

TABLE OF CONTENT

| | |
|--|----|
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| THE PERSON HANS NIELSEN HAUGE | 1 |
| Childhood and Youth | 1 |
| Hauge's Spiritual Experience..... | 3 |
| Spiritual leader | 4 |
| Business leader..... | 6 |
| HAUGE'S ETHICAL THINKING | 8 |
| The background for the Haugian activities | 10 |
| Brotherhood and love of neighbor | 11 |
| The mission of service | 14 |
| The Meaning of work..... | 16 |
| Managerial responsibility..... | 19 |
| Long-range planning | 20 |
| Equality | 22 |
| THE HAUGEAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENT | 22 |
| LEADERSHIP | 24 |
| On Being a Strategist | 25 |
| On Being a Judge of Character | 27 |
| On Gaining Respect | 28 |
| On Cooperation | 29 |
| On Being an Instructor and Guide | 30 |
| OPPOSITION AND PRISON | 33 |
| A ROLE MODEL OF CURRENT INTEREST..... | 36 |
| Social Entrepreneurship | 36 |
| Hans Nielsen Hauge as a social entrepreneur | 37 |
| Social entrepreneurship and sustainable development: From Hauge to modern society | 39 |
| EPILOG | 42 |

In 2001 Sigbjørn Ravnåsen published his book “ÅND og HÅND” (Spirit and Hand). The book was the result of his research on Hans Nielsen Hauge’s ethical thinking and praxis. This booklet is built on Ravnåsen’s book. It has turned out that Hauge is of interest also outside of the Norwegian boarder, and there was a demand to make Ravnåsen’s findings accessible also in English.

It is our hope that the life of Hauge will stimulate people to build their lives on sound and beneficial values both in their businesses and private life.

In the process of writing this short English version Ann Mari Ladefoged has contributed as a co-writer and editor. Ladefoged holds an MSc in Development Management, and has been engaged in the Hauge Institute for two years.

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INTRODUCTION

Hans Nielsen Hauge (1771 – 1824) was a farmer’s son from Norway. He is by many known as a travelling lay preacher who spent ten years in jail due to a law who prohibited ordinary people from preaching in public. Less known is his tremendous impact on his contemporary society. In Hauge’s footsteps developed the Haugean society of friends, who gradually influenced whatever environment they were a part of, both spiritually and economically.

During his career, Hauge laid the foundation for many in Norway to begin thinking and acting independently. In this way, he brought down official authoritarianism, and laid the foundation for Norwegian democracy and parliamentarianism. In a time characterized by inequity and economic poverty, he became an influential leader who bravely pointed out the unfairness in his society, even though it meant a clash with those in authority. This was something he could only do because he was so certain that he was called to a God-given task.

In the following I will provide an overview of Hans Nielsen Hauge’s life and ethical thinking that will shed light upon the question of how an ordinary farmer’s son became one of the most influential leaders of his time. I am convinced that his example can provide valuable insights also for the challenges of our time.

THE PERSON HANS NIELSEN HAUGE

Childhood and Youth

Hans Nielsen Hauge was born in Tune in Ostfold in 1771. He was a farmer’s son and the fifth of ten children. He grew up on his parents’ farm near the town of Fredrikstad. In his childhood home, Hauge became acquainted with the writings of Pietism’s great “fathers,” and

these writings influenced his home and upbringing. He was raised to fear God through the morning and evening household devotions. On the Sundays when the family could not attend church, they read from Luther's book of sermons.

Childhood and youth were important years for Hauge's spiritual development. He read all he could of the religious literature found on the family's bookshelves. He studied the Bible thoroughly, and was a deep thinker. He spent most of his time at home, and was seldom together with friends. It might even be said that the young Hauge was a little odd!

Hans Nielsen Hauge grew up in a time of religious and social conflict. The Pietist heritage from the sixteen- and seventeen- hundreds was challenged by Enlightenment-influenced clergy. A national demand for liberation sprung forth in the Norwegian people, inspired by liberation movements in other countries. The privileged, bourgeois class was in sharp conflict with members of the peasant class, who experienced life at the bottom of the economic ladder. It was in this authoritarian Norwegian society that the farmer's son from Tune grew up. He himself emphasized an individual's right and duty to take responsibility for the society in which he lived.

Hauge was influenced by the Enlightenment's thoughts and its focus on the good in society, such as its social development and advancement. Because of the Enlightenment, however, the form of preaching changed, and some rationalistic pastors spoke in a way which many Christians considered vulgar. Hans Nielsen Hauge would also change the society, but for him change happened in that people had renewed faith in God. This renewal would change the course and content of the individual person's life, which resulted in a change in the environment he or she was a part of. Hauge wrote about being an "example of light," and he encouraged his friends to begin new lives and follow God's will and plan for their lives.

The rationalists would improve peoples' circumstances through increased knowledge. For Hauge, this appealed to his practical sense.

The Enlightenment's faith in knowledge as a remedy that led to positive societal development had strong similarity with that which he himself stood for. On his travels around large parts of the country in the period from 1798 to 1804, the farmer's son and preacher instructed other farmers how to improve their equipment and cultivating methods. The farmers heeded his advice not only because he was one of their own, but also because he was an especially practical and knowledgeable man, one they could rely on. But in spite of several similarities between Hauge and the Enlightenment clergy, it was among these that Hauge found his strongest opponents.

Hauge's Spiritual Experience

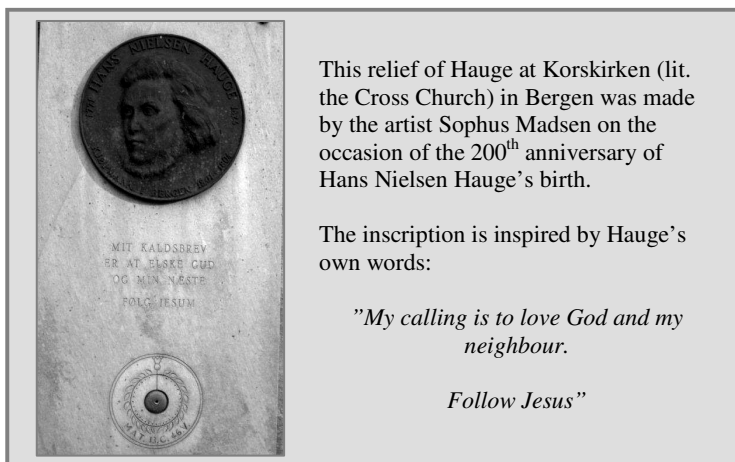
When Hans Nielsen Hauge was 25 years old he had a powerful spiritual experience out in the field one day in 1796. The event took place in the light of day, during a hectic work period. In his own book, *Religious Feelings and their Worth*, which came out 20 years later, he tells about this experience. He was working under open sky, singing the hymn, *Jesus I Long for Thy Blessed Communion*.

The experience was spontaneous and surprising, and ended in a call to preach God's Word to the people. This call followed Hauge throughout his life, and, until his death in 1824, he was faithful to the task he had undertaken that spring day in 1796. About Hauge's spiritual experience, Karsten Alnaes wrote in *The History of Norway*: "The revelation out in the field made Hauge into a prophet. It was a Damascus experience similar to what Paul had. Hans Nielsen Hauge was in other words chosen by God, he was the preferred. He was not ordained by a worldly authority, but by God Himself." Hauge got from this experience a spiritual independence and power which influenced him in all of his work: as preacher, spiritual leader, business founder, and social reformer.

In spite of his God-given call, he did not feel worthy of the task God had given him. Of this call to service Hauge said: *"My calling is to love*

God and my fellow humans". In the book, *Religious Feeling...*, Hauge put it this way:

I cried out to God for Him to take this heavy burden from me, namely that of confessing His name to all people. Rather send a bishop or another high official. But then in my inner being I heard: I have often used the least in the world to spread my kingdom. I will give you power and wisdom. And I answered: Yes, you my God will strengthen me, so I am willing. (*Hans Nielsen Hauge*)



Relief. Photo: S. Ravnåsen

Spiritual leader

In the same year as Hans Nielsen Hauge had his spiritual experience, he started to speak to men and women in farms in the near surroundings for their spiritual edification. Hauge himself has described his need to preach:

It was like a fire inside of me, which made me unable to keep silent, especially when there came several people. It sometimes happened that I wasn't quite conscious of what I said, because a spiritual emotion drove me, and when thinking about it in retrospect, I could doubtfully ask the most enlightened of my friends about my speech. And not only them, but also my opponents, said that I preached thoroughly and in accordance with the teaching of Christ.
(*Hans Nielsen Hauge*)

Hans Nielsen Hauge was an influential spiritual leader in Norway. Through preaching in and to his society of friends, there developed a completely natural understanding among those friends that he was the leader who joined them together in an extensive spiritual fellowship. His strong desire to reach more with his message led to an adventurous writing career. He wrote 33 books and tracts. He also published and gave out the writings of other authors. In a population of 900,000, there were 200,000 copies of his books. He was, in his time, the most read Norwegian author. An effective distribution system resulted in his books reaching areas all over the country. He reached out to the common man and woman with his message. Most people were enthused after reading Hauge's books, and some of these books led to increased reading and writing skills among the general public.

In addition, he wrote letters. Over 500 letters are preserved at the National Archive in Oslo, and most are published in book form. Through his preaching and writing, Hauge presented Christianity simply and plainly. Friends felt close and safe, while uncertainty and anger spread to the established leadership in the society.

There has been a continuing question as to why Hauge's leadership position was so strong. There can be many explanations. Maybe the answer is a combination of spiritual power, professional competence, a great knowledge of people, and an unusually large capacity for

work. This strengthened his authority and trust among the people. He was someone that the friends could depend on. Hans Nielsen Hauge preached with power, clear vision, and direct speech on sin, on the Christian life, and on how one could find the path to God. At the same time, he strongly emphasized a Christian's responsibility for his neighbor and for the society of which he or she was part. Such was how Hauge became a spiritual leader in his time.

Business leader

Hauge's knowledge of people was vitally important to his work of establishing different businesses and finding suitable people to be supervisors for these operations. An example on this is when Hauge on one occasion came to Kristiansand, a town in the southern parts of Norway. Hauge noticed a small brick factory out of operation because the owner had not been able to run the business profitable. Hauge thought it was a shame not to use it. He therefore made contact with the farmer Ole Eyelsen. Hauge encouraged Ole to sell his inherited farm and buy the brick factory. Ole followed Hauge's advise, and moved to the town. Based on his religious faith, Ole showed a strong will to work with diligence. Despite challenges he managed to turn the brick factory into a lucrative business, which in turn provided jobs for seventeen employees.



Hauge's signet ring
Photo: Signe Ravnåsen

As a business leader, Hauge distinguished himself first and foremost as an entrepreneur, and soon after the enterprise was established,

delegated the leadership responsibility to his friends. On his many travels, he bought different businesses and properties, and as a citizen of Bergen Hauge also became a ship owner with several vessels. He built up a network of different businesses which his friends managed and supervised. On his many preaching expeditions, Hauge visited these establishments time after time. He was the leader, the chief with the strategic know-how and superior responsibility that conveyed closeness and caring and motivated the workers. This was contagious among friends. They would also do something. They saw Hauge, and they saw that anything was possible. Several businesses were therefore established by Hauge's friends who had been inspired by his life and teaching.

Hauge's talent for trade and establishing new businesses resulted in approximately 30 operations around the country. Most of these were planned and realized in the period from 1800 to 1804, when he was at the height of his many activities. His arrest in the fall of 1804 put a brutal stop to further expansion. Hauge's business operations were found over the whole of eastern Norway and north to Bardudalen in Troms County. There he founded, among other things, a factory for the production of potash for preserving fish. At Hauge's recommendation, several young families moved from southern Norway to Bardudalen and other areas of northern Norway to take up farming and plow the soil. As a citizen and merchant in Bergen, Hauge was both respected and hated. Some established merchants saw him as a threat to their own businesses. His Bergen period, which lasted just three years, resulted in a number of business activities. He was a ship owner, and he bought a fishing station in North Trondelag, as well as the large estate Svanoey outside Bergen. He purchased a brick works near Kristiansand and saw that a paper mill was built at Setesdal. These were only a few of his business ventures.

One illustration of Hauge's ability to find the right person in the right place was the meeting between himself and sheriff Bache from Numedal at Eiker paper mill in 1801, as described by the Hauge biographer A. Chr. Bang:

At Bache's meeting with Hauge at Eiker Paper Mill, it was mentioned that one of the friends should establish himself as a merchant in Drammen. Hauge saw Bache as suitable for such work. After some thinking Bache decided to resign his sheriff's position in October 1802 and moved to Drammen where he founded an expanding business.



Photo 3: Eiker paper mill in Vestfossen
© Sameia fotoarkiv

HAUGE'S ETHICAL THINKING

In Hauge's ethical thinking, "spirit and hand" (practicality) go together to form a whole. The ethical core is composed of brotherhood, service to others, managerial responsibility, and

equality. Hauge derived his models of ethical thinking from the Bible and carried them out in everyday life.

When Hauge stressed the meaning of practicing brotherhood and love of neighbor, he put strong emphasis on the caring aspect in all human relations. In letters and other writings he instructed his friends to care for one another, serve one another through good works, carry one another's burdens, and be wise in their behavior. If the fellowship was to function in a good way, egotistic and individualistic tendencies must be laid aside.

In the Haugean businesses and societies of friends, service to others was also practiced. They emphasized helping and supporting each other both spiritually and economically when there was a need for it. All his life, Hauge was concerned with the individual person, or as he himself said, *my neighbor*. Hauge often spoke about love as the greatest virtue and pointed to Matthew 22, where Jesus says,

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. But another is equally important: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

To be willing to serve is, in Hauge's view, to live according to God's will in strong fellowship with others. A merchant who serves becomes noticed by others and has a positive influence on his environment. Hauge was clear about the importance of a good example: *Our work and our willingness to serve is something that should shine.*

Hauge's view of human worth is expressed in a different way, such as when he says that *God does not see social status, but those who practice righteousness.* This was practiced in Haugean businesses, which employed women, young people, and disabled persons. They would be given meaningful tasks that fitted their abilities. Capable young women were motivated by Hauge to travel around and preach. Hauge

himself broke with the accepted gender roles of the time in that he knitted, wove, and embroidered. On several occasions he wrote to his friends that men should learn household chores and women do outside work because there may come a time when they would have to use those skills.

Hauge made his ethical thinking known through books and letters. In his letters, one gets the impression of a man who was very busy, but who also had time for the individual and for showing warm-hearted devotion toward his friends. He was the foreman and instructor in spiritual and practical questions. In the same letter, he readily mixed Bible quotations and spiritual viewpoints together with concrete plans about buying and selling and starting a business. Abstract philosophical contemplation was absent. Hauge himself did not make an attempt to give a collected presentation of his ethics. Yet it is possible to see outlines of his thinking in the written material. Hauge was occupied with how life would be lived out in practice. The ethical core in his thinking came out in his many admonishments and advice to his friends. These contained his view of humanity, of society, and of work. By using Hauge's own formulations, his friends would better understand what he himself attached importance to in attitudes and conduct.

The background for the Haugian activities

My calling is to love God and my neighbor was Hauge's vision for his work. Here lies the motivation behind his preaching and many business ventures. The unemployment rate at that time was high, and Hauge saw that many of the poor did not have access to profitable work. To remedy this need was the basis for Hauge and his friends starting businesses. By using the expression *so that idle hands may work*, Hauge reveals a socialistic thinking, and the foundation for the Haugian business activities.

Each man shall assist in creating and managing factories and enterprises according

to his fortune and his gifts, so idle hands may work. (*Hans Nielsen Hauge*)

In the above statement, Hauge showed some of the basis for getting started with his business activities. He turned to his friends, some of whom had money in the bottom of a chest, and to those who had made good money in different businesses.

Hauge illustrated this more closely in a prison letter from 1809, where he said that:

...he who is good and wise lives and uses his gifts and fortune for himself, and thus increases them for the well-being of others; like a good steward he foresees new possibilities. (*Hans Nielsen Hauge*)

He again uses the term “steward” to emphasize that money and other material goods are values given by God for human beings to manage the best that they can. Resources should not lie around as “dead capital,” but be put into circulation so that people get work. By “gifts,” he meant that people are endowed with abilities and talent that come not just from nature. These gifts are God given, to be used to serve our neighbor. Hauge himself gradually realized that he had special qualities and abilities for business operations. These qualities he utilized well and for the best for other people, and showed in this way that he “practiced what he preached.”

Brotherhood and love of neighbor

Do not demand too much from your fellow brother, nor place more burdens on him than he can carry. (*Hans Nielsen Hauge*)

This statement in regard to one’s fellow believers (brothers) is taken from the book *Basic Rules*, which Hauge wrote during his

imprisonment, and probably finished in 1808. The quotation is found in a section where Hauge also pointed out that *we should diligently carry out what our brothers require of us, in order to lift their spirits*. Here Hauge presents some of his thoughts on the ethics of brotherhood. This has a clear connection with what Jesus said about regarding our fellow humans as brothers. Hauge also states that *we should beware of all outward appearance of pride and selfishness*. Hauge warned against letting egoism and greed gain entry into Haugean businesses and the societies of friends.

In his letters to friends, Hauge put great emphasis on the aspect of caring, which in many ways is the foundation for an individual's growth, development, and contribution to society. People are equipped in different ways. They cannot all be dealt with the same, and can therefore not be accorded the same responsibilities. Tasks must be adapted to an individual's qualifications, or the result might be failure. This Hauge was clear about, and in both the spoken and written work he urged his friends to be caring, serve others through good works, bear each other's burdens, show respect for each other, and be wise in conduct.

For Hauge, the ethics of brotherhood was very important. Especially inside his own society of friends, it was important to show "brotherly love" in order to function. It should be shown to the outside world that the friends loved each other. Hauge often used the expression "brother" and "fellow believer" when he appealed to his friends in his letters and other writings. The expression must be understood such that Hauge considered "brother" to be a brother in spirit, a brother in the Lord, or quite simply a "fellow Christian." If one looks at the Old and New Testaments, the term "brother" is used to describe a person with whom one has a spiritual relationship. An example is 1 Peter 2:17-*Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king...*

A strong spiritual fellowship grew up in the Haugean Society of Friends by meeting in homes to read the Bible and other devotional literature, and to pray and sing together. This spiritual community

resulted in a strong unity; emphasizing love of neighbor, brotherhood, and helpfulness. Hauge himself was strongly inspired through his readings about early Christian practice, a spiritual and practical fellowship where all members participated.

Hauge knew that strong feelings of fellowship would make it easier for them to be a part of the society both in a spiritual sense and with the practical duties in which they were engaged. Still, it was not the motivation for community which would win the public's favor and acceptance. It was the individual person's life and actions that first and foremost would be noticed. Therefore it was decisive for Hauge to urge moderation and hard work, and seek that which was good for our fellow human beings. By taking such a stand, the focus would be taken away from oneself and aimed at others.

Hauge also believed that the friends should support each other economically in difficult times, lend each other money when there was a need for it, and generally help each other in all situations. In this way, the Haugeans built each other up so that they gradually developed into an economic power in society. The Haugeans had an economic community based on free will with a network that developed all over Norway. Many friends in these societies began to engage themselves in trade and industry, encouraged by the attitude which pledged that others would come to the rescue when someone had the need for a loan or other service. Because being part of a fellowship meant that they had access to different help methods when the need arose, they found a competitive advantage in relation to other participants in the market, who did not have such a network. It was also a strength that they had spread investments over the whole land and in many business enterprises. In this way they stood stronger in times of hardship. They also helped others by establishing businesses and obtaining work for people who were not part of the Haugean movement, but who needed help to improve their quality of life. Hauge believed that brotherhood should include all people, not just Haugeans. *Everyone is my neighbor*, said Hauge, and he went a step further and asserted that it was a Christian duty to help all people who suffer, to a better life.

Jesus' words that You *shall love your neighbor as yourself* (Matt 22:39) was an important starting point for Hauge when he admonished his friends to put love of neighbor into practice. Jesus appeared in the Bible as the serving Christ, and it was here Hauge found the model for how the mind of service should be lived out by every Christian. Hauge reflected on service in his book *The Christian Teacher* where he urged his friends to *work with our limbs so we can serve and give (...) without causing inconvenience*.

In this book, Hauge emphasized how the friends should use time and energy to help individuals with the burdens of everyday life. Again he emphasized egoism as a threat to fellowship. When Hauge said that, *We should be aware of appearing to be ambitious and greedy*, he correctly pointed as much toward his own kindred spirits as toward citizens, officials, and well-to-do farmers. He passionately believed that the Haugeans should be influenced by a feeling of fellowship and caring and not by egoism and individualistic attitudes. They should not just think of themselves, but show consideration and ease the burdens of others. Love of neighbor and attitudes of brotherhood must, according to Hauge, be seen in practice. Works do not necessarily have great value in themselves, but they are practical expressions for virtues based on genuinely felt love of neighbor. The Biblical principles of love of neighbor and brotherhood were foremost in Hauge's ethical thinking.

The mission of service

Our willingness to work and to serve is something that should shine. (*Hans Nielsen Hauge*)

In this statement, which is taken from one of Hauge's letters to his friends, he stressed the power of example, that of being a good model. Hauge used the term "to shine," clearly inspired by Jesus'

words from the Sermon on the Mount: *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven* (Matt 5:16). It is, according to Hauge, imperative for one's trustworthiness as a Christian in the world that there is conformity between the faith one defends and the actions one carries out. It was his wish that people should see that, among Haugeans, there was conformity between spirit and hand. Therefore he admonished his friends to "shine" in all that they did. There must be conformity between word and action, said Hauge, as shown in 1 John 3:18—*My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.*

Hauge saw his calling as a mission of service. His whole life was inspired by and tied to the spiritual experience he had out in the field that day in 1796. He clearly believed that the "message of service" he received that day was given to him by God. The mission was to preach the Bible's message to the Norwegian people. For Hauge, this was an overwhelming mission. He felt that he was not worthy enough to be such a messenger and tried to find excuses not to do it. After a long spiritual struggle, with prayer and Bible reading, he became convinced that he could not escape God's call to service. By answering God's call, the foundation was laid for a religious, social, and economic movement that would have far-reaching importance and meaning for many people in Norway.

Hauge's mission of service was motivated by his view of the whole person. He believed that the spiritual side cannot be separated from the material. The spiritual side is important, but a person is also made to work, to create something, to be creative in a practical sense. This holistic way of thinking influenced Hauge in his meetings with ordinary people, and this thinking became a starting point for Hauge's work. He took the spiritual side and the practical side of human beings seriously by always combining "spirit and hand." He regarded himself as a servant for the people he came in contact with and for the society of which he was a part.

Hauge believed that to serve our fellow human beings demanded something of oneself and one's will. He pointed this out in the book,

Basic Rules, where he stated that *we can, and should . . . live in God's will . . . to do good and serve our fellow human beings*. The reason Hauge stressed the active will as a condition for performing a service lay in his view of human nature. People do not always do good. Therefore, doing something good for our fellow human beings requires a conscious act.

The source of inspiration for Hauge's clear emphasis on service was Jesus himself as the serving Messiah. In the Bible he found strong words on how Jesus regarded service:

...yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many. (Matt 20:26–28)

It is God's will that we with *love shall serve all*, emphasized Hauge in the book *Basic Rules*, and said that *the greatest is to serve*, with clear reference to Jesus' own words. Hauge also touched on the connection between human problems such as discord, envy, stinginess, and contempt for others. The counterpart to these negative attitudes is service. Service brings forth service, because positive forces are brought out in such interaction. While egotistic and self-absorbed attitudes lead to negative and destructive effects on a community, Hauge believed that service leads to tolerance, mutual respect, and feelings of fellowship. The strong emphasis on mission and the value of service to the individual and to the community stayed with Hauge his whole life. For himself and his friends, *Our willingness to work and to serve is something that should shine*.

The Meaning of work

Often Hauge's friends met great difficulties in their work to promote God's kingdom. In the book *The Christian Teacher*, he dealt with

exactly this problem and said that we should *be diligent and vigilant in our service*. Faithful as the Haugean friends were, they could easily become discouraged and give in to the desire for evil. The danger of laziness was also a problem. Hauge therefore made repeated requests to individuals to take seriously the mission they were set to take care of in the world. Hauge often made use of the term “diligent” in his writings. *Be diligent in good works!*

Diligence was important for several reasons. Diligence in work would give his friends a good outward reputation, and they would present a positive image in their surroundings. Diligence was also, according to Hauge, good therapy against mental illness, as opposed to laziness, which could lead to mental illness and dampen the initiative and desire to work. He used this idea when giving advice to a young man named Jon O. Tengesdal. Jon was not married, and lived in a remote area, far from other people. Due to his lonely existence he was often afflicted with melancholia. Some Haugeans recommended him to talk to Hans Nielsen Hauge, whom they trusted to hold useful advices on different matters of life. Jon listened to their advice, and after a long and fatiguing journey he reached Hauge in a rather shabby condition. It is told that Hauge welcomed the boy and understood his situation. He reckoned that the boy’s problems were caused by loneliness, and that physical work could have a positive effect on him. The story does not say anything about Hauge giving spiritual advice to Jon, but he instead advised the boy to start building a road to his farm. Jon interpreted this as a “sacred” sign. He started the work, and got over his melancholia. However, the road was never finished. Jon died at the early age of 26, and did not get the chance to see the work through to completion.

Hauge often attached diligence to good works, not diligence for its own sake, but as a way of doing good for others. There is a link between diligence and the Biblical principle of love of neighbor. In a letter from 1803, Hauge admonished his friends to *be cheerful and loving, work diligently, renounce and don’t despise the world*. The friends were encouraged to be cheerful and friendly in their work community. Heavy seriousness must not influence the workplace. In the literature

one finds by and about Hauge, one sees that he himself strove for cheerfulness and happiness and had a positive outlook on life. He could enjoy the beauty in nature, he had an eye for fine handwork, and he himself made beautiful quilts and furniture which have been preserved to the present time.

Laziness was, in Hauge's eyes, very destructive, something his friends must keep away from. He always came back to the value of work. He impressed upon his friends that work was a virtue. Hauge was at times worried that laziness would spread through his societies of friends, and on several occasions he noticed that this was on the verge of happening. For Hauge, it was quite simply painful to see friends slide into the problem of laziness. In addition, it was destructive to the fellowship. He especially reacted sharply when people tried to withdraw from a work task so that others in the fellowship were left with the load, or when an individual demanded the same salary as others who put in more effort. In such cases, Hauge believed that those concerned should be reprimanded by their supervisor. But this supervisor did not get off "scot-free." Hauge set the same demands on leaders as on employees. If the workplace was to be enjoyable, all must do their best. A leader could be tempted to exploit his position for his own benefit at others' expense.

It is interesting to read Hauge's thoughts on the difficulties a business can face when the manager is bad and the employees lazy. In the book *Conviction about Superstition and Unbelief*, Hauge took up the problems concerning mismanagement, laziness, and the employees' right to remove a leader from his position. This was revolutionary in a time when there were no administrative agencies or trade unions. Therefore, it is remarkable that Hauge focused on the importance of good leadership at the same time he spoke about employees being diligent in their work.

Hauge often took part in practical work himself. It is told that he eagerly participated in the national grain threshing. As he was occupied with this work, a man came to see him for advice about his salvation. The man was shocked to see Hauge, well known to be a

spiritual leader and God fearing man, working in a barn. He stopped in the door, and after some thinking he said to Hauge: “(...) I see that you are managing the worldly affairs”. “Yes”, Hauge answered, “I have to run the worldly affairs so that the worldly affairs cannot run me!” He then carried on with his work until the evening. He preached the word of God, and the man seeking spiritual advice got all the spiritual edification he needed. He understood that it was the will of God to be faithful in the temporal work, and at the same time work faithfully to promote the kingdom of God.

Managerial responsibility

We may have and must use the world's riches,
as would a good housekeeper. (*Hans Nielsen
Hauge*)

What is implied by managerial responsibility? What does it mean to be a good manager of natural and human resources? Hauge took his thinking on managerial responsibility from the Bible. God has given humanity a responsibility for all He has created and for all the resources humans have received. People are God's stewards on earth. He wrote that a good steward should *make the most of his or her talents*. What he wanted to say with this expression is that one should manage his gifts, his property, and his money in a way which provides income and which leads to a positive development both for the individual and for society. Hauge's managerial thinking provided a basis both for protection of natural resources and a positive attitude toward work. Humans manage the work of creation, but don't own it. Resources should not be squandered away or be destroyed. Resources, gifts, and abilities should be used in the best ways possible—for our fellow human beings and for future generations. This long-range planning for “managerial service” was a concern of Hauge's 200 years ago!

Long-range planning

God has given people a responsibility to take a hand in what has been created and all the goods each person has received. The right stewards manage nature's abundance with discretion and wisdom. Therefore a wise manager will also develop long-range planning and economic measures. Hauge touched on the temptation for increased consumption as opposed to long-range planning in a letter he addressed to *Trusted Christians: The Creator (. . .) gives abundance and again shortages, so shall we save and gather in good times (. . .) to help both ourselves and others.*

Hauge himself often made quick decisions, some were perhaps even rash. The most well-known example of this was the time Hauge, as a businessman in Bergen, bought a new ship in spite of much advice against it because of the boat's bad condition. This bad investment became a stinging setback and resulted in large losses. It is clear that he learned from this when he later wrote to his friends on the importance of long-range planning, and that decisions must be well thought out, preferably after advice from others.

People also have a responsibility to manage the work of creation from a long-range perspective. To manage the work of creation sets certain limitations. Hauge was, among other things, aware that unrestricted exploitation of natural resources could create an unbalance in nature. He said in one of his writings that people should *use the world, not misuse it.* Hauge saw the work of creation as God's gift to humanity, and it should be managed in a reasonable way; herein also lies a long-range managerial perspective. Hauge here was ahead of his time when it concerned ecological thinking and managing natural resources, with the thought that coming generations should also benefit from God's gifts in nature.

Hauge took note of the problems that could follow owning a lot of possessions and/or property. He didn't mean that there was something wrong in acquiring wealth and good living conditions. On the contrary he said that *wealth is good for those who use it well.* But wealth

should not be used for gluttony or one's own pleasure. There is often the temptation to acquire more for one's own consumption than what is really needed. Hauge himself was occupied with gaining material goods and urged his friends to do the same. In Hauge's time, business problems were not connected to stock quotations or interest fluctuations, but to trade blockades and lack of food, which led to general destitution in the land. In order to meet such conditions it was, in Hauge's view, completely necessary for a good steward to maintain a "service mission" and managerial thinking in all that he did. In several of Hauge's writings, he stressed that an individual has a duty to do good work in order to gain that which is necessary for one's life. A good steward takes this assignment seriously. To provide that which is needed for one's livelihood and use it in the best possible way is both natural and God's will. Hauge believed that God must come first, and he reminded his friends as well as himself that our toil and effort for livelihood must also be a Godly effort.

In the book *Reflections on Religious Society*, Hauge pointed out another side of management of one's own capital and goods. There he said that *each should with his assets and gifts help factories and workplaces to start up and operate so the unemployed can get work*. The quote must be understood as a strong appeal to manage resources as good stewards by building and operating factories and businesses. The reason is, to begin with, to obtain work for people. Hauge thought that reasonable investments could give a good return. As a consequence of Hauge's strong emphasis on using abilities and capital in a good way, he requested that some young, capable farmers' sons to sell their farms, move out of the countryside, and establish themselves in town. He saw that a number of these young people had special abilities and opportunities to start enterprises which could develop into strong businesses, which in addition could become important Haugean spiritual centers. To follow such a request was not without problems at the time, since there was little mobility in the society.

Equality

God doesn't see persons, but those who do right and are righteous. (*Hans Nielsen Hauge*)

In Norway in the 1800s there existed a clearly defined gender role pattern, and in addition there was great social inequality. The principle on human equality was, for Hauge, an important starting point on how an individual should be treated. In the above quote, Hauge says something decidedly important on equality between persons. He believed that, through God, individuals have the same worth irrespective of class, position, age, or gender. The traditional gender role pattern of the 1800s stood in strong contrast to Hauge's understanding of equality between the sexes. Therefore he met much opposition, especially when it came to the use of women as preachers in the Haugean Society of Friends. As a well-to-do farmer on the Bredtvedt farm outside Oslo, Hauge married a cottier's girl. This was also noticed; because to marry "below" one's social status was at that time considered unusual and improper. He clashed with the established view that advantages and rights should follow certain groups in society or be gender specific. All have the same value. Therefore all should be respected such as they are, and all should have the same possibilities to develop their talents and skills. As a leader Hauge stressed placing the right person in the right place, while at the same time emphasizing that Haugean undertakings should have a place for people who could not function in the same manner as others—that is, the disadvantaged and disabled.

THE HAUGEAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

The increasing mobility among some of the women in Norway was reinforced by Hauge encouraging more of them to travel around the country as preachers. They traveled from place to place and spoke and sang at gatherings. In this way, women got greater possibilities to

use their abilities for creating work such as preaching, singing, and writing in addition to the more traditional housework in the homes. A good example of this was a woman named Berthe Canute Aarflot, an impressive and very versatile Haugean woman from Orsta. She was a great spiritual influence for many over all of Sunnfjord and Nordfjord. Her many hymns spread over the whole country, also in Sweden. The great writer Bjornson wrote in the Swedish newspaper *Aftenbladen* after her death in 1859:

Her deep, religious song is a treasure in every farmer's house throughout Trondheim and Bergen (. . .) it is also sung in the neighbor lands.

What was the reason that Hauge, right from the start, made use of young women to preach, not just in their home areas, but over large geographic areas in Norway? Hauge believed that both men and women had the right to preach God's word. He said that (. . .) *the gift of grace is poured upon many, both men and women, to proclaim God's word.*



Sara Oust.
Relief on a monument erected by Tynset municipality in
1971.

Hauge also asserted his view from experience. The gift of grace to preach has been given in great measure to women as well as men. His view was that women could fill important spiritual tasks in the work of God's kingdom. The many friends' societies needed leaders, persons who had a special spiritual leadership responsibility. In a letter which Hauge wrote in 1802, he gave the criteria for a good leader. Among other things, a leader *should have humility and love . . . whether they are young or old, rich or poor, man or woman*. The quote shows that neither age, position, nor gender should be hindrances to possessing spiritual leadership functions. In this letter, Hauge appointed over 30 spiritual leaders for friends' societies around the country, among these several women. These women met the call through Hauge's preaching. Many of them were inspired to travel around the country to preach through word and song. They generally began their preaching career in their 20s, and their travel routes could be long and laborious. When their traveling gradually decreased, they often settled down in their home area. Some of them became spiritual leaders or took part in other ways in Christian and diaconal work near their place of residence. In good Haugean tradition, they were hard working, had great practical insight, and functioned as mentors for others.

LEADERSHIP

We should deal patiently with our neighbor
and in all ways seek his betterment. (*Hans
Nielsen Hauge*)

Hans Nielsen Hauge stands out in Norwegian history as one of the most important leaders the country has had. He became the leader of a nation-wide Haugean society of friends. In this network, Hauge was the undisputed and natural leader. He stood forth as an initiative taker and the person who connected the network threads together. Hauge himself formulated little or nothing about his theoretical view of leadership. But by examining his many writings, and above all by

seeing how he himself practiced leadership, one finds an integrated ethic and leadership philosophy.

The introductory quote makes noticeable an important principle that was the foundation for his leadership. According to Hauge, an individual should get to improve his or her life, be given the opportunity to develop abilities and skills, and manage property for the best for him or herself and for the community. Hauge's leadership was influenced by initiative and the desire to work, combined with love of neighbor. As a courageous man who was clearly suited for leadership, Hauge became a model for many at that time. He held on to the vision for his work: to love God and his neighbor. Until his death, he was regarded as the undisputed leader by the Society of Friends.

On Being a Strategist

As a leader Hauge had an exceptional strategic sense. He had the ability to see where it was possible to start up business operations and make long-range plans. An example of this was when Hauge was traveling in Mo i Rana in 1803, long before there was mining in the area. During the visit he stated that *in time, here an ironworks could be constructed*. Ninety years later, mines were established in the rich copper beds in the area. If Hauge saw a waterfall, he would gladly recommend that his friends start up mills. When he saw there was a suitable waterfall in Solbergfossen outside Drammen, he suggested to friends that they begin a textile mill. They followed his advice, and the well known Solberg Mill operated all the way until 1990.

Hauge met young people with drive and good abilities. He would advise them to move from their homes to start up businesses in other places in the country. This included, for example, young families from Gudbrandsdalen, Osterdalen, and Nord-More, who moved to Malselvdalen and Bardudalen to establish themselves as farmers. Here the climate was good and there were available agricultural areas. By leading his friends in this way, Haugean societies of friends sprung

up around the whole country. He watched these small cells, which arose in different places, become independent units, but at the same time he connected them together in the Haugean network.

Because Hauge travelled as much as he did, he was able to connect people strategically. Book printer and tradesman Hans Thoresen Bakkerud contacted Hauge in 1809 in Christiania. His wife had died and he was losing his spirit. Bakkerud had several persons who depended upon him for employment, and he experienced serious challenges when it came to managing everything both in the home and in business. He considered selling both printing press and business. This Hauge strongly objected, as he was dependent on the printing press for the printing of his books. He advised Bakkerud to pray for a good wife and also start looking for one. Bakkerud on the other hand replied that this would be difficult, as only an extraordinary skilled person would do. But Hauge replied that he knew about a Christian woman who lived in Christiania who would be well suited for the tasks at hand. Her name was Lucine Nesterud. Hauge sent for her, but Lucine told Hauge that she was already engaged with a young man named Ole P. Moe. Hauge knew this man, whom he believed to be a good and God-fearing man. However, Hauge argued, Ole P. Moe was still very young, and had yet much to learn. In Hauge's opinion Ole P. Moe would have difficulties running a home.

Ole P. Moe was also sent for and he confirmed that Lucine and he were engaged. But Hauge was of the opinion that they could wait. The way he saw it, Bakkerud needed a good wife as soon as possible, and he added that the young ones could serve the haugian community of friends well by accepting his suggestion. Lucine and Ole P. Moe accepted, although heavy-hearted. Hauge on the other hand wrote to one of his friends, a merchant in Trondheim, and asked him to find a job for Ole P. Moe. He told Ole P. Moe that he would learn a lot here, and that God would bless his hands work, and provide him with a suitable wife.

Lucine and Bakkerud got married in 1809. Five years later Bakkerud died. Hauge wrote to Ole P. Moe and asked him if he would like to come to Kristiansand and run the business with Lucine. Moe

immediately left Trondheim, and married Lucine. Together they ran a printing house, a newspaper, and a merchandise business with great success.

When Hauge began to earn money as a businessman in Bergen, he started a large scale publishing house for his own books and pamphlets, and organized a distinctive distribution network over the whole country in order to distribute his writings. This was done by people going from place to place selling them for a reasonable price. It is said that one of the book sellers, Ole Rorsveen, became stoop-shouldered after carrying the books for many years around southern Norway. Through his books and letters, it seemed to many that Hauge was near, even though he was far away. He was also an organizer who usually entrusted the daily business to others, and advised them to think long range and not be arrogant. With a glance towards the long term picture, Hauge inspired people to find new opportunities to make a living. This created optimism for the future in the Norwegian society.

On Being a Judge of Character

Hauge had a remarkable ability to find the right person for the right place, whether it concerned preaching, business leaders, tradesmen, or people with other functions in the Haugean network. This “people knowledge” he acquired through the many conversations he had with people he met. He always took his time when meeting with people, and he talked mostly about everyday things, generally asking questions that they answered and talked about. The spiritual conversation between Hauge and the individual ended naturally. In this way he learned much about the individual’s personality and which different tasks he or she could handle. When Hauge gave people advice, most listened and followed it. Here is one example:

In 1804 Hauge bought Svanøey Goods in Sunnfjord for 12,000 riksdollars. This was a lot of money. According to the purchase contract, a friend of Hauge’s from Numedal, Simon Knudsen Storemoen, was to manage it. Storemoen, however, could not leave

Numedal because he was a soldier. Hauge then approached a young farmer from Hallingdal, Ole Torjussen Helling, and asked him to take over the goods. Ole had been converted to God after hearing Hauge preach, and he himself began to travel around as a preacher in upper Hallingdal. Ole followed Hauge's advice, sold his farm in Al to his brother and moved to Sunnmore. There he took the name Ole Torjussen Svanoe. He soon proved himself to be the right man for the right job, and the place became a model farm with a mill, a ship building factory, and a salt cookery. Svanoey became a gathering place and home for the Haugean friends. The unemployed could go to Svanoey for support. With great capability and drive, Ole won the public's respect and trust. He was a representative at Eidsvoll in 1814, and sat as a Parliament representative until 1842.

Hauge's closeness to people and business helped him to build up trust and a natural authority. He was acquainted with the work processes of businesses and could therefore easily see which work tasks were appropriate. For Hauge it was especially important to stimulate young people to work in the businesses Haugeans managed around the country. That the workers had something useful to do and at the same time joined a fellowship where they were taken by the hand spiritually and practically, greatly touched Hauge's heart.

On Gaining Respect

In several of Hauge's writings, he discussed the danger of being arrogant, and he also indicated that he himself could be tempted to arrogance. So when he expressed to his friends that he placed arrogance as one of the worst of all vices, he thought just as much of himself. Hauge saw arrogance as a bad quality that is difficult to get away from. He said right out that *arrogance is the worst vice that we have*. With this assertion, Hauge dealt with the question of self-pride. Hauge set respect and honor up as the opposite of arrogance, and appealed to the friends both to show respect and live such that they themselves attain respect, because this promoted the good and positive in society. He discussed showing respect in this way: *Respect is*

important to those who are faithful and virtuous, because we show respect for their words and works. When it concerns arrogance, he said there are two kinds. One is the obvious, see-through kind. Such people, said Hauge, *set themselves above others.* Hauge characterized these people as haughty and dumb. But it is the second form of arrogance that is more difficult to see through. This is false, because the concerned will use their meekness and “humility” to win favor and glory.

Hauge admonished his friends to restrain from such vices. He urged them to be honorable, truthful, and show respect in their association with people. As an antidote against being arrogant, Hauge pointed out a line of virtues which instead promote the good in relations between people. In one of the first letters he wrote from the Bakkehaugen farm in 1811, he formulated a kind of “vices and virtues catalogue.” Among the vices one should be careful of are: *selfishness, stinginess, pride, vanity, an easy life, laziness, and excessiveness.* Instead, one should attach great importance to: *simplicity, thrift, meagerness, humility, being loving, and charity.* He placed great emphasis on these virtues in order to not become arrogant and selfish, and full of pride. But those who encompassed the above-mentioned virtues would be honored and respected by his co-workers.

On Cooperation

Hauge thought that one who has a leadership position must be aware of his responsibility. The business enterprise must be developed and operated in harmony. The interaction between leader and employee in a business carries an assumption that the result will be good. Hauge believed that if this two-sided dependent relationship doesn't function, everyone loses. To illustrate how strong this dependent relationship is, he compared it to the organs of the body. In spite of their differences, the body functions as a whole.

Still, he lays a decisive responsibility on the leader. If the leader doesn't have the ability and will for cooperation and harmony, he can't manage with trust from the employees. If a leader uses his

authority for his own benefit, or appears obstinate and bossy, the relationship could be so filled with conflict that the only way out is for the leader to go. Hauge mentioned such a situation and expressed it thus: *One person needs the other as the limbs do, so nothing should be the other's corrupter, but helper.*

Hauge saw that contact over country boundaries was necessary for international long-range progress and development. He asserted that different lands must learn from each other across cultural and other differences. Hauge's own travel was limited to Denmark and Sweden. He visited Denmark several times, mostly Copenhagen. The city had many publishing houses and several of them published large numbers of his books and pamphlets. On a trip to Denmark, he observed how a mill functioned effectively. He took practical tips such as these home to Norway, and later, when he went to Eiker, he gave a lot of useful advice and instruction on how the mill could be improved so that the quality of paper was better. His advice was followed, and the result was that the paper quality at Eiker was long one of the best in the country.

When in Denmark, Hauge wandered through the countryside, held meetings, and spoke with farmers. He kept his eyes peeled and quickly realized that Norwegians and Danes had something to learn from each other. While Hauge was in Jylland in 1804, a few months before he was arrested, he wrote an article for a Kristiansand paper. Here, he approached the provincial thinking which in large measure influenced that time, where cooperation over national boundaries was nearly absent. Hauge pointed out that contact between countries was necessary and right, not only to import items that a country may lack, but also to further develop production and equipment in an effort to improve industry.

On Being an Instructor and Guide

In order to visit the friends' societies and their many businesses, Hauge often walked. By doing this, he came in close contact with people, and met the ordinary men and women face to face. But for

more effective communication with friends all over the country, Hauge wrote many letters, where he instructed the recipients in both spiritual and practical matters. Some of the letters gave the impression of a real caring for the spiritual life of the friends, while in other letters, he stood forth as the practical guide who took initiative on different kinds of trade and industry. He also pointed out the importance of industrial improvement efforts for several of the Haugean businesses.

The Haugeans' businesses were many and varied. On his travels through the country, he visited the workplaces and enjoyed seeing how they functioned. If he noticed something that could be improved, he instructed the workers on how the improvement could be done. Here is an example of how he helped to order supplies:

We have now intended to build a salt cellar with storeroom, which is the most necessary other than a house to live in and a fishing wharf. You must now send here something more from Bergen for a cheap price, such as grain and flour, and yes many oats at a reasonable price. In addition, rope, flax and fishline, iron, steel, hemp, and cloth. From Trondheim, send four tons of tar and three tons of plaster. Perhaps I could get 12 dollars extra on the sale (. . .) Blue quartz—it has been spoken of many times that we should have this sent from Kristiania.
(*Hans Nielsen Hauge*)

Hauge's form of instruction revealed his great insight and knowledge of the different undertakings in the Haugean network. Yet, he knew his own limits, and also that he could make mistakes. This was mentioned above when he impulsively bought the ship in Bergen.

In his many conversations with people as he traveled the country, Hauge noticed that there was a great need for better equipment and methods of work. It is difficult to document directly whether he

invented new equipment and work methods himself. But some of the source material, both written and oral, suggests that he was seen as an inventor. There is found, for example, an oral tradition from Telemark that said Hauge invented a new type of plow which did well on steep terrain.

It was also well known that Hauge was interested in people learning how to weave, both for their own use and for bringing in income. It was even rumored that he invented a sock-weaving machine that *costs little and is of great use*.

As previously mentioned, Hauge wanted to improve work methods. He was also interested in doing things faster. In a letter he wrote during his time in prison, he told how he kept busy with, among other things, handwork.

I, who was never one for wasted time, now took on my childhood work—knitting gloves. This drove me further, that I even made the finest silk and cotton gloves, even the most elegant women in town—they bought these from me. I had seen these gloves one time, when I was 12 years old; but I found a way to make them on my own—a way faster and better.
(*Hans Nielsen Hauge*)

Hauge developed a new way of knitting, a technique that clearly was faster and gave a better result. What the new way of knitting was, we don't know. But to Hauge, it was a great improvement over the old way.

These three examples—the plow, the weaving machine, and the knitting method—give us clear indications that Hauge, in addition to everything else, could also be characterized as an inventor and new thinker.

In much of what he undertook, Hauge showed that he had an unusually large ability to be both a “regular person” and a leader. His capacity for work led to his getting much done in a short time. His knowledge of people resulted in a connection with young and capable colleagues. He delegated responsibility to them, and at the same time he practiced a strong and extraordinary leadership. He focused on the individual and emphasized that we *should deal patiently with our neighbor and in all ways see his betterment*. An individual should get to improve his or her life, have the opportunity to develop abilities and talent, and experience being part of a community. That was the most important. On the other side, he set demands on his co-workers about good work efforts and practicality in the management of assets for the best of oneself and society. He stressed that the Haugean Society of Friends should always demonstrate a mindset for equality. Show respect and caring, he said, and don’t lay greater burdens on others than they can bear. If one presumes to speak about Hauge’s leadership philosophy, all of the above lay behind it.

OPPOSITION AND PRISON

Hans Nielsen Hauge was met with great resistance from the very beginning. The clergy, especially, were fearful that they would lose their authority and support from the Norwegian people. There was also unrest among the business owners, who felt that their privileges were threatened by Haugean farmers who re-established themselves in the cities. Public officials such as chief magistrates, tax collectors, and administrative officers worried that Hauge’s great movement would undermine their authority.

Thus, there was an extensive effort to stop Hauge’s evangelizing. A layman should not preach God’s Word. Only priests should do that. Some individuals also questioned his economic undertakings. Evil tongues claimed that he had a so-called “holy fund” of capital from his friends around the country which he could utilize at his convenience, an assertion that was not correct.

In 1804, Hauge was at the height of his career as a spiritual leader and as coordinator of an extensive industry and trade network that covered almost all of the country. Around this time, Hauge himself noticed that the authorities intensified their efforts to have him arrested. Bishops demanded descriptions on how Hauge and his friends conducted themselves in both spiritual and commercial undertakings. When it concerned their Christian ways of living and work efforts, there were “words of praise” by saying nothing at all. But their spiritual work and the organization of friends over the whole country was strongly criticized.

Claims that they preached heresy and drove many people on the wrong path came out again in the many written accusations from clergymen. Sheriff's officials got orders to arrest Hauge, who noticed there was something going on when he left Bergen for the last time in July 1804 with one of his ships to sail south along the coast to Kristiansand. From there, Hauge went to Denmark where he walked around and preached in many places before he reached Copenhagen. On the way home, he wandered through Sweden to Norway.

Hauge visited his brother for the last time at the Eiker Paper Mill. He stayed at the paper mill for some days, and worked and gave advice on how to improve the business. Suddenly one day sheriff Jens Gram was on the way to the mill. Many knew what was about to happen, and they begged Hauge to go into hiding, but he would not do that. He went out to the sheriff, who told Hauge that he had orders to arrest him. On the evening of October 24, 1804, Hauge sat under arrest in the old prison in Hokksund, and was eventually placed in irons. This arrest put a brutal stop to Hauge's eight-year career as lay preacher and leader.

Thus began the prison period, which lasted nearly 10 years before there was a final judgment. According to this judgment, Hauge had to pay a fine of 1000 dollars because he had preached God's Word and because he had offended the clergy. The long time spent in prison destroyed Hauge's health. As a free man, he no longer traveled

around the country. Contact with his friends consisted of frequent letter writing, and the publication of books and pamphlets. Hauge bought the farm Bredtvedt outside Oslo, which became a gathering center for Haugeans from around the country. To Bredtvedt also came priests, bishops, and other persons of authority to speak with Hauge. He had at last become well known by society, but it had cost him dearly both health-wise and economically.

When Hauge became a free man in 1814, he married Andrea Nyhus. She died just after their first son, Andreas, was born in 1815. In 1817 Hauge married again with Ingeborg Marie Olsdatter. They got three children together, but all of them died in early age when they lived in the farm Bredtvedt outside Christiania.

29 March 1924 Hans Nielsen Hauge died in his home after being sick over a long time. His life had been full of both grief and gladness. He left much unfinished business. If he had gotten to live his life in peace and in economic independence, there are many more undertakings he could have set in motion. But through all his hard trials, he still kept his faith in the God who, on that April day out in the field, had called him to service. Hauge was buried at Old Aker Church in Oslo. On the gravestone is the following inscription:

Until his final breath he held fast to that faith, that hope, and that love which he had sought to spread and strengthen through word and deed, through writings and Christian conduct. He lived in the Lord; he died in the Lord. Through Jesus' grace he receives salvation.

A ROLE MODEL OF CURRENT INTEREST

Social Entrepreneurship

Our global society faces a great range of challenges. After more than 50 years with “development efforts” the gap between the economically rich and poor has not been closed, and the environment that we all depend upon for our well-being is deteriorating. There is a general agreement that something needs to be done. In praxis, however, the challenges of poverty and inequality have turned out to be difficult to deal with. Still, development agencies do not lack theories on what can bring about positive development. There might be much to learn from such theories, but in this chapter it is not a theory we want to present. Instead we present the historical person Hans Nielsen Hauge as a role model and a source of inspiration to make a difference in our own time. In the following we will look at the life of Hans Nielsen Hauge in light of a phenomenon of current interest and attention; social entrepreneurship.

Before we move on to the life of Hauge as a social entrepreneur, we will briefly define the concept of social entrepreneurship. The entrepreneur is a person who “undertakes to supply a good or service to the market for profit. The entrepreneur will usually invest capital in the business and take on the risks associated with the investment” (Oxford Dictionary of Business and Management). The entrepreneur as a personality is innovative and adaptive, and has had a great impact on modern economy. Although the main objective of entrepreneurship is economic income, many of the activities started by entrepreneurs have, as a side effect, provided jobs and income opportunities for others, or brought about services that were useful in the society. Within social entrepreneurship the aim to solve a social challenge is made clear and purposeful. Social entrepreneurship is to find solutions to defined challenges and problems in an innovative and sustainable way. Though the social entrepreneur will use business

methods, the primary goal is not mere profit, but to create social value¹.

Hans Nielsen Hauge as a social entrepreneur

Hans Nielsen Hauge had a socio-ethical perspective for his work. He had seen the social challenges of his time, and his analysis of his contemporary time is in many aspects dismal reading. He describes how a few rich lived in abundance with no heed for the many struggling to get enough just to maintain a living. The majority of his contemporaries lived in economic poverty, facing difficulties just securing the most necessary needs in life. For many, income opportunities were hard to find. Alcoholism was widespread, causing many to spend their scarce resources on alcohol. But as described in the above chapters, Hauge was not paralyzed by the amount of challenges. As a response to the situation, Hauge stood forth with a powerful message underpinning what he called “the good purpose”. He was determined to make an effort to bring about changes for the better. This was an underlying motivation for his work.

The struggle between good and evil has followed mankind through all times. Hauge was aware that he and his friends had to enter this struggle from a positive starting point. In one of his books he claims that “the good” needs to be on the offensive if evil shall be defeated. He says that “when we go forth in the Good, then Evil lose power”. Under this parole Hauge and his friends went forth in the Norwegian society. He wanted them to be like sourdough, impacting their society both by spirit and hand. And they succeeded. According to a yearly report from 1810 written by Herman Wedel Jarlsberg, county governor in Buskerud, the haugians were well spoken of in their time. Hauge encouraged his friends to cooperate in order to establish enterprises for the purpose of securing a livelihood for themselves and others in their communities. Simultaneously he reminded them

¹ In this context *Social Value* is loosely defined as: *‘the additional benefit to the community from a commissioning/procurement process over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes’* (Social Enterprise UK, 2012).

not to be self-centred and individualistic. He encouraged them to make their economic activities have a positive influence on the society. Property, capital, talents and capacity for work should be managed to cause a positive spin-off both in the Haugian Society of Friends and in the society at large. In all their doings Hauge encouraged his friends to have “their neighbour” in focus.

As is described in previous chapters, Hauge had an outstanding talent for spotting business opportunities. He had the qualities of an entrepreneur, but his aim was clearly more than economic gain. As the typical social entrepreneur he would use business methods, while the primary goal was social value.

One example on a Haugian enterprise showing social entrepreneurship is Eiker Paper Mill, an inclusive workplace providing income opportunities to people who would otherwise be left out of ordinary work life. In 1806 there was 50 persons' employed at the mill: 21 women, 17 men and 12 juveniles (some of them below 17). In addition to these there was a man “of high age”, some disabled persons and some referred to as mentally impaired. At that time, these people would have struggled to get other sources of income, and Eiker Paper Mill must have given them a greater sense of economic and social security.

The books and tracts that Hauge wrote and distributed through sale were also more than just a business opportunity. Hauge had a message to the Norwegian people, and he was of the understanding that his message could improve the life of persons and their communities. By distributing the books and tracts, he also wanted to give people an opportunity to practice reading, and be able to study and find information themselves. It was a business, but the business was started with the intention of creating social value.

Another example is that Hauge initiated weaving enterprises with the clear purpose of giving people, especially women, an income opportunity. He had discovered that there was a market for weaved products, and wanted to use this opportunity to fight poverty. His intentions are made clear to us in one of his letters: “We will make

considerable useful (handicraft) with weaving etc. : So that the poor can get something to live by ... instead of begging”.

It is tempting to draw a parallel to the well-known slogan of the Greyston Bakery, a modern enterprise built on social entrepreneurship: “we don’t hire people to make brownies; we make brownies in order to hire people”. This way of thinking also inspired Hauge and his friends to seek opportunities and initiate businesses already in the late 18th century. The result of many hands working side by side for “the good purpose” turned out to have a tremendous effect far beyond the individual level.

Social entrepreneurship and sustainable development: From Hauge to modern society

Entrepreneurship has brought about changes in human societies throughout history. By their capability of taking on risks and running businesses, they have definitely contributed to enhance economic growth personally, and in larger communities. But it has become clear that a narrow focus on economic growth through “business as usual” can have severe negative side effects. The Danish philosopher and theologian, Løgstrup (1905-1981), has said that it is the side effects that change the world. And often the side effects can really make things difficult for us. When it comes to economic growth this has indeed proven to be right.

One point here is that economic growth often fails to benefit the neediest, and a side effect has in many connections widened the gap between the economically poor and the economically rich. Statistics show that a country with high Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is not automatically a “better society” than a country with lower GDP. In addition to GDP, another factor of relevance is economic equality. If there is a high level of economic inequality in a society, this seems to increase social problems like e.g. imprisonment, illiteracy, homicides,

infant mortality and mental illness (incl. drug/alcohol addiction)². Economic growth will be important in economically poor countries, but it is not enough. Along with economic growth there is also a need to avoid the development of huge income gaps. Focusing on giving the poor an opportunity to make a living, Hauge as a social entrepreneur contributed to shrink the gap between the few very rich and the many poor in the Norwegian society. Modern studies show us that this was, and still is, an important part of making development benefit the society at large.

There are also environmentally side effects from development and economic growth – both locally and globally. For example, people started to use organic fuel to make money and create great advantages to the human society. It has for example provided us with the possibility to travel over long distances by car and plain, provided us with indoor heating, and made possible different industrial processes. But the side effect was discharging of CO₂, and can in the long run contribute to make the planet unsuitable for human life. The logging of rainforest has become a great income for logging companies, and has contributed with timber and made room for agricultural production. But the side effects can be loss of fertile soil, landslides, loss of biodiversity and ecosystem balance, and climate change. According to World Health Organization (WHO), environmental degradation is an important contribution to poor health all over the world. For example, it causes ca. 25 % of the preventable diseases globally, and on top of the list we find acute respiratory infection and diarrhoea. Children are especially vulnerable. In addition to this, environmental degradation has in the long run a negative effect on the economy, and it is the poorest who are hit hardest. All of these side effects, and many more, are serious challenges to modern society.

To avoid serious environmental degradation a long-term perspective is needed. Hauge managed to think ahead, and did not fall for the

² See e.g. Kate Pickett & Richard Wilkinson (2011): *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*.

temptation of securing only his own short sighted desires. An example of this is that Hauge criticized those who cut down forest and impoverished the soil, thinking only about themselves, failing to take heed of the future generations. Here, Hauge's thoughts are highly relevant to our own challenges. All around the world, policy makers and people in general are talking about sustainable development. According to the so called Brundtland Report from 1987, sustainable development is: "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." In order to achieve this, need for economic growth should be balanced with social and environmental needs. If the welfare of future generations is going to be secured, the environmental and social concern is not an option for the especially interested, but a necessity. Future generations will, like those of us living now, need a healthy environment with social well-being in order to live a good life.

Despite that fact that mere economic growth does not automatically correlate with a "better society", the major focus of development efforts has in reality been, and often still is, the GDP, namely the mere economic aspects. The social entrepreneur, with his/her broader focus on public utility, can have an important role to play in sustainable development.

The social entrepreneur's innovatory, targeted and flexible approach to find business opportunities seems to have a unique potential to meet some of the social and environmental challenges which has proven difficult to solve through the ordinary market, governments or development agencies. The social entrepreneur, with a broader focus on contributing to solving a social problem, can find ways of running businesses that manage to benefit groups that would otherwise be left aside.

Hauge's life shows us that a focus on creating a social value through entrepreneurship could indeed make a difference in his own time. But his example is more than a story from "the old days", it has current interest for people today.

EPILOG

Through his preaching, Hauge laid the foundation for a renewed spiritual freedom for the people. Gradually, this spiritual freedom also resulted in social freedom for individual groups within the population. People who formerly were dependent on merchants and other persons of authority now got the freedom to start businesses. These independent initiatives resulted in more persons beginning to earn money in order for them to be able to support themselves and their families. Out of this grew a new “lower middle class” in the wake of Hans Nielsen Hauge’s work.

Parliament representative Viggo Ullmann (1848-1910) reflected on the reason for this structural change, and said, A completely new spirit, a previously unknown power and energy, awakened in Norway. The Hauge movement represented something completely new. It was far-reaching: it enlarged the individual’s perspective from the local to the national in a whole different way than before. For the first time in Norwegian history, the “commoners” experienced a class “border-crossing” that helped to lay the foundation for extensive commerce both spiritually and practically (business-like). This national unity became an important factor in the dawning of a national consciousness which formed the foundation for Norwegian independence and democracy.

For Hauge, it was important that the Haugean Society of Friends be influenced by the feeling of fellowship and caring, not by egotism and individualistic attitudes. In this way they developed strong solidarity, they influenced their environment in a positive way, and they gradually became a part of a nationwide network. Hauge spent most of his time being near his co-workers and showing them caring in both their spiritual fellowship and in their work relationships in their different jobs. Thus, he became the point of contact—the “glue”—that held the Society of Friends together. The Friends experienced fellowship and worked toward a common goal. Here lies an important element of Hauge’s leadership philosophy. In his role as

leader, Hauge considered himself a servant, and in this context he said that his calling was to serve God and his fellow man. He believed that a mind of service and kindness should permeate our attitude toward our neighbor. This should also concern a person's work situation.

Hauge wanted to work for an attitude change in society and in work life based on Christian thinking; that is, love of our neighbor. With "spirit and hand (practicality)" in union, he would create a sort of counter-culture, a reorganization of society where regard for one's fellow human beings was superior to regard for one's own power and profit.

The man who changed Norway and gave many people a new start both spiritually and socially, left a legacy that is needed in our hectic, fast-paced, modern age. Hauge's ethical thinking is timeless, and at the same time it is bold and challenging. Even though he lived 200 years ago, his life and ethics are relevant for today, and can be sources of inspiration for us in our private lives, our businesses, and our society.