



SUMMARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL MACROBIOTIC CONFERENCE

27, 28, 29 October 2020, held online due to the pandemic



In August the committee felt that the conference could not be held at IMP in Lisbon, Portugal due to the “Covid 19” crisis. They had devised a “plan B” strategy and when Geninha declared that she would prefer to postpone until 2021 they launched an online “Zoom” gathering for the dates planned. We have to thank Rosalina and all the experienced tech-savvy committee members who put everything into this achievement. Ana Torres was also a splendid moderator and technician. Twenty-five participating people seemed a perfect number online and the atmosphere was warm and receptive. After each fascinating talk the many questions and rich discussion could have extended longer.



The presentations were excellent and wide-ranging responses to the theme ‘relationships’ (an access link will be sent to you with the full length talks and the various papers should be with you within the next few weeks). Carl Ferre from U.S.A. has wanted to join in for many years and being online gave him the opportunity. There were other established, senior participants and this leads us to plan another online event in the spring as well as the October “in person” meeting 2021.

On the first evening, at 6pm GMT, Ana Torres opened the online gathering to welcome speakers and participants worldwide. The opening 30 minutes gave everyone the opportunity to introduce themselves.

At 6.30pm Ana introduced Kenneth Prange, with his topic, “Divine proportion and our entanglement with the cosmos”. Kenneth gave an extensive description on the recently discovered central axis of the universe and how that corresponds to the “Trees of Life “ of the ancients. He then pointed out how Yin/Yang polarities synchronistically affect different organisations of life at every level according to a seniority rule. As above, so below, he said, where microcosms develop within the framework of macrocosms. Further, in contradiction to Darwin’s theory of biological evolution, he referred to what George Ohsawa had written in 1956, that Darwin’s theory is not yet scientifically proven and there are many contradictory phenomena. It cannot explain, for example, the mutation phenomenon; besides, it does not know what life is, not the mechanism of changing and developing or of retrogression.

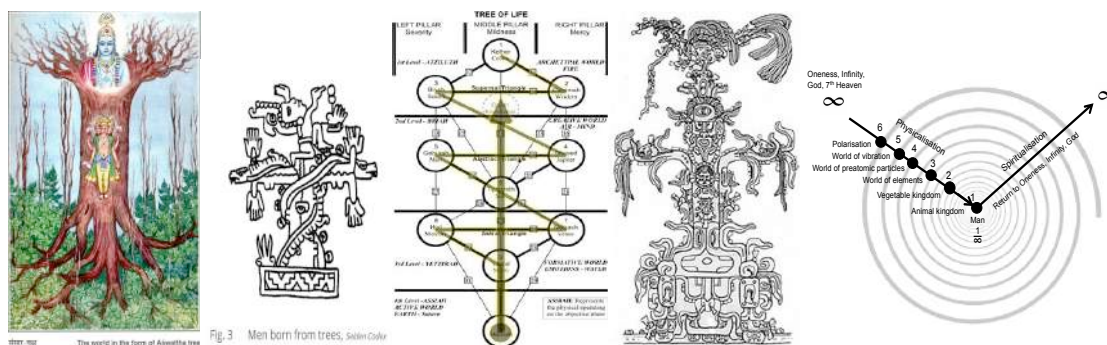


Fig.3 Men born from trees, Saini's tree



At 8.00pm after discussion and short break Ana announced Simon Brown who spoke about “The Relationship Between Health and Thinking”. Simon indicated that growing evidence suggests that how we think might have as great an effect on long-term health as the food we eat. Similar to food, our mind could influence what become medical issues, such as rising blood glucose levels, blood pressure and inflammation. What is called the placebo / nocebo influence is surprisingly powerful. He said Ohsawa wrote extensively about thought, including non-credo, curiosity, beginners mind, appreciation, honesty, responsibility and humility as principles of macrobiotics. He finished with the notion of how can we explore bringing these factors into teaching, consultations and health coaching.

Second Evening and Ana introduced Greg Johnson. His talk carried the title “Zen Macrobiotics and a doorway to infinity”. Greg began by asking whether we can restore some of the original spirit intended by Ohsawa’s association with Zen. He believes macrobiotics, as currently understood, may provide an insufficient context to attract a new generation of practitioners. He suggests the inclusion of Zen in its “masthead” would restore much of its original context and open a new dimension of growth and possibility. He quoted Michio Kushi from 1976, “We all have come from infinity, we all live within infinity, we all shall return to infinity, and we are all manifestation of one infinity”. A great talk with inspirational tones.

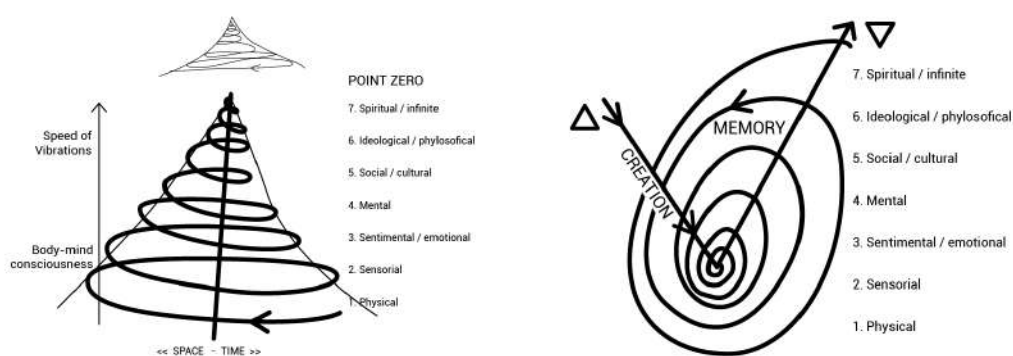
At 8pm Laurenço Azevedo brought his topic “To Love Life” and asked us all to stand on one foot, then the other, our feet and whole body listening to our inner balance. Daily he suggested we do this practice. He took us on a journey to recognize inside and outside nature as one, walking across the flat plateau of an A4 piece of paper, that he then crumpled and re-opened to show how it was the same paper but with mountains and ravines to traverse. Here were core questions to help us improve aspects of our relationship with life, our inner ecology and sustainability. He was prompting us to not only experience intellectually but physically go to that place of learning such as mountains, rivers or sky.

Third Evening and Ana introduced Filipa Silva who presented the results of the Macrobiotic survey 2020 which explores the relationships between macrobiotics, the people practicing a macrobiotic



way of life and macrobiotic principles. This was completed by over 750 people from around the world and identifies why people start macrobiotics, what their greatest challenges are, why they leave macrobiotics, what motivates people, what they want to learn, what they eat and what influence macrobiotics has had on their health. Afterwards it was agreed that this is an invaluable piece of research that reflects our changing times.

At 8pm Rik Vermuyten was introduced with his talk “The Most Essential Relationship” beginning with a question, “Among all the relationships that we develop in our life, what is the most deciding, the most essential, the most important one we need to cherish?” He shared his screen with an image of the great spiral of life as drawn by Michio with the central axis crucial between Heavens energy and Earths energy. He went on to say that, in our life we develop many different relationships, almost all of them exist within the frame of time and space, so they appear and disappear with birth and death but the most essential one we keep forever is our relationship with our divine spirit. When we develop our consciousness we become more and more aware what that means and how we can connect into that spirit. He spoke also about how the widespread fear of the present coronavirus crisis can seriously damage that relationship.



At the end Geninha spoke to welcome everyone next year in person to the conference in Lisbon. She said, attendees can once again bring proposals to hold the next conference in their own country, as indeed last year was a superb conference in Valencia.



The whole group took one minute of silence together to send love and light into the world at this time. Ana Torres closed with a summary and poem.

Carl addressed the conference about a possible online “Olympian Conference” every 4 years proposed by Japan which was followed by much talk about online conferences.

Michael Rossoff did wonder where were many teachers he expected to be attending.

All teachers agreed to kindly forego their payment in order to support future IMC events.

The money made from this event goes towards website up-keep, office work, future IMC events and a donation for planting trees in Portugal. (See accounts on line.)

Carl Ferrer has shared with us the Tribute to Herman Aihara:

<https://ohsawamacrobiotics.com/images/earticles/mbt1020.pdf>

The Instituto Macrobiotico de Portugal will be giving a donation, corresponding to each person that travels do Portugal for the next meeting, to the Quercus Tree Project. With volunteers they will plant Oak, Ash, Platino, Arbutus and Pine from Spring 2021 onwards, which will be looked after for 5 years. This will help to offset the air travel of all of us.

As we begin, or indeed continue to find understanding of our divine proportion, in the profound depths of our own cosmos, we are enriched and inspired to nurture our thoughts and mind patterns, as they impact us so deeply.

We may find the doorway to infinity, be it through our zen practices, or maybe simply letting go.

However we acknowledge the power of community, as one of the great pillars of health (not forgetting food and movement, of course), the objective is to be able to love life, make peace with our inner and outer cosmos.

Measuring how we practice macrobiotics and why, shines light on another beautiful perspective of life and this precious art/ philosophy we share. Also being the observer, of our bigger self, we may be able to recognize the most essential relationship between the divine and self.

Together in our openness and vulnerability we received the greatest gift of all, the *present*, as a moment in friendship, love and understanding.

Reflection by Ana Torres



ACCOUNTS

Income

23 people paying 59€	1375.00€
Total Income	1375.00€

Expenses

PayPal fee 2.94€ per person	67.62€
Website upkeep	752.25€
Tree Planting (25 trees)	87.50€

Total Expenses 907.37€

Balance 467.63€

The 2020 IMC committee members

Rik Vermuyten , Ana Torres, Simon Brown, Anna Mackenzie, Rosalina Silva, Kenneth Prange and Sandy Pukel.

