

## Communal Economy and Community\*

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Hans Ritschl's book<sup>1</sup> declares the idea that we live in an exclusively capitalist economic order to be a mistaken one. The title of his book already hints at what he believes to be correct. He agrees with the critique of the idea that community and society as basic forms of co-existence succeed each other in history. Rather, he notes that there is today, as always, a dualism in the social order, "which takes hold of the individual human being – a part of one's being and life is captured in community, another part in society." The principle of association in the state is allegedly not that of society, but that of community.<sup>2</sup> In note 19, he asserts that I would regard the state in the sense of natural law (implied herein is rational natural law in line with the age of the Enlightenment) as a general societal connection, existing and established, as it were, for the purpose of protecting the freedom and property of its subjects like any other constituted association. Ritschl believes that he has demonstrated in the text that a people in a state, "especially in today's nation-state,"<sup>1</sup> must also be regarded as a community, and that to him it seems inappropriate to restrict the concept of community to local life-communities.<sup>11</sup> (I must correct the honorable author to the effect that this has never been my opinion, since I have always also recognized ideational community,<sup>111</sup> which is motivated by solidarity, i.e. purely based on the mind.)

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\* Translated by Mark McAdam, Stefan Kolev, and Erwin Dekker.  
1934. "Gemeinwirtschaft und Gemeinschaft." *Schmollers Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft im Deutschen Reiche* 58 (III): 317–26.

\*\* Born on July 26, 1855, deceased on April 9, 1936. Adjunct Professor (1908 – 1913) and Professor (1913 – 1916) at the University of Kiel, Founding President of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie* (1909–1933).

<sup>1</sup> Hans Ritschl. 1931. *Gemeinwirtschaft und kapitalistische Marktwirtschaft*. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck).

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, 34 and 56.