



# The Mt. Tron Mail

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*Mt. Tron as seen from the main road at Steimosletta, Alvdal, on January 2nd 2023. Photo: BP.*

## 2023 – The Curious Case of the disappearing Mt. Tron Mail

Last year, for the first and only time since its launch in 1998, there was no issue of The Mt. Tron Mail produced and distributed to the Mail's readers. Not because there was nothing to read about, no, far from it, but rather that time didn't permit. 2023 was a very hectic year with lots of travelling and so many tasks to be done all at the same time, and added to that were several projects already under way but not yet finished.



So, this edition will partly sum up last year including some of the projects started then. And, we also write about our beloved Sham, who passed from this life at the very beginning of this year.

*Sham just before her first dose of chemo at A-Hus that year, on July 21st 2023. Photo: BP, at. 07:48 hrs.*

# SHAM in Memoriam

By Bjørn Pettersen



Sham at the Sohlbergplassen viewpoint at Sollia in front of the Atna Lake and Mt. Rondane, on July 16th 2023. Photo: BP, at 18:38 hrs.

## The last minutes

It is early Thursday morning on January 4th 2024. The clock is nearing a quarter to eight. Outside it is still dark and nearly minus 20 degrees centigrade. Inside the room on the fifth floor of the Elverum Hospital there is nothing like dark and cold, but Sham, who lies on her deathbed for a third week, fights to get enough air. Her body works violently. She is actually only waiting to leave her body, which is full of lymph and cancer and unbearable pain – a wait which has been going on for some days now. She is awake and her eyes are half open, and from her open mouth sounds are coming.

A moment before I was talking aloud to her: “Sham, can you hear me!?” Immediately she focused her gaze on me and nodded affirmatively, completely unable to express a “yes”. “Everything is fine, Sham, you will soon get released. You will become completely free!”, I told her as so often

these days while dearly stroking her head. As almost always during this time on her sickbed Sham has had a calm and peaceful expression on her face – the awful condition of the outer realities doesn’t affect her inner tranquility.

But Kavitha and I together with two cancer nurses, Elise and Trine, who we had just called, were worried about Sham’s increasing physical strain and unrest, and we discussed if she required a special sedative in this situation. Shortly before we had confirmed both feet and hands were cold, and her breath was short and intense. It was almost unbearable to see her like this, with the emaciated face and the sunken eyes she had acquired in the last days. I had followed her every breath since midnight, when Kavitha called me from my room at the patient hotel on the fourth floor, after Sham had suddenly woken up from deep sleep and looked around for me.

To see Sham lie in bed like this, hour after hour, with

an analgesic pump frequently being adjusted upward, nearly unrecognizable in her face and with violent gasping for air, is perhaps the most painful thing I have ever experienced in my life. Especially because one feels so helpless oneself. Those impressions are so strong that even now, weeks later, if I go back into those memories I will immediately burst into tears. But there in the hospital in that situation, I asked the nurse about how long this condition could last. She said it was impossible to say, so then I asked further if it could be days? “Perhaps”, she answered quietly. Then, for the first time, I felt some despair, because we were all, not least Sham, fully exhausted. There and then an intense prayer rose in my inmost being asking for her total relief NOW.

Shortly afterwards, while all are focused on Sham’s right arm where the sedative is about to be administered intravenously, I suddenly notice that Sham has become fully quiet, without sounds and body movements and I exclaim: «She doesn’t breathe!» All four of us, who are standing around her bed, suddenly concentrate on the upper part of her body where some faint movements can be noticed at the upper end of her chest – four or five small twitches which tell us that she is still present in her body. It is a most intense moment for all four. But it is completely *kumbhak*, stopping of breath, without inhalation or exhalation, the heart tries to make a full beat, but cannot. And then only she leaves her body, fully imperceptibly, so quiet, so quiet, fully awake, with her mouth closed and her eyes open, and with a beautiful, light and utmost peaceful expression on her face.

There and then an enormous joy on behalf of Sham was felt, that finally she was free of all the insane pain and of that prison her body had been to her the last weeks. And that her very last wish in her life was granted, that I should be there by her side when she took her very last breath. Thanks!

In this way Sham made her exit from this life, with some of the greatest physical challenges a human being can encounter, but with a tranquil mind in tranquil surroundings, fully conscious and well prepared for what was to come, and with dear friends around her in whom she had the greatest confidence. But what was the cause of all this? To get an answer to this question we need to go way back to the very beginning and briefly narrate how her life unfolded.

## The beginning of life

Sham was born on December 26th 1975 among Tamils on the East coast of Sri Lanka. Her mother was a Hindu her father a Muslim, so clearly this was a love marriage not an arranged marriage. She was their second child as there was already an elder sister. The birth caused several serious complications, such that the mother died only one week after the delivery. Sham therefore grew up together with her mothers’ parents and siblings outside Jaffna in the north of

Sri Lanka. However, until she married as an adult, she carried her father’s name – Sham Al Bahmiya Ibrahim.

## Civil war and exodus

Sham had a good childhood among her maternal aunts and uncles, who raised her and her sister just like they would have raised their own children. But in 1983 the Civil War broke out between the Tamils and the Sinhalese, so that their childhood, naturally, to a certain extent, was affected by this. When the acts of war reached their neighbourhood outside Jaffna in 1990, Sham escaped further south to Colombo where she started studying at college. Like so many other Tamils in Sri Lanka at that time, her family eventually became spread worldwide. After only half a year there she escaped further to India where she completed a semester in Chennai. After that she returned to Colombo where she lived together with her sister and continued her studies there for the next five years.

After a while it became increasingly unsafe for Tamils to stay in the Sinhalese-dominated Colombo, and when it started to be really scary for the two young, lone sisters, her uncle in Norway arranged for their escape. The journey involved several stages, in one of them they were smuggled inside the dark, narrow and claustrophobic cargo compartment of a bus together with all the luggage of the passengers. But in September 1996 they finally reached Norway, where Sham had to start a new life as a nearly 21-year old. She soon learnt Norwegian, and she both spoke and wrote Norwegian better than most Norwegians, being very apt in expressing herself in writing.



Sham performing classical dance. Unknown photographer.

She also soon got work, and in her free time she engaged actively in Tamil cultural work and travelled around with a drama group performing classical Tamil dance.

## Family life

In 2001 she met an accountant by the name of Olav Stapnes and they married two years later, in 2003. They lived together at Ski south of Oslo where they had two children together, Andrea Priyanka in 2006 and Sondre Praniid in 2012. In the mean time Sham trained as a preschool teacher with pedagogy as her specialization, and she worked in various kindergartens. There she always got the best of recommendations in testimonials and attestations. She was very good with children and had a strong belief in their own ability to master their own challenges. Actually, her maternal feeling was so dominant that she once said that if she was to get another life she would wish to feel as a mother for absolutely all children.

However, during Autumn 2018 Sham and Olav agreed an amicable divorce, after 15 years of marriage.

## Initiation into spiritual life

I met Sham for the first time when I was invited to hold *Satsanga* for the Universal Kriya Babaji Yoga Sangam, or simply 'Thamba's yoga group', as we used to call it. They had weekly meetings on Sundays in a rented room in the basement of Ellingsrud Church. This was during Winter 2012. There Sham participated in a group about 20 member strong of Tamil refugees who had escaped the civil war in Sri Lanka. Sham soon stood out by having a kind of "fit" when we were to meditate together. All of her body was shaking and uncontrolled sounds came from her mouth. Those were the symptoms of a sudden rising of the kundalini, so I called her after asking the group for her name and Sathya had answered "Sham". I then made her sit beside me while I patted her head and back in a fatherly way while at the same time talking to her. And all her symptoms disappeared. She told me that it had never happened to her before, and later it happened a few times more, but it was only in my physical presence.

After that we kept a sporadic contact by phone and by e-mail, but it was not until June 13th 2015, after expressing her wish some time beforehand, that she was initiated into spiritual life by me in Paramananda's hut at Shantibu. Then she had already visited Shantibu for the first time one month earlier together with Sathya and Sri, when Sathya was initiated.

I knew that she had had periods of depression and been seeking actively for more meaning in her life for several years. Among other actions she had made two trips to London to meet with Mooji, but both times she returned disap-



*Sham at Tronsvangen Seter October 20th 2017. Photo: BP.*

pointed. Her diaries, which go back to 2006 and forward to only a few weeks before her death, are full of quotations from great wisdom sources and bear the witness of a very active truth seeking in all those years. And these two circumstances in her life were probably decisive in her coming to me.

After her initiation there were steadily more frequent visits to Tronsvangen Seter, about once a month in the last years. She said she needed that for quiet, inspiration, social amusement and personal guidance, and it was always a very high-spirited, smiling and happy Sham who drove into the yard from Oslo in her own car, in Summer as well as Winter. Even if she was gentle and quiet, and a little more introvert than extrovert by nature, she had a good sense of humour and her resonant laughter infected all the others at the Seter.

## Illness and cancer

When she was diagnosed with cancer in July 2022, it naturally became a turning point in her life. On Thursday September 8th at the Radium Hospital in Oslo she underwent surgery lasting many hours successfully to remove ovaries, uterus, cervix, spleen and parts of the liver, and to scrape the diaphragm.

Before they wheeled Sham into the operating theatre, she had said to herself that she might not survive the operation and so she therefore surrendered completely to God and was mentally prepared to die. Therefore, after waking up from anaesthesia after the operation, she felt that her life was a gift and that everything it contained had more value for her than before.

During the operation the surgeon had removed all visible cancer, but to have more certainty and to prevent a new growth of cancer cells, a programme of six chemotherapy doses was started. This treatment therefore was not meant

to be curative but rather only preventative. Sham started this treatment but after taking the first dose became so intensely sick, both physically and mentally, that she felt in no way able to continue with further doses. She quite simply could not take it because the chemo of course attacked her healthy cells as there were no more cancer cells to attack. She therefore found no other way than to abort the treatment.

Unfortunately, this created a big stir among the family members who all tried to persuade Sham to continue the treatment. But she felt that she had no other choice since further chemo treatment would have ended her life. After this she thought that it might be better to live a rather short life with cancer and possibly a fair quality of life, than to be tormented over a long time with lots of energy draining treatment and no real quality of life, only to delay the inevitable. Because, as her doctor at the Radium Hospital said: "If there is one thing we know about cancer, it is that it will return."

Sham eventually regained a firm footing after this misjudged treatment, thanks to three weeks of intensive care and convalescence at Tronsvangen Seter, and more than half a year passed before cancer was again discovered in her body. This time in lymph nodes in her groin. She consented to start a curative chemo treatment with only one of the two active components in the chemo, namely karboplatin, and after only three doses of this a rather surprised doctor at the Radium Hospital could ascertain that Sham now was completely cancer free. However, as a side effect of the surgery Sham developed lymph oedema in both legs, and eventually also all over her abdomen. This developed so quickly and was considered "abnormal" so that several doctors thought it to be a side effect of the chemo.

But Sham hadn't had any significant distaste with only the karboplatin nor hair loss, unlike the first time. So, in relation to the cancer treatment itself which had been successful, it felt really bad to fall victim to the side effects of this treatment. The lymph oedema was continually growing and made her physically impaired, and intensive physiological treatment during eleven days at Unicare Landaasen, outside of Gjøvik, didn't make her any better, in fact only worse.

Eventually, she was admitted at the Elverum Hospital on December 18th 2023 and remained there for 18 days until her passing away on January 4th this year. Kavitha and I undertook all care of Sham continually every day during the whole of this period. Kavitha washed, showered, dried, and was meticulous in rubbing in creams and oils to avoid ulcers and infections, twice daily. And I assisted her to the best of my ability. We put on and off her support stockings every day, changed clothing and bedding, made food and fed her, every single day from about 7-8 in the morning to about 10 at night. The last

four-five days we kept watch and ward over her continually in turn. Kavitha put aside all her personal needs and offered herself completely for Sham. As a vegan she could hardly find anything to eat from the scandalous selection of food in the hospital, and she hardly got any rest. She even forgot to take her daily medication, on which she depends fully for her daily balance and health. I have never seen anyone here in Norway with such a complete sacrifice for another person – not by blood but by spirit – that is pure, unconditional love in practice!

## Good Sham

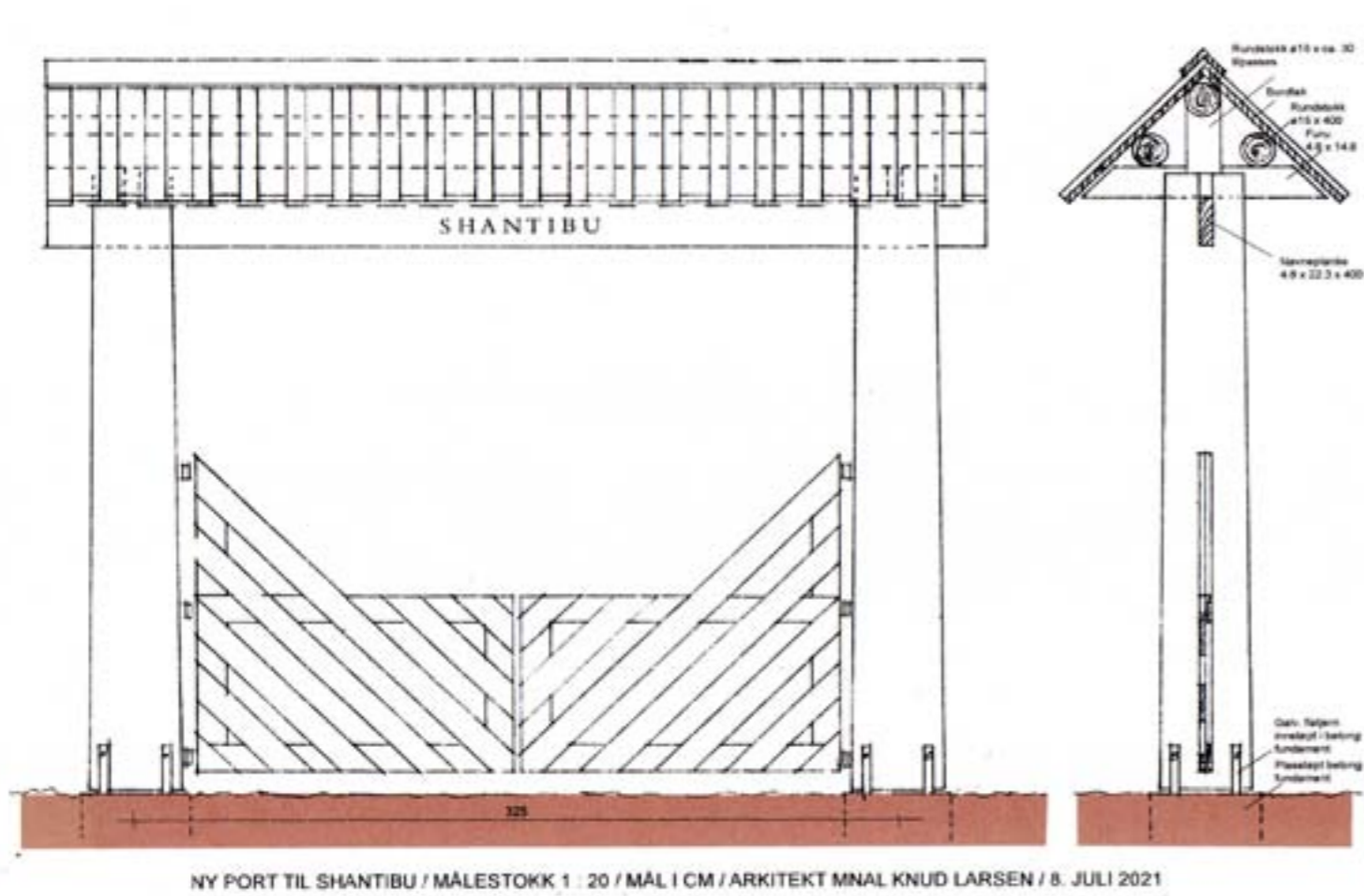
Sham was in every way one of the kindest persons I have ever met in my life. Always ready to help, and always willing to try to understand. In every way incredibly generous and miserliness in any form did not apply to her. She loved to give gifts and attention, and she had a certain ability to find very nice and useful gifts where they were needed. Otherwise, she was quiet and not talkative. It was always peaceful to be together with Sham. But she could also play innocent tricks and "pranks", and had a wonderful sense of humour where her laughter came easily. To me she was the most pleasant person to have around, without words, demand, complaint or commotion and restlessness. Always quiet, calm, considerate and responsive, with a very pleasant sound in her voice. She has given me values in my life as no one else.

We know that Sham's positivity and love will be with us for long, long, long, and we call down peace on her good memory.



*This is the very last picture taken of Sham at Tronsvangen, on December 2nd 2023 at 11:15 hrs. Photo: BP.*

# New entrance at Shantibu

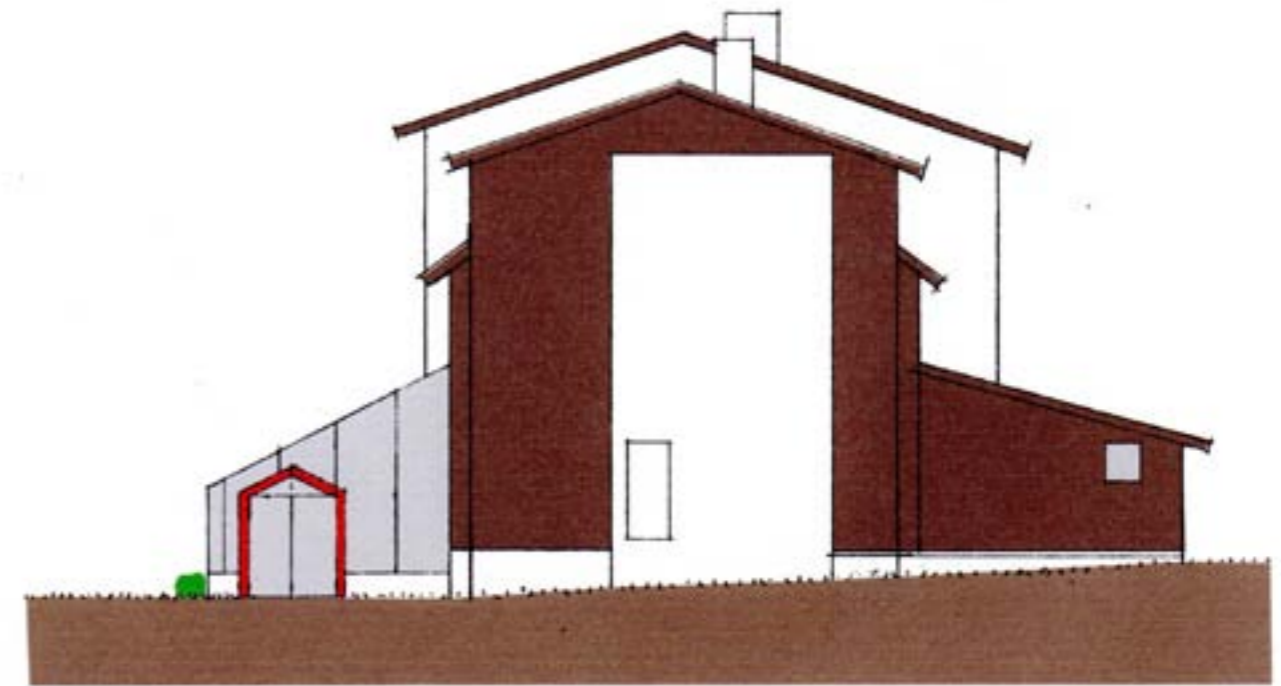


Shantibu has a new architect-designed entrance! Our resident architect Knud Larsen designed this entrance on July 8th 2021. Almost exactly two years later the finished work graces Shantibu in Tronsvanglia, Alvdal. The pillars are from two pine trees who stood too close to the buildings on the property and therefore unfortunately had to be cut down. But they now live on through this elegant entrance. It remains to make an inscription on the board overhead, just underneath the roof, together with a rail fence on each side in front of the property. How we treat the pillars and the rest of the wood in the entrance, is still not decided. With this entrance the extensive renovation work at Shantibu is complete.

*Top: The groundwork was performed by Kent and Erlend at the end of May/beginning of June 2023. It was very well done with a firm foundation directly on rock. Here inspected by Sham. The picture was taken on May 31st 2023.  
Over: All carpentry work for the entrance was performed by building contractor Halvor Haug and assistant. The picture was taken on July 14th 2023.  
Below: The finished result, July 18th 2023. All photos: BP.*

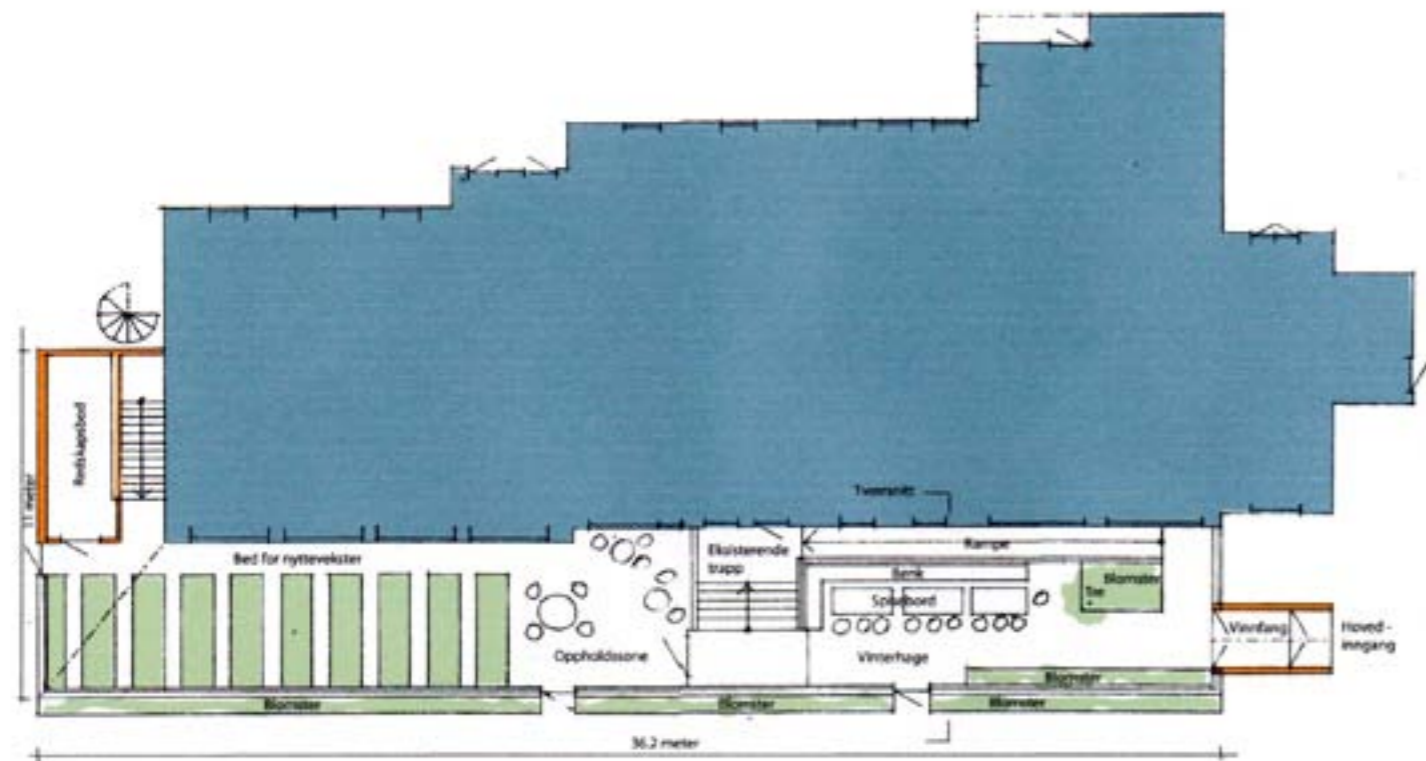


## New plans for a greenhouse at the 'Seter'

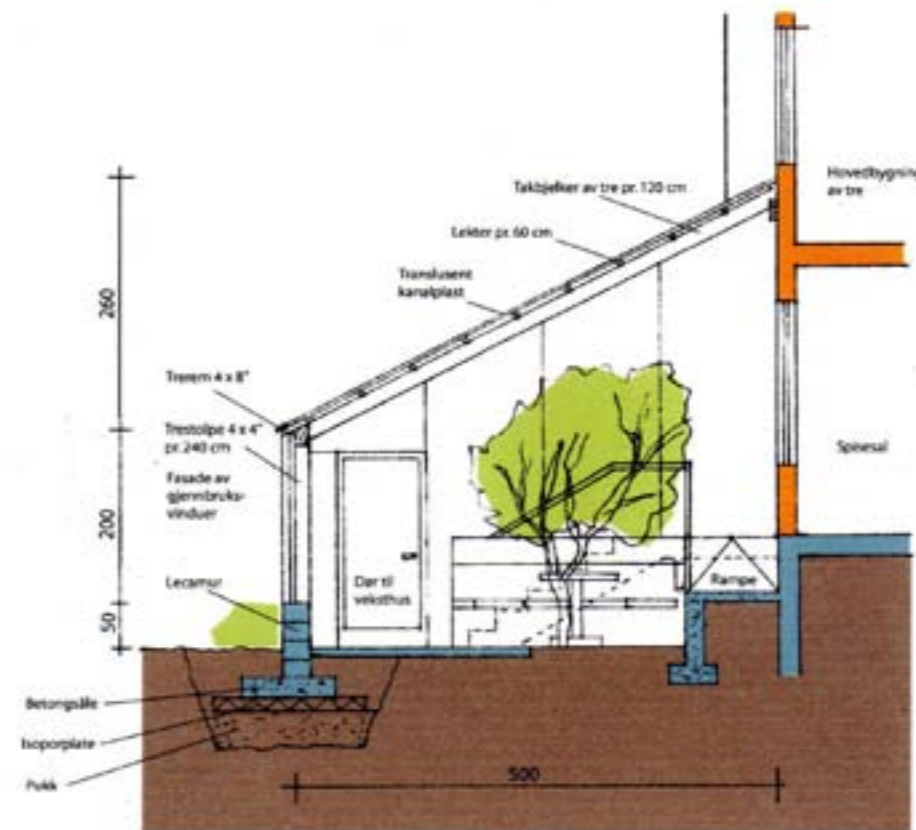


TRONSVANGEN SETER  
Forslag til påbygg av veksthus/vinterhage  
Fasade mot sørvest  
Knud Larsen 01.11.2023

TRONSVANGEN SETER  
Forslag til påbygg av veksthus/vinterhage  
Målestokk 1:100  
Gavl mot øst  
Knud Larsen 01.11.2023



TRONSVANGEN SETER  
Forslag til påbygg av veksthus/vinterhage  
Mål i meter  
Plan  
Knud Larsen 01.11.2023



TRONSVANGEN SETER  
Forslag til påbygg av veksthus/vinterhage  
Målestokk 1:50, mål i centimeter  
Tverrsnitt i vinterhage  
Knud Larsen 01.11.2023

Tronsvangen Seter is old and draughty, and everything quickly becomes expensive when you insulate old constructions, replacing windows and doors, etc. The plan for a greenhouse which we presented in the previous edition of The Mt. Tron Mail will also become too expensive. With the present plan, however, we can solve several problems in one go:

- 1) We will have a completely new, cosy, good indoor climate in the whole building, and avoid expensive insulations and various replacements.
- 2) We will be growing food for own use, which is the most important.
- 3) We will have an attractive winter garden.
- 4) Our entrance will be turned from SW, which is not at all good, to SE, which suits the main direction of the building.

5) We will finally get to do something with the NW end of the building, which is not at all satisfying today. It will be a completely new emergency exit from the basement, but also from the first and second floors, together with the building of a new tool shed for the greenhouse.

If Sweden Greenhouse, leading greenhouse builders in the Nordic region, were to build our project it would cost more than five million Norwegian Crowns, an amount we could never afford. But we are thinking that we will use only recycled glass from thrown away windows, among other material from the old school of home economics at Alvdal, which we have been promised. Besides, there will be plenty of own efforts in collaboration with a local carpenter. We hope to get this building done this year.

# The Galloping of Money

## Open suggestion to Alvdal municipality's strategic plan for trade and industry

By Bjørn Pettersen

The municipality of Alvdal has produced a strategic plan for trade and industry, which contains long term and strategic goals for the municipality in the coming years. In the enterprise section there are general aims and specific initiatives within the areas of industry and transport; tourism; commerce and service; together with general agriculture; traditional livestock production; ecological milk production; forestry and outfields; recruiting and competence; and additional business. Of all the 58 concrete initiatives that have been listed, there is in reality only one – “green added value” – which, perhaps, may look like something innovative and future-oriented. The rest is only a continuation of the all too well known slogans for growth which in sum only aims at just one thing: How to earn more money!

How much money does one wish to earn? Is there any limit? How much nature needs to be levelled to the ground, and how many animals are needed to pay with their life? How many holiday houses need to be built? How much unnecessary pleasure, bread and circuses do we wish to prepare for? Does all this make us more satisfied and happy as humans? I am only asking, because it doesn't seem like the municipality of Alvdal is at all worried by the fact that we are standing at the gate of enormous global crisis which will be affecting all of life on Earth – nature crisis, climatic crisis, crisis of war, economic crisis, societal crisis, and so on. In the municipality of Alvdal everything shall continue exactly as before, only with even more optimism and tempo of growth. That the UN Secretary, from his high post, shouts DANGER! and HEADS UP! at the top of his voice, doesn't help a bit. That now there is a scientific consensus for the verifying of these crises, that extensive reports have been published, detailed documents, chronicles and other educational resources from a large part of the society's conscious intelligentsia, and that in addition there is a broad international political agreement that something has to be done, also doesn't seem to make any impression on the leadership of Alvdal, just like the rest of this country lead by the government.

But honestly: It is a fact that human activity now is so dominating that it disturbs the natural forces and the natural habitats that life needs to survive on Earth. All this is now about to collapse because of the human being, who has placed itself outside the natural order and thus alienated itself in relation to nature. Within the next 80 years it is most likely that we will lose half of all the species of the Earth. Last time it happened was 65 mil-

lion years ago. We are now entering a new geological era. During the Earth's lifetime there have been five earlier extinctions which have all been caused by volcanoes. Now in our time humans emit more CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere than those volcano mega eruptions in the past that extinguished all life. During the past 200 years all accumulated CO<sub>2</sub> from history – oil, coal and gas – has been dug out and consumed. It was this that laid the foundation for the industrial revolution, which is based on these fossil fuels. Today we emit 100 times more CO<sub>2</sub> than all the world's volcanoes together.

CO<sub>2</sub> warms up the Earth because it works as a carpet in the atmosphere around the globe. This is destabilizing one of the most important factors of life: The weather – and leads to drought, more fires, storms and floods. This results in the fact that climatic refugees will be forced to move to other places to live, and hundreds of millions will have to move in the next 50 years. Carbon is the very principle of life on our planet, because all life consists of carbon. Since the start of the industrial revolution the ocean has absorbed about half of all CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions from us humans. Human activity disturbs the balance of an already perfectly balanced planet – it disturbs the oceans and the weather – because 80% of all consumed energy comes from fossil fuels. Seven billion people are already now using the resources equivalent to 1.5 times our globe. This is NOT sustainable!

Yes, these are enormous perspectives, but we have to worry about them! If we do not do so voluntarily now, we will sooner or later be forced to do it, because no one can escape the consequences of this. In Alvdal's strategic plan for trade and industry there is nothing about moderation – about how we can move onwards by consuming less – how, as a small community, we can help each other to become more self-reliant and self-sufficient with both food and energy. Forget the greater society for a while – they are on collision course and believe that these crises can be solved easily by climate accounts, bio economy, quotas and technology – more energy, more growth and more consumption are the all too well-known recipes there. But in a small society like Alvdal the conditions are more lucid and manageable, and at least it should be possible to try a little creativity for the organizing of these conditions. Of course it will imply a completely new intention for a strategic plan for trade and industry, and it could make Alvdal into a pioneer municipality in this otherwise nature hostile country.

I think most people have started to feel a little of these crises touch them personally now for the past two-three years. At first, the covid pandemic came, which inflicted huge restrictions to our freedom of movement. For the first time in decades nature got a small breathing space, and big metropolises the world over experienced clear air because much of the motorized traffic went down drastically. But all grieved and complained heavily, and were only waiting for everything to come back to “normal” again. Except for me – I hoped that we would never again come back to that “normal”, because that “normal” was never normal in the sense of natural or harmonic. Long before the pandemic I had felt disgust and sadness on account of an affluent society which has only become more and more decadent and removed from nature with every passing day – a luxury society in which we live beyond our means, at the cost of the world's poor who cannot even fill their stomach every day – where rape and rasure of nature belongs to the daily order.

After nature's little foretaste of the consequences of man's unfathomable heedlessness and greed, we have seen power crisis, price crisis, care crisis and hospital crisis, to mention some – and many more will come. The most striking crisis of all to us in the rich part of the world is of course our neighbour country Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. There is nothing to indicate that this war will not escalate and include many more countries over time. One does not need to be a prophet to be able to predict that we now, in all likelihood, stand on the threshold of a third world war, in which atomic weapons will be used.

And thus we are back at the starting point of this article: The making of money – in a dual sense. We serve (earn) for money and are servants of Money. Absolutely all people, and the society as a whole in all countries all over the world, are completely slaves of money! Money and economy rules everything – it precedes all concerns of both humans and nature. Anyone who follows a little news and debate, can easily understand this nowadays in connection to the power crisis and the crisis of care. These days electricity is being sold with super profit to those who are the rightful owners of hydropower, namely the people, and the sick and elderly have to suffer because the old people's homes and hospitals are operated as enterprises in the well-known Norway Inc. At the top ‘the fee market’ towers, which has become the most holy and untouchable of all for politicians and those who wheel and deal in positions of power. Everyone and everything is subject to ‘the free market’, which fully lives its own life. In our democratic society also law lives completely its own life, but it is built on the principles of balance and justice, in which the higher qualities of mind and intellect are the guiding factors. But in ‘the free market’ there is free rein for all the lowest and meanest sides of man, like greed, lies and fraud.

It is the greed of the free market that burns down the rainforests – the lungs of the world – in Amazonia, in the Congo Basin and in Indonesia, and it is the same mechanism which privatizes public institutions, removes labour by speeding efficiency, and merges industries to increase profit. Are we really aware what money actually does to us as humans? How insanely bound we are to it in our daily lives? Has money become the very meaning of life? Because it seems that we live only for money! Have you who read this ever stopped to ask yourself if you consider yourself a free human being? About a hundred years ago Baral said it very clearly in that time's language: “Christ didn't have to say ‘Satan’, he could have only said ‘money.’” Everything that in the Christian language and understanding was attributed to Satan, has today been realized through our relation to money – there is no essential difference. All of us that have been living for a while, know the expression ‘the dance around the golden calf’. The comparison is obvious.

I know what I am talking about, because only in my lifetime, soon to be 70 years, enormous changes have happened in society. What was generally considered as great luxury during my childhood and adolescence in the 1960s and 1970s, which only a very few rich could afford, is today quite ordinary and the possession of almost everyone, together with the fact that general consumption has exploded. Today's youth have no idea that switching off lights or saving electricity and other of various resources in the home, is at all possible because they never needed to learn it. Myself, except for a few years at the end of the 1990's when I worked at the municipality of Alvdal, I have lived all my adult life far, far below what was the official poverty line in Norway at any given time, without being a burden to society or others. It has been a voluntary and a good life, and I do not mention it here because I think that it should serve as an example for others, but because I wish to underline that it is fully possible to do it – that it is possible to live austere without consuming a lot, that you can be satisfied with only the bare necessities of material goods.

The politicians talk about how important it is to sustain our affluent society, but our exaggerated affluence means the suffering and death of others, and it is an affluence which is now only unnecessary luxury and abundance, in which the emphasis is on creating more and more artificial needs for pleasure and entertainment. We simply cannot continue this over-materialized race – it is not sustainable for anyone or anything. We all have to think about what we can do in our own home sphere, and the municipality can think through what it can do for the necessary arrangement and coordination with others. Because crises will only continue to appear, bigger and more radical than before. This is absolutely necessary to comprehend, the sooner the better.

# Whence? – Whither? – Why?

## Our Spiritual Dimension of Being

Address delivered at the  
Norwegian Taiji Centre 40 years Jubilee at  
The Norwegian Noble Institute (01.09.2023)  
By Bjørn Pettersen

**Dear friends,**

I would like to ask you if any one of you can recount what happened to you while you were sleeping last night – when you were actually sleeping? No one? Why is that? You must have been asleep for at least six or perhaps even seven or eight hours and you do not know what was happening to you all that time? Well, my friends, relax – it is natural! It is because we are sub-conscious and even unconscious at that time. We do not have the waking consciousness then which we – hopefully! – have now. Everybody knows this because it is a daily phenomenon during the whole of our life.

But what we do not know and perhaps never reflect about is that spending from 1/4th to 1/3rd of our lives in sleep sustains our ignorance about ourselves. Because as a human being we are having an identity crisis of Self. We know so much about the outer, physical universe, macro and micro, from far distant solar systems and galaxies to neutrons and electrons and protons in atoms. But we still do not know our Self. We know much about our physical bodies and something about our minds. But we are totally ignorant about our spiritual dimension of Being.

Who am I really – behind my name, my family, my education and social status, and behind all the other identities given to me by society? From where have I come and to where am I going? And why am I here? Whence – Whither – Why? These are the eternal, universal questions of the human being. We certainly need sleep. It is our mental hygiene. During our dream-sleep on the sub-conscious level, in which we are spending most of all the hours of sleep, we are processing and eventually ventilating our many impressions and desires of mind. And thus keeping a certain mental balance.

So the mind is active during this time even if the physical body is inactive. But during two to two and a half hours of sleep even the mind is inactive. What happens then? Absolutely nothing! We are then at perfect rest in our Self. The problem is that we do not realize this because it is happening on an unconscious level. We most certainly also need the mind-inactive, unconscious, dreamless deep sleep. It is simply not possible to live without it.

We all have experienced that we may have been both

physically and mentally exhausted at night when we turn into bed, but after a good night's sleep we are totally refreshed and starting the day anew. It is only thanks to the deep dreamless sleep. So of course we need it, but, as I said at the beginning, it sustains our ignorance about our Self. Because it is happening on an unconscious level. In deep dreamless sleep we are having perfect rest in the static Self – in our source, which is the same reality for all. As the saying goes: “The one who sleeps doesn't make any sin.” It is our ONE common ground with all beings and all life.

So how to realize that and how to make it conscious in our lives? The human being has been pondering this question since time immemorial, and the wise men of the East have come up with wonderful methods of self-culture to solve this deficiency. And here is where the arts of the various Yogas and various martial arts, among others, have come to light, which involve increased consciousness on many levels, such as concentration of mind, resolution, discipline, patience, endurance, humility and sacrifice. And it is also here that they invented the “conscious sleep”, which is better known as ‘meditation’!

In meditation we are doing nothing – we are only neutrally observing our mind and everything which is there, without involvement or assessment, only being a perfect witness. As we are completely relaxed, physically and mentally, our body is then sleeping and after a while we cannot feel it. And our mind is dreaming, just like in sleep, but we do not mind it. The only difference from regular sleeping is that we know that we are not sleeping – we know that we are perfectly awake – and the witness of everything!

**Dear friends,**

as human beings we consist of three dimensions: material, mental and spiritual, which are also called physical, subtle and causal. These three dimensions or bodies correspond to the three levels of consciousness (conscious, sub-conscious and unconscious) and the three states of mind (waking, dream-sleep and deep, dreamless sleep), which we have just discussed and which we all are experiencing every day throughout our lives.

When these three bodies operate together in harmony, we feel peace. Peace is nothing else than harmony of life. When the physical body is in health and the mind is in

balance and we do not feel any identity-crisis, we feel peace. Peace is a feeling of harmony when we are sound and sane. Peace is not a commodity – it is not manufactured – it cannot be bought or sold in the market. We cannot give peace to anybody, and peace conferences cannot bring any peace. Peace can only be felt inside.

When we feel peace outside it will only be in nature, because nature is always in harmony with herself. And so we always have to follow nature, and peace in human society has to come from within – there is no outer peace without inner peace. Thus, in the same manner, to know ourselves and to solve the chronic crisis of humanity, we have to learn the language of our body and to read our mind, because we can only know ourselves through our body and mind, which are our gifts by birth.

In learning the language of the body we shall have to decide our food-habit and life-style; re-learn the rhythmic breathing of our babyhood; exercise the body properly; and overall learn how to live in harmony with nature.

In reading our minds we shall learn how to relax the mind; how to concentrate the mind; and how to observe the mind as a neutral witness in perfect silence.

And through these practical exercises we will gradually learn to know ourselves or our Self, thus getting the answers to those most intimate, universally human questions put forth at the beginning of this address: Who am I? From where have I come and to where am I going? Why am I here?

So, “Learning the language of body”; “Reading the mind”; and “Knowing thyself” – these are the three step Art of Life courses contained in the Mt.Trøn University of Peace at Mt.Trøn in Alvdal.

When we realize our pure, static Self we find the source of life and all dynamic activity and manifestations, and our lives will be transformed. We will see that One Entity in all the multitude and variety of manifested life, and we will never again feel that they are different from myself. And thus peace and harmony will prevail. We will realize that the dynamic becomes the static and the static becomes the dynamic, and that is the final realization of life and Being.

It is actually the same rhythm of sleep and waking going on, only now there is no more subconscious or unconscious but being fully conscious all the while. Then we have become the natural human being that we are meant to be – that evolution is working towards – because we will be able to feel both static and dynamic at the same time. The Static is all Wisdom and the Dynamic is all Love, and together they constitute the Eternal Bliss which we are meant to feel and which all, consciously or unconsciously, want and are longing for.

**Dear friends,**

In concluding this address I would like to share with you a very pleasant experience I had exactly 20 years ago now – in September 2003. It was the last time I was giving a public speech to an international audience like now.

I had been invited to Australia as one of three key speakers at an international peace symposium held at the Griffith University in Brisbane. And there I had the great fortune to get acquainted with the Chinese-born Teresa Hsu, who was widely known all over South-East Asia as the “Mother Teresa of Singapore”, where she was founder and head of “The Heart to Heart Foundation”.

She was nearly 105 years old at the time and was doing physical yoga daily, which she had started at the age of 80. She was the very incarnation of peace and love and sheer joy with a wonderful sense of humour – so sweet and affectionate and a most wonderful person.

Later, I was also invited to write an article about her in a book of accolades, which I entitled “Everyone's Sister”. She lived to become 112 years old, and as she was born in 1899, she had experienced three centuries in her lifetime.

One of the most striking things about Teresa Hsu was her most wonderful motto of life, which covers all the most basic ideals we need to have in life as a human being. Please listen carefully – here it comes:

**The whole world is my home;  
All living beings are my sisters and brothers;  
Selfless service is my religion.**

Thank you!



*Bjørn delivering his address at the honourable Nobel Institute of Oslo, on September 1st 2023. Photo: Sham Babitha Stapnes.*

# Introductory course in the Art of Life

Summer 2024

**Step 1: Learn language of body:** fri-sun May 31st

**Step 2: Read the mind:** fri-sun June 7th

**Step 3: Know Thyself:** fri-sun June 14th

**Fee: 7500 NOK**

Incl. food & lodging

**Register before:**

31st of April 2024



**Mt. Tron**  
UNIVERSITY OF PEACE

For more information and **registration** you may reach us at  
[kontakt@tronsvangenseter.no](mailto:kontakt@tronsvangenseter.no)

## Introductory Art of Life course

Three weekends, Three steps - Summer 2024

The central idea of the University of Peace is that there is no outer peace without inner peace, and that we as humans have everything latent within for realizing ourselves in full harmony with our surroundings. We only need a little stimulation in a favourable environment for the complete unfolding and manifestation of our potential, much like a tiny seed in the ground which only needs warmth, water and light to grow into a great tree.

The Art of Life course applies this idea in three practical steps. By knowing our body and our mind we can know ourselves - the Self. We can develop as human beings, and achieve peace and harmony with ourselves and our surroundings:

### 1. Learn language of body

This will be a "survival class" - a kind of ecology of the body—where we learn how to survive in the world. Focus will be on food habit, lifestyle, physical exercise and relaxation, right breathing etc.



### 2. Read the mind

This will be a "silence class" where we will gain insight into our own psychology in peaceful and harmonious surroundings. Focus will be on mental relaxation, mental concentration and mental observation.

### 3. Know Thyself

This will be a "philosophy class" where the great and fundamental questions in life will be examined in the light of our self-identity and self-integrity. Questions like "Who am I?", "From where have I come and where am I going", and "What is the meaning of life?" will be central here.





## Schedule

A detailed schedule will be sent to the participants ahead of time. The three steps of the course will be distributed over three weekends: Step 1, **31st of May to 2nd of June**; Step 2, **7th to 9th of June**; and Step 3, **14th to 16th of June**.

The basic structure of each step is as follows:

- **Fridays:** check-in at 15-18. Later, we will gather together to provide information for the weekend, as well as summarize the previous step.
- **Saturdays:** two main sessions, one before noon, and one in the afternoon.
- **Sundays:** one session before noon. Check-out in the afternoon.

## Fee & Registration

The total fee for the course is 7500 NOK per person, including food and lodging. The instructors work for free and any profit goes to Stiftelsen Tronfjell Fredsuniversitet (*University of Peace Foundation*).

We'd like anyone to participate no matter their financial situation, so do let us know if you have certain challenges or needs.

**IBAN:** NO90 1822 58 84133. **SWIFT/BIC:** SHEDNO22

Sparebank 1: Østlandet

Mark your payment with name and "Introkurs".

Register before 31st of April 2024. Maximum participants: 20.

## Lodging

The course is held at Tronsvangen Seter where the participants will stay. Towels and linen are included. For those of you who can share a bedroom, let us know so that we can make space for more people.

For those that wish to stay with us for the remainder of the week we can offer lodging for an additional fee of 2100 NOK per week. The environment is excellent to freely practice what you learn during the course.

## Meals

We serve breakfast, main meal and supper during the course. The diet will be mainly vegetarian in addition to some local ingredients. If you have special dietary needs we would like to hear from you as soon as possible so that we can plan accordingly.

## Instructors

The Art of Life course is led by an idealistic group of people that work continuously on developing Mt. Tron University of Peace. Decisions are made together, everyone contributes in their own way and encourages each other to be who they are. In the spirit of the University of Peace we put more emphasis on compassion and goodwill, rather than social position and reputation.

## Directions

Tronsvangen Seter is situated at about 805 meters above sea level, at the base Tronfjell (*Mount Tron*). From highway 3 in the center of Alvdal, take the exit by Shell gas station and follow the road signs to Tronsvangen Seter.

The address is Tronsvanglia 238, 2560 Alvdal.

If you arrive by train or bus, we can pick you up at Alvdal station. The closest airport is Røros at about 1,5 hour away by car.

Welcome to the University of Peace! 🕊️



Would you like to know more about **Mt. Tron University of Peace**?

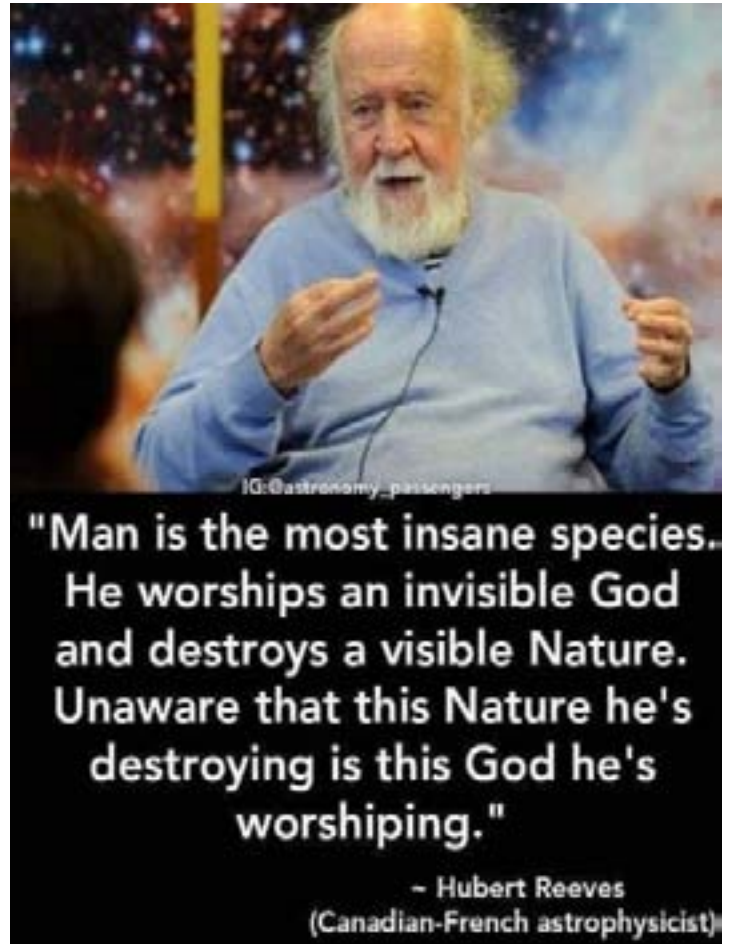
Visit [→ tronuni.org](https://tronuni.org)

## Other

Nothing is known about the man in the picture to the right except for what can be Googled about him, but the text which is attributed to him expresses something of what I have almost always been thinking, and which is at the very core of what is the problem of the human being in the world – no feeling for nature, no understanding, no respect. We have removed ourselves so far away from nature that we cannot recognize her as our mother, who has given birth to us and nourished us and who we in any case are fully dependable on for our survival and for real welfare in life – and, not least, to be able to understand our self as a human being.

This poster was found by chance on the Internet.  
(Bjørn).

The photograph below shows one of countless, magnificent sunsets witnessed from Tronsvangen, especially in the month of January when the sun is at its lowest in the sky. It was taken by Erlend Becsan on January 21st last year at 15:35 hrs local time from the veranda at the 'Seter'.



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

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