

Biography (brief)

Manfred Klett was born in 1933. He studied agriculture in Hohenheim, did research on fertilizing in relation to food quality at the institute for biodynamic research in Darmstadt. In 1968 he took on the Dottenfelderhof near Frankfurt, Germany, together with four other families to form the first farm community. He became in 1974 co-founder of the farm school Dottenfelderhof and in 1980 of the agricultural community Dottenfelderhof - an attempt to open the farm spiritually, legally and economically to the social environment. He trained many young apprentices and continued farming for nearly 20 years. Between 1987 and 2001 he led the Agricultural Department at the Goetheanum.

Summary

To conceive of the farm as a kind of individuality affords a precise study on how Rudolf Steiner has chosen the words to embody spiritual science. Thereby arises the problem of translation.

The origin of agriculture in pre-Christian times derived from a close spiritual relationship of mankind to the macrocosm. The duality of light and darkness was experienced. In post-Christian development this former relationship ceased and instead there arose a consciousness of the Trinity and finally of the threefold individuality of the human being itself. Thus the foundation of the concepts of the farm individuality and of its body, the self contained farm organism, originates in the knowledge of the being of Man. In beholding ourselves we discover this threefoldness in the human constitution of body and soul. The body differentiates in three independent systems, the nerve-sense, the rhythmic and the metabolic system. They form the bodily foundations for exercising the soul faculties of thinking, feeling and willing.

In order to conceive a farm as an individuality we must create, through spiritual activity, a true image of the soul being of man and of its bodily carrier in the human organism. Anthroposophy delivers the over all insight to attain this goal and the Agricultural Course by Rudolf Steiner in particular, the means to put these concepts into practice. The bridge between the powerful image within us and the outside world of the farm, is our labour. If we think, feel and will this image we can carry it into our work and organise the farm according to it in detail. A piece of the twofold macrocosm - the farm, evolves to become a threefold one in accordance with the microcosm - the human being, by knowing and experiencing itself in the trinity of both body and soul.

The transformation from the spiritual ideal concept into practical farm work can be perceived and experienced in specific qualities on the level of thinking, feeling and willing. In the sphere of thinking for instance the relevant question is how to organize the farm according to the principle of an organism, how to gain an understanding for the preparations from a sensory and super sensory point of view and why an anthroposophical study can thereby be an essential part? In the sphere of feeling the personal relationship becomes significant concerning for instance the experiencing of rhythms of the function of the cowherd in relation to the whole farm of the working with fertilizing substances. In the sphere of will we can, in special moments, perceive an identity between the idea and the reality arising from it. And we might experience how this leading idea becomes an inexhaustible source of moral forces and encouragement.

To conceive of the farm as a kind of individuality becomes the starting point for a new growing together and for a new developing identity between Man, earth and cosmos.

Manfred Klett