



1. For the rain it raineth every day

William Shakespeare wrote this sentence and with it he expressed a deep wisdom. The rain can only see the world as rain. When it is not raining, there is no rain to see it. When rain sees the world, it is always raining. Because the rain is rain, it sees the world as rain.

It is the same with human beings. I see the world the way I see it because I am a human being. If I would have been a fly or a cow, I would have seen an entirely different world. Not only that. I am an unique and particular human being, and the world I see is determined by the unique and particular human being that I am.

My world reflects what I am. I cannot imagine my death because in death I am no longer the unique and particular human being that can witness it. My unique and particular human state emerges at birth and ends at death. That does not mean that there is nothing after death, but it is not the human being of the stage between birth and death. There are more indications that there is a stage beyond death than there are that deny it.

The quiet room in which I am writing could be a traffic jam in another dimension. With the parameters of my birth/death stage I cannot

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witness that other dimension. It makes no sense to speculate about it, but it is beneficial to realise that my world is determined by the parameters of my birth/death stage. In order to remain with William Shakespeare, I would say that 'to be or 'not to be' is not the question. 'To be' or 'not to be' are just variations in observation within the parameters of the birth/death stage. Therefore, what really

matters is not 'being' or 'not-being', but 'non-being'. Such 'non-being' is not restricted to the birth/death stage and its parameters. It is therefore unimaginable; outside our frame of reference. We all know the famous yin/yang symbol of intertwining drops. Yin and yang refer to the birth/death stage. The circle within which yin and yang are happening, the Tai Chi, is what really matters. Yin and yang are determined by variations of 'to be' or 'not to be'. Tai Chi stands for the 'non-being' as far as non-being could 'be'.

Indeed, the very essence of living is outside the limitations of our understanding. Nevertheless, it is very real and people have been referring to it throughout the human evolution. They have been calling it God, gods, spirits, father, Dao or One. All these different images are not all the same. They are sometimes very different. They are however all trying to refer to the same. There is something real, which as a vague impression is more real than all the reality around us. I have no idea what it is, I cannot know it, but it is essential to human living.

In order to link daily living to this essential reality people have been creating stories around it such as mythologies, philosophies, cosmologies and religions. They all are efforts to establish a link between this unimaginable reality and our daily life with its circumstances,

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situations and phenomena. As religions however, they often started to represent more than that as they became organisations of social management.

Because of this, something happened in the Western evolution of thinking: we liberated ourselves from the restrictions of religion. "We killed God", as Nietzsche put it. We got rid of the irrational god-image of Western Christianity, as it was presented by the political power of a church. However, because of the symbiosis between the god-image and the church, liberating oneself from the church and its god-image implied that what the god-image represented got lost with it. With the bathwater we threw away the baby. By killing the god-image we killed the Ideal.

What the sages have been expressing is that the world is not fixed. It is not something solid. It changes with us. It is not a kind of reality outside ourselves. We are intimately interconnected with the world. That interconnectedness has the quality of an illusion, it is illusory. This means that you can manage the world as

you can manage an illusion. You can change ideas, opinions and beliefs and with it the world around you changes.

Sages throughout the ages have always been stressing that the world is an illusion. We have generally misunderstood that and considered it as a saying that “it is only an illusion, and therefore not important.” The world was, therefore, seen as something evil; something you have to isolate yourself from; a world full of devils that try to seduce you. This is certainly not a useful interpretation.

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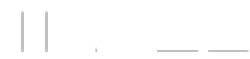
We may wonder about the state of the world, but we should remember the rain. The world is a reflection as it is, not as we would like it to be. The chaos, crisis, inequality, destruction and violence are just symptoms. They reflect what we are as humanity. Indeed, for rain it raineth every day.

Take, for instance, the climate crisis. We can consider, as we usually do, that we ‘did something’ to the world. In order to solve that, we are going to take measures that may go wrong or may not go wrong, will be respected or will not be respected. We can also take a different approach; an approach that in the long run is much more effective because it is closer to what we are as human beings. As bodies we are like moving particles of the crust of the earth. As human beings we have a self-consciousness and with it we have treated ourselves and the world deplorably. Now, we as humanity, and the world as our reflection, are suffering. The moment we collectively realise that we are the world and we start to treat ourselves better, our reflection as world changes with it.

Meaning is very central to human living. People need meaning in order to feel secure or in order to explain occurrences. In the past, meaning was found in religions. Nowadays, a conclusive meaning is found in what is considered to be scientific. The meaning of religion is often attributed to a ‘divine will’, which subsequently determines the attitude with regard to what is happening. Such a ‘divine will’ can also be morphed into ‘faith’ or ‘cosmos’. What matters is that this kind of meaning is imposed from something definite that appears to come from ‘outside’. There is nothing wrong with such a meaning, however, in order to find unconditional Well-Being, a meaning should

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not be based on something definite, but should be based on an open investigation, using the dimensions of experience that human beings are endowed with. This applies also to the spiritual endeavour. This endeavour is not rooted in a belief system that is adopted, but in an ongoing search for meaning.

The meaning I refer to in the spiritual endeavour should not be confused with a meaning that provides satisfaction. Psychologically, a satisfactory meaning serves as a kind of conclusion, giving rise to a superficial level of a temporary 'feeling good.' This superficial wellbeing arises when one, consciously or unconsciously, gives a satisfactory meaning to an occurrence. For example: "I feel good because I have been running for 10 kilometres today", or "I am satisfied because I studied for my exam today", or "I can keep up at my job, because ultimately, I am free in the weekend", or "I have lost five kilos, my goal has been achieved", or "I understand that she dies because she was already sick for three years." In these examples, rationally one is able to connect a meaning to an occurrence and therefore it provides a base. It is the nature of such conclusions that they are temporary and subject to doubt, which ignites new investigation. Although this is part of normal living and inherent in the rational process, there is a kind of meaning that supersedes this temporary meaning: a meaning which is permanent and an ongoing source for Well-Being. This Well-Being is of a different nature which you can only experience when it happens to you. Later in the book this will be explained by distinguishing Awareness from Experience.

When a meaning turns into a fixed Ideal, which is a closure of perspective, the Ideal becomes a belief structure based on definition

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or dogma. The Ideal remains open when it is treated as a continuous reference point for finding meaning of occurrences in daily life. Every new generation has to discover its Ideal. When the Ideal has been found in Awareness, it guides the ideals of the new generation and prevents it from running astray in trains of thought that are destructive. The problem of the present world is that ideals are not rooted in the realisation of Awareness, given the great disharmony, crises, wars and the dehumanising tendencies at the present moment.

Siweb will demonstrate that very easily we are biased in our search for meaning and we draw conclusions on the basis of shaky opinions and ideas. Ascribing a meaning to a certain event, just because it is the opinion of the majority, invites

disaster. In order to have a direction in the management of meaning you need an Ideal as a measuring stick. It is the tragedy of the West that the Ideal is lost. People wonder about the meaning of life. The more materialistic we get, the more we need therapists, and the more gullible we become for anything that provides meaning as a surrogate.

You cannot fully understand what you are as a human being with its open and hidden tendencies, if you ignore a kind of essence that keeps you together as a 'you'. It is the 'you' that you do not lose when your body sleeps. You are not less 'you' when the mind is off and you are unconscious. You are still 'you' when you walk in a wondrous world of induced hallucination. There is something quite natural that keeps you together. It is what makes the rain seeing the rainy world and it is what makes you seeing the world the way you see it.

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Because of the Western history with its church religion, everything that has to do with what is other than the material world is seen as something special, as something different from ordinary life. People call it 'religious' or 'spiritual', something you are either interested in or not; something that you occupy yourself with one day of the week, a few minutes a day, or during a meditation course once a week. It is a mistake to see it as separate; we are what we are because of that other than ordinary.

Our world is an unfortunate consequence of the schism between our essential nature and our everyday nature. They cannot be separated.

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