

„Initiative to preserve indigenous Cultures “

What do we learn from indigenous people, with them? How to respect them? How to preserve them within their environment? Visit them?

What may we assume?

From the own perspective everything is right: We are Caucasian, have round eyes, blond, brown dark hair, are between 1,60 m and 1,90 m tall and we possess all technical achievements that since the 19th and 20th century simplify our life at a sheer indispensable way.

What is not quite correct, is dealing with each other. It is increasingly based on competition, dominance and group pressure, whereas the competencies of the group, the mutual support, the complementarity, the cooperation with each other fall into the background. Exception: ideological groups. They do stand together.

But here are the strictest stipulations, how, where and when something must happen during life, especially: how one has to be dressed. The narrowness of the thought concepts and the degree of power authority (through the pressure of groups or the leader) can be deduced in an almost direct proportion based on the clothing regulation. "Free" societies do not have direct rules on clothing, while authoritarian and pseudo-religious-fascistic shaped societies mostly have strict clothing regulations, which, only godly, are subject to severe sanctions: violators must expect draconian punishments.

During the last centuries until extinction indigenous peoples have been pushed to the edge of "cultures", where it must be considered that there seems to be a tendency to unify cultures through the decrease of diversity:

Arnold Groh is a lecturer at the Technical University in Berlin, Center for Semiotics (Semiotic Research Center). For many years he has executed studies on the field in Africa and Latin America and is participating in conferences of the U.N. for these topics.

His expedition follow the principle of minimally influencing isolated tribes and peoples, whereof some are considered being "studied" for centuries and been influenced by the "European thinking", others still remained undetected. Among those being known and been in contact with the "western" way of thinking and lifestyle, are

The number of cultures decreases exponentially during the syntheses' processes. Starting with n cultures at time t_1 , which go into synthesis two by two, their number will, after passing through synthesis, at time t_2 be only half as great, etc. (Fig. 1). However, these interconnections do not lead to a mere accumulation of cultural elements or of cultural information; rather, they lead to discarding processes. In the storage of the resulting world's standard culture, there are only those cultural elements that have "survived" the various steps of synthesis. In other words: the progressive cultural change leads to a global culture that has just a fraction of the information originally available within the system "humanity".

Fig. 1.: Successive syntheses of cultures

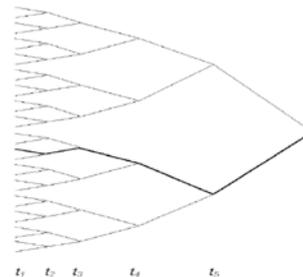


Abb. 1.: Arnold Groh: Globalisation and Indigenous Identity. In: Psychopathologie africaine 2006, 33, 1, 33-47 (S. 36).

some tribes, whose life styles have not yet been infiltrated, corrupted: "adapted". Where those people are living without clothes, Arnold Groh and his students strive to meet them, similar wise, also being nude, painted or not painted. This way trust and personal contact, as well as normality can be created.

Basic condition: Being guest, non-invasive, cautious. The observer's problem:

Cautiousness, carefulness, and learning stand against the trend towards exploitation, assimilation and mental as well as economic neo-colonisation. Whoever travels to the indigenous peoples like to Disneyland, will get a presentation of a façade, they will be intoxicated by these or those amenities (anyhow by alcohols) and in contact with the US-American prudery, together with the European Capitalism or the Chinese land-robbing-colonialism, they will end their own way of life. They are infected by decadence and are depending on technical devices, with respective products run out for long time, starting with synthetic fibres unsuitable to the climate to tube-equipped monitors. Their biotope is being



commercialised and also physically destroyed.

Their finely adapted way of life loses its basis, pathogens meet insufficiently trained immune-competence, cause infectious diseases, the predominant-western model of life causes the gradual loss of livelihood, leads towards impoverishment, deep dependency, rural exodus and ghetto formation in run-down cities.

Not only in Latin America a kind of Indigenous Tourism is developing, which faces wealthy US Citizens with the – still in their original contexts – living indigenous people. It is known that in the USA, based upon a historically evangelical-enthusiastic religiosity, a certain state prudery is widely accepted. Thus the nipples of the “American woman”, for example, must be kept covered under all circumstances, which leads to the pert stars, borrowed from the ‘Stars and Stripes’. The majority of all people find the “normal state of life” in being clothed, often “cultivated people” can be seen at home wearing street clothes, in various soaps or publicities people are seen in the marriage bed with street shoes on.

Nobody seems to recognise the absurdity of this lifestyle or – if it is recognized – to question it. That is the perfect matching that we encounter in the “western cultures”. What the purpose of this should be is another question.

When such people suddenly meet naked living indigenous peoples, they consider these as being “primitive”, animal” and, as first reflex, they will make “gifts” and impress with items tourists bring along as convictions. Thus synthetic fibre clothing is brought into the rainforest, worn jeans and T-shirts become a status symbol and a sign of authority in the savannah of Central Africa.

In return, these people experience incomprehensible disregard for this. This way a mentality

of indoctrination and – unconsciously to strategically planned “ missionary continues during the 21st century, out of a 500 years long fatal history.

Arnold Groh wants to counter this. He refers to an ethically basic attitude, to wisely meet other people with appreciation and respect, which has politically been stated in the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

Previously, a thorough and science-based research for still existing indigenous peoples and their careful studies of the respective way of life are is needed.

Here the well-known observer problem is not a philosophical subtlety, but a real application.

Article 29

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The observer does not simply abstractly invade the particular way of being of foreign people and cultures like the histologist with the eyepiece of a microscope, but as a whole man with his same-wise pre-defined reality.

Then he is an often not invited,- yet welcome – foreign-looking, foreign- speaking, foreign-smelling guest, at that place barely able to survive without any help. As such he enjoys a limited esteem: the rights of guests are defined by very different ways. The obligingness may very quickly evaporate, when misunderstanding and arrogance start prevailing. A guest enjoys acceptance and help, as far as he appears in an interested, cautious and reserved way. By his arrival the scientist already has changed the system to be researched: He himself, although unavoidably, forms an artefact. By any further reckless change first the prerequisites, then the relationships and at the end the expected research results would be made useless.

In addition researchers, when dealing with people who maybe never before have been in contact with distant cultures, must have a special duty of abstinence and restraint. They will have to put aside many own thinking methods, to open up themselves, yes, also to undress, so to allow trusting and cautious approaching each other. This includes gathering beforehand thorough information about the local circumstances, like questioning neighbouring, already visited tribes, but without establishing an “inner image” about the people to be visited. Conceptual images may trouble the open view of that what is, more than

a lack of scientific training or adverse circumstances.

Here “neurotic-patriotic” or even religiously indoctrinated guests are out of place. From the point of view of naturism there is an important as well as a commendable task for naturists: very probably they are free of neurotic constraints. They have a good contact to the own body, they feel in peace with their own being, here and now, and are also clear as to their own sexuality. They are, we are easy, unobtrusive people.

As naturists and researchers we can put ourselves in the service of a great cause: to protect indigenous people in their environment, get information about their way of life, learn from them, and thereby dissuade the “community of nations” to leave them, all together with their arduous paradise, to the raging turbo-capitalism of political and financial elites.



Fig. 2”: minimal invasive meeting during research with the Batwa: Arnold Groh with two of his students in December 2010. Source: <http://s-a-c-s.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/BatwaRec.pdf> http://inst.at/trans/15Nr/09_1/groh15.htm (A. Groh)

Statistically, in the German-speaking regions on the European continent alone, there are about 8-10% of naturists among the 90 million people: women, men, girls and boys. Assuming that about 1% of those 20% who have graduated were able to participate in an expedition and from these again 1% were willing to commit themselves to the rights and living space of the indigenous peoples, we would reach a number of 180 experts. Let’s assume that from these only 10% were actually fit and interested enough, we then could expect 18 experts in the German-speaking region, who would ethically be competent, and at the same time practising naturists.

This number cannot be extrapolated to the world population, as here in the German-speaking part of Europe we obviously are extre-

mely favoured by the freedom and acceptance of the naturist life style. By that we may expect that about 40 additional naturists worldwide would be available, who would be competent and willing to commit themselves to the highly specialised natural living areas and the very differently adapted cultures, languages, behaviours and surviving strategies of the indigenous peoples.

When estimating the total amount of 50, this results in a manageable number of network partners. We know about possible communication channels, leading to these colleagues. Besides universities the international and regional media are important.

Now it is up to us, to tell each single girlfriend, each naturist friend about this task and that in Berlin a man, together with his students, plans expeditions, which pursue exactly this objective of research and protection.

So far there numerous expeditions have been supported by various scientific funds. These funds are drying up, because, due to the capital and speculations crises, also the interests are eliminated, from which so far the research funds have financed their projects.

However, this is not another call for Crowdfunding, but a call to interconnect female and male experts also being naturists. The result of this network shall be a pool of experts, female and male: People with experience and networks who also can bring or help to bring financial resources.

A CALL TO NATURISTS, to research and to contribute:

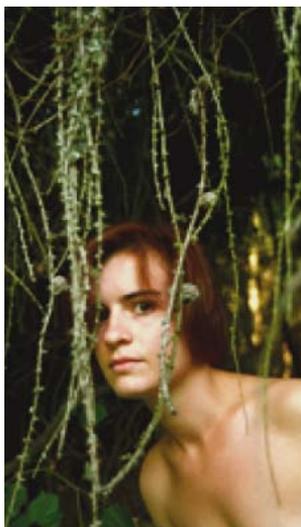
This contribution has been written in the service of humanitarian duty for those people, who have already been pushed to the edge of existence, to the “edge of the world”. This – their –world is in acute danger to be sacrificed to the final exploitation of resources and men. Yet: Indigenous tribes and peoples might teach us something, which for the largest part we already have lost: Nature, the survival in and with “Nature”, yes: wisdom in and for life – being human.

Short visits by dressed people are of little use to the indigenous peoples. What can strengthen their position, their self-understanding, are people, who approach their circumstances without any prejudice and who allow mutual learning from each other.

When we really are “naturists”, then we should and we will be active. We will look more closely at that topic, ask ourselves how we can contri-

bute, will seek contact with Arnold Groh; as simple guests – children with the family would be ideal mediators - or as researchers.

He is a reserved, serious, friendly man, keeping his goal well in mind and so not calling for a competing tourism.... here: The breasts, covered by stars, of cheerful American women, who want to experience “Oh my God! Nature!”, but that with all comfort – and there: the embarrassed naked facts of equally naïve Europeans? No – that is not what we want.



What has lead me to write:

First: the basic obligation to promote fellow human beings in freedom and to exert on their rights of existence.

Second: the long-time acquaintance with Arnold Groh. At the occasion I also had taken over to prepare candidates from Austria, Slovakia and Hungary for the situation of the undressed man in nature, before they travelled to Berlin, and thereafter for the expedition. These experiences were very instructive, in relation to the disconcerting of well-meaning, committed students as to their own nudity in the jungle. Yes – Vienna has a jungle! – one of the last in Europe: the National Park of the “Donau-Auen”- Danube wet Meadows. This stretches from Vienna till Bratislava at the tri-border area point of Austria-Slovakia-Hungary.

Here we spent the first few hours, undressed and far away from anything called “civilisation”. They were supposed to memorise the way, but were allowed to freely move around, also to swim, to meditate. I noticed two particular points: Uncertainty and fear. How far were these young people already estranged from Nature? How much inner overcoming would it cost to feel as being part of nature? Although they had been taken care of by my wife and safely been returned to the daily life, only a few students were able to cope with the situation. At the place they did show themselves being brave, but satisfaction did not appear. Researchers like father and son Grzimek in the Ngorongoro Crates, yes: Naturist Families too would be more qualified.

What has intrapsychically to be considered before expeditions?

When insufficiently accustomed to be undressed in nature, some people may be thrown back to old conflicts, although thought to be already overcome. Each sudden flooding with badly coped emotional experiences, perhaps due to suffered sexual violence, may lead to the termination of the experiment and to the wish, to find a “cause” for the shame and the anger and to punish this as a substitute.

Any person who, unprepared, does not only go to a National Park, but actually into a jungle, is in real danger not to bear the situation at the place, however without the possibility to escape. This can lead to serious, crisis-prone developments. For that reason it is recommended for those people wanting to approach this topic, to reconcile with one self and with the own past. There are high effective techniques for this. First, a matured – or shall we say – successful personality cannot only endure but even enjoy meeting with oneself and with other, foreign people and only then, in a state of inner joy, transmit a similar great feeling to the hosts.

We owe this to ourselves, to the group, to the hosts. In my opinion visits without research should be handled restrictively: by prepared contacts, preferably only by invitation.

Volkmar Ellmauthaler, Wien
<http://medpsych.at>

Info Focus April

Deadline to remit articles: 20. March 2017

Release of Focus latest: 05. April 2017

Events February

07. 02. 2017 **Nude Bowling Tournament, France, Paris**



You may download the registration from our website (available in FR & EN) <http://naturistes-paris.fr/activites/sorties-et-evenements/>

For further information, contact:
laurent@naturistes-paris.fr

Recently Arnold wrote:

Hi Volkmar

Attached I send you a book chapter, an article and a further excerpt from the textbook manuscript. The chapter is in context with the Tourinfo-project, the article has a theoretical and the excerpt has a practical perspective.

Here also a speech I had held in Havana:

<http://s-a-c-s.net/files/FAPCI.pdf>

Also on the context of the Tourinfo-project we had, nearly one year ago, tried in vain to arrange an excursion based on Crowdfunding:

<http://projektstarter.ch/?sid=79&IID=990>

The present project goes a step further. The orientation is no longer in relation to the already destabilised status, i.e. the visitors do not adapt to the more or less still available tradition, but they support the implementation of Article 11 of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which recognises the right to revitalise the indigenous culture. In fact, in the concrete daily life this implementation is being prevented, by importing the global standards into the indigenous societies. Then the nice words of the UN Declaration do not help. The visitors keep their clothes on in the indigenous villages, even at 35 degrees, while they expect that the indigenous people will put on clothes when they enter the city.

So, an asymmetric relationship.

The social cognitive input that the indigenous people receive, is just pushing them into one direction, namely towards the industrial-cultural standards. In order that they really have a "Freedom of Choice", they should receive the same counterweight from the dominant role models, in the form of behavioural patterns that lead away from the global standards back to a cultural semiotic before the external influences. But we are not in a position to deliver that much counterweight, however we may give those drops onto the hot stones, that are soothing and that give impulses to strengthen the cultural

self-awareness of the indigenous peoples. Any perceptible behaviour is an act of communication. When representatives of the dominant culture appear fully covered at the indigenous peoples, they express something. But when orientating themselves to the traditional of appearance of the indigenous people, they also express something, namely the same acceptance towards the other culture, being requested by the globalised contexts from the indigenous peoples.

Under <http://s-a-c-s.net/uno/papers-and-reports-to-the-un/> you will find a picture from the field in the UN Report about the Batwa.

Actually there should be enough naturalists in the world, willing to give respect and recognition of their original way of appearance to the indigenous peoples. It would be very nice for the indigenous peoples if such encounters could take place. As I know the indigenous peoples, the villages and the infrastructure, I would be very glad to bring along groups of 5-20 persons.

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Michael Hoffmann
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