

GEN Europe General Assembly

Lakabe Ecovillage, Basque Country, Nafarroa-Euskadi, August 2000

Lucilla Borio

News

GEN Europe



The general assembly of GEN-Europe was a wonderful opportunity for members to meet each other and work together. The community of Lakabe, in Basque country - northern Spain - was a perfect host for the occasion and gave us great support and encouragement.

Many hours were spent talking and discussing, but a good amount of time was also invested in singing under Martin Stengel's (Ecovillage of Sieben Linden) skilful supervision, dancing the traditional ecovillage circle dances, walking and exploring the majestic surroundings of the village. Slide-shows and video projections filled our evenings and afternoons providing a non-stop flow of information and entertainment for all those interested. The final "Open House" on Sunday closed the Assembly and attracted a crowd of friends and activists who sang, talked and shared the evening meal with us, after a general presentation of the network and the GEN official slideshow.

Mabel, Alfredo, Claudio and all the other Lakabe members made us feel at home, and at the end of the meeting Lakabe was elected honorary member of GEN-Europe as a symbol of our gratitude. Many thanks also to Agnieszka Komoch, Ulysses and above all Susanna Onate who offered their help with translation from and into Spanish.

About 60 people attended the meeting, representing 17 members:

- Eight National networks: Come Together, Germany; RIVE, Italy; EVNUK, UK; Ekilat Turkey; NJORD, Sweden; RFEV, France; Finnish and Hungarian Networks)
- Nine ecovillages: Artosilla and Val de Pielagos, Spain ; Damanhur, Bagnaia and Torri Superiore, Italy; Lebensgar-

ten and Sieben Linden, Germany; Ekbo/Gebers, Sweden; Gyürüfü, Hungary.

- Representatives of Alcatraz Free University, Italy, Young Nature Friends, Romania, and ecovillage initiatives in Croatia and Portugal participated as well.
- Maria Helena Avena from the Brazilian Ecovillage. Terra Mirim was a special guest.

Decisions from the meeting:

- Eco-rates* were adopted for GEN-Europe membership fees, which were set at 50 Euros/year for full members and 25 Euros for Ecovillage Supporters;
- The new statute of GEN-Europe was approved by consensus and will be registered in Italy;
- Accounts for 99/00 and budgets for 00/01 were presented by the GEN Europe Secretariat, and approved.
- The newly elected GEN-Europe Council is formed by (in alphabetical order): Lucilla Borio of Torri Superiore, Italy (Secretary), Mete Hacaloglu of the Ekilat network, Turkey (Treasurer), Agnieszka Komoch of Lebensgarten, Germany (President), Jean Michel Pochat of the French Network, Lepre Viola of Damanhur. They will serve a two-year term of office.

During the plenary sessions, we discussed the situation of present ecovillages and networks, suggestions and possible improvements on fundraising, network organisation, and communication. It was also decided that the next General Assembly will be held in July 2001 in Poland.

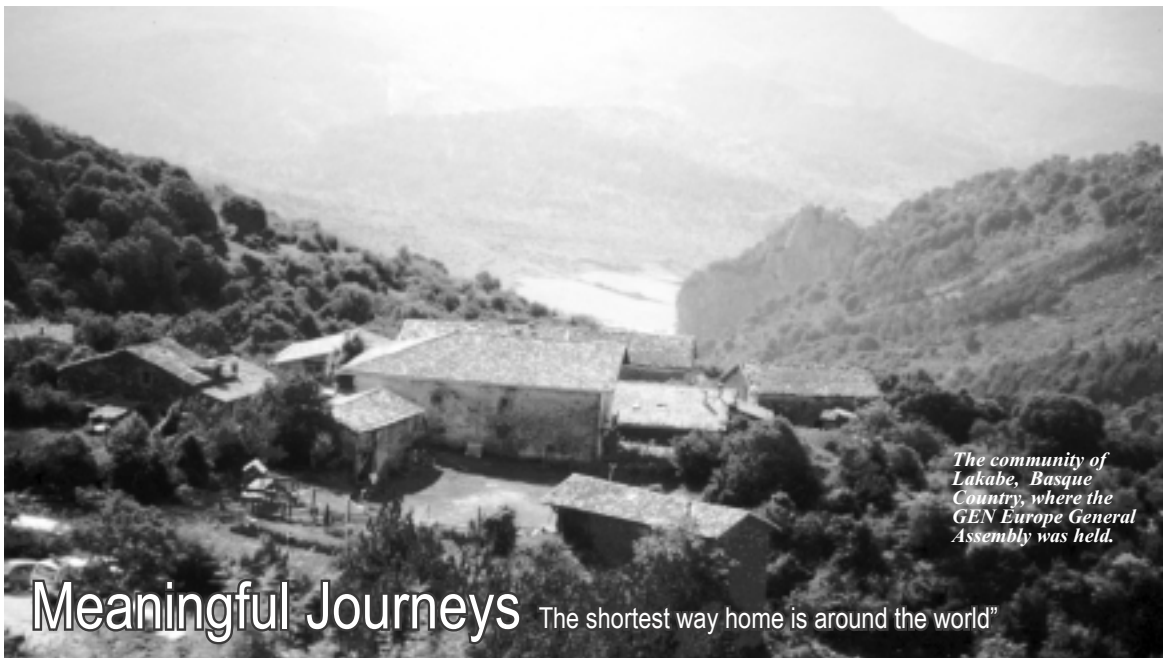
Several smaller work-groups were formed according to personal interests on topics like youth exchange and volunteer programs, politics and ecovillages, communication and conflict resolution, community glue, sustainability and education. This allowed a more relaxed and direct exchange between participants, and enhanced personal relations and contacts.

As a final note, the general assembly was a great moment for GEN-Europe, not only for the important decisions that were taken but also for the general feeling of support and cohesiveness among members. Even though long plenary sessions were sometimes tiring, the group energy was high all the way through and participation was intense. It was hard to part and say good bye to our new and old friends... we hope to see you all in Poland for the next meeting!

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*Ecorates: alternative currency exchange rate system based on the average income level of each country. Created by Eyfa (European Youth For Action).





The community of Lakabe, Basque Country, where the GEN Europe General Assembly was held.

Meaningful Journeys The shortest way home is around the world"

Teodora Anastasoei comunitate@yahoo.com

Teodora Anastasoei is a young Romanian activist who plans to start the first ecovillage in the Timisoara region with the Tinerii Prieteni ai Naturii Association (Young nature Friends). She and Sebastian Capotescu received a GEN-Europe bursary to attend the General Assembly and visit some well-established ecovillages as a part of their practical training. Here she writes about her experience and dreams, living in a country where sustainable rural communities still exist but are considered something of the past.

The idea of community living sprouted within Tinerii Prieteni ai Naturii (TPN-Young Nature Friends, a student group from Timisoara) a few years ago. We--Teodora Anastasoei and Sebastian Capotescu (Capy)--met Lucilla Borio of GEN-Europe during the Ecotopia festival and the straw-bale construction workshop in Romania in the Summer of 1999. We were very honoured by her invitation to attend the GEN Assembly in Lakabe this Summer, and the opportunity given us to visit other European ecovillages as part of our training.

We were more than two young people travelling: We were the messengers of the Young Nature Friends vision, meeting other dreams that had become a reality. Our trip was a very intense journey, sometimes providing more food for thought than we could digest.

Our first stop was Lakabe, Spain. We had the double privilege to visit this amazing place and meet people from ecovillages all over Europe. The greatest challenge here was assimilating the overwhelming input of ideas. In Lakabe we felt at home, as in Romania we are fond of mountains, and the place reminded us of the simple village lifestyle we know.

The biggest lesson was learning about slow development in time. Patience and solidarity are so important...

Next, we traveled to Bagnai and Torri Superiore in Italy.

We were really overwhelmed by the Italian hospitality... We absorbed the atmosphere of community through all our senses, and we took home not only ideas about economical development but also memories of communal meals, lots of dishes and big pots, singing and talking, gardening in tough conditions, and of the way time passes by the sound of the wind.

In Germany we visited Sieben Linden and Lebensgarten. Here we received lesson after lesson on communication, decision-making, conflict management, business initiatives and more.

Each place we visited held a double vibration for us. On the one hand there was the emotional aspect: We were finding something that linked our original dream and drive with the start of this project. On the other hand, there was the intellectual stimulation: Each place was giving us a lesson, answering questions and dissolving fears and unclaritys.

We were pretty tired after traveling one full month. We spent over 150 hours on trains, and talked for maybe half of this time. Our memories and impressions crystallized into lots of ideas for the project of our life. Our journey continues, as two of us are now going to India, to visit Ladakh and other places. We'll keep you informed ...



To know more order the book "Between Sky and Earth" at tpn@banat.ro or look it up on the internet at:

<http://www.geocities.com/betweenskyandearth/>

Our site: <http://www.geocities.com/comunitate>



Top: Strawbale building course in Hasandede, Turkey

Strawbale Building in Turkey

Demet Irkli Eryildiz irkli@mmf.gazi.edu.tr

The first straw-bale house workshop in Turkey was held last July in Hasandede (90 km south-east of Ankara), organized by the ecological association “Harman” and sponsored by GEN-Europe.

The house plan was designed by Architect Demet Irkli Eryildiz and drawn by Mükremin Barut and Aysu Baskaya, who also helped for the building calculations. The course was held by the German instructor Harald Wedig. Nine Gazi University students, two architects and three volunteers participated. The State Farm in Bala provided the strawbales, while the Research Fund of Gazi University and the Kirikkale branch of the Chamber of Architects provided the other building materials. The Hasandede Municipality supplied a building area on the town hall plot.

The workshop aimed at building an earthquake-resistant and ecologically sound rural dwelling. Straw-bale houses have a very high thermal insulation value both in winter and in summer, and the wooden post-and-beam structure was chosen for earthquake considerations. A 10cm thick concrete slab was placed on top of the masonry foundation while heavy cross-ties were used to attach the foundation to the upper frame of the roof structure. A wooden trussed-roof system and light metal coverings were chosen for their earthquake resistance, durability and ability to harvest clean rainwater. Both the foundation and the roof were properly insulated against cold, humidity and condensation. Openings were designed mostly on the south surface for harvesting more solar energy, and wooden window and door frames were applied as natural building elements.

One month after the end of the course, the first and second layer of mud plaster were completed and the windows fixed. From the very beginning, villagers closely monitored the building process, as the construction site was strategically located in the Hasandede town center. The site was also visited by several architects and university professors from Kirikkale.

The building will be offered to the Hasandede Municipality as an ecological training center, and experimental tests will be performed in the next stages of the project, which is now in need of additional funding to carry out further research.



Top: Strawbale house being built in Torup, Denmark. Architect: K. Hejgaard (p. 10)



A strawbale house can also look like this!
(Burritt Mansion, Alabama, Photo: Albert Bates)

Greetings from Gyurufu, Hungary

Bela Borsos

For us at Gyürüfü, 1999 was a year of great migration: The four founding families of the project finally moved out from the neighboring Ibafa village and into their respective homes at Gyürüfü Ecovillage. Also, we reached benchmarks such as the completion of the access road to the ecovillage (previously a dirt path), the roofing of the Community House, the installation of five reed-bed systems, solar collectors and other eco-facilities, and the beginning of on-site community life. The Ecovillage became a reality. Unfortunately, some misunderstanding soon followed about the fact that the Gyürüfü Foundation has no membership and is thus unaccountable, and the community still has to accommodate different views on this subject. We hope to sort out these difficulties soon. All in all there



Straw roof on a compressed earth house at Gyurufu, Hungary

are seven families permanently living on site, hoping to receive residential permits from the authorities. With the moving of the head office, contact numbers and mailing addresses have changed. Inquiries about Gyürüfü should be addressed to: Andrea Solymos, e-mail: tarkaret@freemail.hu

Letter from Grishino Ecovillage, Russia

Vasudeva Kirbatiev Vasudeva@mail.spb.org

We are glad to share with you the joy of our growth and creativity in the Grishino community (300 km North-East of St. Petersburg). We had a really lively, productive Summer with six seminars/camps in our ecovillage, which showed us that our community is becoming a good retreat and workshop place in Russia. We hope to grow further in this direction.

We only have five permanent residents at this point in time, as the others join us for periods lasting from a few days to a few months. We are working on the project of a family school in Grishino, to allow families with children to live in the ecovillage all year round. During the summer 20 to 40 people live, work, meditate, dance and laugh here together with us. We are building new rooms for our guests, a new dining room and meeting place, and we invite volunteers to come and work with us in exchange for food and lodging. We speak Russian and English, a little German and French, and we invite our European and American brothers and sisters to come and try the real Russian experience. Hot shower, Russian sauna, vegetarian meals with organic vegetables from our

garden, spring water and free swimming in the river a part of every day's program. Every year we have a great Russian New Year's celebration (Dec. 31-Jan. 2), when we receive many friends for an evening of singing, dancing, story telling, costume show, Russian sauna and swimming outside amidst the snowy landscape. And of course we invite our western friends to join us for this wild Russian winter holiday! Our inspiring vision is to build a beautiful Universal Temple in traditional Russian style in the middle of the wild flowers field, where we can meditate, pray, sing and dance together. You are very welcome to join us to make our dream come true.





The café tent at Tamera, Portugal.

Institute for Global Peace Work

Founded at Tamera, Portugal

The Institute for Global Peace work (IGF) was opened last August at the Summer University at the Tamera Center for Humane Ecology, Portugal. This was the largest summer meeting in Tamera so far, with about 230 participants (70 of which were youth). We received representatives of several peace initiatives and European communities (among others Likatien, Zegg and Sieben Linden from Germany; Damanhur from Italy; and Findhorn from Scotland). The main topic related to communities was cooperating to give their youth a purposeful perspective. Special meeting participants included Scilla Elworthy, founder of the "Oxford research Group" against nuclear weapons; Hartmut Heller, founder of "Friends of People Close to Nature"; and Daniel Zapata who supports the Hopi and Navajo tribes in their fight against uranium mining on their land.

"If we are against war, we need a vision for a peaceful life", say the IGF founders, Dieter Duhm and Sabine Lichtenfels, who believe that true co-operation between communities, organisations and individuals who have committed themselves to working for global peace is now urgently necessary.

The new Institute aims to develop a concept for a global non-violent civilisation on earth and to speed up global networking. They also want to help establish what they call "healing biotopes" - a living community of people, animals and plants whose life forces are complementary and don't block each other through violence and fear - in many places on earth.

Below: "Growing People" or meditation in nature at Tamera.



Through IGF, future peace-workers follow a three-month intensive training on subjects like the art of overcoming fear; the logic of love; sexuality and healing; building communities and leading groups; cosmology and the study of religion; evolution and early history; and the power of concrete utopia. In this "Political Ashram" the fundamental co-dependence between inner and outer peace and the global effects of punctual actions in a holographic universe are deeply researched. Spiritual training is held on the basis that our ego must not be a life-determining force, and emphasis is placed on finding the personal task in global peace-work. If we are fully focused on this goal, personal fears can be looked at in the right perspective. The greater the aspired goal, the more energy can come to a person or a group for its achievement as well as for their own healing.

Through the establishment of a chain of healing bio-topes around the globe, the professional peace workers want to create co-operation with fully established or newly set-up centers and peace movements.

The IGF principles are published in the "Tamera Manifesto for a Global Peace Culture" by Dieter Duhm. This project needs financial and mental support from foundations and individuals.

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Email: tamera@mail.telepac.pt homepage: www.tamera.org

Books contact sarah.vollmer@zegg.de

Tamera: Manifesto for a Global Peace Culture
text by Dieter Duhm, Zegg Community, Germany

Thoughts on the development of a Global force for Peace and a corresponding perspective for a humane future.
Note: Zegg community members started Tamera.

Eros Unredeemed, Visions for Peace between the Sexes, Dieter Duhm. 100 pages

Events

July 1 - 7, 2001 at Zegg, Belgig, Germany

Fourth International Community Meeting

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email: empfang@zegg.de

French Ecovillage Network

Report on latest meeting

August 26/28, Village of L'Arques, Carcassonne.
Jean-Michel Pochat

Our Summer 2000 meeting was organised over four days and was very successful. A great variety of topics was discussed every day.

On day one, we looked at:

- an overview of eco-villages in Europe (presented by people living in them, like Lepre and Husky from Damanhur)
- the work of traditional rural villages in Africa with Demba Mansaré of Colufifa and Elise Guldagger (whose presentation was very rich, full of love and hope and much appreciated by everybody)
- a general presentation of the GEN network organisation and evolution, with Lucilla Borio, Lepre and myself.

On day two, a few eco-village projects in France introduced themselves:

- “Le village”, with Claude Traks (a fabulous writer, able to communicate with great ability his faith and his inspiration)
- our “Montbel ecovillage” project was creatively introduced and arose good interest
- “La Chataigne”, in an old and beautiful village in Ardèche, and several other projects were introduced and discussed at the plenary session.

Day three was focused on subjects related to the Ecovillage concept: health, economy, architecture, finance (with representatives of “La N.E.F.” - Nouvelle Economie Fraternelle). We also met people from the “Rainbow” movement, a historian who talked about the Cathar communities in the middle ages (the meeting took place in Cathar country) and a witty French inventor presenting a car running on a compressed air engine. Live drum music and dances were the perfect end for this intense day.

The last session was dedicated to education and politics, with Erwan Lecoeur, Claude Traks, and many others. Lucilla Borio (GEN Europe Secretary, Torri Superiore Ecovillage, Italy), Lepre Viola (Damanhur, Italy) and Elise Guldagger (Colufifa Movement, Senegal) contributed with singing and dancing, and their presence helped make the meeting a success.

A final note about the formal part of the French Network meeting, the general assembly of our network Association: This session started off with conflicts but ended very well. It gave birth to a new and dynamic organisation with a freshly elected Board, chaired by Murielle Gehlen as President and Co-ordinator. We are now happy and confident in our possibilities, and we know that our network is on its way to making Ecovillages a reality in France.



Demba Mansaré from COLUFIFA in Senegal, addressing the GEN Europe Assembly. Photo: Courtesy Lucilla Borio.

Fifteen Criteria for Sustainable Land-Based Rural Developments

Lucilla Borio

There have been many definitions of sustainability, but one definitive statement has been internationally endorsed by the British and most other national governments throughout the world: The June 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which is backed up by an extensive programme for social change known as Agenda 21. Chapter 7 of Agenda 21 specifically addresses Sustainable Human Settlement Development, and provides a detailed policy context for matters relating to planning and construction.

Through Agenda 21, governments have expressed their commitment to sustainability, and sustainability is regarded as a material consideration in planning decisions. However there is very little guidance on what actually constitutes a sustainable form of development in the countryside. Planners and other professionals involved with rural development may therefore find it difficult to assess the merits of a project which claims to be sustainable” or “low-impact”, or to find grounds for refusal of one that they suspect is not.

In 1996 a working group under was set up under the auspices of an organization called “The Land Is Ours” in order to address this policy vacuum ; this document is the initial result of the work performed by that group.

See full text: www.gaia.org/secretariats/geneurope/criteria.html

Upacchi's 10th birthday

Eva Lotz

On September 10, 2000, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Upacchi Ecovillage Cooperative in Arezzo, Italy. On that day, the new residents of the old village took the opportunity to link with the past. The village consists of very old stone houses abandoned which were abandoned between 1950 and 1960. Upacchi is now being rebuilt by the ecovillage initiative, and its church has been restored and consecrated.

The ecovillagers, their relations, new friends and local neighbors were invited to join in the great celebration, and lots of people came to take part in the event. Over 300 people came for the consecration mass of Upacchi's little church, though it could only hold less than half of the visitors. A constant flow of people met around the church and remembered the last time it was restored, in 1948. Exchanging memories of the old times in the village, and meeting the new eco-villagers, some of the elder people were in tears, having come back to a place where they grew up but had not returned to for over 50 years.

Later in the evening, the village square was crowded by old and young Italians and Germans (new inhabitants of the village), former and present inhabitants, friends and relations. As is the custom at all good Italian parties, we had plenty of food and wine, followed by music and dancing. We also set up a slide show and a photo exhibition of how the village had changed during the last 50 years. After a while the difference of age, nationality or life style were forgotten and the people in the square melted into one joyful company. An elderly man with his accordeon was accompanied by African drum rhythms played by young villagers, old and new inhabitants were dancing waltz and rock together. When we finally sat around the bonfire late into night, we felt that past and present had really met. We could hear from the distance our children and youngsters dancing together, reminding us of the future, which we hope will bring more occasions to connect to each other in harmony. Contact: Upacchi 51, Eva Lotz 52031 Anghiari (Arezzo) Tel: +39 0575 749323 Fax: /330

New Community of Pan

A new community has developed within The Damanhur Federation since last May: The community of "Pan" is located in the rural area of Vidracco and is developing a very interesting agricultural project. It is composed of two of the larger Nucleos of the Rama Community and a new Nucleo. These have decided to merge and create the new Ecovillage in order to develop the agricultural self-sufficiency programme of the Federation. The Pan Community are presently running several greenhouses and vegetable gardens, a new orchard, poultry farm and goat farm. They also have an organic bakery - which makes special bread on new and full moon days - a carpentry shop and an "agri-tourismo" (agricultural tourism) business, with a restaurant that serves delicious organic meals. At present, Pan has approximately 40 citizens with an elected woman President by the name of Medusa Silene.

The Spanish Ecovillage Network Is Born

Ulysses

Summer 1998: Artosilla, a small village in the Spanish Pyrenees. I was rebuilding an old house to transform it into a communal building, hostel and training centre on sustainable development, when I heard of a "strange" ecovillage meeting to be held in Permacultura Montsant (Tarragona). At the time I didn't know anything about ecovillages, but I had the feeling we in Artosilla were close to this concept.

So I attended the meeting, and after 3 days of exchange with different people, I realised I wanted my village to become an Ecovillage. At Artosilla, we were 10 adults and 7 children. I gathered everybody, talked about what I had discovered and we all (or almost all) began to think about the Ecovillage concept and how to apply it to our own lives. A few months later, the second Spanish Ecovillage meeting took place in Artosilla and over 200 people attended.

Summer 2000: third Ecovillage meeting at Amayuelas de Abajo, an old and small village in the Spanish Meseta, where a group of 12 people is carrying out an interesting project on organic farming, clay building and social economy. Fewer people than last year attended the meeting, but unlike previous times many participants now were involved in existing projects or initiatives.

Approximately 15 projects were represented, among which some of the most significant Spanish communities, e.g. Matavenero, Lakabe, Los Arenalejos, Artosilla and, of course, the host village, Amayuelas de Abajo. Among the most interesting initiatives were the Ecovillage Valdepiélagos, near Madrid, and the South-East Permaculture Network, grouping several collectives that want to create an ecovillage in the Spanish Levante. We talked about social economy, self-sufficiency, healthcare and conflict resolution; we potted in the garden, worked with clay... had a good time in the pub at night and in the morning circle-dancing. We all wanted to do things together and keep in touch. We had the feeling we needed to build a network.

Autumn 2000. Madrid, a small village (maybe not that small!) in the center of Spain. All groups interested in creating the Spanish Ecovillage Network are invited to a gathering that will take place during the Biocultura exhibition.

I am looking forward to this event, as I have always defended the network idea as a way of improving and deepening our Democracy. Now the Spanish Ecovillage Network is going to be born. All I can say is you're welcome to attend!

Ulysses, La Carrucha Cultural 22600 Artosilla (Huesca)
Web page <http://www.pangea.org/spie/carrucha>

GENTle Power

Hildur Jackson

Meeting in Damanhur Nov 8-11, 2000
www.damanhur.org/GENTlepower

Women from Denmark, France, USA, Germany, India and Italy met between the third and fourth flooding in Italy this autumn. On arrival we had fun identifying new names within the animal and plant kingdoms for ourselves. Birgit from Fjordvang in Denmark brought a beautiful talking stick with a big crystal which was designed to inspire the speaker holding it in her hands.

Topics were wide-ranging from Indigo children (page 21) and the exchange of children between villages, through sorrow over all the cows/animals being butchered every day, to the new women's declaration, the creation of a new political party, a global university and a full ecovillage curriculum. A core group crystallized consisting of Lepre, (Damanhur) Brigitte (France), Birgit (Denmark), and Sara (Zegg), which committed to arranging the next meeting on education in either Torri or Fjordvang.



Between meetings song, dance and the spell of Damanhur and all its attractions, a full moon shining on white mountain tops made it mythical and unforgettable. A dinner in one of the communities was another gift as was a visit to the Temple of Mankind. Coming home, what stays with you is the feeling of all the women of Damanhur as belonging to a future race of humanity with open hearts and the capacity for change. A big thanks to Lepre for sustaining prolonged labour in giving birth to this work.



Top: Hall in Damanhur's underground Temple of Mankind, man-made, carved and built by hand over twenty years in the mountain's flank. The mural represents an androgyne, symbol of the perfect balancing of female and male energies. The fusion of male and female is represented by the man (right) and the woman (left) uniting in one entity.

Left: Formica, the Queen Guide (elected leader for a year) holds the feathered "talking stick" with a large crystal, a gift Birgit (back, left) brought on behalf of an artist friend for the GENTle Power meeting in Damanhur.

Below: Top, left to right: Sarah, Birgit, Gentiana, Hildur, Muriel, Brigitte. Bottom row: Lucilla, Marti, Lepre, Rotraud, Gazella, Cristina, Heather, Karen, Formica.





Tomorrow's Children

A Blueprint for partnership education in the 21st Century

Riane Eisler

Tomorrow's Children is the book for a new paradigm in education- even if the author does not write about ecovillages and their educational role. The targets of the book are primary and secondary schools- but also with the perspective that it can be used in much broader contexts in neighbourhoods.

Riane Eisler distinguishes between partnership and dominator models of education. This distinction can "equally be used to describe systems

of belief and social structures that either nurture and support or inhibit and undermine- equitable, democratic, nonviolent and caring relations." For Eisler, the task ahead is to develop an educational paradigm that fully supports the partnership model. She distinguishes between 3 core interconnected components:

- 1)Partnership process is about how we learn and teach, or pedagogy
- 2)Partnership content is what we learn and teach. It is the educational curriculum. It is about basic skills (reading, writing,) but equally about how to create a sustainable, peaceful Earth.
- 3)Partnership structure is about how the education situation is organized.

Riane Eisler realizes that a lot of experimentation is going on everywhere, but what we urgently need is an "integrated partnership curriculum that will

not only help today's and tomorrow's children build healthy bodies, psyches, families, businesses, governments, and communities, but also give them a clearer understanding of our human potential, our place in history, our relationship to nature and our responsibility to future generations." Riane concludes: " What I am interested in is systemic, long term educational change."

The book contains a wealth of ideas for the implementation of such a system within existing schools. It could be a bible for ecovillage education. In the last pages of the book, Eisler envisions a "future partnership school where tomorrows children will form visions of what can be and acquire the understanding and skills to make these visions come true. They will learn how to create partnership families and communities worldwide."

The Cultural Creatives: How 50 million people are changing the World

Paul Ray and Sherry Ruth Andersen

Paul Ray has studied the rapid changes of values in the USA for 20 years. In his most recent book, "The Cultural Creatives" he presents statistics, graphs and documentation on a social group which he calls the Cultural Creatives, and which he estimates to encompass 50 million people at the present time in the US alone. The Cultural Creatives are people who care deeply about ecology and saving the planet, about rela-

tionships, peace, and social justice, about self-actualization, spirituality and self-expression. The writers draw upon research studies on more than 100,000 Americans, over a hundred focus groups, and dozens of in-depth interviews. The cultural creatives have grown from less than 5% of the American population in the late 1960s, to 26 % in 1999. The European Union launched a related study in September 1997 and found at least as many Cultural Creatives across Europe, to their amazement. Ray defines the radical change being brought about by this group, representing the process by the same symbols as GEN's: the Caterpillar, the Chrysalis and the Butterfly.

In the first part of the book the authors group Americans by their

values: traditionalists, modernists and cultural creatives. Traditionalists and modernists make up respectively 25% and just under 48% of the population in the US. While modernists are for making money and bigger is better, traditionalists share some values with the Cultural Creatives (such as being pro-environment).

There are two kinds of Cultural Creatives. The Core group is the creative leading edge of the subculture, consisting of about half the cultural creatives-24 million persons in the USA. The core group has strong values of personal growth, ecology and spirituality. They are mostly educated, leading-edge thinkers. They differ in the intensity of their values and in the "extent to which they put their values into action." (It seems to me that the



core of the Core Cultural Creatives must be partly made up of ecovillagers since they have already made their lives to fit these values.)

The second Cultural Creative group is called "The Greens". The greens are more secular than the Core Cultural Creatives, with the same green values.

The Cultural Creatives are a coherent subculture but, says Paul Ray: "they are missing self-awareness as a whole people." The first time they realized that they are one culture was in Seattle in 1999, fighting the WTO. Now, a convergence is happening between different parts of the ecological/social, women's and other consciousness movements. The book gives many examples of such groups converging.

In part two of the book, the authors describe the creation of the cultural creatives, and in part three they outline the "maps for the journey" towards a new culture. The "in-between period" is experienced by most as a period of utmost pain. You have to live in total insecurity and constant change, and at the same time you have to keep the vision clear. Describing this transition may be the biggest asset of the book and present a real help to many.

The authors do not come up with concrete solutions, but they notice that there is a phenomenal demand for resources to feed the movement; for institutions that can support their values. There is a need for classes and courses, teachers and schools and centers where they can take these classes on how to change society and our own lifestyles. Cultural Creatives need gathering places in which circles of people with common interests can explore new ways of knowing and sharing.

This book has the possibility of changing the world by uniting all these movements and making them ask: What is the new culture we want? How do we create it? The ecovillage movement has valuable answers. How about inviting Paul and Sherry to visit ecovillages around the planet?

And we Are Doing It! Building an Ecovillage Future

by Ross Jackson, Excerpt from the Foreword by David Korten

This Book presents the personal life journey and vision of a very special human being, Ross Jackson, and his life partner Hildur Jackson. Ross rose from a modest background to achieve extraordinary success in the institutions of International business and finance. From his insider's understanding of the destructive nature of the institutions he came to master, he has lent his energies to the task of creating societies more responsive to the needs of people, community and nature.

In this book he shares his personal insights into the forthcoming step to human spiritual maturity by offering clear information on topics such as the causes of global financial instability.

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