

New Ruralism – to Revive the Countryside organically

New Ruralism is a concept and a *slow* movement to live and to feel life, to revitalise the emptiness and work with nature, to go back from cities to the countryside, to respect the planet and the laws and poetry of nature, to collaborate and to celebrate with each other. *Slow* means we take care, we are conscious and we enjoy to be engaged with each other and with the subject. **Slow** is already successfully implemented in the *Slow Food* movement founded by Carlo Petrini and by *Slow Science* constructed by Frank Moulaert. We would like to add *Slow Breeding*, taking care of the influence of humans towards culture plants. The participants of the movement have a vision that society needs a new structure, with Rudolf Steiner a social threefolding. 100 years ago, Steiner explained the vision that we have to end the domination of economy of the whole society. Culture, politics and economy have to be disentangled and transformed, to allow a harmonious development of society. Each of the three pillars needs its own parliament and culture and economy would not have to coincide with its borders of state. We need emerging villages which work cross borders in cultural and economically exchange under the support of local governments. New Ruralism means:

- The economic implementation is local and less global, but in close trade with other sustainable centres across borders. Organic and biodynamic seeds, agriculture and healthy food are its core pillar. Knowing your clients on arm's length will generate trust.
- Innovation is created by clustering of local business, science and education centres, local politics and local administration, all in exchange with other local centres.
- Culture and knowledge are permanently exchanged among local and global connections. Culture is what you create locally with global influence. Build your theatre by using local traditions and passionate persons. The farmer, who takes care of the soil, plants, animals, food and nature could become the local poet. Seeds bear the poems via the grower. Spirituality will come back locally partly inspire other communities.
- Human relationships and nature are of attention, to support each other, to respect the environment and to learn by observation.
- Instead of consumption, everybody is requested for creation and entrepreneurship.
- Politics is local and local governments will play a vital role to support
 - o circular economy by buying organic and local food for their hospitals, schools, residences and other facilities,
 - o training and education centres
 - o a more spiritual culture based on traditions and modernity.

We are going to build the bridge over the troubled water and we climb up the hill to the spring of the river. This text hopefully will launch a discussion and a programme of action to revitalise our society and harmonise the world. Five theses will be discussed in the following paper.

This text and the theses has been created in preparation of the same named conference in Idanha a Nova, Portugal, in discussion with Samson Hart, Totnes, Devon, Dr Georg Brann, Germany, Maurice Sanciaume, Paris, José Domingus Costas, Coimbra, Johannes Pfister, Germany and Stefan Doeblin, Switzerland/Portugal. Many thanks for the support.

5 Theses

1. Seeds – Food – Nutrition - Health - Humanity

Life starts with powerful seeds. Good and healthy food is the base of improving humanity. We need healthy food as the basis of any new activity. If humans are going back to eat healthy and diverse food, humanity will improve.

2. (Bio)-Diversity

A philosophy of diversity with the goal to identify the common of differences offers new ways of solving problems and answering questions.

3. Collaboration

We are moving from the century of competition towards the century of collaboration.

4. Social Investment and Social Innovation

What this planet and the so called Western society need is impact investment and social innovation.

5. Learning, training and how to admit failures

Learning jointly, to train each other, to admit failures, exchanging experiences, improving concepts, adopting ideas to your local places, publishing projects, financing jointly will be key for New Ruralism.

1. Seeds - Food - Nutrition - Health - Humanity

Life starts with powerful seeds. Good and healthy food is the base of improving humanity. We need healthy food as the basis of any new activity. If humans are going back to eat healthy and diverse food, humanity will improve.

Portugal and the Mediterranean have a huge heritage of traditional seed varieties which needs to be improved for commercial use by professional farmers. This is a huge work which was not done since a while. To cope with new challenges like climate change, with the environmental pollution and heat waves, most power, tolerance and resistance have to flow into the organic and biodynamic seeds. In a small cultural seed, there is caught all wisdom of spiritual humans, environment, cosmos and nature to survive and spreading life. Organic seeds should be the base of organic farming and it will come according the EU latest in 2035. We have been very astonished when we identified that most organic food is based on conventional seeds and that was the key motivation to start Living Seeds Sementes Vivas. Local environment, local adoption and local influences are related to organic seeds. Seeds Organic and biodynamic farming is not using chemicals and herbicides so it is depending on the power of seeds and of soil. Using them, farms will deliver more tasty food with higher levels of important ingredients.

Local farming has the potential to revitalise the countryside as key pillar by providing an economic activity to new farmers, coming from the cities, to existing farmers to reduce their dependency to big agriculture companies and to develop a direct relationship to customers. What is critical is access to knowledge on how to grow plants for food, how to grow seeds to grow great plants and which is the right methods. Is it permaculture, organic, biodynamic or others? Knowledge, training and education are key in this process. And we need social innovation to create a new society on the countryside.

In order to obtain healthy food, a new way of incubating food is required using a wide area of knowledge and social innovation combined with low-tech innovation: how to make tools, how to manage the soil, how to grow seeds, how to create biodiversity. There is a need for collaboration between rural areas and cities were the mass of consumers is located. Such a collaboration has huge positive impact including freshness of food and crops, combining quality of local seeds with local soil (terroir) to get the best crops, vegetables or fruits. We need to combine ancient medical knowledge with modern one and we need to act urgently not to lose it. All life starts with eating food and if we eat more healthy food, we will improve humanity.

There is a significant parallel between the increasing brutality of the 20th century and the decreasing quality of food. The 20th Century is characterised by highest number of wars, mass killing, and unscrupulousness in killing methods. The war became industrialised and the food too. The food became uniformed, its nutrients decreased, the taste reduced to zero and the industry invented flavour enhancers to complement taste, which results in increased sales and income. The chemical agents moved after the Great War into agriculture. After the Second World War the chemicals moved into herbicides for plants and the pharmaceuticals into animals. The big winners of the

wars have been the chemical and mechanical engineering industry which are now dominating the profits in agriculture. And it is not an accident that the big five seed companies are from chemical sector. Now we are attending the 21st Century and there are new signs of light, the ecological, organic and biodynamic consciousness, slow food movement, green parties, Greenpeace, NGOs and a lot more smaller groups want to have a change and some of them are pro-active. To change we need to change our food, our eating habits and the best way is to change the food production towards more locally. The future region of good food is the countryside. We should not forget, that chemicals are expensive and if we produce without them the food should be cheaper. For that, a lot of know-how and experiences are needed.

In most rural areas, the core competence and economy are based on agriculture. To be more sustainable, the agriculture will evolve towards organic and permaculture, growing its own seeds, growing its own food and trade with local partners. Since the invention of chemical agriculture most knowledge is moved to the agro-chemical companies with all their test trials, patents, breeders' rights and seed banks. The farmer received more and more recipes what he should do in what sequence. The farmer became more like a farm manager who is not connected to the soil any longer. He has workers to manage and the workers have a job. Due to loss of knowledge of real farming, specialisation of tasks is needed and knowledge transfer has to be organised. Seed specialists, organic consultants, agriculture scientists and ecologists are requested to build clusters with business, local administration and politics. Farmers have to learn again to come in touch with the soil, with the weather and not to rely only on chemical recipes handed over by the chemical giants. They have to learn to use local resources and to use plants to support other plants in a symbiosis of an organism. Because of the climate change, agriculture is becoming much more complex and a more holistic approach is needed. Diversity is now essential for organic and conventional agriculture. For nature biodiversity is key to adopt fast on any environmental change and we could learn from nature by observation.

The agricultural world is out of balance and a holistic approach seems necessary but it looks like that to find a lifestyle consuming less resources is obviously important. To look after seeds in each region will be more and more crucial, because we have lost most used old varieties and the farmers are depending on the five big giants of seed companies (Monsanto, Syngenta, DuPont, Groupe Limagrain, Bayer) from the US, China, France and Germany which are delivering seeds and know-how, paid for a huge amount of money every year. We have to motivate farmers to collect and save seeds and to exchange seed knowledge. Seed seminars are demanded, to teach how to identify appropriate seeds, how to preserve them and how to share knowledge to further improve the seed quality. It is the time to organise trainings and to exchange knowledge related to local organic farming. How could a small farm survive by organic and biodynamic methods, permaculture design and local food distribution with more fair pricing? Organic farming is based on bio-diversification which relies on harmony of plants, soil and animals. The right balance assumes that chemicals, pesticides and antibiotics are not needed and the groundwater can be kept clean.

Good food for health. Good nutrition and social community life are the base for good health and that could save much money spent at the doctor and pharmacist –

especially things related to overweight, diabetes, depression, etc.. Organic food has more nutrients than conventional food and often a better taste but sometimes it looks diverse. We can accept the diverse looking if the taste is great, so vegetable tastings will be crucial for the market education.

Local food is better to control than every imported one. You can visit the farmer and his farm to get an impression what kind of character the person is and how the farm is running. And you can become involved in helping at the farm. More and more new farms become community supported, which is a method to finance and to support the farm also during harvest. What you can harvest locally it is linked to heart and soul and can be complemented by other food and ingredients from other areas. Food variety asks for teaming of the different farmers to create a larger portfolio, to define the same quality level and to support each other with knowledge exchange and tools.

The best restaurant is at home - not because the restaurants offer wrong food but because *you* take the best care about your food, where it comes from and *you* take care how to prepare and how to cook. To take care and to be conscious is the idea of Slow Food, when Carlo Petrini founded the movement in 1986. Slow breeding, slow eating, slow living means we are conscious and we take care. Naturally grown vegetables, fruits and animals create better taste and health. This will attract also foreign food companies to import products and could be a second distribution channel added to the local markets. A team of small farms could create multi-diverse products and a broad portfolio to reduce the risk of crop failures as long as the individual farmers complement each other to increase jointly the individual product volume of each farmer and each crop variety. Multi-production sites enable more knowledge to be exchanged.

Knowledge and experience about plants and health seems to be crucial. To exchange observation and to discuss them with others are key to grow all sorts of horticulture. How could we make sure that knowledge is disseminated in all possible ways?

Should we not regain the knowledge to identify wild medical plants, how to find, to grow and use them, to transform them into medicines? There is an ancient knowledge in Europe starting very early on with druids and so called witches and even before. How can we make sure that this knowledge is kept and offered in general education? The solution could be setting up local knowledge centres, schools and seminars which could offer local trainings by educational paths to identify medical herbs, trainings walking on trails in the countryside, interviewing or inviting well educated medicine experts and local wise men, studying science papers jointly. Instead of only building hospitals, the municipalities could support such local knowledge centres.

Local herbs have been used to cure sicknesses over centuries but if you break your bones in an accident, you need a hospital and surgery. The western medicine is strong in physical and mechanical methods but other treatments like Homoeopathy, Chinese, Ayurveda, Shamanism have a holistic approach and integrate the soul and the emotions into the healing process- which can be more successful in diverse cases. Local herbs can support the hospitals like in India and China, the indigenous medicine, added by actual knowledge can supplement Western medicine or better the other way

around. Using local herbs can save a lot of money, which you usually spend in the pharmacy, and most of their products are imported and have strong side effects. Most diseases are caused by unbalanced nourishment and unbalanced lifestyle. It is about Yin & Yang, to find the equilibrium whatever you eat. And we have to find also the equilibrium with nature, our environment and our life. Stress weakens the immune system. If you feel happy at your work, with your family, partners and neighbours the probability to become sick is much smaller. Health and medical system: only 20% of health depends on health care services, while 60% depends on social, environmental and behavioural factors by strengthening the sources of health and wellbeing in communities. However, we spend 60% in health and safety systems and only 20 in social factors (Lebendige Erde magazine July/August 2017). To reduce our spending for pharmaceutical products and to use healthy local food supports the circular economy, because of using local resources and know-how. Food, health and housing are cornerstones of living and any sustainable economy has to create most of the resources locally. Healthy housing, healthy food and healthy community life keeps you and your soul balanced. The local soil, environment, agriculture can provide most items for housing, health and food.

In the aromatics and herb production the local government could give a great impact by supporting the exchange of knowledge, offer facilities and open schools to organise seminars of how to use herbs for medical treatment, so that children and parents can learn. The creation of competence centre for aromatics and medical plants in Portugal could be a first step. It is also necessary to train healers how to use herbs and medical aromatics for the different needs of their patients. It would be important to create these kind of exchange centres between producers, healers and science experts on local level.

Let us take the example of Portugal. When Portugal joined the EU in 1986, 50% of the farmland became abandoned. Today one understands that was a mistake. The consequences of the absence of farmers in the countryside are soil erosion, fires and invasion of weeds. Portugal has now the chance to recover this land and to hand over to young farmers coming partly from the cities. These young passionate people want to create a new agriculture, a new kind of sustainable living and a new economic model, based in local markets. To create local markets which would improve selling the tasty food directly to the end customer to make more profit. The organic farmers team up to add volume of specific crops and to add additional complementary crops to increase the portfolio. Traditional and local food in organic or biodynamic quality could be used for specific recipes, local cooking, local diets and culinary highlights, which are of interest for any kind of eco-tourism. If Portugal would declare the country GMO free, it will attract more investment in organic agriculture. This could help small farming to survive and to earn a living and many small farms will reduce the unemployment rate. Spain with its large farms and intensive agriculture could always undercut conventional farm products. Portugal needs to concentrate on organic and permaculture farming, differentiate in quality and taste. Portugal has already declared to be “nuclear power free” and over 60% of its energy is renewable energy. To declare Portugal as a GMO-free zone is in line with the previous achievements.

New Ruralism

Cultural seeds and farming defines a relationship between humans and plants and animals. Mankind is going to take care of the animals and plants. Humans are going to influence the other species and make them supporting us. The spirit of the plant breeder, gardener and farmer will move into the seeds and farming products. To accept spirituality and believe is important also for the cultural vegetation. Spiritual attached seeds and food is the base for your own spiritual development, which will lead into humanity.

2. (Bio)-Diversity

A philosophy of diversity with the goal to identify the common differences offers new ways of solving problems and answering questions.

With Thales, Parmenides, Plato and Hegel the philosophy comes to the limits of the philosophy of unity where the individual is part of the general. To live peacefully with different cultures from North to South, East to West, we have to cope with accepting different kinds of truth in different cultures. This acceptance raises an impulse to generate new ideas, breaking out of Hegel's system, reflecting what answers other eternal verities could give us on our way of truth.

Let us assume that philosophy and art become a function of culture and regions. Diversity is reflected and materialised in bio-diversity and in acceptance of diversity of culture and truth. Do we not need to create a spiritual science of things, elements and energy we cannot see but which is an important factor of influence? Philosophy and art of South hemisphere crosses the ones of North, the philosophy of the East meets the one of the West.

In the sequence of Thales, Parmenides, Plato and Hegel the European philosophy of unity where the individual is part of the common comes to an end. There is no more progress or evolution. Hegel believed his philosophy summarises the European philosophy where the common principle describes and explains the individual example. Jacques Derrida was one of the front runners to discuss a new approach to create a philosophy of diversity and deconstruction. He was willing to accept different truths with the goal to identify the common of differences, to point out a common ground and to become inspired by other cultural truth to create a new one. That leads that philosophy and art become a function of culture and regions.

Diversity is reflected and materialised in bio-diversity and people need to accept the diversity of culture and truth to become inspired and to create something new. Would we not feel more save when our scientific communities are taking care of the common values and goals of scientific discovery and if they would ask and reflect the consequences of the use of the discovery? The current value-free science seems captured by selfish and often harmful interests. Spiritual science was recreated by the anthroposophical society and there is still access to the historical knowledge of indigenous people who respected nature, cosmos and different worlds.

The Europeans have forced a history to subordinate special facts and individual situations under general principles. Scientists or clericals tried to find always concepts, religious "laws", physical "laws" or mathematical descriptions to subordinate the example under common principles. This approach guides us to several contemplations:

- Only one single truth exists
- Monotheism
- One economical model
- European culture as the most attractive way of living

Many other cultures were killed or suppressed by Europeans like the Jews, the Muslims, the indigenous people where ever the Europeans landed and conquered the territory like America, the witches and wise women were often killed and the slaves like the Africans traded as goods. In parallel, we lost seeds, plants and many animal varieties. The European culture expanded globally and the Latin-based languages are the most spoken ones on the planet and suppressed other languages, cultures and thinking. Due to this expansion, we forgot to imagine that something goes wrong and to accept other cultures or minorities.

Nowadays more and more people are waking up for a change. It makes no sense to live long but being demented, to eat much food but receiving no nutrition or to learn something, which does not support the sustainability of the planet, to earn a lot of money but causes stress and does not make us happy.

We understand that biodiversity relates not only to plants, animals and human beings but also to ideas, concepts, practices, religion or truth. There is unwritten knowledge in stories and wisdom of people rooted in their land where they were born. These people have integrated the local conditions in their wisdom. We have to listen to them and to learn from them and combine this with other knowledge that is written. The idea of published writings or books is to disseminate information to others. Therefore, the written knowledge is abstract and often not linked to a specific place to reach more people. You cannot write all details how to grow seeds in a specific region. You need to know the region and to understand the specifics. Therefore, you need locals who know this and can teach by showing and doing. And you will combine them with teachers of other regions to reflect and discuss questions and answers to conclude on a higher level.

Nature has created biodiversity to act flexible on any change of conditions. In nature, each organism plays a role and interacts with the other organisms in the surrounding and often they are a part of a supra-ordinated organism. Nature has evolved in a diverse way, where many different species are constantly re-balancing and adapting to changing conditions. Most species are in balance and they are supporting or balancing each other. In case of changes and unbalances, nature creates new species or varieties to balance the planet again. Mankind tends to simplify the complexity of nature as a trial to get a better understanding. This simplification eliminates many parts of the whole and provides a partial knowledge that can lead to destruction or to exploitation of nature if we forget that we are simplifying. We have to collaborate with nature to learn from it and to be part of its balancing process.

Diversity of knowledge, truth and culture is an offer to learn from “contradictions” and to be inspired by all the options. Philosophy and art are based on culture and on regions. But we will always find a common base and each of the regions can stimulate each other. Seeds spreading across continents and wisdom can follow the seeds. The current concept of Western philosophy based on Hegel`s single truth and logic comes to a limit in its development and will not create much new ways of thinking. To solve the current problems of societies and the planet we need to get more inspired of disruptive and different thinking. Only diversified ways of living, culture and philosophies will inseminate each other and can open solutions for the actual situation of pollution and isolation of human individuals. The Greek had several gods for the

special responsibilities and the African tribes were animistic and seeing spiritual essence in everything. These different ideas, we could use to get inspired to find new ways of thinking and maybe our ideas and philosophies will inspire them. Nowadays we should accept diverse religions for different regions and combine thinking and feeling to create new ideas and concepts.

Bio-diversity is the answer of nature to any change of local conditions. Local conditions determine the global change. The complexity of natural influential factors increase exponentially if the area of influence increases. With a progressive speed of environmental change, bio-diversity becomes crucial to survive.

To manage bio-diversity, local factors matter. Local and circular economy including local currency could motivate people to complement and to use local resources instead of purchasing globally. We do not need so many knowledgeable people of the same skills to compete with each other, we need more complementary skilled people who support each other (Nobody is perfect- but a team can be better). Today local learning seems not enough due to the global influence and local losses of know-how. Let us link local with global learning, training and research and exchange experiences globally. The local economy is much more stable than any global connected one due to less complexity, impact, shortened reaction time and better control. The diversity of skills could support each other and create ideas and new concepts by joined brainstorming and clustering competences.

The local economy will become stronger if it is part of a global network of emerging local economies or emerging villages. The cycle of learning and to give positive examples will cause acceleration of motivation and implementation. We have to recognise that diversity is a positive gift and to accept that diverse knowledge becomes a way of life. If we integrate diversity into the act of solving problems it will democratize itself.

If we study the culture of indigenous people, working with nature and if we accept different truths, religions and spiritual thinking, we will be more successful in finding solutions for the countryside. Spiritual thinking seems to be difficult in the big towns or does come less into practise. Spiritual science and thinking could attract people to come to the countryside to listen to nature, get inspired due to the silence, calmness and emptiness. There is too much noise in the cities and you have to cry to being heard.

3. Collaboration

We are moving from the century of competition towards the century of collaboration.

Collaboration is the base of organic farming. Competition leads to separation of our body from our soul, from each other and to physical emptiness of the countryside. Moving to the cities, the current centres of power, to go to the more fancy and expensive schools and to believe blind in Western material science will not change life for the better, will not support nature and will not calm down climate change. Total competition is history and its history ruins the planet. Now we have to recreate collaboration, which will guide us to create joint working, to complement skills, to use fewer resources and to revive areas of emptiness, in total to become happier in small communities. Constructive competition, like in a football match, could support the collaboration and collaboration could bolster constructive competition. Constructive competition generates fun, humour and not money. People are not becoming greedy and egos, the team spirit is still the priority. It is like local football without TV.

Today in most regions only a few people take care about the soil, the plants, the animals, the forest and the fires and they are not enough to cover and secure all land from damages like erosion, weeds and fire. The countryside cannot motivate people by money, it can only motivate by people's team spirit, passion of nature, social innovation and self-fulfilment.

45 years ago, Erich Friedrich Schumacher published his famous book "Small is beautiful", a study of economics as if people mattered. A New Ruralism could open the door to Schumacher's thesis, that we cannot consider the problem of technological production as solved if it requires that we recklessly erode our finite natural resources and deprive future generations of its benefits. Schumacher's work coincided with the growth of ecological concerns and with the birth of environmental and community movements.

The last century was the century of competition. We were told that liberal markets and capitalism are the solution to every problem and give us freedom of choice. The result is that it led to unbelievable accumulation of capital in some private hands, to the biggest killing ever of this planet (genocides of Jews, Muslims, Native Americans, African Slaves, witches, chemical, nuclear weapons, etc) and to the most poisoning and pollution of the planet since ever. Through total exploitation of nature, we maybe achieve the illusion of unbridled consumption, but we decimated many cultures of humans, animals and plants, and continue to do so.

We have learned the "Western" scientific approach is the only one, which is valid. If we felt items or experienced phenomenon we will be asked whether we have used scientific methods to check the truth and relevance. There is a tendency that each phenomenon which does not fit into the general rule is excluded or declared as not science oriented. In Western society religion is nearly diminished, spiritual science is not supported, unwritten knowledge is not valid and written knowledge has to be published in certain predefined scientific magazines to be accepted. We, as individual

humans, are part of a National State and the National State is responsible for the laws and the rules of the game, and in the end, the State and its Industries are controlling the individual. This thinking and implementation of laws has led to a big power game, where the economic system of accumulation of capital fits perfectly. Jointly with the upcoming business people, governments supported the industry with laws and tax systems like the depreciation of machines and to tax labour hours, to create the working class, declassified or nationalised farmers. The first machines have been created to generate energy and to save farm workers which instead are needed to be employed in factories. The oil industry is in the hand of a handful countries and rich people. Oil became cheap and could trigger a reduction in transportation costs. If goods are moving around the globe, people have to follow. Mobility is key for modern industrial times and leads to the uprooting of people and disconnection with local knowledge. The consequences of many government and industry practices to the health and wellbeing are recognized too late, if at all. These practices are quite often done with the sanctioning of governments and much of the scientific community, who influence the information that reaches the public. Most of the agriculture subsidies support the Western industry and not the farmers.

The 20th century was the century of egomaniacs and “me comes first” mentality! Most of the workforce became overspecialized in a narrow field and people are disconnected from how and where their food and tools are used, as they get their stuff via Amazon wherever they are living, thanks google maps. This economy is based on global sourcing and cheap global production, which leads to global exploitation of labourers and farmers. The losses of knowledge (farming, gardening, crafts, medicine, art) and taste is compensated by cheap consumption. You feel rich because you can buy all the year tomatoes even if they do not taste, furniture even if it does not last long, you can eat your tuna or salmon in every decent town but you lost to know anything about diversity of fish. People concentrate mainly to eat rice, noodles, potatoes, meat, bread and drink often Coca Cola instead of water. The reduction of food diversity creates huge single markets based on high volumes of a view crops like corn or wheat which fits into large farming with huge machines, less people, more chemicals, less taking care of soil, animals and society.

Nowadays we know how to use a smartphone, computer, robots and how to give birth to a child artificially. There is competition to give one’s children the best education, which often means the best universities and private schools with cost up to 40,000€ per year. There are symbols of competition like the Nobel prize, Fields Medal, global Football players, Wimbledon, etc. Competition right from the start.

To concentrate power (capital and political) cities are needed and therefore, towns grow bigger and bigger. For virtual finance and virtual services like software, the cities are the place and fancy offices the location. They are also the place for political power. If the countryside burns, there will be a lot of talking, if the Capital of the country burns, there will be actions immediately. London, one of the biggest job and financial centres in the world, is one of the cities with the highest rate of surveillance cameras, police and secret services. Access by companies and government institutions to each mobile phone and computer is required by law. The real enabler is the worldwide web. The biggest accumulation of capital is created by virtual and half virtual services and

products. Those reaping the most benefits are the owners and senior managers of IT, Telecoms and Finance companies (Bill Gates, Microsoft, Steve Jobs, Apple, Jeff Bezos, Amazon, Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook, Carlos Slim, Telmex, Dietmar Hopp, SAP, Warren Buffet, Berkshire Hathaway, Carl Icahn, Icahn Enterprises, Li Ka-shing, Hutchison Holdings, George Soros, Soros Fund Management, Michael Bloomberg, Bloomberg LP,...).

The Internet and the World Wide Web have led to another phenomenon: "Winner takes-all" markets where the power and control are concentrated in one single company like Amazon, Uber, AirB&B. The individual consumer receives access to a global product portfolio, profits virtually by buying cheaper services but the profits are mainly located at one single company and these companies do all the same: squeezing out workers and partners, exploiting humans and nature. Why not creating an open source software of like the one of Uber, which could be used by cooperatives in each single town instead one system for the globe. Why individual bookshops do not trade with each other via an open Internet platform instead of trading only via Amazon, ABE Books, ZVAB, which is all owned by Amazon? The industrial nations and the global industry were able to pollute the whole oceans with plastic in less than 50 years which is now in every fish we eat, with serious health consequences. Cancer will increase GDP of each nation by costs of hospitals and medicals to fight against it but decrease the health of people. Clearly, the interest of big industry is not always oriented on health of humanity. We can hope that they will learn to take more responsibility about that.

Ironically, the Internet is also the enabler to communicate globally and to identify people who are going different paths. This gives a chance to rescue some lost knowledge and to replicate experiences, to develop new cultural plant varieties to create a better taste again and to invent an alternative economical model with less power concentration. To disseminate information the Internet is currently the tool and it is not an accident that governments are trying to control and restrict the information flow.

Many people are more and more waking up from the mantra of consumption and competition. The Club of Rome, the ecological movement and many activists stopped to accept the current economically model and began fighting for a change. On multiple local levels, we are moving to the eco-century and wellbeing for everybody based on less consumption. People have identified that money is not everything in life and to sit in an office with air-condition and high living costs is a short-circuit of quality of life.

Competition was fun and many people like to watch football. Now we relearn that it could be also fun to work and live together instead fight against each other. This is like nature is conceived, all species even predators have a function to maintain the balance of the planet. The planet behaves like an organism based on many organisms being part of the cosmic organism and being the home of many local organism. Communities will give us a role to play so that the community works better and is more balanced. A football game is a team play and competition at the same time. Local football games could be used to have fun, to team up and to reduce the extreme of concentration of big money in the hand of international football players and football clubs.

We can learn how to collaborate and to have fun in early stages of life, let us say in the schools already. Collaboration is the way to save resources, to create less waste and to support each other. Organic and biodynamic farming is exactly about that and not only about food production or how to produce crops. Organic farming means to support each other, to exchange know-how and tools, to increase product volume without chemicals, to raise the quality level of the products, to distribute jointly to have more power or to serve more efficiently the consumer directly. Conventional agriculture is driven by competition and individual goals and the result is that the power moves to the retail and wholesale sector. The price and money, the consumer pays for organic products, often does not reach the farmer, the seed grower or the soil. Only big farms with monoculture and intensive use of machines make profit receiving on top a lot of subsidies due to the number of ha, the small farmers become poorer, because they cannot compete cost wise. The real winners are the ones selling equipment, seed, herbicides and chemicals. Only if the small farmers team up with the consumers, use open pollinated seeds, motivate local equipment manufacturer jointly with local polytechnic institutes and with other farmers the margins will increase. To sell organic food in supermarkets is a transition model. We need more kind of community supported models to make sure the producers get also their benefit and profit.

Coming back to E.M; Schumacher, the municipalities and local governments on the countryside will play a vital role in supporting organic food chain and circular economy. They can have an impact of scaling up local production, teaming up producers to organise producer organisation and offer their local facilities like market halls, schools, hospitals, retirement homes, youth hostels and others to buy organic food. The municipalities and local governments could initiate such transition processes. Japan has been successful in introducing a program since 2005 to get food served in schools coming from local farmers. Such a programme is more than that as it is also an initiative to create relations between farmers and children and generate interest to become farmers. It could be complemented by activities initiating children and their parents to learn how to cultivate small plots of land (maybe owned by the city or the village). Food could be used for cooking lessons during school time. France is also working on such program which has already been implemented by some cities or small rural towns with success. And Sweden has implemented such school, hospital programme to reduce the chemical pollution for the Baltic sea. This could be how to get 20 to 30% of food consumed in a territory provided by local farming very fast.

The next century is the century of collaboration, which is needed to save resources, to stop oil dependency, create knowledge tailored to local areas. Collaboration could undercut the global economically model and enables to implement more local business models, where import and export is more the exception, especially of products and services which could be produced locally. Collaboration helps to identify complementary skills which are needed to create a local economy and to attract people to come to the countryside. If you want to build an ecological house you need craftsmen. Homoeopathy or Chinese medicine could reduce medical costs radically but an expert has to be attracted to come to the countryside. School could cover local content of the community by integrating local professions, global skills and examples

of other communities. Education and training programs could be used to learn to collaborate and to show collaboration.

In a first step, the new revivers, which are coming from cities and moving to the countryside, could support a transition process of collaboration and knowledge transfer between cities and villages. Some villages could become hubs to collect information and knowledge and to disseminate ideas and concepts to other villages. The same could be valid for the flows of goods and services which could help the new villagers to survive and to create income. In a second step, the cities maybe become less important and the network of emerging villages will be the key of success.

Why not giving social functions back to different local generations even if there are no relations of relatives. Old people could take care of children, some of them can tell stories, teaching some activities like crafts, to explain the history, to show places of extraordinary energy, working in a community garden, children can play on the farm and learning outdoor, etc. To reduce oil, we need to organise joint transport, it will go along with less individual transport. Neighbours could bring food from the pickup point, that was ordered online by different neighbours. A local online portal will coordinate transport to the next village or town, who is going next to the town? Who needs a lift to the next town in the next hour? The future collaboration is network based and we will use the Internet and platforms more locally. To install optical fibre cables could be cheap on the countryside and you create your local telecom cooperative like you could create a local energy cooperative.

We have to change the emphasis that collaboration is supported by competition like sport games and not competition is supported by collaboration. The balance of sustainability of resources and social impact should be the criteria of the emphasis or the community governance.

4. Social Investment and Social Innovation

What this planet and the so called Western society need is impact investment and more social innovation.

Impact investment behaves like seeds. Out of a tiny little seed a tree can grow more than 100m high. The wind carries seed across the borders. Seeds are spreading around to survive and to find better growing conditions. Each plant born by one seed will spread hundreds or thousands of new seeds again and again to keep the species alive, to create nephews and nieces. You sow, you sponsor, you harvest jointly with your neighbours.

Impact investment means that each project initiates several others which complement each other and increase the sustainability of the region. Impact investment is local, will initiate local projects, embedded in a global network of emerging villages. We need more social rather than technological innovation. This movement is bottom-up, balances body, mind and soul, uses circular economy and moves to the edge of society: to the countryside. A job in the countryside could be much more sustainable and eco-friendly than a job in the city if we do it right.

The current economy is based on accumulation of capital and based on dispossession of land and knowledge. The dispossession of people of access to their land lies at the heart of early capital accumulation. The creation of big cities increases the speculation of the value of the land of big cities. And it goes along with the dispossession of knowledge. Much wisdom especially the unwritten one is lost, most written is concentrated and controlled by science institutions or industry. The church created medieval universities to control and colonise knowledge. The church supported by the noble government suppressed the wisdom of the mouth and charged knowledge by accepting only written documents in Latin. The entrance fee was high. All other knowledge systems were suppressed. The losing system was the countryside with its stories, poems, culture and unwritten knowledge. The winners have been the new upcoming towns. The traders could afford to pay for the education of their children. The farmers could not pay and became less educated and less accepted. If we want to revive the countryside we have to change the education and training system to be more adopted to local needs and prices and more applied to local matters.

We need impact investment and more social innovation: Life starts with seeds and seeds are embedded in their context and environment. Life information stored in seeds woken up by water becomes active in the soil and grows and grows. Impact investment is the water to wake up and let things grow.

The local economy on the countryside cannot rely on technological innovation due to its lack of global skills, global science institutes and research centres. It can rely on social innovation, supporting each other, being open minded and building local trust. On the countryside and its local markets people live close to each other, develop trust, can observe the production quality of each other and there is less competition. Related to agriculture, lower technological tools are demanded, which could be produced by local skills instead of importing.

Most innovation is created where clusters are built. Science institutions, companies, education centres, local administrations and local politics are teaming up (see study of university of Hanover <http://slideplayer.org/slide/656739/>). The emptiness and to be less exposed to alternatives give the opportunity to create whatever you want but with less meanings. If you miss going to an opera house then build one instead of going to the opera for one evening only. Those kind of projects will inspire capital and people to join if you follow up seriously (see Schlingensiefel and Burkina Faso).

Local projects, linked in a global network of emerging villages, will ramp up faster. Social innovation will be only sustainable if it is created bottom-up and will use circular economy. At the edge of society like the countryside it is easier to innovate. Based on circular economical approach each job in the countryside is much more sustainable and eco-friendly than any in the city because the food production is more eco-friendly and more sustainable.

Compared to cities, the countryside opens free space of creation. You could do whatever you want to do due to lack of competition and lack of initiatives. But you need to want it seriously and you have to have the energy and the enthusiasm to do it. Instead of going to the office, where your boss tells you what to do and you get a salary at the end of the month, you create a job for yourself and others. The countryside needs social entrepreneurs who are giving an impact to the local situations and conditions. The management needs to engage with the constellation of surrounding stakeholder as in living eco-systems of relationships. It has to balance local interests with global shareholders interest. The Governance should be based on shared awareness, on a joint holistic approach.

The finance of regenerative capital needs to target beyond technology to create social and eco-commons with an impact in long-term and systemic targets and to unleash the highest level of creativity and collective impact (Otto Scharmer). The move to collaboration is in coincidence with the move to social innovation. New communities as emerging villages which are combining open minded knowledge, applied science, traditional heritages and social innovation are based on multi generations of non-relatives to support each other, to reduce social costs and being based on common interest and friendship. Social innovation causes social impact by creating jobs and not reducing them. Local needs, combined with local technical and engineering know-how and low salaries stimulate to copy tools or equipment design, adopt to local conditions, optimise with additional knowledge. The motto is to create new products instead of importing them from North-Central Europe, Italy, the US or Asia. Why not connecting local schools with engineering companies and local users to bundle the knowledge and to create. To diffuse or spread technology without intellectual property restrictions is to democratize it. As discussed we need local clusters of collaboration.

To implement forest management will help to avoid fire, to use the forest as a common resource pool and to change climate to the better. The best way to avoid fire is to revive the forest with humans and animals which are engaged, observe and take care. There is a high need of programme to settle forest experts and forest farmers using sustainable methods to manage a forest and to use it carefully. Forests are the soul

for the climate and the rainfall. We need a young forester programme like the young farmer programme.

Today, the future is local and the local economies are impact economies which means they take total cost management into account (including the cost of the impact towards environment) and they reduce physical transport to reduce oil, heavy metals and plastic (packaging). To produce and distribute food directly from the farms to the consumers could save a lot of packaging. Usually people measures working hours or are paid by hours. Can we measure enthusiasm, passion or engagement by hours? People are different and need different time to achieve goals. We should not discriminate people who need more time than others. We can motivate by collaboration. A good team can motivate more than money. The current financial system borrows against the future; the current rate of fossil fuel driven growth may be unsustainable. Local currencies could motivate to trade between locals, is based on trust and will avoid any global influence. Local cooperative financial instrument, small money collected to finance small gaps, crowd funding including equity and complementary projects will be the future for local community projects. Consumer engagement is key to finance local projects. Community or village could adopt to create a local congregation like the Thing in the Nordic countries long time ago to discuss and to attract. As an open forum moderated by senior fellows, elected by the forum at each meeting or for a period of time could become an efficient organisation to coordinate local matters and to attract engagement. Other communities could advise related to certain items. The congregations could be assembled to specific topics created by the local people on local demand. It could be created by several local congregations which elect one member to present them in the common congregation. On the congregation projects could be presented and discussed how to finance. Complementarity will be key criteria and the village could discuss with other villages and supportive research institutions the project strengths and risks.

One of the key questions is still: How To empower local people? By positive examples, by training and education, by team work,...

5. Learning, training and how to admit failures

Learning together, to train each other, to admit failures, exchanging experiences, improving concepts, adopting ideas to your local places, publishing projects, financing jointly will be key for New Ruralism.

Modern life and modern communities are knowledge based. How to generate knowledge and know-how on the countryside? Is it enough to have an Internet access? The requirements in the countryside are partly different from the cities. Applied knowledge of agriculture, crafts, alternative medical systems, food production, seeds, education are some items with a different focus. To access local values and wisdom, access to different sciences, written ones and none-written ones, with books and without, combining local with universal wisdom would be great. You feel and experience in the emptiness more than you see. We need sciences that accept a spiritual dimension, apply to the countryside, motivate to create and build tools and integrate unwritten knowledge of wise people. We can learn from indigenous plants, animals and people. They give us wisdom about nature and they lead us to diversity of truth.

Knowledge is embedded in ecology, each knowledge has its place, linked to cosmology, with roots to local wisdom, nature and life. The calmness and freedom on the countryside causes less stress, you do not need to hurry. Life is more relaxed. You are not played by hundreds of entertaining alternatives, sometimes there is not even one. The lack of cultural events needs not only to create new cultural groups but also people who are organising and motivating the existing cultural groups. Everyone on the countryside is asked to become an entrepreneur and an inventor, a poet or/and a farmer.

The countryside demands to create new scientists, who care less about intellectual property but exchanging and sharing knowledge with others. Today “science is concentrated in cities”, the countryside needs a kind of new science which works, listens to and respects nature and cosmos. The goal is to develop ecologies of visible and invisible knowledge on the one side and knowledge embedded in eco-systems and nature on the other side. Connectedness and metabolism of life! New science should target more on the common and the collaboration between parties supported by playing competitive games. Education and training are focused on learning with nature in teams, co-shaping the future, integrating agriculture, food and seeds, from organic cultivating to shape the future, the living presence of eco-social fields.

Today we need to move knowledge back to the land: we need a multiple knowledge systems, such as organic, spiritual and land-based systems, frameworks arising from social movements and the knowledge of the marginalised or excluded: the countryside needs to create a Participatory Research Network.

The different villages or town could create clusters of competence, which are hosting specialists and experts which might be complementary to support rural areas. There are also new networks in France supporting a new way of farming. Fermes d’avenir and a few other organisations like Bec Hellouin and Ferme St Marthe are also setting

up trainings and education programmes. In the Basque Country, an association called Euskal Erriko Laborantza Ganbara is doing the same. The local governments could give an important impact by supporting initiatives of alternative schools, science centres or seminar centres to train organic farming and breeding. They can offer buildings to these initiatives, funding, publication and PR. The key questions will be, could we replicate existing success stories or models? Could we adopt the success and implementation of Fermes d'Avenir in France to Portugal or Spain as an example? Maybe one or two key people of Fermes d'Avenir could advise the development on the Iberian Peninsula? Regular exchange and visits between the new country organisation and the French origin will help.

In the past, the common activities and shared land of each village was an angle to exchange knowledge. This is gone and we have to create again common ground maybe even common land like a community garden. What can we learn from the Idanese indigenous people in case they still exist? Each education initiative is based on Open Access of knowledge which will be local and global. "Out-of-the-lab" knowledge and participatory research that integrates the views of many stakeholders, and the connection to higher values are welcome. An exchange of different skills between the different emerging villages has to be organised and the travel expenses have to be funded (either via EU or via crowd funding). The same is valid to invite scientists to relevant subjects and to organise seminars or conferences to attract people - there is something going on at the village or region. In most countries there are several polytechnic institutes close by with agriculture on their target list. These schools could be linked with farms in practical actions and test trials and the schools could complement skills of each other. Local centres for organic farming could be established where students are invited to work with the farms close by. There are enough empty buildings on the countryside.

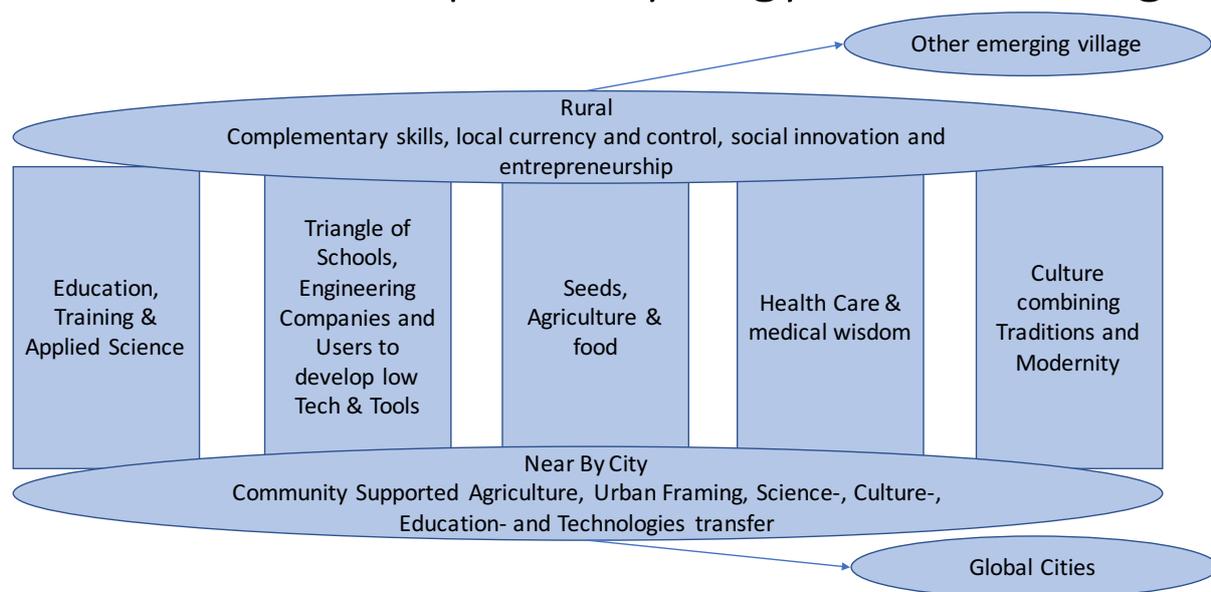
"Global social injustice is therefore intimately linked to global cognitive injustice", Boaventura De Sousa Santos. "The next century is with the sky, the earth, the lyrics and with poets and not with the marketmen" Tagore. Therefore, education and training plays a vital role.

We have to combine conviviality with common goals.

6. Conclusion

Due to lack of people and production companies *Rural Areas* needs to attract entrepreneurial and other people to come (back) and to revitalise the land. The countryside could be the edge to create and renew our society of harmonising economy, politics and culture by creating new structures of emerging villages. Organic agriculture is core as a main pillar of circular economy on the countryside. Collaboration is key to support organic farming, organic food production and direct distribution to customers and users against the current value chain dominated by retail and big agriculture companies taking out the main profit. Due to none capital value, human resources can only be attracted by team work, social innovation and local creative culture. New settlements need to be sustainable. To be sustainable, each local activity needs to complement and to support each other local initiatives. Local concepts are linked to global exchange of failures and know-how. Cluster building is key – applied local administration, politics, business, education & science.

New Ruralism – pillars, synergy of networking



The local governments play a vital role to revitalise the countryside. They can impact in pushing the buy of organic and local food, create competence centres to exchange knowledge between users, consultants and producers, to support the different initiatives on the countryside with funding and PR. And the local initiatives can influence the local government by handshake, argumentation and voting. In culture and in economy the villages could create trading, maybe with a joint independent village currency.

Networking via cultural visits, business collaboration and Internet will be key to combine ideas and how to admit failures, lessons learned from the others. We need to use the web but in a positive way and not to lose control. The physical and human exchange and to support each other will be always the priority.

New Ruralism

Let us celebrate in festivals and in silence the reviving ourselves, our creativity and our common land, saúde.