



The Mt. Tron Mail

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Mt. Tron seen from the centre of Tynset, May 29th 2009. Photo: Knud Larsen.

The work with the Mt. Tron University of Peace finally commences!

The Municipal Plan of Alvdal 2008 - 2020, where a site for the University of Peace has been allocated in the Part of Land Use (in accordance with the Foundation's description), did finally pass, as expected, in the local council on June 25th this year. The Foundation is now preparing to start working on the regulation plan for the area. This regulation plan has to be made in collaboration with the two other participants on "The Peace Plateau", namely the local hang glider club and Arild Solvang (cafeteria on Sørkletten), and it implies ground tests and botanical registration as a basis for facts. Independent of the regulation plan the Foundation has already made a verbal agreement with Arild Solvang for cooperation with the cafeteria for the future. The Foundation is now contacting the Joint Ownership Nysetra to make an agreement for regulation on "The Peace Plateau" (including ground tests).

The Foundation has also contacted the national supervisory authorities for foundations to clarify the relation between the Foundation and the law for foundations - that there will not arise any conflict between these in the construction process of the University of Peace, and especially not afterwards on account of the operation of the building. On the basis that ideal foundations are not allowed to make money, there is a possibility that we may have to set up a company which will conduct construction and operation of the building. But all this will be carefully considered as soon as we have obtained clear signals from the supervisory authorities.

View from Mt. Tron

by Bjørn Pettersen

(Previously published in the author's regular column in the cultural paper Bredablikk)

The Universal Human

As human beings, from the perspective of nature, we have almost everything in common, no matter from where we come, in what we believe or our particular experience in life. Physically, everybody can see that we have in common all the autonomous body functions, such as respiration, heartbeat, hunger, thirst, digestion, evacuation, etc., and mentally, humans have the same basic feelings and needs, such as fear, anxiety, insecurity, security, joy, love, etc. For this reason, human psychology is, on a general basis, very predictable and everyone knows the validity of the saying: "Who knows himself knows others".

This is what we may call 'the lower mind functions'. In 'the higher mind functions' where thoughts, intellect, discernment, understanding, etc. work and where all learned things in life display themselves, there will, though, on the contrary, apparently be big differences. It is in this sphere that all are coloured and impressed individually by innumerable influences in life. But even here there are several basic common psychological principles at work where the unification of awareness into one point - what we call 'mental concentration' - is the most important. For instance, in a religious ecstasy, where the concentrated mind after long training and purification has become absorbed in its own total unity, a Hindu may perhaps have the vision of Krishna or Mother Kali; a Northern Buddhist the vision of Avalokiteshwara or Manjusri; a Christian that of Jesus or Virgin Mary; and a Sufi Muslim of the Prophet Muhammad. Here, what the individual sees or experiences, will be characterized by the understanding or devotion or the focus he or she has prior to the experience. And according to the background of the person or the environment they are in. But religious ecstasy is not the ultimate in life or the final goal of man. Because no matter how incredibly strong or momentous and transforming such an experience feels, it is still within the frame and world of mind. In itself the mind is nothing - it is just like a glass of clear water where one blends and mixes whatever it may be. It is only a tool for the human being to know life and Self - a medium between our static and dynamic existence.

It is only when there is no more project or object in the mind and when it no longer has either will or unwilling - beyond both intellect, identity and ego - where the mind naturally is put to passive rest, that we realize our Self. And here "all are perfectly alike" because it is a total unity of pure consciousness in itself, completely without individual identities or specific qualities. This One, Eternal, Absolute Consciousness is the basis for all life in the entire universe!

The Passive Witness

If you wish to know yourself, i.e. your inmost "I-feeling" - that has remained unchanged with you throughout your life, independent of your physical and mental development, and all the various outer circumstances in your life, and that has nothing to do with your name or identity in this world - then you have to make passive your active body and your active mind, and only concentrate yourself as a passive witness to all outer and inner phenomena. It is this that is called meditation.

Meditation is "non-doing". You are only aware of yourself as a passive witness to everything that is happening. This is meditation in its purest and most original form. The huge variety of meditation techniques that flourish in the "market" are in reality concentration techniques which prepare the mind for the actual meditation. How does this happen in practice? When you sit comfortably and undisturbed and are physically completely relaxed, preferably with your spine erect and with all your senses withdrawn much in the same way as a tortoise pulls its limbs back into the shell, then it is mainly only the mind that is left continuing its usual activities. The mind is really a unity but is experienced as if it is spread across many fields and on many levels contemporaneously. If the mind is going to be of help to us it has to be concentrated and one-pointed. This holds good for any kind of mental activity in life. The more we can concentrate our mind, the better result we obtain by any kind of effort or endeavour, be it physical, mental or spiritual. Therefore a number of various concentration techniques are used to make the mind a useful tool during meditation, as a rule by sound (mantra) or symbol (yantra) or visualization or other mentally one-pointed methods. When the mind is concentrated it is easy to observe, and gradually being aware of oneself as a passive observer becomes easier. Because one cannot stop the mind - it can only be directed and made passive. When the mind, as an object for our observation, through continuous exercise has been made passive more and more, the neutral and passive Observer will gradually emerge quite clearly. The Observer is the Subject - your Self, completely beyond your psychical and physical sphere - that rests in Itself, fully independent of anything else. Nothing can really be said about this - it can only be experienced. But as soon as it is experienced you have solved the mystery of life and have become immortal, spiritually speaking.

After this you are an awakened witness to everything that happens and you do not experience any essential difference of active or passive, static or dynamic - both are expressions of the same, all-encompassing eternal Consciousness, who is the essence of you.



Mt. Tron seen from the centre of Tynset, May 29th 2009. Photo: Knud Larsen.

Steinar Semmingsen (Tolga)

Architect student of landscapes who takes his master degree on the Mt.Tron University of Peace



Above and below: Steinar Semmingsen reconnoitres at "The Peace Plateau" on August 15th this year. Photos: BP.

Steinar Semmingsen is 23 years and from Tolga (originally Tynset). He is an architect student of landscapes at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, and is presently taking his master degree on the Mt.Tron University of Peace.

This late summer and autumn he has made several trips to "The Peace Plateau" to reconnoitre the terrain. With permission from the municipality's chief administrative officer he has put up a number of arrows in the area for measuring the snow depth in winter.

Semmingsen explains that he is going to carry out an independent landscape analysis that will contain an "outdoor room" analysis (mountains, "walls", vegetation, terrain formations), vegetation analysis, geological analysis, and terrain condition (gradient, etc.), together with an analysis of the landscape around Mt.Tron as "peace landscape", and a little about Baral (Sri Ananda), where history ("why Mt.Tron"), nature and silence will be catchwords. The analysis will amongst other things show to what extent the landscape can bear intervention.

Semmingsen wishes to integrate the philosophy of Baral with the "outdoor room" and surrounding nature, and imagine zones in the "outdoor room" as meeting places for people. One of the major challenges will be the decision as to whether the outdoor room as a whole shall mingle harmoniously with the surroundings/landscape or be in contrast to it.



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The peak of Mt. Tron with "The Peace Plateau", as seen from the valley of Alvdal on May 29th 2009. In the foreground the village museum Husantunet, in the middle ground the hotel at Tronsvangen. Just below this, in the forest, one catches a glimpse of Shantibu. Photo: Knud Larsen.