

RUDOLF STEINER LIBRARY



VYDZ019257

**THE CONSEQUENCES OF THREEFOLDING
FOR LAND**

Lecture by Dr. Rudolf Steiner

Stuttgart, ¹⁶ June, 1920 (GA 337a)

Printed as Manuscript
(special reprint from the volume of
The Sociology of the Land by Rudolf Steiner)
for the participants in the
Social Science discussions of 8 & 9 June, 1940

AT THE GOETHEANUM, DORNACH

Publisher: Social Science Association at the Goetheanum¹

Rudolf Steiner Library,
65 Fern Hill Road
Ghent, NY 12075
(518) 672-7090
rsl@nerlibrary@ix.com.net

¹ Translated in 2004 and added to collection of Rudolf Steiner Library, Ghent, New York. (Translator not noted.)

My Dear Honored Guests!

Today I would like to speak about the Threefolding of the Social Organism in such a way that, through the viewpoints my exposition will treat, some light can fall on what, in modern times, based on the facts of the national economy, has been called the land question.

One feature of the Threefold idea is that through it one can learn to see how certain discussions and agitations that have developed based on conditions that lead us into decline – how these discussions and agitations in the old style must cease if we want at all to move further in a fruitful way.

The land question is something that interests wide circles very much, because the price, also the availability and marketability of land, is closely bound up with human destiny and living conditions.

How one has to pay for one's dwelling, how one has to calculate the prices of land into the prices of food, is something that everyone intimately feels.

But one need only to think about it a little and one will find that what proceeds from the land in an economic sense has an effect on all the other relations. Just as one has to pay for one's food in proportion to the price of land, so it is also that, if one is in a profession, one has to be supported by that profession, etc.

But not only those immediate life-sustaining factors are connected with land relations, but also many broader cultural and civilization matters. We need only think of how the rural areas relate to the cities – how conditions of life in the cities, regarding difficulty or ease of living conditions, are influenced by conditions in the rural areas. On the latter will depend what can develop in the cities. Conditions of wealth reflect those of cities and rural areas, of cities and suburbs. In a city, conditions of prosperity result, conditions of well-being result and develop also, at least, under our recent cultural conditions, and especially in the cities, what we call – at least publicly – spiritual life. A lonely mystic can, to be sure, be found in the country, but in the whole context of scientific activities, of technical activities or artistic activities, one can keep up the pace only if one has some kind of connection with city life. This is indeed something that becomes apparent even from only a superficial view of life.

And one could also cite many other things that would show how the land question and with it also the question of how the city relates to the country, cuts deeply into our cul-

tural situation. Thus the land question must also be considered along with all that has driven our culture into decline.

The more recent treatment of the land question concerns in particular the rise in the value or price of land, which bothers a great number of people who consider it unjust. They noticed how little the price of any specific parcel of land at any specific time had to do with human labor and any other kind of human development. And I know what a great impression a very well-known land reform exponent, Damaschke, kept making when he told his audiences to imagine a certain person bought a piece of land, knowing that a factory was to be built near this piece of land, also that the city would expand toward that piece, that a railway would be built there, or things like that. He bought that piece in the expectation that its value would increase dramatically in the next few years. He bought it just before he went to prison for three years. When he got out, his land was worth five times as much as before. The man had done nothing more for the value of his land than sit in prison for three years!

An image like that has of course a powerful effect. And one cannot even say that it was wrong. Something is working here that is readily comprehensible, and rightly so, because it can actually be just this way. And then – passing by many things – this knowledge leads us to the conclusion that the part played by land values in our economic system cannot remain the way it is, and must undergo reforms in some way.

And indeed the most varied reforms – but all of them going in the same direction – have been put forward. Henry George, Damaschke, and, between them, many others, all of which, shaded in different ways – the form not being at issue here – say that land must somehow belong to all. Not that all land reformers wanted an immediate nationalization of land, but they did want rises in value to be taxed, in some cases almost to the full extent of the increase if it happened without the owner having improved it in some significant way. This would be called a value-added tax and be turned over to the community. One can think of other ways, among which land being committed to becoming a sort of common property. But, doubtless, the man who had so harmed his fellow men that they felt the urge to put him in prison could also compel him, after he had served his three years, to take the accrued extra value enjoyed by his land and turn it over to the public treasury.

Damaschke indeed will emphasize that he wouldn't consider submitting other means of production to the same fate as land, the way I have characterized it. He proves that

other means of production go up in value in an entirely different way when they are part of private property. He also proves that other means of production, the value-added category, are entirely different from the price increases of land, and are not to be compared to them.

Say that this is certainly illuminating and could hardly be disagreed with. But – you have seen that there is nationalization: transference of what was produced purely by private economy and was compensated privately, to the administration of a certain collective entity. But one cannot say that the experience with such things in past years has been satisfying in every way! For I do not believe – at least some of you will have noticed – that it happened to all people the way it should – regarding rationing or in the communalizing of food and other things. Some people experienced “squirreling” during those years when a lot of goods were communalized, as I believe. And the social impulse that should be given with Threefolding does not want to make pretenses to itself or others. Rather, it seeks to give such impulses that do not remain on paper or cater to a certain type of people, whereas other people are in a position to get around them – and in a big way. But rather the impulse brought by the Threefolding of the Social Organism should be an impulse based on reality which, if it is realized, would achieve what it intended. Whoever knows life, and actually *only* he who knows life, can really understand what the impulse for Threefolding in all seriousness wants. One who makes an effort to understand life, and who does really understand life, will have no doubt that there can be hoarding of increased land values if one communalizes land in the way the land reformers who think out of the old ideas want. It is altogether possible not only in Lenin’s state but also in Damaschke’s, by all sorts of back doors, to render ineffective what comes into the world by way of laws.

The impulse for the Threefolding of the Social Organism simply cannot ignore the fundamental principle that social realities are the work of human beings and that social realities cannot be implemented by laws that come from the old ways of thinking and picturing society and the state. It depends on human beings and on that social organization and social organism that makes certain that no human beings can find ways to circumvent unjustly, or in an immoral way, anything pertaining to the social organism. At least one must come as close as possible to such a demand from life.

One can look at what we call the Threefolding of the Social Organism from the most varied standpoints. One can adduce something I gave as a first attempt in my *Toward Social Renewal*. One can also characterize the necessity for Threefolding from other viewpoints the way it was done by me and others for more than a year right here in Stuttgart. But one can, for example, also vindicate the following viewpoints. One can say:

In the whole course of recent human evolution we have come to the point of not being able to tolerate certain arrangements because of the way we think today, and to demand other establishments more suitable to our modern condition of soul. The cause of the worldwide chaos we have now is that certain evolutionary conditions of the last few centuries are unbearable. The one has the indefinite feeling that present conditions are not to be borne; he hears Damaschke tell how significant it is that a prisoner can realize the five-fold increase in the value of his property in three years without doing anything for it. Another is told of Marxism and takes it on. A third is told that if we do not preserve the old so-called "Junkerdom",² then the whole world will go into chaos: so we have to protect it!

But basically the reasons why people are dissatisfied with contemporary conditions lie deep in human nature, and what are being developed as plans (just now that's how it is) are fundamentally only dreams, only illusions they make up. They never get to what they really want. And thus one or another spins a theory based on one or another habit of life, calling it logical and foisting it on the social sector. At bottom it all depends on whether one lives within the proletariat or was born into a Prussian House, whether he is a habitual Marxist, or whether he is a conservative like Herr von Heydebrand and der Lasa. These programs, emanating from left or right, they actually have nothing more to do with reality. When something like a Reichstag election is being held, the talk at it would be as though a wicked cosmic demon were to have dreams, and these dreams passed over into the consciousness of the party members, and leaders were entertaining themselves with what, basically, had nothing at all to do with what ought to be happening.

For humanity tends today toward a most definite goal. Only it is unclear about this goal.

² Prussian landed aristocracy.

To begin with, humanity feels that there is no ordering of spiritual affairs, the way it has been done so far. This happens because, despite all the materialism, there is filtered spirituality in the abstractions to which people devote themselves today. For instance, the proletariat, in spite of seeming to be the ones dealing mostly with "realities," "production," and the like, also deals with spiritual abstractions and, with these, cannot come to any kind of construct that comprehends reality. The people feel that they must hold to something spiritual, and that the spiritual must also be there in order to engage in social life in order to build the social structure of the social organism, which is, after all, enlivened by human beings.

What, then, fundamentally speaking, has built the structure of our social organism right down into our day? The spirit? No, I don't think it was the spirit. If, for example, I inherit a large estate from my father, that is something different; there it is a natural connection, that is, blood. Blood, with all other possible contexts bound up with it, can, still, today, put a person in a certain position, on which his relation to the spiritual life will depend. His educational background, formed by old traditions largely based on blood ties, gives him social status no longer tolerable to the people, especially regarding spiritual life. They feel instinctively that the spirit should have a say in the social structures of the future, rather than the old principle of blood ties.

You know, the churches, in order to keep up with what has developed, have adapted to it in a way that one cannot stand it, namely regarding the resolutions of the eighth ecumenical Council of Constantinople in the year 869, where to a certain degree the spirit was abolished; where it was determined that, to be sure, the human soul had some specific spiritual qualities, but that the human being consisted of body and soul, not of body, soul and spirit. Among the things that spread out over the civilized world as a world conception, due to the demands of the spirit having been held back, something developed that could be injected into the whole pursuit of spiritual life and yet was not determined *by* the spirit. Yet today the human being, out of his inmost depths, *wants the spirit to have a voice in the disposition of the social structure*. But only when spiritual life is no longer an appendage of the old blood ties, or of what has evolved from them, the state; -- only when the spiritual life has been placed on its own, when the spiritual life functions only according to the impulses that lie within it, can it have this voice. Only then, in this spiritual life, can one assume that those people who have leadership roles, in terms of their obligations (we will shortly speak about a few things that are their bounden duty. In *To-*

ward *Social Renewal* [*Kernpunkte ...*] many aspects are developed.) -- one can assume, on behalf of these leading personalities, that they will really bring people into the social structure on the basis of *knowledge* about talents, diligence, etc., without *laws*, through knowledge of the purely natural. One will have to say: In the realm of spiritual life that will be standing on its own, working out of its own impulses, there knowledge of the factual will be determining. In short: the spiritual life, the spiritual part of the social organism, will demand knowledge that are deeds of power; knowledge that is knowledge with the power of deeds.

To the extent that the spiritual is working in it, our entire social organism is after all bound up, right down to the most factual matters, with what appears with every new generation; indeed, every new individual person brings in new forces, out of indeterminate depths, into the social organism. Take the present point in time. Might you, somehow, out of the present time, if you have honorable intentions, set up any sort of organization which would determine, in some definite manner, how people should get along together? No, you may not do that. For with every single human being new forces are born out of unknown depths. We have to educate these people, and have then to wait to see what *they* bring into life. We are not to tyrannize what has been brought into life by imposing on them already prevailing laws, or even a prevailing organization; we must openly receive what has been brought to us out of spiritual worlds. We may not tyrannize it and dogmatize on the basis of what already exists. Thus we need such a member of the social organism that works entirely out of freedom, out of the freedom that works into human beings out of their innate dispositions.

The second member of the Social Organism, the Rights-State life, has more to do with something that is less dependent on what comes in new. For, as we know, it is those who have come of age who are active in the rights life, in the life of the state. And by the time we have come of age we have already been gripped in large measure by what is average in man. It is to an extent the leveling element of philistinism that has got us in the neck. And insofar as we are grown up we are all equal, we are thus (that is not said in a negative sense) we are, in a sense wearing the blinders of philistosity. We exist within that which can be *regulated* through *laws*.

You will say [regarding coming of age]: Sure, but we cannot make all of our cultural/spiritual life dependent on children, the spiritual disposition, the spiritual capacity and the spiritual diligence must go beyond the age of majority -- ? Fundamentally not!

Paradoxical as it may seem! For those abilities that go beyond the average, when we have gone beyond the twenties, derive from the fact that we – serious spiritual research shows us this step for step – have kept what we have had in childhood as predispositions, etc. And the greatest genius is the person who carries the most forces of childhood into his thirties, forties, and fifties. One puts these capabilities into practice only with the mature organism, the mature soul, the mature spirituality; but these are the forces of childhood. Unfortunately, these characteristics of our culture have the peculiarity that they beat to death, through schooling, these very characteristics of childhood, so that these characteristics of childhood survive into adulthood and de-philistinize only the lowest possible number of people who make it into the philistine age. For this not-being-philistine comes about because the forces of childhood that have been preserved and de-philistinized: they break through subsequent philistinism.

So because something enters in that does not continually have to be renewed with respect to the contemporary needs of human consciousness, the relations of the rights life and the life of the state can be regulated in this new age only on democratic grounds.

Laws are not knowledge. Regarding knowledge we must always confront reality, and based on this reality we have to attain, through knowledge, to those impulses that suggest what we should do. Thus it is concerning education and everything else I have shown in *Toward Social Renewal*, that it has to emanate from the spiritual member of the social organism.

How is it now with *laws*? Laws are enacted so that the political life of the state, the rights life, can be maintained. But one must wait until one has cause to act regarding to the law. Only then can we go to law. Or one must wait with the law until someone has broken it. In short, there is always something at hand that gave rise to the law. But the suit can follow only for cause. The element of contingency is always there, the *casus eventualis*. That is what always has to be the basis for the law. One must wait until one has a case involving the law. The law must be there, but if it does not impinge upon my own sphere of interest, then I don't have it on my mind. There are today many who think that they are interested in the law in general. But what I said is still true, just the way I indicated it. If one is honest, one must concede this. So now: the law is something that exists, but must work toward "eventuality." That is what must lie at the foundation of rights: the state, the political member of the threefolding of the social organism.

Regarding the *economic* member, the law is not sufficient, because, just to pass laws, say, about whether this or that firm delivers this or that to someone in some particular way or other does not deal adequately with the subject. There one cannot work with eventualities. For this there is a third element alongside knowledge, where the law enters in: that is the specific *contract*: -- the contract drawn up between those doing business, between corporations and associations -- that does not, like the law, operate with eventualities, but rather deals with definite fulfillment of contracts.

Just as knowledge must prevail in spiritual life, and as the law in the state-political-rights life, so the *contract*, as such, in all its subdivisions, with all its variations, must predominate in the economic life. The category of the contract, that is not oriented toward eventuality, but rather toward obligation, that is what must effect everything you will find described in *Toward Social Renewal* as the third member of the social organism.

We can thus say: we have here three readily visible points of view from which we can understand how by nature these three members must be: everything in life that underlies *knowledge* must be administered by the free ground of spiritual life. Everything in life that can be framed in laws belongs to the state. Everything that is subject to obligating contracts must be made part of the economy.

If people think that what has been worked out in *Toward Social Renewal* consisted of a few ideas spun into a web, they are grossly in error. One can talk on and on about what has been expressed in the *Renewal* from the most varied points of view. Because it has been taken from life! And one can portray life only the way one photographs a tree: from one side one has this aspect, from a second, another, from a third, fourth side yet another side, etc. That's the most characteristic thing: when something comes directly out of life itself, not a contorted utopia, or a contorted idea, but rather right out of life, then one can always find new aspects, because life is manifold and rich in content. One cannot basically exhaust what can be learned about the necessity for the threefolding of the social organism. And it is also nothing indefinite or nebulous, rather something that can be put into the sharpest concepts, the way I showed you again today with reference to *Knowledge, Law, and Contract*.

Now the thing is that one must say: one has to work toward -- and one can today work out of normal, real conditions in the direction of Threefold -- in the direction that is given by ultimately having the social organism divided into three sub-organisms working to-

gether administratively. And in the end one would have to see that all the solutions derived from old arrangements, and end up being merely a rehash of the old conditions, are out of date.

Hence when the land reformers say: the one whose real estate has increased in value without any deserving or work on his part, would have to pay to the state a property tax of such and such a sum, then one has to do with an old form of the state. One has no inkling that also this *state* would have to be reformed, that it can be only one member of the social organism. That is the peculiarity, that even the most radical reformer of the day cannot actually think that something must be formed out of the depths of the social relations of humanity, and that not everything that must be achieved can be achieved if one presses what we are trying to achieve back into the old forms. The state remains anyway, if it pours into its little coffers what it takes from the land speculators – and when it lets it flow back again to them or to others (in ways that are possible after all), and which these people will get without deserving, without working, will also increase in value, etc.

Check out what would result for you from the membering of the social order if, in all seriousness, you take up the thought of threefolding. Then you will find that all that lies in this direction – since the old mischief can be poured into new forms – becomes a sheer impossibility if one takes seriously the application of what underlies Threefold.

For what is land actually?

Land is obviously a means of production. We produce with land. But it is a means of production of a different type from the other means of production.

The other means of production must first be made ready by human labor, and land is, in the main, already there without having to be readied by man. Hence once can say: the other means of production tend toward commodity; for when they are finished, when they have been given over to their function – we have repeatedly emphasized this; I myself have emphasized this repeatedly: Means of production may be in economic circulation only until they have been finished and have been given over to economic life – then they are no longer commodities. What are they after that? They become subject to the life of the *state*, democracy, regarding the amount of work men are to do in connection with the means of production; with oversight as to how the adults who serve the means of production deal with one another, that is, that they do a definite amount of work for it. And finally, with what becomes subject to the authority of the spiritual [cultural] life, as when

the leadership of the means of production passes from one person to another, so that it is always the one who is deemed suited to handle the means of production who actually gets to do it. For it is the spiritual life, not the old inheritance factors, that should determine who should control the means of production when the previous leader is no longer operating it, and should bestow it on the one who through *knowledge* (which is the only way modern consciousness can cope with it), through his disposition and abilities, is qualified to take care of the means of production. So one can say: If there is anything that lies at the base of Threefold, it is that the means of production are commodities only while *they* are being produced. After that they become subject to the law and to knowledge. Through *laws* and *knowledge* they are incorporated into the social structure.

Land cannot be produced. It is thus from the start not a commodity. So it is never subject to the principle of commodity, over which one draws up contracts, hence has nothing at all to do with commodities subject to contracts; rather it must gradually be led over into the social structure, so that primarily the apportioning of land for human labor becomes the business of the democratic, political state, and the transition from one to the other is the affair of the *spiritual* member of the social organism.

That is, living conditions within the democratic state decide who is to work on a piece of land for the benefit of man. Land is never a commodity. It is from the start not to be bought and sold. One has first to strive for the goal that one cannot buy and sell land but rather that it be legal and spiritual conditions, legal and spiritual impulses, that govern how land is led into the sphere of being worked by man. Only one who doesn't make these thoughts clear to himself could think that there is something utopian about them. For basically it is merely another way of stating what we already have today. For it is no truth, rather an illusion, that one can pay for land with money, perhaps generated by the sale of commodities. That is a *social lie*.

Money used as the equivalent for land is different in the national economic process from money used as the equivalent for a commodity. That is something so difficult to penetrate in the current social chaos. Let's assume that you are buying cherries, and thus give money for them. You buy some knightly estate and you give money for it. Now if both parties who have received money, the one for cherries (a goodly number, of course; it is not the main point that in this regard the matter is also possible) he receives money, and the other party also receives money for his knightly estate – if you mix the money together you could not tell which monies were paid for the cherries and which went for the

estate. But for just that reason, that one cannot make the distinction, one is being led into a frightful, destructive *illusion*.

See here, if I draw little crosses and then little circles, then if I were to mix them all up together, I would still be able to distinguish them. But if I had no sense of the difference between little crosses and ringlets, then I would no longer be able to differentiate one from the other. In other words, if I were to make the crosses and the ringlets both look like half circles and drew them up that way, then one would no longer be able to tell the difference.

But in reality it is not at all like that. It is basically different here. Assume I get the cherry money. And I get the knightly estate money. If I mix it all together then, sure, I cannot distinguish which money I got from the knightly estate and which money I got from the cherries. Well, one could say: Money is money. But that is just the frightful illusion. It is *not true!* In the national economic process, the ringlets – those which come from the knightly estate – affect the whole of human life differently from the little crosses – which come from the cherries. It is not the money that in reality constitutes what happens! Rather the aftereffect of where the money comes from, that's what. And a veil is simply spread over it. So it is no longer apparent to human observation.

And thus money forms a living abstraction. Everything gets mixed up without differentiation. Man is no longer able to be where he belongs, what he is producing, what he is working on. [*sic*] Through money everything is confused. As with the unclear mystic, all flows confusedly into a couple of abstractions. And just the way these abstract concepts are not to be used in our way to knowledge, so also it is not to be used in life, namely how man thinks about money, which is also an abstraction – but compared to the reality it is not something one can use in life. Just let us be clear what immense, concrete significance land has in human life, how in connection with land it should never happen that I, without any interest in the land, should be a land owner, merely collecting my income from the land, everything else being a matter of indifference to me – try to have an overview, from a national economic standpoint, of what it means: I live from the land; but fundamentally it is a matter of indifference whether I live from the land or if I live from my winnings at solitaire or poker. At bottom all this is absolutely the same. All that matters is to make a sum of money! – that it is all the same. That one earns money in this way or that is not so bad as long as one earns it. But when one gets it – not from one's father, rather from something connected with weal or woe, with destiny, indeed with the

whole configuration of the culture, the way *land* is, then it is *not* possible to transform this *land* into indifferent, abstract money. For it is precisely *land* that makes it necessary that the one who is working it, who has something to do with it, the one who leads it over into the economic process, whatever depends on the land – which is certainly not the money that it brings in, rather the fruits that thrive on it – that he be part of it.

Within its own bounds it is absolutely not to be administered according to the economic categories that have been worked out in recent times. Please, just figure it out: If someone works up his own fertilizer on his property and fertilizes his property with the manure brought forth from his own cattle – figure out how one should come to the point of assigning a value to this dung – perchance work out the market value of the fertilizer, and what the fertilizer would be worth if it were to stink up the markets in the cities. That is merely a drastic example.

If you carry this line of reasoning to the end you will find that an enormous difference obtains: 1.) between the whole manner and way in which the produce of an estate based on a self-sustaining economy is led into the national economic process; that is, when the one who is working on an estate, be it large or small, regards its management, based on his capacities, as his primary concern. And 2.) the way and manner in which an estate functions, and must function, where the only purpose is to realize the most money possible that one can exploit it for.

But the way we stand today in public life, things have to balance themselves out. One who is a self-provider cannot help adapting to the one who rents it out to him and collects the revenue.

So our situation is unnatural in that what comes out of the concrete has to adapt itself to abstract money considerations. Considered out of the concrete, the land, it becomes obvious how the several products must mutually carry one another, how the one must support the other; that is assessed completely differently in the individual economy, assessed by completely different motives from the situation where things are simply brought to the money-ridden market. But then, gradually – that has indeed already happened, and is why, today, we are in this unnatural situation – then gradually the independent individual economic activity will become dependent on a completely abstract relationship involving money. *Land*, that cannot be a commodity, is being *made* into a commodity, and, through this, a real lie is being brought in. Not only what is *spoken* is

the lie. Also what *happens* is a lie. As soon as one *thinks* of land as a commodity, that is, one can buy and sell it, then one is lying through one's *deeds*.

For if one has Threefolding of the social order, then one cannot *buy* land. The conditions under which land passes from one to another are subject to the laws of the states, which have nothing to do with the buying and selling of wares: *How* land is transferred from one man to another – the decision about this is subject to the *spiritual* member of the social organism, which has nothing to do with inheritance and blood ties, but rather with such matters as I have portrayed them in *Toward Social Renewal*.

What does Damaschke want? He takes up the land question; he contemplates it; and out of this contemplation of his, the land question should be solved. But out of sheer contemplation no *real* subjects are resolved! I would like to know sometime, just how, by taking thought, how you would thrash sugar[cane], chop wood, and so forth, how you, by contemplating, would attempt to eat. Just as little as one can thrash sugar or eat, just as little can one solve the land question by merely contemplating it. One can only say: Land today exists within certain human conditions. We think of ourselves. Think about the human being at his best and what he would do in the social organism, coming upon the impulses of Threefold, then the *facts* that come to pass because one devotes oneself to this Threefold, will resolve the land question just the way the machete cuts sugarcane or the hatchet cuts up wood, *not* by your *thoughts*. Likewise what happens to the land question via Threefolding is simply that land will fit into the threefolding of the social organism by no longer being treated as a commodity; that it no longer goes on in this unjustifiable way, namely through blood ties, but rather is subject to what today man feels to be the only tolerable thing: that the transfer of land from the one party to the other shall be governed by spiritual knowledge, out of the impulse of the spiritual member of the social organism, where everything happens according to spiritual [cultural] impulses.

So you see: not through Programs, not through some sort of abstract or utopian ideas, like those of Damaschke, shall the land question be resolved by Threefold. Rather the matter is such that one shall say:

Regardless how distorted today's land conditions may be: Dedicate yourselves to Threefolding! Carry the facts that lead this Threefolding into social life! What happens then leads land into a situation which will be rich in blessing for mankind, insofar as anything at all on earth can be rich in blessing.

Threefold does not want to answer the questions, the burning ones, through thoughts, but rather by facts into which man places himself when he dedicates himself to thoughts that emanate from himself, not such thoughts that work on with old traditions. It is something else when one says: Let us try to work in the direction of Threefolding; then, under these changed conditions the land question will be resolved, in that the land will be stripped of the character of the commodity into which it has careened; or if one says: "Oh, the state is a good guy – he can do everything; he does do everything, he hinders not, he merely rationalizes; it is he who occupies offices with commodious dwellings – who determines how much each is allowed to have; who prevents hoarding!" That can no longer be!

Isn't that right? One could say: It is perfectly reasonable when one thinks, with Morgenstern, the way he once put it: a fellow was run over by a car. He gets sick and is taken home. Korff (that's his name) wraps himself up in damp cloths. He is suffering, but does not give in to his pain because he is a good follower of the state. He discovers in the law books: right there, where I was run over, no automobiles are allowed; that is against the law. And inasmuch as it is against the law that I was run over, then it means that I wasn't run over, for what is against the law cannot happen!³ It is just about the same thing if, today, when one wants to reform something that is rooted in reality by saying: Wherever land rises in value it is given over to the state. *It* knows how to prevent hoarding. For that doesn't occur when the state has spoken! It is forbidden, hence it doesn't exist!

Now you can see from this example how different the whole method, the whole manner of viewing the life into which Threefolding brings us is. As I have often said, it doesn't matter that one merely thinks: one makes *changes* in the outer institutions; by some authority one takes the money away from someone who has too much money and gives it to the state. Rather the point is that human beings learn in their inmost being to *rethink*. That's so hard. They don't want to do it at all. If you start out with what truly comes from a sense of reality and is described in *Toward Social Renewal* you will see how the main thing is that the *associations* are built up by those people who are intimately bound up with what they are producing or consuming. The latter need not have

³ "... was nicht sein kann weil es nicht sein darf."

too much attention paid to them, but the former [the producers] need *a lot* of attention paid to them.

You see, above all, how all matters are wrapped in obscurity, veiled, because we are living in the abstraction of the money economy, as I have indicated today. One does not correctly observe how, for instance, the larger estates relate to smaller ones. Because today one wants to have everything convenient, one agitates against larger estates or for smaller or *vice versa*. But all this has been led into a certain monism of abstract thinking: either the larger estates are good or smaller estates are good for the national economy. But that does not correspond with reality. It has turned out that the coordination of small and large estates is the right thing. And so it is. The point is that in certain ways the coordination of the larger economies with the smaller economies is the right thing. But it is only through the associative principle, which is characterized in *Toward Social Renewal* as the most essential factor in economic life. Large economies work together with small economies and thus arrive at what is best for the national economy. It is not a matter of shaping them all on the same last, rather that under certain conditions large and small estates do work together. Do you believe that it *doesn't* correspond with certain realities that the Prussian landed gentry have produced, all by themselves, 54.8% of the total red beet production, that is more than half, whereas in other things they produced less than half -- under 50% -- compared to what the smaller estates produced? All this is so firmly grounded in real conditions that it could only have a fruitful effect on the national economy if the people who are involved in the management of the estates form associations based on real circumstances. *Then* it will come out how the one must carry the other, because then one will not be working with abstractions but rather with reality. And then one can simply decide through contracts how the surplus can be balanced out, and so forth.

I said I wanted to speak about certain arrangements in Threefold that could then shed light on the land question. I didn't want to talk about the land question in the usual way, rather I wished to show how one question of social life must be taken up if one is standing on the ground of Threefold. And you can take this question up very concretely, whereas you could never approach these questions properly using the old standards.

For one would have to be almost like the town pastor if one thinks about social organism, Threefold: Well, here are three triangles, and nothing passes from one into the other! No, the threefolded social organism is *really* an *organism*; and the one always plays into the other, so that in every one of the three members there is something of the other two. The way it also occurs in the human organism: in the head it is not only the nerve-sense system that functions, but in it also rhythm and digestion. So the economic life plays into the life of the state, only it has its own center of operations. So also the spiritual life plays into the economic life when the means of production are transferred from one to another.

But we also see this interplay in more everyday matters:

Let us take an example where three aspects flow into each other in public life: traffic. Traffic, in one sense, relates to land in that it uses roads. But one sees that the ground under the traffic, the streets, etc., cannot be private property, nor can it be a commodity, that it must be excluded from commodities – so that at least one part of the land cannot be regarded as a commodity. But our whole culture is related to traffic [or commerce], which in turn comprises three aspects. What under lies commerce? First, goods, commodities; second, human beings; third, communications. In any one of the three categories can you include everything that underlies commerce: news, people, commodities.

Through the fact that wares partake in commerce, everything involving commerce must be regulated by means of contracts according to the impulses of economic life.

What concerns people is to be regulated by the life of the state. That is, rights relations. Human intercourse must be regulated according to relations of rights.

Communications are subject to the spiritual life, and also constitute the spiritual life of commerce.

You will surely find that the Threefolding of these three sides of commerce must be administered from these three sides – something the old system did not bring about. Figure out what kind of monstrosity it is that, in the same way, through the same institution, both goods and news are expedited, the mail packages and correspondence sent out, which absolutely do not belong together, and for which there is no need in our outer establishments. But the old state institutions could not get so far as to separate the transport of goods from the mail service, so that the one disturbs the other. Look into our system

for postage rates: what kind of uneconomical situation it is that the mail serves for both letters and freight.

Right there, where life must begin to be practical; and our life today has become so constricted because it is no longer practical; impracticality sits in every nook and cranny – just here Threefolding is called upon to reestablish practicality. But there is one thing that belongs to this Threefolding: a little courage. Whoever does not feel capable of taking parcel post away from the mail service and give it over to regular railway freight; whoever puts in his reservations and doesn't figure out realistically what importance this or that has, he will never, ever, understand Threefold. For holding on to ideas about old systems, to ideas of old human images, or old images of the state, etc., is just what Threefold is *not* about; rather Threefolding is about considering real situations.

For one cannot ask Threefold, the Threefolding impulse, to construe reality, praxis, by submitting something like: now what position would a privy councilor or a government advisor take up in the threefolded organism? Yes, many questions they put are like that. It is grotesque. One simply cannot say how a privy councilor or a government advisor would fit in. It is also not necessary to ask it.

But the *Spiritual*, the *Rights*, and the *Economic* realms of humanity will, in a very clear way, govern according to *knowledge*, according to *rights* and according to *contracts* respectively. But within those three areas there will no longer be a number of things that used to be highly valued.

But wouldn't one have to admit that the old regime had entrenched itself so firmly that sometimes one regards someone more highly by virtue of his being a privy councilor than by his capabilities or by what he is doing for the social organism? But in reality the point is *not* that someone is a privy councilor, but rather that he is doing something for the social organism. And therefore the idea of Threefolding must disregard what is still present as a vignette coming down from olden times, and it must look to what must pass away in the present time (if we are not to face the complete decline of the West) as the fruit of what a human being, through any kind of work, achieves in the service of a threefolded, but entire social organism.

* * *

In a lecture to the Stuttgart Branch of the Anthroposophical Society on 24 June 1920, Rudolf Steiner came back to the lecture of 16 June. In this sequel there speaks the unconditional will for the effectiveness, for the realization of the Threefold impulse.

As long as it is made impossible for "Threefold" to make itself into the living constitution of the social organism, this will cannot lead to deeds.

Despite this, the will must underlie every kind of thinking, even regarding details of social renewal. Without this there can be no sociology in the name of Anthroposophy, rather only sentimental phrase-making, only a "moralistic licking of one's fingers for sheer inner ecstasy." And also a "quiet scholar of sociology" can be justified only if he keeps this unconditional will burning unceasingly. To be sure, he must block every excursion into the world of deeds when deeds don't make sense. Fear of deeds and an impulsive craving for deeds will destroy Anthroposophy as a social science at its roots.

R[oman] B[oos]

...It is really very serious to say, "Threefold is a beautiful thing: one should join it!" One feels so good if one says: "I am now establishing something entirely in accord with Threefold. So now I am a worthy man. I can feel myself to be a worthy man when I found something that is at the heart of Anthroposophy." Morally one can lick one's fingers for sheer inner ecstasy if one does something like that. But for that, one does not need to have a sense for reality. For the Threefold idea is so much in accord with reality just because one must seek with all the force one has to carry it out to the point of reality. But this is in many ways so contrary to the spirit of the time that it must, before anything else, get into the heads of a sufficient number of people. One has to have a sense of reality and a practical mind.

A week ago I had to speak here about the consequences of Threefold for agriculture, for the land. I said that in Threefold, as a matter of course, one would work toward the societal interchange, the societal conditions that would bring it about that one could not buy and sell land like a commodity. *That* is based altogether on reality. And the opposing conditions are an unreality.

I had to set all this forth on the day that I came here late. We drove around the countryside all day long buying real estate (for the agricultural undertakings of the newly-founded society "The Coming Day"). If one has a sense for reality, one cannot simply place oneself on the ground of Threefold by saying, "I actually must be a worthy man because I am forming a nucleus of Threefold." No, one must devote oneself, without illusions, to the fact that unless one works out of the immediate present it is impossible today

to work for Threefold, because, in a certain sense, the present is the most essential element.

The point is not that one licks one's fingers "morally" when claiming that one is "a devotee of the idea." From there it becomes unfruitful and abstract. The point is to see through to reality, that one cognizes what is necessary. That constitutes the difference between the practical people and the utopists and the dogmatists. Yet the practical person goes on in the idea only as far as is called for, but does not live as some kind of stranger to the world, in merely an inner ecstasy; rather he takes hold of reality. We give ourselves over to illusions really only out of inner ecstasy. That must be understood.

Rudolf Steiner Library
351 Fairview Avenue, Suite 610
Hudson, NY 12534-1259