

„NATURAL VILLAGE” PROJECT

Respect for the earth

The humans and their natural environment are forming a complete body. None organism exists beyond the natural environment. The nature influences the humans and the humans are influencing the nature. In this two-sided relationship humans can influence the nature in different ways of activity and administration.

From the times of Aristotle the process, in which the men has been separated philosophically and spiritually from the nature, was inaugurated. The new model of comprehending the nature as the human is beyond the nature and can administrate and manage her without any consequences to him, was formed in Europe. This way of thinking has outlasted to our times and has caused huge destructions in the environment because of the irrational administration and economy of natural resources.

In result of the misconceived and irrational use of this resources the dynamic of the biosphere of the Earth has been modified and her natural processes has been changed. A disturbance of the biological balance in many cases has changed the character of whole biomes and lead to mass extinction of many species, causing the disturbance of other elements and parameters of the ecosystems, which depend on this species. This all inevitably lead to an ecological catastrophe and in consequence, to a notable abatement of the Earth-habitants' quality of life.

“Gradually it is becoming clear that the so-called “external affects” of the economic production process are not as external as we would like them to be and the affects off non-sustainable development in the past are costing us billions of dollars today in repairing, neutralizing or limiting the damage to the environment and human health, in so far as this is possible.

The global scale of these environmental problems is now threatening the integrity and functioning of the entire biosphere: the thin layer of soil, water and air surrounding the earth in which life exist naturally. The need for conservation and sustainable use of nature and natural resources should, therefore, need no further explanation; man is an integral part of the biosphere which constitutes our only life-support system in an otherwise hostile cosmic environment. By threatening its integrity and functioning, we are not only seriously affecting the quality of human (and other) life, but we may even be threatening the very existence of life on earth.”

Rudolf S. de Groot (1992)

To break off this fast succeeding process of destruction changing the man's behavior and ways of thinking by integrating the nature in the human philosophical system is unavoidable. In this situation we should ask ourselves if the evolution in our earlier history doesn't go the wrong path and if the economical growth and the accumulation of capital should be our destiny. We also ought reflecting, if the modern technological attainments can help us in finding a natural and human way of life – in harmony with the nature – or is it maybe only a way to obtain more and more money so we can consume even more, which deprive us the natural aspect of our life?

We should find out where is now the man's place inside the nature and in which way our mental and spiritual being can integrate with the nature. We must relearn how to respect the Earth, our Mother and how to listen to her. It's indispensable to rediscover which is the role of the humans inside the nature's framework and fulfill this role consciously. Restoration of this consciousness is necessary to find the biological balance of the Earth's global ecosystem with all functions, which it fulfill in human life. Conscious realization of these functions will not only raise the quality of the natural environment in which we live, but also the quality of the human life will increase – people are completely related to processes occurring in the nature.

Development of a natural way of life

In this context the question is raising, how we can develop a natural way of life, which would finish this physical and psychical separation of humans from the nature. The natural way of life should integrate harmoniously with the natural rules, preserve the respect to the Earth and not interfere with her at a degree, which could proceed to disorder of the natural balance. This way of life should be accordant with the human nature and the man should fulfill his part in the complete system of Nature. To initiate this way of life humans must regain a contract with their environment, they must relearn how to observe, how to hear, how to feel its needs.

The activities, which proceed into this direction should take place in atmosphere of respect and love to the nature. To get clearness and candor to hear and understand the nature the first requisite is the resignation of all sort of technology, excessive consumption and things, that make us addicted because they impede a direct contact with the nature.

We should find out which social and economical structures the best suit the natural way of life and which part will play spirituality. It makes sense to orientate ourselves on tribal structures of native tribes, still living in harmony with the nature and to transfer them to our conditions and culture. From ages the tribal structures have been evolved in the unison with the nature, so they can be a useful help in forming a “new” natural way of life.

We should also realize which global effects may be caused by spreading the natural way of life. Even if this way of life must be organized regionally and decentralized.

It is important to find the right place, where we can realize this way of life. This place should have an efficient ecosystems, a stable ecological balance and be capable to appease the fundamental needs of its habitants. We should pay attention on the quality and quantity of water and soil, which should be cultivable, on some building materials as clay and wood, on quantity of eatable plants, medicinal herbals and burning material. It is important that the quantity and quality of the primary goods and the quantity and behavior of the habitants are in such proportions which aren't disturbing the natural balance.

This place should give us the possibility of working out a natural way of life and finding the answers on many questions, which are raising in this context, e. g.:

- What is the real, primary human nature?
- What is the man's mission and his sense inside the nature?
- In what way a human can integrate in the natural environment and live in harmony with the nature without disturbing the natural balance? Is it still possible?
- How may look the human natural way of life?
- Will we miss the “civilization” and be less happy or will the primitive way of natural life give us more satisfaction?
- Does the natural way of living can help us to resolve the ecological and social problems of our civilization?

The consequences of the natural way of life for the different aspects of our life

The natural way of life causes some consequences, which found its reference in all spheres of human life as agriculture, architecture, pedagogics etc..

Agriculture we can learn directly from the nature. In the nature appears a notable variety of living creatures, which cooperate in biocenosis without man's interference - it means without the use of fertilizers, pesticides and tillage. It is possible to transfer these rules to the conditions of agriculture and cultivation of soil in a natural way. For example the method of farming which was developed by Masanobu Fukuoka in Japan in the last 50 years of the 20th century called *Natural Farming* works without tillage, chemical manure and was in the course of 10 years more effective then the traditional methods of cultivation. This method does not abate the productive quality of soil by changing its structure and chemical composition, hyper-manure or making it sterile and initiate erosion. It is based on natural methods of growth and cultivating of plants, in which the different cultivable plants, similar to the plants growing in a natural biocenoses grow without excessive man's interference.

In architecture we should find out which way of building is the most concord with the human nature and is in harmony with the environment e. g. by using natural resources like clay, sand, stones and trees.

For handicraft it is important to discover which skills are required and useful for the natural way of living and how we can practice them in harmony with the nature.

In the education and the pedagogic it's important to preserve the respect to the human nature of the child and to learn respecting the natural environment.

In the medicine we should use methods of curing, which diagnose the nature of a disease and which heal the human as a whole instead of fighting only the symptoms.

Similar solutions should be found in all aspects of our life.

The Natural Village

How may look the “Natural Village” in practice, where we can develop the natural way of life?

For developing a natural way of living we have to integrate the different aspects of human life which are the aspects of community, family and the individual aspect. We will consider here mainly the village community.

The village community has different tasks, e. g.:

- To satisfy our various needs [social, economical, spiritual].
- To share temporary and permanent tasks between the habitants of the village.
- To fulfill different communal tasks like cultivating of soil, building, production of secondary goods, healing, pedagogic and education, representation to the outside world and the internal organization.
- To take care about the realization of communal tasks and rules

To fulfill these tasks we have to create some social, economical and spiritual structures. We can consider the example of structures in native tribes like the Iroquois.

By living in the community we will recover the rules necessary for the communal live and by living together with the nature we will recover the rules which shows our respect to the nature. This may be the resignation of modern technology [electricity, petrol engines, electronics, chemistry] and consumption goods, eating meat, breeding animals, consuming alcohol and drugs.

It is also important to respect the people's heterogeneity and their personal nature, their private life and the free choice of their spiritual path. We have to solve the conflict between rules that helps us in the community and in the natural way of living on one hand and individual freedom on the other.

In the village community we can start to develop the natural way of living, which is based on the mentioned rules. Everyone must be conscious about the importance of this natural way of life and must take responsibility for his activities.

It's important to pay attention on the integration of the Natural Village in its natural environment without disturbing the natural balance. We should recognize and respect the limits, which exceed may charge the ecosystem. This may happen if the quantity of habitants will be exceeded in proportion to the area.

Quantity and quality of the primary goods accessible on an cultivated area should be proportional to the quantity of the habitants. Pressure which will be exerted by the habitants of a village on a definite ecosystem mustn't threaten the natural balance, which is the result of the natural factors like the needs of the animals occurring in a definite area [e. g. wolves, lynxes], the needs of the predators to preserve their distinction [because the predators are especially sensitive to presence of a humans], preserving the natural composition of plants [every plant lives in a community and a removal of one plant affects the rest of the plants in the community]. We ought to reduce the activities which aren't natural for this ecosystem and can have a bad influence on it's dynamic and should preserve its natural aspects.

Other bad influences which can cause the change of the composition of flora and fauna are:

- Dropping organic and inorganic waste into the ecosystem.
- Selective cutting and removing some species of trees and bushes.
- Building barrages or dams on the rivers and streams or changing their course.
- Making noise.

To avoid these negative influences inevitable is the arrangement of some structures in the village, which determine forms of activity do not threaten the natural environment and in the same time preserve the integral character of it's function and increase the quality of life in the village.

In this village we want to find the answer to the question, how should we live without threatening the nature? Probably it isn't entirely possible because all the interferences cause a modification that cause unforeseen changes. But we should reduce the changes to a certain amount so that they don't disturb the balance and still stay removable.

If we manage to develop a way to live in harmony with the nature we should share these experiences and knowledge. For example through meetings, seminars or workshops. We should also find out in which way we can transform our experience to other conditions. Which aspects of this way of life have general character and which aspects must be adapted to specific territorial circumstances?

Hulskie – the actual situation

We have found a small valley in the Carpathian mountains (Bieszczady) beside a mountain stream, where we want to realize the “Natural Village“ project.

This valley resides the landscape park “San river valley” near the National Park of Bieszczady. In this place used to be a small village named *Hulskie*, which was destroyed by the operations of the UPA-army and the “Vistula Action” after the end of the second world war.

The soil contains some clay and there is drinkable water of very high quality. A part of the valley is a deciduous forest, in the main part there are pastures and meadows. It is a very wild area where are living numerous species of animals like deer, wolves, bears, lynxes, vipers, Aesculapius snakes, eagles, black strokes.

There are fruit trees near the stream where was the former village [apple trees, pear trees, plum trees]. Eatable plants near the village are: raspberries, blackberries, wild roses, hazels and many herbals. There also trees like sycamores, ashes, and some birches, limes and coniferous trees. The climate is continental with frosty winters and warm summers.

In this valley we have bought about 30 ha of ground, the main part is pasture and meadow and some part with trees. This area lays on the north west of the stream and extends from its shore to the top of the mountain on a length of about 1 km. The altitude is between 500 and 600 meters over the sea. The area is declared as agrarian-forest without the right to build houses.

We constituted a foundation to realize the project and to buy the grounds. It is called the *San-Tribe Foundation*. Her main goal is buying and preserving natural grounds and create places, where humans can learn to live in harmony with the nature. The foundation may also organize and finance workshops and meetings in which we share our experiences and knowledge. Activities of the foundation aren't limited to this place, it may also be active and realize projects in other areas.

The Foundation is governed by the Foundation Board, who manages the activity of the Foundation and represents her to the outside world. The Board makes all decisions related to the foundation by unanimous **consensus**. The Foundation Board should consists of all habitants of the natural village.

Realization of the project “Natural Village” would be one step to end the exploration and degradation of the nature and may give us the beginning of a new friendship between the Humans and the Earth – our Mother.