



Associative Financial Literacy and Waldorf Schools

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October 2020

This document has been produced in response to increasing requests for information about the teaching of financial literacy in Waldorf schools. In my professional experience as a contributor to financial literacy education, in schools generally financial literacy is either wholly absent from today's curricula or varies between conventional market theory and 'alternative' economics. The term 'financial literacy' usually means learning to use and so be part of today's problematic system – the very instability of which is what financial literacy education is supposed to address. Or it entails an essentially leftist critique that is ill-disposed toward finance. In both cases, double-entry bookkeeping is noticeably absent, as is Rudolf Steiner's concept of money as bookkeeping. And yet, double entry bookkeeping is the foundation of modern finance and Steiner's concept of money is key to understanding this; so that both should be present if one hopes to understand modern finance, let alone meet the challenges it presents – the most important being to recognise its inner, spiritual significance.

That would mean Waldorf schools and teaching seminars placing associative economics and the wealth of Rudolf Steiner's material on finance centre stage. Now more than ever, Steiner's ideas have direct, clear and timely relevance and yet in many Waldorf settings the economics taught is often based on schools of thought, concepts and paradigms that do not have their roots in Rudolf Steiner's work, and even flatly contradict what he says.

This is especially concerning since a substantial literature is available on what one might call *associative financial literacy*, albeit perhaps not recognized as such, produced by colleagues of the [Economics Conference of the Goetheanum](https://economics.goetheanum.org) (economics.goetheanum.org) in many parts of the world – all of them directly linked to finance and economics either as entrepreneurs or academics. They are active in 'live' situations and build their work overtly and deliberately on the many precise suggestions and observations in Steiner's 1922 economics course (said by some of his immediate collaborators to have been the hardest of the 'professional' courses he gave).

The purpose of this document is to give an overview of that work that parents, students and teachers alike can consult and use as a resource. Much of the material is available as free downloads, while the books cited are deliberately priced to be affordable. They are mainly in English, but some are in German, Portuguese, or Spanish.

A particular focus is on the teaching of financial literacy to young people, for which Fionn Meier has a specific remit in his role as 'Ambassador for Youth Financial Literacy' – see [here](https://economics.goetheanum.org/courses/financial-literacy-1-1) for background (https://economics.goetheanum.org/courses/financial-literacy-1-1).

The Economics Conference website contains a wide range of material directly related to or contextualising associative financial literacy. The table below assembles this information in one place, providing links to each item. (Should the links not work, please cut and paste them.)

We hope this material will be both informative and inspiring, as well as useful. Comments are always welcome to economics@goetheanum.ch.



Topic Reports

<https://economics.goetheanum.org/publications/reports-by-topic>

Overcoming Separateness in Economic Life

English.

Understanding Gift Money

English.

Building World Economy

English.

True Price in Thought and Deed

English.

Money, Credit and Accounting I

English.

Money, Credit and Accounting II

English.

Money, Credit and the Future of Banking

English.

True Money, Growth and Accounting

English.

True Money is Bookkeeping

English.

Money is Accounting - is this idea ripe for the world?

English German

Money as Bookkeeping as Mirror

English German

Articles and Papers

<https://economics.goetheanum.org/publications/articles-and-papers>

True Price : True Income

Marc Desaules (2013)

English.

In the Shoes of Luca Pacioli – Bookkeeping and Financial Literacy

Christopher Houghton Budd (2016)

English.

Money as Bookkeeping

Fionn Meier (2018)

English. German. Portuguese.

Money is Bookkeeping – The Key to Effective Financial Literacy

Christopher Houghton Budd and Fionn Meier (2018)

English.

Awakening to global Book-keeping

Marc Desaules (1998/posted 2018)

English. German.

Kooperatives Verrechnungsgeld o. National-staatliches Vollgeld?

Fionn Meier (2018)

German.

Postmodern Money

Stephen Vallus (2020)

English.

Beyond Brundtland: True Price and Sustainability

Christopher Houghton Budd w. Xavier Andrillon (2020)

English.

Theses

<https://economics.goetheanum.org/publications/books-and-theses>

Auditorial Central Banking (2002)

PhD Dissertation

Christopher Houghton Budd

English.

From Gold to Golden Rule (2006)

Diploma Study

Arthur Edwards

English.

Entrepreneurial Economics (2018)

Diploma Study

Daniel Osmer

English.

Money as Bookkeeping (2017)

Masters Thesis

Fionn Meier

English.

True Price and Sustainability (2020)

PhD Dissertation

Xavier Andrillon

English.

Books

<https://economics.goetheanum.org/publications/books-and-theses>

Finance at the Threshold (2011)

Christopher Houghton Budd

English. Spanish.

Money as Accounting

Fionn Meier

English

Perspectives in Finance

Fionn Meier

English