



The Mt. Tron Mail

October 2014 * Mt. Tron University of Peace Foundation * No. 1-2-3-4 Vol. 17



Mt. Tron seen from the local road to Tynset just after Alvdal centre, 14.06.2014. Photo: BP.

Prospects for The Mt. Tron University of Peace

This edition of The Mt. Tron Mail is a single collected issue for the whole of 2014 comprising issues No. 1. 2. 3 and 4. This is owing to particular circumstances throughout the year amounting to a “state of emergency” at Shantibu which has necessitated a number of changes.

In this issue of The Mt. Tron Mail, besides looking at the present status of work for the Mt. Tron University of Peace, we shall also take a closer look at the prospect for the work in general at Shantibu – in all its aspects, together with work for peace in the world.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

By Bjørn Pettersen

The Light of Conscience

The faculty that really makes us human, different from other animals which have not developed spiritual qualities, is our conscience. In the life and growth of animals we see that only instincts and intelligence are at work whereas humans demand more: that we bring to fulfilment the development of life and growth, and it is our conscience that brings about this manifestation of fulfilment. Our conscience is the fundamental faculty in life and the greatest renewing power in our lives. It is the very heart of the human intelligence. Without an active conscience there is no real human or humane development. In other words: There is no humanity!

The reason why there are differences of conscience among people is that in some it is awake and in others dormant. In enlightened and noble people conscience is always very active while in egoistical people who think only of their own self-interest it remains latent. Consideration, care, sympathy and understanding are always positively present in persons with an awakening conscience. And when conscience is fully awake it reveals itself as love and compassion for all, inner purity, self-discipline, honest undertaking, search for truth, satisfaction, temperance, simplicity and devotion to God. Practise of these virtues leads the soul to happiness while their neglect leads it to misery. It is the basis for these activities which in the East is called dharma. There are no equivalent words for 'dharma' in any of the Western languages. It is usually translated as 'religion' or 'law' but dharma is that principle or quality of life which accelerates its development, makes it excel and manifest as art of life. Dharma uplifts everything and brings life to perfection. The driving force in this is our awakened and active conscience.

"A good conscience is the best divinity", says an English proverb. It is very probable that the Sanskrit word 'samvid' lies near the root of Old Norse and modern New Norwegian 'samvit' (conscience), because this word has no clear etymology. The Standard Norwegian form 'samvittighet' (conscience) is a loanword from the Middle Low German 'samwitticheit'. The Sanskrit word 'samvid' is a compound of 'sam' (same, together, with) and 'vid' (knowledge, to know) and stands for ('knowing together') 'consciousness', 'understanding', 'reason' – meanings that also hold true for 'conscience' in all its closely related forms in most of the European languages (Greek: 'syneidesis'; Latin: 'conscientia'; French and English: 'conscience'; German: 'gewissen'; Dutch: 'geweten'; Bulgarian: 'ssewesst'). Philosophically speaking samvid represents our non-personal consciousness beyond our empirical consciousness. In other words, our watchful, witnessing self is that which is called samvid. In any case, samvid and conscience are closely related qualities, where the one is only passively observing and the other is in full activity – just like life itself in relation to the source of life. Samvid is the light of conscience!

The Good Mother

"If the mother is good everything is good", my good friend Paramananda used to say. And my own good mother often said that "if you want good children you will tell them that they are good, but if you tell them that they are bad you will get bad children!"

Woman is the great carrier of culture of humankind. Down through history, wisdom, art and science have always been personified as women. In Greek antiquity Athene was the goddess of Wisdom, and all the arts and sciences (song, music, poetry, dance, history, astronomy, etc.) were presided over by the nine Muses who were all women characters. In Rome wisdom was personified as Minerva, and in the East she is still today known and worshipped as Saraswati among the Hindus and as Prajnaparamita among the Northern Buddhists, to name just a few examples. In the Rig Veda of the Hindus, which is the oldest known document written in an Indoeuropean language, the first poem is written by a Self-realized woman named Vak, the daughter of the rishi (seer and sage) Amvrin. This poem ("The Self-Divine") is considered the oldest in the world and the word vak has for all posterity come to stand for human speech itself in the meaning of voice (cf. Latin vox and Eng. vocal). The woman Vak had achieved maternity which is the highest achievable state in this world.

"Maternity has to be accepted as creator – as the symbol of the Universal Womb – and not as an object of pleasure", my friend Paramananda said. "Man has to refrain from humiliating, dishonouring and mistreating women for only women can save humankind. The ideal mother's role and qualities are more important than the teachings of a hundred wise men. Motherly self-sacrifice exceeds all limits in building up an individual's character. Ideal personalities and noble characters are born in those societies where women are educated, intelligent and pure. Women's education and progress will lead to more progress in society and peace and harmony will reign in the world. The future life of human society depends on the foundation maternity will be given."

Woman is really the Creator in miniature – she forms and influences us from the very first moment. When we were in our mother's womb she took care of us in all possible ways – we got all the loving care we needed with security, food and protection and we didn't have to worry about anything. The food she ate, we also ate and the outer surroundings, events and impressions she received, we also received. And after our birth into this world we received sweet, warm milk from her own breasts – pure, liquid love! No one can influence the child's ability to understand and to love better than the mother, and no one has a greater possibility to turn man away from destruction and war than woman!

Status of work for the University of Peace

Illness and reduced activity

During the last part of the four month long stay in India last winter TriptiMa unfortunately became seriously ill requiring hospitalization and suffering complications. Not without considerable difficulties was she transported home to Norway on a regular scheduled flight on March 19th, some ten days later than originally planned. On account of her serious health condition she thereafter remained a nursing case until the middle of June. Consequently, the Office of the University of Peace at Alvdal Centre had to be closed because TriptiMa was no longer able to conduct the Yoga classes there which had partly paid the rent for the office. It also made us unable to receive as many visitors to Shantibu as we usually do, so that our normal activities were significantly reduced.

Besides, Bjørn has also been suffering from minor health issues for most of the year. On account of these health issues for both TriptiMa and Bjørn the work for the University of Peace has perforce operated at a minimum throughout the year.

Kent Gjorran

Luckily Kent Gjorran Skaug Kristiansen (age 28 years) from Moss, has been staying permanently at Shantibu ever since he first came by in the middle of July. Kent Gjorran wanted guidance for himself and his life. Now he receives that and at the same time Shantibu receives a badly needed hand in everyday life. Both parties can therefore equally help each other!



Kent Gjorran in the living room of Shantibu, 31.08.2014. Photo: BP.



Shantibu, 07.07.2011. Photo: BP.

“Friends of Shantibu”

Since Shantibu’s work now is facing major funding challenges, and many friends see the value in ensuring that its unique cultural work is able to go ahead in the future, a cluster of the “elder” and the “younger” friends of Shantibu met to take the initiative of forming an association – “Friends of Shantibu” – to secure Shantibu’s future and the continuity of the work that it does.

To refresh memories a little we may summarize the following about **Shantibu**:

The property “Shantibu” in Alvdal, Norway, is owned by **Swami Sri Ananda Acharya Trust** (established by Einar Beer in 1975), which takes care of the heritage of the Indian philosopher Swami Sri Ananda Acharya who lived at Mt.Tron from 1917 to 1945. Today it is also the seat of the **Mt.Tron University of Peace Foundation** (est. 1993) and **Mt.Tron University of Peace Estate Inc.** (est. 2010), which run the project for establishing the Mt.Tron University of Peace. Shantibu is run by, and also the home of, Bjørn Pettersen (since 1978) and Tripti Chatterjee (since 1990) who have both dedicated their life to this work.

Shantibu administers the unique heritage of Sri Ananda (and Einar Beer) and the unique heritage of Swami Parmananda in Norway (who lived at Shantibu for a full year in 1989-90 and for several months in 1993, 1995 and 1998), as also the universal idea about the University of Peace.

Shantibu is functioning today as a centre for truth seekers from all over the world who comes for conversation, company, inspiration, meditation and retreat.

www.shantibu.no

Status of work for the University of Peace (cont.)



Professor emeritus Knud Larsen in front of Mt.Tron in Alvdal, 24.06.2013. Photo: BP.

Tronsvangen Seter

It is an open secret that for a long time we have had a wish to acquire the old hotel “Tronsvangen Seter” at Alvdal, even if all the time we have kept a low profile about this. The old mountain hotel, rich in traditions, is situated about 100 metres higher and only a stone’s throw away from Shantibu. We have been thinking that it would be a good place to start small scale courses and activities as a preparation for the later activities at the University of Peace up on the Peace Plateau on Mt.Tron. Moreover the traffic to Shantibu has increased to such an extent that a bigger place is now required for receiving all the visitors.

Since the sale of Tronsvangen Seter was made public last year Knud Larsen has been bidding on his own behalf as a private individual, with the intention of handing it over to the University of Peace after a while, at which point a separate operating company would be established. Several potential buyers have shown an interest, among others Norsk Folkehjelp who wanted to use it as an asylum reception for refugees, but all of them have backed out. As the hotel is “sold as is” we have spent much time trying to identify all the existing faults and deficiencies to get an overview of the actual costs of buying the property.

So far we have discovered and estimated the costs, amongst others, of deficiencies in the sewage system and the fire alarm installation, which each give rise to substantial costs. None of these deficiencies have been mentioned in the sales prospectus, and neither the present owner nor the estate agent has offered any help to find out about these issues. Therefore lots of time has been spent on this, including several meetings and lots of correspondence with representatives of the municipality and other relevant parties. Currently, we are trying to find out more about a possible border conflict which was mentioned in one of the newest sales documents from this summer. It is impossible to offer a new concrete bid before this conflict is sorted out.

We have been all along, and are still, the only serious potential buyer of Tronsvangen Seter. The disclosure of the deficiencies at the hotel has shown that we need to budget for about two million NOK extra in addition to the selling price. It is therefore very importance that the selling price is right. Until now all the bids from Knud have been refused by the owner. But during the time that the hotel has been on the market the sale price has dropped by almost a half! Knud therefore is quite hopeful that eventually he will be able to buy it for the price he is prepared to offer.



Tronsvangen Seter is situated at the lower end of the summer mountain farm village called Tronsvangen underneath the singular and mighty Mt. Tron (1666 metres), about 4 kilometres from Alvdal Centre, with a magnificent view of the valley below, Alvdal Vestfjell and Rondane. It is surrounded by a splendid outdoor terrain both summer and winter, with a network of ski trails in winter and marked hiking trails in summer.

Tronsvangen Seter, cadastral number 43, holding number 1 in Alvdal municipality is a freeholder site regulated for business activity and covers an area of 9088 m². The building ("The Hotel") is from about year 1900 with an extension in bricks from 1964 and has a total utilization area of 1 333 m² (gross area: 1 424 m²) distributed on three floors + basement. It is Norway's only seter hotel with roots back to the 1800 Century.

All three photos: 09.06.2014. BP.



Status of work for the University of Peace (cont.)

Donors

After the regulation plan was sanctioned in 2012 we have undertaken work to finding possible donors for the building project and have identified and contacted a number of private individuals in Norway and abroad. This work continues but has not led to anything concrete so far.

The Office

The previously announced national fund-raising campaign has not been implemented owing to the closure of the Office of the Mt. Tron University of Peace in the centre of Alvdal, and also because our clerk did not after all have the possibilities for engagement we had initially anticipated. Now we are thinking that the best way forward would be for the office with all its planned functions, including the national fund-raising campaign, to continue as and when Tronsvangen Seter is purchased. This part of the work is therefore on hold for the time being.

Building site on the Peace Plateau

Even though our private regulation plan is officially sanctioned and the municipality of Alvdal in the municipal regulation plan have regulated the Peace Plateau on Mt. Tron solely for the purpose of the University of Peace, it is important to understand that the building site remains to be bought from the private owners. However, the problem is that at present no one knows exactly who

these owners are but it is presumed that the two joint ownerships Nysetra (7 members) and Tronsvangen Setersameie (35 members) together owns the Peace Plateau. This ownership has first to be tested and decided legally and only one or more members from any of these joint ownerships may petition for such a case at the land consolidation court – it is not possible for us to petition the court.

The situation for the past few years has been one of inner conflicts in Tronsvangen Setersameie owing to land border disputes among its members, so that it has not been possible to present our case yet.

Only after a decision has been made as to who the legal owners of the Peace Plateau are, may we send a request for buying the land for building purposes and then negotiations on price may start. However, such a land consolidation case may last for years and the owners may feel tempted to demand an unnaturally high price. In that case the municipality has the possibility and advantageous possibility to demand expropriation of the property for the common good of all in the municipality.

Our regulation plan is valid for 5 years until May 2017. This period may thereafter be extended by 2 years by application. That means that we have to start the building project at the latest by May 2019. So far we have set the target for the Mt. Tron University of Peace to be up and running by 2022.



Mt. Tron seen from Grimshaugen at Aukrustsenteret, 06.08.2014. Photo: BP



Mt. Tron seen through Solan Gundersens picture frame at Aukrustsenteret, 06.08.2014. Photo: BP.

Work for Peace in the World

There are many roads to peace and there are many human and social frontiers which have to be worked on to be able to create humane and harmonious human societies in the world. Traditionally much emphasis has been laid on so-called “peace and conflict research”, democratization, fraternization, disarmament and other remedial actions at political and organizational levels. This work has by and large been effect oriented and not cause oriented – collectively focused and not individually focused. And therefore the effect varies with the social and political factors in general. As always it is human greed and economical factors that decide the degree of conflict and war.

Animal Welfare

There are two aspects in the work for peace in the world which are never mentioned in relation to peace-building but which are absolutely crucial if we are going to live in peaceful co-existence in the future. The first aspect concerns our relation to the animals. As long as the animals are treated as senseless commodities in farming, hunted for sport and used and used again as guinea pigs in the name of research and science, and this remains an accepted and recognized human attitude and practice, we can forget the possibility of peace in the world. Our relation to our elder sisters and brothers the animals is decisive for our relation to our fellow human beings.

Feminism versus Maternity

The other aspect concerns our view on women – especially how women view themselves! During the past decades in the Western world we have experienced action by women for feminism. This work has mainly been directed towards gaining the same rights as men in an otherwise male dominated society – something that is still going on for achieving equal pay for equal work. All this is, of course, necessary and good but much of the thinking and attitude has been, and still is, a complete misunderstanding. This has manifested in such a way that apparently, as a matter of life and death, women seem to want to be like men, to copy men or to take over men’s role in society. Much of this may appear as hostile to men but is in reality plainly antagonistic to women. Women’s feminism is largely self destructive and they are denying the nature of their own sex. Instead of promoting sex neutrality and even sexlessness they should rather explore the enormous latent possibilities of their own sex.

Why has woman never understood that man will always only be her son? – that she can form him exactly as she wishes him to be? And why does she never think that man is how he is precisely because she has not been conscious of her capability and her responsibility? The uniqueness of woman is precisely that it is she alone – and never in all eternity man – who gives birth to children, boys and girls! It is exactly this that is the essence of woman’s nature and at the same time her enormous advantage. Because only woman can be mother and have the immanent motherly love for the child. And as a human this immanent motherly love can develop to perfection.

In the animal kingdom we find that the female mammals, birds and even certain species of fish have strong maternal instincts, and often they will defy death to protect their children. A reptile like the crocodile, which to humans mostly appears as a grotesque killing machine and which hardly has any brain, shows great tenderness and the strongest maternal instinct for her many children. So why should not we humans greatly surpass these animals by making our instincts conscious?

To develop motherly love it is not at all necessary physically to give birth, it may develop through all types of relations, to humans, to animals and to plants in the nearby environment. Yes, to all manifested life. That we need and only that may save humankind!

A new big world conflict

A new big world conflict is expected – which has been predicted a few years back and which is supposed to come soon. That aggression newly launched by extremists in the Middle East may well result in a huge conflict which will trigger a 3rd World War. Everything points to a continuous escalation of that which has now been started, and this is happening in the most sensitive and explosive area in the whole world and which already indirectly involves all the superpowers.

This conflict may crystallize into two big combating blocks: All of the Muslim world together with the Mongolian world on the one side against the West together with Russia on the other side. Only after this fatal war, which most probably will see certain isolated atomic explosions, has played itself out, there will be hope for a World Government with humanity and spiritually conscious people in leading positions, and humankind will get a new hope.

UTTARA-KURUENE

Anandacharya in one of his books writes about the ancient land and people of Uttara Kuru - present day Scandinavia

Scandinavia is probably within the zone of the Harivarsha of the ancient Hindu geographers, with the land of the Uttara-Kurus as its northernmost extremity (Uttara = north). Uttara-Kurus were known to the author of the Rāmāyāna. Cf: 'In that place live the Uttara-Kurus and Kuruvarsha is the home for those who are proficient in virtuous works'. It is very probable that the Arctic Circle formed the extreme Northern boundary of Kuruvarsha, for it is said in the Rāmāyāna, 'No one can go to the North beyond the Uttara-Kurus; even creatures other than humans cannot go further, and the mountain chain called Somagiri (the ancient name of Finland was Suomi, or Suomenmaa) even the gods find difficult to cross'. And again: 'Beyond the land of the Uttara-Kurus lies the ocean, and Uttara-Kuruvarsha is bounded on the North by a chain of mountains called Somagiri, bright as the luster of gold'. This ocean here mentioned is the Arctic Ocean and Somagiri refers to the chain of high mountain which form the barrier between the land and the sea.

Aitareya Brāhmana says that the nations occupying this Northern land known as the Uttara-Kurus and Uttara-Madras, are dedicated to Vairājyaya ('glorious supremacy') and other nations address them as "the dignified ones'. The Vishnu Purāna gives a wonderful picture of the Uttara-Kurus; 'There are no such inequalities as are conveyed by the words 'higher', 'lower' and 'middling' among the people of the Uttara-Kurus'.

And again: 'They are a race of healthy men and women, free from all kinds of misery, and their land is full of natural springs'.

That the Uttara-Kurus were a heroic nation in ancient times appears from passages in the Mahābharāta. Arjuna, Prince of India, when on a conquering expedition was warned by the Uttara-Kurus not to invade their country. 'Thou canst not, O son of Prthā, conquer our town. Retire, O fortunate man, for our land is invincible. He must be an immortal who aspires to violate our town. There is nothing here which you would wish to take away. Here dwell the Uttara-Kurus, whom no one cares to conquer, and even if you succeed in penetrating our country you will see nothing. We are very much pleased with you; there is no need to fight, we are quite prepared to carry out your wishes.

"Prince Arjuna smilingly replied: 'I wish to establish the suzerainty of my brother, the righteous Emperor Yudhisthira, but if these lands are not to be violated by foreign conquerors then pay just a nominal tribute to my brother'. At this the Kurus were greatly pleased and gave him presents of woven stuff, precious ornaments, embroidery and rare skins. (Chapter XXVII of the Sabha Parva.) It is remarkable that the names 'Mleccha' (barbarian) and 'Dasyu' (robber) which were contemptuously applied to other races conquered by Arjuna were never given to the Uttara-Kurus.

From these and other allusions in the ancient Sanskrit writings it seems evident that in prehistoric times Scandinavia was inhabited by a highly-gifted people who developed a great civilisation and culture. There is a notable passage in the Mahābhārata which shows that they were great engineers and general scientists. This passage compares the cities of the Uttara-Kurus to Amarāvati, the heavenly city of Indra, Lord of Paradise. That they were a very honest people is evident from the epithet punyām (= holy) applied to in the passage: 'uttaram va kurum punyām' ('the holy northern Kurus').

The Rāmāyāna speaks about the Uttara-Kurus as of very happy disposition and fond of giving gifts. The independence of their women is particularly noticed by Vyāsa. There was communication between the Hindus and the Uttara-Kurus even during the Buddhist period, for the Mahāyāna alchemist, Nāgārjuna, who lived either in the first century of the Christian era or the preceding century, visited their land. The civilisation of the Uttara-Kurus referred to in ancient Sanskrit works must have existed at least many thousand years ago – but of course such dates are purely hypothetical. (It is of interest to note that many of the names of Norwegian places, rivers, mountains, valleys etc. are purely Sanskrit e.g. 'Jotun', 'jaette' (in compounds) = giant, Skt. yatu; Dovre, Skt. dava; Rondana, Skt. Ranada. These are mountain names. Rivers: Glaama (Gangā); Jömna (Yamunā); Faa-a (Payasa); Sölina (Sarna); Saanaa (Skt. Śanai-śanai) etc.).

Swami Sri Ananda Acharya:

TATTVAJÑANAM –

The Quest of Cosmic Consciousness.

The Brahmakul, Scandinavia 1921 and Vishveshvaranand Vedic Research Insitute, Hoshiarpur, India 1980.



Over:

Visitors to Shantibu during a short halt on the way to Baral's Grave on Mt. Tron 07.08.2014. From left: Eva-Get Pettersen, Moss; Svein Ellingvåg, Tynset; Eva Rajan, Borensberg, Sweden; Kent Gjørøn Skaug Kristiansen, Moss; Rune Schytte, Bornholm, Denmark. Photo: BP.

Rune Schytte of the film production company "Baldurfilm" is presently preparing a new film about Baral (Sri Ananda Acharya).

To the left:

Vikash Dutt Pandey, India, at Baral's Grave 29.08.2014. Photo: BP. Vikash is presently working for his PhD in physics at the University of Oslo.

The Mt. Tron Mail - the newsletter for those interested in the establishing of the Mt. Tron University of Peace

Publisher: Mt. Tron University of Peace Foundation
Editor: Bjørn Pettersen
 (Chairman of the Foundation)
Issues: Quarterly (4 times a year)
Languages: Norwegian and English
Prices: Subscription of support NOK 350,-/year
 US\$ 50,-/year € 44,-/year

Address: "Shantibu", 2560 Alvdal, Norway
Telephone: +47 62 11 36 91
E-mail: shanti@tronuni.org
Internet: www.tronuni.org
Organization No: 990 106 118
IBAN: NO94 1895 2650 935
BIC-address: SHEDNO22
Bank name: Sparebanken Hedmark