea of ‘healthy’ again requires our faculty of feeling-sensing-perceiving, of *‘Empfindung.’* This discernment is complicated by the fact that the social organism is constantly changing. “Perhaps the most challenging virtue in this time is discernment, and it may be the one most needed.”¹²³ Steiner pointed out several times that what he presented in GA 23 is not of the nature of a utopian solution to put in place. It is something which evolves, as it must in order to meet the needs of the society as society itself evolves. In 1919, the ethics of artificial intelligence and cloning were not on society’s radar because these concerns simply did not exist. LGBTQ rights were shunned/ignored by the social norms of that time. As society as a whole becomes more conscious of its challenges, the discernment of matters of human dignity and human rights must become a more conscious process and must do so at a pace that matches the rate of societal change.

But how? Even the concept of truth is questioned. Over two thousand years ago Pilate asked: “What is truth?”¹²⁴ The rock opera Jesus Christ Superstar¹²⁵ expanded Pilate’s question to reflect our modern day societal thinking: “And what is ‘truth’? Is truth unchanging law? We both have truths. Are mine the same as yours?” How can we agree that someone’s discernment of ‘healthy’ is actually an archetypal truth regarding a healthy social order? Can we even agree that there is an archetypal truth? As Amit Goswami, PhD and theoretical quantum physicist wrote:

¹²¹ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10796-021-10222-9>

¹²² <http://psychology.iresearchnet.com/papers/power-and-powerlessness/>

¹²³ Robert Sardello, *The Power of Soul: Living the Twelve Virtues*, Epilogue, Goldenstone Press, 2012

¹²⁴ The Book of John 18:38

¹²⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_Christ_Superstar

One of our most important archetypal values is truth. All our intuitions hint at a truth-value, and that bothers us: Seek and ye shall find, and you will be troubled! If we follow up our troubled minds and engage creativity, the products will express a transcendent truth—this truth is a common aspect of the archetypal themes.¹²⁶

We can only penetrate the primal thoughts and develop our relationship to the concept of a healthy social order through our individual *Empfindung* of what human dignity and human rights means.

There are two key points here. The first is that we do so with conscious participation rather than instinctively.

As Steiner wrote:

Modern times demand the individual's conscious participation in this organism.¹²⁷

And:

Good will is therefore necessary in order to turn energetically to the primal thoughts and not to underestimate how damaging it is, especially today, to banish them from life as 'impractical' generalities. Criticism of what modern times have made of the social organism exists in the life and in the demands of the proletarian population. The task of our times is to counteract the one-sided criticism by finding, in the primal thoughts, the direction to be taken in order that events be consciously guided. For the time has passed in which humanity can be satisfied with what instinctive guidance is able to bring about.¹²⁸

In other words, we really must not shy away from the task of discovering these primal thoughts.

The second key point is that exercising our faculty of *Empfindung* is a continual process, not a utopian endpoint, both from the perspective of a constantly changing society and our own human limitations. This process demands our engagement and conversation, particularly in disagreements over what we individually feel-sense-perceive (the verb, *empfinden*). Listening is a key element of conversation. As Robert Sardello wrote: "Listening rescues truth from the current degradation of living falsely, living anonymously, and living separate from the listening cosmos and the sacred Earth."¹²⁹ Sadly, when we fail to listen, the truth has a tendency to walk out the door.

The Critical Role of Administration

Each domain requires its own kind of administration, which one might view as an internal legislation specific to the requirements of the domain and independent of the overarching rights domain. The administrative aspects of each domain cannot be understated, especially as everything has become (or very much seems to have become!) more complicated since 1919.

Within each domain, having documented procedures, practices, and workflows is critical to the smooth operation of the domain. Having documentation that informs people of how a particular process should

¹²⁶ <https://www.amitgoswami.org/2018/09/09/the-archetype-of-truth/>

¹²⁷ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c02.html, 3 pages from end of Ch. 2 (p. 80)

¹²⁸ GA 23, https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA023/English/SCR2001/GA023_c03.html, 3 pages into Ch 3 (p. 85)

¹²⁹ Robert Sardello, from a description of his book, *Contemplative Listening*, Independently Published, 2020

work is vital for consistent repeatability of that process. Documentation actually promotes creativity because it serves as a reference point for the suggestion and development of improvements. Having an organized repository of documentation allows one to review the internal policies with regards to the needs of human relationships and dignity. This includes policies such as ‘code of conduct’ – a simple example being the request to remove one’s shoes in a particular venue. This is clearly not a concern of the rights domain but is instead an administrative concern of the venue as part of its participation in the cultural domain. Another example is how the money collected in a donation basket is to be dispersed. By having a clearly stated policy, the venue, the event speaker/performers and the sponsor of the event all know what the intended standard practice is (established for the sake of all in the present and foreseeable future) and can therefore negotiate adjustments to it consciously.

In our technological society, administration must also consider the issues of security and data collection. Personal Identifying Information (PII) such as names, physical and email addresses, phone numbers, credit card information, and so forth, is not just a consideration of the domain internally but in our society is often regulated by the rights sphere:

In the U.S., no single federal law regulates the protection of PII. Instead, there is a complex patchwork system of federal and state laws, sector-specific regulations, common law principles, and self-regulatory programs developed by industry groups.¹³⁰

Endeavors that take up the three domains must have the administration in place within each domain such that it functions with cognizance of the laws governing PII, laws which can be ever-better guided and crafted by our *Empfindung* concerning the handling of PII.

Administration in a domain must also consider intellectual property, copyright, patents, trademarks, and confidential information. Even if the work one is providing is ‘free’ or ‘gifted,’ a copyright notice such as a Creative Commons¹³¹ license gives important information to others as to the extent of use and further distribution of a work. Because such endeavors (whether personal or a group) must interact with people, businesses and governments outside of itself, as part of its administration, it is important to consciously consider the protection of their work.

Administration of ‘what was decided’ is also important, typically in the form of minutes. Minutes offer legal protection and structure, drive action, act as a measuring stick, and declare ownership of roles and responsibilities.¹³² Accurate minutes are useful to newcomers to the endeavor, too (such as new board or executive committee members), enabling them to review what decisions have been taken in the past and how and why they were taken.

The importance of administration within each domain of an endeavor cannot be overstated. This aspect of the life of each domain needs to be seriously considered right at the start – ‘how do we administer ourselves in relation to the three domains within our smaller organism and in relation to social organisms beyond ours in the larger society?’ – before unfolding any other activity of the endeavor.

¹³⁰ <https://legal.thomsonreuters.com/en/insights/articles/data-privacy-principles>

¹³¹ <https://creativecommons.org/>

¹³² <https://www.allbusiness.com/five-reasons-why-meeting-minutes-are-important-4113272-1.html>

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Kate Reese Hurd is a resident of Philmont NY, long-time anthroposophist and graduated eurythmist with a background in music and literature, reciter of poetry since 2015 and writer of articles and reports on eurythmy and a manual of speech work exercises (alliterations and assonance) in relation to eurythmy. In her library for many years has been the work of Rudolf Steiner on the three domains of the social organism. One reason for her long-standing interest in the ‘social question’ is not just what she has perceived as unhealthy arrangements within the body-social generally, but also what she experienced personally as someone inclined toward working in several of the arts. One of her parents actively blocked her efforts to gain appropriate training. Why was this? – for fear that she might not be able to ‘support’ herself as a musician, artist or eurythmist. And this worry is quite right when facing social arrangements as they stand! But one thing her parent failed to grasp is Kate’s desire to work and to be productive no matter what – a healthy trait, artist or not!

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¹³³ <https://www.thephilmonter.org/>