

New Publication: Manfred Klett “Von der Agrartechnologie zur Landbaukunst” (From agricultural Technology to the Art of Husbandry”

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The new book “Von der Agrartechnologie zur Landbaukunst” may be described as the summary of Manfred Klett’s life work.

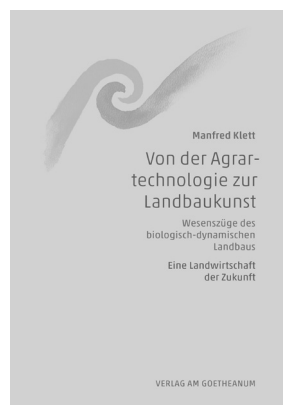
Manfred Klett, born in 1933, is the doyen of the biodynamic movement. After he has been travelling world-wide as a speaker, tutor and interlocutor for decades alongside his practical work and responsibilities, you could expect to find him now in quiet retirement. This picture is misleading, for, out of an outwardly quiet life Manfred Klett appears in public again with a comprehensive work of 488 pages. And whoever knows him, suspects immediately what Manfred Klett puts in our hands: the quintessence of his life-long working for agriculture of the future. Retrospectively, the harvest yielded by his life is sifted through and ordered: a structured stocktaking of what agriculture was and is. Looking forward, we are faced with a challenge to subsequent generations in the sense of work orientations to get to grips with the future potential that agriculture bears within it.

The first subtitle “Characteristics of biodynamic Cultivation” may be understood as a summary of the contents. Yes, indeed, it is about biodynamic agriculture, but not in the sense of an inside view, an internal communication of the biodynamic ‘community’ with itself. Well, is it about an outside view? It is not that either, for, from the outside nothing at all is looked at in this work. However, you could say it is a matter of a perspective looking out. A perspective, in which what we call ‘biodynamic’ is explored beyond the movement and how it sees itself in order to find something in its characteristics of what of agriculture is in terms of its purpose. That is a mighty claim, which requires solid backing-up. The book can be read as this backing-up, and I believe it is intended to be read in this way from the author’s position, that is, in terms of the content and the style. The content includes among other things:

- A history of agriculture in its connection to the development of culture and consciousness of humanity in the West.

- A socio-economic study of the relationship between industry and agriculture.
- A theory about the agricultural organism in its three- and four-foldedness.
- An examination of the “agricultural individuality”.
- In the context of the three pillars of cultivation – tilling the soil, crop rotation and fertilising – a detailed portrayal of biodynamic preparations.
- A textbook for biodynamic farmers.
- A textbook for farm communities and associative initiatives around farms.

With the style the evidence or argumentation needs to be called Goethean in the best sense. In other words, it is not abstractly logical and systematic, but rather is orientated towards the phenomenon. The biography of the writer is a life for and with the biodynamic impulse. The concrete work experience and the thought discoveries in principle belong together. The life lived is the interweaving of both, and this book stays true to the language his life speaks. Concrete work experiences – whether they be in the fields, in the cowshed or at the work meeting – and the formulations on archetypal phenomena concerning soils, livestock or working together are closely interwoven. That is intentional. The style can be described as “real-ideal”. And it is the realisation of what Manfred Klett calls “the Art of Husbandry” in the title. The real aspect does not lose itself atomistically in the details of dates and facts and the ideal does not get lost in the abstraction of the general; they seek each other out and fertilise each other to find a higher unity; this art may be called the art of husbandry.



Manfred Klett

Von der Agrartechnologie zur Landbaukunst Wesenszüge des biologisch-dynamischen Landbaus (Characteristics of biodynamic Cultivation)
Agriculture of the Future

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