

## Gilleleje

### The Continental Meeting at Gilleleje, Denmark 1-4 May 1997

#### Report by Max Payne

Gilleleje was different. Normally any meeting or conference has a series of talks expounding a particular theme. At Gilleleje there was no given topic, instead OLE and SUZETTE VAN HAUEN DRUCKER led us into a Bohm dialogue. The emphasis was on process, not information. The group gathered in a silent circle and tried to subject itself to the simple but inexorable discipline of only speaking from the heart and waiting 25 seconds before following the last speaker. The previous contribution was to be noted with respect and if possible added to. It is amazing how difficult it was to follow this simple prescription. Even psychologically sophisticated members of the group found the restraints almost impossible to follow. We were all bursting with our own ideas; we wanted a convergent discussion to reach a conclusion; we could not wait for the chance to supplement or contradict what had just been said. Slowly it emerged that this was not the point of the exercise; slowly there became a sense of a truly gathered meeting: slowly we realized that a dialogue on these terms is something deeper than a discussion: slowly an awareness which can only be called 'group consciousness' began to appear. It was not that wise words were not said. Thoughts were expressed about the understanding of our own consciousness, the experience of life, death and bereavement, and the path to truth which many of us will carry away in our minds from now onwards. But perhaps the deepest thing we will carry away is the understanding of how our busy minds come between us and reality.



The meeting has other happy memories. The accommodation at the Gilleleje holiday centre was comfortable, and the food at the three full Danish buffets a day was superb. At their cabin in the evening Ole and Suzette provided drinks at retail prices. Any effects could be removed early next morning by raising the *qi* under the direction of BISONG GUO, while skylarks sang overhead. On our free morning we had a tour of the imposing Renaissance pile of Elsinore castle, and the commandant of the castle told us of the political background to *Hamlet* in the most impeccable English. On the Saturday evening we had the entertainment. Through song, dance, music, poetry, and comic sketch the Network entertained itself. Some were skilful amateurs, some enthusiasts, at least one was a professional. Performers and audience, we were all in it together. If we ever cease to be able

to laugh at ourselves, sing to ourselves and dance with ourselves, the heart of the Network will have stopped.