

REVISITING THE IDEALS OF THE REVOLUTION

by Gregers Brinch

The following paragraphs have been formulated in an attempt to clarify a sense of understanding which arose through a series of conversations between Sigune and Gregers Brinch concerning the way in which we are mixing up some principles in the key areas of our life. We are both performing artists and have realised that we are active in three areas of life: economic life, human rights, cultural/spiritual life; and we painfully experience that things are wrongly balanced - it is as if we truly live in a time where "fair is foul and foul is fair".

In short, all our deeds, feelings and our striving for learning are belonging to one or other of the following spheres of life.

1. Firstly, in **economic life**, we unfold the activity of providing and surviving (comfortably), as inhabitants and custodians of the planet. Here we are engaged in the business, however advanced or primitive, of producing and consuming, sowing and reaping.
2. Secondly we are active in maintaining and negotiating our human **rights**. On the basis of our humanity we are subject to the law of equality in our dealings with one-another within the **sphere of rights**.
3. Thirdly we are as human beings in our **cultural /spiritual life** challenged to understand the world and become aware of the implications of our humanity in relation to the rest of the world and to ourselves. Here we strive within the fields of art science and religion.

These life areas have been explored in different ways by different thinkers. During the First World War Rudolf Steiner 1861 - 1925, the Austrian thinker and founder of Anthroposophy set out a vision of a **three-fold social order** outlining the above three interdependent areas of life. He saw the necessity for the human family to come to a conscious experience of belonging to a **global community**, as opposed to a limited sense of belonging to a nation state.

The ideals of the French Revolution must all lead to an enhanced experience, not merely of the wellbeing of the self, but of the **whole of humanity**. These ideals are life conditions of the human being as an individual but a co-dependent and co-responsible being within a global Humanity. These are:

1. Fraternity or as I have renamed it **"BROTHERLINESS"**,
2. **"EQUALITY"**, and
3. Freedom or **"FREEHOOD"** as I would like to suggest we could think about this state of being!

When these life conditions are out of "sync" with the areas or spheres of life to which they naturally belong, there are disastrous consequences, which are all too familiar with all their horror. We ignore this at our own periland are we not at risk of falling asleep even to our own sense of disbelief?

In an effort to remain active in our striving to make sense of the world, these areas and conditions of life are described in the following way:

1) The Economic life and the condition of "Brotherliness"

"Everyman shift for all the rest and let no man take care for himself, for all is but fortune. Couragio! bully monster, couragio!" "The Tempest" by William Shakespeare.

Economics means making sure everyone has enough for their existence and physical wellbeing. Everyone has a sense of the health and wealth of the whole global community, and our economic endeavour has the prosperity of all rather than that of the individual as its goal. Here there can be no competition, more to the point we are challenged to realise the mystery of: "the more we share, the richer our life"! The fruits of the earth and what is produced, is for the benefit of all and so we are all party to **"BROTHERLINESS"** developing among us. **This is a matter of distribution!**

2) The Sphere of Rights and the Condition of Equality

The quality of mercy is not strained, it is twice blessed....it blesseth him that gives and him that takes.... "The Merchant of Venice" by William Shakespeare.

"Human rights....everyone speaks of them, but no one knows them."

"There is only one place where human rights are flouted...and that is between us, and nowhere else." (See www.kuenstler-fuer-menschenrechte.de if you speak German.)

Our right to be; to respect and to be respected; this is the essence of our human rights. The way in which we negotiate a conversation; be it with a friend or a stranger, is informed by our instinctive feeling for our human rights, and our sensitivity to the rights of the other is of enormous importance in our endeavours to live together, work together, strive together. We all have a right to be and be treated equally according to the prevailing principles of the particular culture we live in, be they set down in a book of law or be they according to the law of our bodily constitution.

In **the realm of rights** we have entered into agreements concerning the ways in which we can coexist on this planet. These agreements are formulated out of our sense of justice and fairness and when they are drafted into legislature it is in such a way that all citizens are treated as **equal** in respect to the law. The Laws are subject to a consensus and agreements amongst individuals and as such can be changed when appropriate and perpetrated in the right manner. Here it is the **principle of "EQUALITY"**, which is developed among us. **This is a matter of balance!**

3) The Cultural /Spiritual life and the striving for "Freehood"

"The truth will out.....and the truth shall set you Free!" from the New Testament

In the realm of life where we strive for an understanding of our humanity, the universe we live in and our relation to it, we are active as scientists, artists, thinkers, actors, priests, counselors and guides for each other in **the life of spirit**. In this endeavour we must be at **liberty** to strive and develop skills according to our own individual principle in relation to our particular field of human activity.

The ideas, works of art, scientific discoveries must be subject to judgement and a weighing up of the value and importance of the work for all. In this case the individual with the greatest capacity for achievement will bring forth the greatest achievements according to his or her own principle of working with the particular subject. At times, the recognition of the value of an individual has been delayed a century or more, as fellow human beings have had to "catch up" with the achievements of the individual in question. There are situations where the value of the contribution of one individual is beyond doubt and that work becomes like a endless source of nourishment. We can look to geniuses of the past for guidance and inspiration in our own endeavours and learning. These individuals become particular representatives of our humanity. Of great importance is that the principle of **"FREEHOOD"** can be developed. Not in the sense of freedom **from others** or freedom **from other circumstances** or even to do as we please, but a **"FREEHOOD"** which arises as a principle out of the striving of the individual to overcome his or her personal limitations. A kind of ultimate rite of passage!

If, however the individual can unfold their human, spiritual and cultural potential in an atmosphere where freehood is striven for, we find the principle of hierarchy is in its right place. This is the natural way to view the differentiation between individuals who are at varying degrees of mastering their fields of work. The work is for the good of humanity because of the human moral striving that informs it, and the one who is at the highest peak of their capacities provides the greatest good, for now and for generations to come. The more individuals there are of this calibre the better it is for the world. **This is a matter of the perseverance of the individual.**

If we find the principle of **"equality"** entering the **life of spirit** we are perhaps more inclined to express our personal limitations and challenges rather than overcome them in striving for perfection in our particular field. As consumers of art, spiritual life, and the products of science we are called upon to view each and every artistic and scientific achievement etc. as a matter of personal taste and leave our need to judge for ourselves the value of the work in question, dissatisfied. Beauty, for instance, has to a painful extent been relegated to a matter of fashion and the economic life drives the advertising whereby fashion is perceived, adopted and perpetrated by "the masses". Instead of having the capacity to produce work in this field, which can continue to be a source of learning and inspiration for millennia we have fashion accessories that banish us from depths of human spirituality and chain us to the surface.

If we find the principle of **"freedom"** in the **economic realm** we have a different problem. **"FREEHOOD"** makes no sense in this realm and so a bastardisation is created, which we unfortunately all buy into today. In the **"free"** economy of the **"free"** world **"freedom"** has come to mean a **"free for all"**. A kind of mildly organised looting and pillaging is rife in the economic realm, in essence not very different to piracy. The **"Freedom"** here has been **given** rather than **striven for**. It is a commodity delivered through the ideology of politicians who preach the wonder of the "free market" economy. **As consumers we are free to purchase to our greed's content.** We are then subject to the **principle of hierarchy** in the **realm of economics** and we have the situation that the individuals with the **greatest wealth** are in possession of the **greatest power**. As a result of freedom being a given rather than a striven for principle within this realm, that power has no curb, no "natural predator" except the conscience of the individual who is in possession of it, and so in most cases it becomes self-perpetuating. Instead of a hierarchical position of high rank providing the greatest good for the whole of humanity, it serves and feeds egotism. In this way the pursuit of personal wealth when it leads to power, by nature stands in contradiction to the pursuit of happiness within the development of **"brotherliness"**.

When we encounter the principle of **"brotherliness"** in the realm of the **rights life** where **"EQUALITY"** should prevail it means we have a fraternity which secures certain exclusive rights for its' members and denies non-members these rights. When members of such a fraternity are wealthy, powerful and well connected in both business and politics then they are in a position to pursue a covert agenda for world domination.

Political life has captured and imprisoned these three areas of life and made them subject to political systems of thought, which are by their very nature limited and inadequate to deal with the complexities of human social life. These principles have been mixed up and distorted to such an extent that we are thereby endangered of losing our ability to practice and develop idealism. We are called upon to react emotionally to sound bites that come from different corners of life. But in order to practice idealism we must think independently and clearly.

Were these three areas and their particular conditions and principles realigned and allowed to develop without interference from business and political agendas we would see a different world than the one we live in today. For these principles to be reactivated in the appropriate areas of life, i.e.:

1. **"BROTHERLINESS"** in the **economic life**
2. **"EQUALITY"** in the **rights life**
3. **"FREEHOOD"** in the **life of spirit**,

it is necessary to become aware of the fact that we are all moving in and out of these realms on a daily basis. As a consumer, vendor and producer of goods I am engaged in the **economic life**. We accept the need to "make a living" but when are we called upon to be concerned with the wellbeing of our "neighbour"?

As a human being engaged with "another" in dialogue I am in the **rights life**. When do I feel called upon to uphold another's rights or my own rights. When am I witness to the flouting of human rights, not only through the newsmedia but in my own life and experience?

As a human being engaged in self-development I am active in the **life of spirit**. Where is the area within my own being where I know I have an issue to address and develop? My willingness to address my own weakness as well as a courageous acknowledgement of my own strength is the pathway to inner maturity.

All of this is a matter of recognising and understanding the nature of our actions and experiences, be they cerebral, sentient or of the will. The drive for this is the same drive that informs my striving in my engagement in the Cultural /Spiritual life of the day. Please accept these thoughts as an offering in this spirit.

