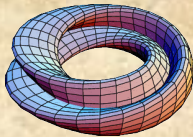


## Omnia Amsterdam



"Who are you" is about you and me and everything around us. Are you and I connected or are we separated? How are we connected? What makes you to the person who you are and who is involved in your creation? Who are you before your birth and who will you be after your death? Do you exist without an universe? What relationship do you have with the universe? How are you aware of yourself? And how are others aware of you?

This search will be a way home. Our journey leads from the beginning of time until now. At the end, we will look back. We will see that everything is finished in one sigh.

Man Leben, Carla Drift and Narrator started the Odyssey to "Who are you". This biography "One way" gives a view on the life of Narrator until now.



# Narrator Nārāyana – One way

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*Εἰς τὴν Πόλιν to the daily world*

*A biography*

Man Leben

Narrator Nārāyana is a fictional person. No existing human has been model for him.

Man Leben (Levi Hermann) is a fictional person. No existing human has been model for him.

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*Instead of a home  
The moon and the starry sky  
As steadfast mate*

- adapted from a haiku by: Inoue Shirō

*This,  
That we are now  
Created the body, cell by cell,  
Like bees building a honeycomb.  
The human body and the universe  
Grow from This.*

- Rumi, *This we have now*



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# Introduction

As long as I exist, there have been story tellers in my life. At home, at school, in the synagogue, in the Church, in books, in the classics of antiquity, in the Tanakh – the Bible of Judaism – and in the Talmud, I have heard of the experiences of the great storytellers. Next to my mother, the most influential storytellers in my life are: Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ in the New Testament of the Christian Bible, Siddhartha Gautama as Buddha, Muhammad as the Prophet and Messenger of God in the Islamic faith, Vyasa as writer of the Mahābhārata – the story of India, Homer the poet and singer of the Iliad and the Odyssey, and Rumi or better Jalāl al-Dīn the poet of amongst others Masnavi.

Before I met Narrator in Istanbul, an extraordinary mathematician was the most wonderful storyteller in my life. With only a suitcase, he travelled from friend to friend for a few days home. Regularly he stayed several nights with me in Amsterdam. He recounted about the difference between finiteness and infinity, about prime numbers, sets and zero. As a welcome gift he always gave me some of his books on mathematics that he exchanged against a few technical books from my bookshelves. At our parting he always sincerely asked if I didn't mind that he had to leave now.

Narrator, I saw for the first time in the Süleyman mosque in Istanbul where he welcomed me with: "Here, Air and Earth are one". I replied: "This, that we are now", whereby he swirled with rustling clothes.



[1]



[1]

That morning I had arrived in Istanbul on invitation by Carla Drift to start our Odyssey to "Who are you – a survey into our existence". Carla Drift and I had met for the first time during a lecture on philosophy given by Prof. Dr. W. Luijpen at the Technical University in Delft. Hereafter our lives regularly crossed; we helped each other where necessary and we always enjoyed each other's company.

A few years ago, Carla began her nomadic existence in Europe with a caravan-tractor combination. On a clear icy cold night Carla saw a dark nearly frozen man in a sleeping bag by the side of the road. After she had saved him from an eternal dream, they travelled to Istanbul where she had scheduled to start our Odyssey.

The search for "Who are you" is about you and me and all that is in connection with us. Are you and I connected or are we separated? What makes you to the person who you are? Who are you before your birth and who will you be after your death? Do you exist without an universe? How are you aware of yourself? And how are others aware of you? The answer to all these questions is currently unknown, but nevertheless we raise these questions.

We have started looking for the way that made you to who you are. This quest – with 17 stages – will be a homecoming. The journey from Troy to home took Odysseus ten years. We will make our Odyssey quite longer: our trip runs from the beginning of time until now. At the end, we will look back on our journey. We will see that everything is finished in one sigh.

During the first part of this Odyssey, you and I have experienced the complete oneness at our first stage. Then we endured the first separation of Air and Earth – *if there is a only one hair width of difference, then Heaven and Earth are clearly separated* [1] – and all subsequent separations: we were completely disintegrated. After an



incredible long time we returned again in a human form. Then we visited stage three. Here we experienced how people try to overcome doubts and separation by placing "people, objects, offerings and words in the middle" between themselves and the uncertainty. During the preparation for the continuation of our Odyssey, an intermezzo followed. The report of the first part of our Odyssey is available on the website of the publisher.

On the second part of our Odyssey we will meet the following five common realities at separate stages:

- o Facts and logic
- o Intensities and associations
- o Void
- o Change
- o Interconnectedness

In this second part we will enter everyday life.

No existing man has been model for one of the main characters. Their names may be Allman and Everyman. Now it is the time to give you and me a fictitious name and place in our society. My name is Man Leben, your name is Carla Drift and the name of your tale teller is Narrator.

In the biography of "Carla Drift – An Outlier", a short description is given of Carla's course of life to date. The biographies of Narrator and Man Leben will be published before we report on our experiences in the five common realities.

On the third part of our Odyssey, we plan to visit the seven other realities:

- o Ishvara
- o Et incarnatus est
- o Show me a small truth
- o No time, no change
- o Thou art that
- o And death has no dominion here
- o Here and now

The last stage on our quest will be:

- o Zero – Not one, not two

At the last stage, we hope to be back home.

[1] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%BCleymaniye\\_Mosque](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%BCleymaniye_Mosque)

[2] See also: Wick, Gerry Shishin, *The Book of Equanimity – Illuminating Classic Zen Koans*. Somerville MA: Wisdom Publications, 2005, p. 54.



# My origin

3 September 2012

Unimaginably long ago I arose from the sound of falling rain in the blowing wind, and by the clattering of tumbling pebbles. With the rain the rhythm was created, by the wind my voice arose and with the tumbling pebbles the applause started. Stories emerged from the rhythm and the wind. Esteem started by the applause with the urge to seek the attention again and again.

My entire life I am telling stories about life and death, about wars, greed, courage and loyalty, about love, revenge, honour, glory and wrath, icy wrath that brought countless horrors.

Since I was saved by Carla Drift from a dream in which I almost slipped into another world, I am telling stories on the interfaces between philosophy, literature and religion. Thus, I hope to contribute to a better world, peace and happiness for everyone and everything. This is the summary my biography.

In this summary my first remembrance is missing in which I heard my father singing in a language from the country he had left to live in Africa. This song sounded so familiar as if I already knew it from the beginning of time. My father had told me that this chant is called the Īśāvāsya [1] Upaniṣad or the Isha Upanishad [2] in his country of origin. When I was four years old, my father taught me the text while I sat beside him [3].

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते।  
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते॥  
ॐ शांतिः शांतिः शांतिः॥

Ôm, Purnamadah Purnamidam Purnat Purnamudachyate;  
Purnasya Purnamadaya Purnameva Vashishyate.

Ôm shanti, shanti, shanti

Ôm, that is overall. This is overall. Overall comes from overall.

Take overall from overall and thus remains overall.

Ôm peace, peace, peace.

The chant of the Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad can be listened via an annex to this post on the website of the publisher: [www.omnia-amsterdam.com](http://www.omnia-amsterdam.com) [4].

My father is dark as the night. He was born and raised in a poor southern part of India. At school he fluently learned Sanskrit: the language of the Gods in the world of humans. All my grandparents and grand-grandparents had spoken this language. As a young man my father travelled to Kenya in Africa to wander as storyteller and to lead a better life. In this country he met my mother.

My mother is a proud woman from the Maasai nomads tribe. She does not know any borders; all the land is for everyone and the cattle needs food and care. She met my father as a young woman. He was starving and she took pity on him. Between them a love arose that transcends our existence. They go through life together; my father remains wandering as storyteller and my mother gives care and shelter when he is passing by. Herefrom I came on Earth.

My first name is Kṛṣṇa [5] because I am dark as the night – like my father – with my black blue skin, and because I was born during the dark of the moon. My parents expressed the hope that I may awake every night again like the Moon and may not die like all other people [6]. Later in my life I changed my first name in Narrator, because I wished to belong to the mortals. My family name from my father's side is Nārāyana. This means in the language of my ancestors: "Son of the original man". [7]



[8]

On my sixth year, my father brought me to school. There I learned to read and write. I never ceased reading. I read Gilgamesh, Iliad, Odyssey, Mahābhārata, Shakespeare in my last years of school while the other students played warrior. Many of my stories stem from this time.



[9]

Until my 16th birthday I stayed at school. Then stark dark pages came into my life.



[1] In Sanskrit Īśa means amongst others “God in the heaven of the Gods”, “one with almightiness”. “Avāśya” means “putting down”. Hereby Īśāvāśya can be understood as a description of God in the heaven of Gods. Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

[2] A literal translation of the Isha Upanishad in Dutch can be obtained via the following hyperlink: [www.arsfloreat.nl/documents/Isa.pdf](http://www.arsfloreat.nl/documents/Isa.pdf)

[3] Upanishad literally means: “Sitting down near”. See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upanishads>

[4] The author does not know the origin of this mp3 file. When the owner makes her-/himself known to the author, the post will be amended to the wishes of the rightful owners.

[5] Kṛṣṇa means amongst others “black”, “black blue”, “the dark period of the moon cycle”. Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

[6] According to a Maasai myth, the God Engai gives cattle to the people and he brings people to life after their death, and each day he lets the Moon die. After a sin wherein an opponent was wished death, Engai lets people die and each night he brings the Moon to life. Source: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF\\_\(volk\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF_(volk))

[7] Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

[8] A Maasai woman. Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maasai\\_people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maasai_people)

[9] Source image: <http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maasa%C3%AF>



# From heaven to hell

7 September 2012

In my youth I lived in heaven. At that time I had five obstacles in my life: my clothes got dirty, my body changed, my armpits sweated, my body smelled and life was sometimes uncomfortable [1]. My mother took care that my clothes, my armpits and my body were washed when we had enough water in the dry land. This was a feast. Changes of our body belong to human life; when the changes are over and the pains are forgotten, the situation is back to normal. And a sober, simple life does not always include comfort.



[2]

During my school time I sometimes had adorned as warrior, more for fun and vanity than to prepare for battle. As student I was not interested in fighting.



[3]

At the end of my school time I moved from my motherland. I craved for the adventures told in the stories of my ancestors and I felt an urge for comfort, money, fame and power.

Or in the language of my ancestors: I wished to change from Nara [4] to Rājan [5].

While everyone was asleep, I left my mother; I left a letter behind with the message that everything would be all right and that she could be proud of me.

After a few days wandering, I encountered a militia; I joined them. I received an uniform with a weapon and I was drilled as soldier just as the heroes from the Kṣhatriya [6] or warriors/rulers caste in the Mahābhārata.



[7]

I was not a strong soldier, but I was smart and fast and I immediately noticed what was needed. The leaders of the militia saw this too: I became driver of the leader of the militia. Like Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavad Gita [8] I was charioteer and advisor.

Similar to a charioteer on a chariot I was cook, I gave advise in battle, I encouraged, I offered protection in emergency, I rescued from difficult situations and afterwards I told the heroics of the fighters.

By the transition to the militia, I left heaven and I entered the world of hungry ghosts and the extremely painful world of hell. My life went from peace to war, from love and care to violence.

At the end of one night we set the forest surrounding a village on fire. The God of fire and the wind spread the flames. Our militia shot with joy at everyone and everything that came out of the forest and we were happy [9].

In daylight the disillusionment followed. We saw that we had killed everything and everyone from new-born to the elderly. Hereafter I left the world of hungry ghosts and hell.

[1] From: Cleary Thomas, *The Undying Lamp of Zen – The testament of Zen Master Torei*. Boston: Shambhala, 2010. Voetnoot 3 op p. 23

[2] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maasai\\_people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maasai_people)

[3] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maasai\\_people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maasai_people)

[4] In Sanskrit “nara” literally means “someone who does not rejoice”. This word is used for an ordinary man.

[5] “Rājan” means in Sanskrit “rejoice in birth/origin”. This word is used for someone from the royal or military caste. Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta.

[6] For the caste system in India see amongst others: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caste\\_system\\_in\\_India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caste_system_in_India)

[7] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military\\_use\\_of\\_children](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_use_of_children)

[8] For an introduction of the Bhagavad Gita that is a small part of the Mahābhārata, see: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhagavad\\_Gita](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhagavad_Gita). A good introduction with a word by word translation from Sanskrit to English is: Sargeant, Winthrop, *The Bhagavad Gītā*. Albany: State New York University Press, 1994. An introduction with a religious – yoga – background is: Yogananda, Paramahansa, *The Bhagavad Gītā*. Los Angeles: Self-Realization Fellowship, 2001

[9] See the last part of book 1 of the Mahābhārata where at the fire in the Khandava forest, Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa shoot arrows with joy to all that leaves the forest. Sources: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/maha/index.htm> boek 1 Section CCXXVII and further; Katz, Ruth Cecily, *Arjuna in the Mahābhārata: Where Krishna is, there is victory*. Delhi: Molital Banarsidass Publishers, 1990, p. 71 – 84





# Back to earth

10 September 2012

The fire in the forest [1] burned all night. The next morning it still smouldered; in the late afternoon the fire died. The nocturnal massacre on the edge of the forest yielded nothing. The smell of burned forest mingled with the smell of dead bodies and blowflies were everywhere.

At the beginning of the next moonless night I left the militia. I walked the whole night; I followed the destination [2] of my name Kṛṣṇa [3] – in this moonless night I escaped alive from hell and I evaded the death of Engāi [4]. Later I understood that a few months later the militia was massacred by the army of the country. Just before the first sunlight I discarded my uniform and weapon.



[5]

The next day I traded some belongings from the militia against clothes. In just over a week I moved to my mother's pastures [6]. Through information of acquaintances I found her temporary residence.



[7]

She saw me at a distance and my younger brothers and sisters ran to me. My mother looked so happy until she saw my eyes – dark and cold as the night. She saw in my face the fire in the forest, my movements reflected the hungry ghosts and she smelled the hell on my skin. I received food and shelter, but the next morning she sent me away with the words: "You took from the world, now you must give back to the world. Afterwards you will be welcome as guest."

By foot I went to the capital. On the outskirts of the city I received a non-paid post as indwelling teacher at a school. During the lessons I

helped pupils with their work and outside school I visited the library for study. My English and Sanskrit improved tremendously and I learned and practiced the important epic stories so I could start as storyteller – like my father.



[8]

In the city I met the most beautiful men upon whom I secretly fell in love. After a year I encountered my first love – so normal, so obvious, so safe. His name was Arjan; I called him Arjuna [9]. His parents had moved from Netherlands to Nairobi for their work. Outwardly we were only friends, secretly we were lovers. His skin was much lighter; he studied at the University. I helped him with Sanskrit; he helped me with English, French and German.

Two years later we visited my mother. She greeted me as her lost son. All my brothers and sisters were glad to see us. A few days later my father came along and we were happy.

My mother immediately saw that the relationship between Arjan and me exceeded usual friendship. To protect me against the overwhelming forces that a love between young men evokes in her country, she sent me away to a city in a distant land where men may love men. In this way she bridged [10] the dilemma between her world order and duty, and human action [11]. She called the name of the city: Amsterdam. A few days later I left. Never I visited my parents again, but they accompany me wherever I go.

[1] See for the fire in the Khandava forest: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/maha/index.htm> book 1 Section CCXXVII and also: Katz, Ruth Cecily, *Arjuna in the Mahābhārata: Where Krishna is, there is victory*. Delhi: Molital Banarsidass Publishers, 1990, p. 71 - 84

[2] In Sanskrit nāmadheya means next to "name" or "title" also "designation". Source: Maurer, Walter Harding, *The Sanskrit Language, An Introductory Grammar and Reader*. London: Routledge Curson, 2004 Deel II p. 771

[3] Kṛṣṇa means in Sanskrit amongst other "black", "black blue", "dark period of the moon cycle" Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

[4] According to a Maasai myth the God Engai gives cattle to the people and he brings people to life after their death and each day he lets the Moon die. After a sin wherein an opponent was wished death, Engai lets people die and each night he brings the Moon to life. Source: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF\\_\(volk\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF_(volk))

[5] Source image: [http://ki.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sunrise\\_over\\_Mount\\_Kenya.jpg](http://ki.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sunrise_over_Mount_Kenya.jpg)

[6] In Sanskrit "nama" means "pasture" (this is a form of destination for nomad people). Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

[7] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF\\_\(volk\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF_(volk))

[8] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenya>

[9] Arjuna is one of the main characters in the Mahābhārata. He is one of the five brothers who live together with one wife Draupadi – the most beautiful and influential wife of her time – in polyandry. The five brother fight for their rightful share of the kingdom, for the honour of Draupadi and for maintenance of the world order. The name Arjuna means amongst others "wit, clear, silver"; one may also recognise "arh" in the name meaning "worthy, capable of".

[10] In Sanskrit the word "yuj" means also "link, tie, prepare, order"

[11] In the Bhagavad Gita – a small and old part of the Mahābhārata – Krishna – the charioteer – encourages Arjuna to start the battle wherein families, teachers and pupils stand opposite each other in the warfare between world order and duty (Dharmakshetra) en human behaviour (Kurukshetra). Dharmakshetra consists of Dharma meaning “place of continuous self/Self”, and “kshetra” – literally: field. Kurukshetra consists of Kuru – a conjugation of “kr” meaning “to make, to do or to act” and “kshetra” – literally: field.



# A way from home

14 September 2012

**L**ike my father, I travelled from my motherland to another continent to have a better life. I didn't want to wander in Europe but I decided to live in Amsterdam – a city where men may love men. In the end this intention worked out exactly reversed.

Via the parents of Arjan – named Arjuna by me – I received documents and a visa for the Netherlands. I left my name Kṛṣṇa behind in Kenya. In this way I also hoped to leave behind the dark pages in my life wherein I lived in hell with the hungry ghosts. This was not successful: in my dreams and in my stories these pages returned for a long time.



[1]

In my passport I have mentioned as first name Narrator [2]; I wished to be like my father, performing for an audience the role of narrator in life's story. As a tribute to my father and his ancestors, I have added the surname Nārāyana [3].

At the end of the scholastic year I resigned as indwelling teacher at the school. I said goodbye to Arjan and his parents and I thanked them for all the help. One of the teachers at school introduced me to a driver who regularly travelled via Nakuru and Lodwar to Jübā in South Sudan. The driver made contact with a colleague who drove to Khartoum – the capital of Sudan [4]. In Khartoum I could travel to Wadi Halfa, just before the border with Egypt.

My experience and instinct as a soldier were helpful at a roadblock. With yet another bend in the road to go, the driver noticed a checkpoint just before a small town. The driver could not justify my presence. In the bend I could slip out of the truck. Via a detour through the shrubbery I entered the town. There I met the driver again to continue our travel.

At Wadi Halfa I could start a job as indwelling servant on a tourist boat on Lake Victoria. This boat travelled to the North. At Abu Simbil I visited the Temple of Ramses II. Here I saw images of rulers from lost times who were venerated as idols in their hubris. On my trip along the Nile I noticed more forms of pride – as dust particles in the universe. At school I learned from the sisters the first commandment according to the Catholic enumeration: "Thou shalt not worship idols, but worship only Me and above all love me". For me this "Me" always remained the starry sky and the moon. These images of idols were no match for the sight of the night sky at new moon.



[5]

In Egypt I travelled the Nile with different boats. On the way I saw several pyramids at a distance – for me pointers to the starry sky and the moon.



[6]

I could pass the Nile delta by boat to Alexandria. In the library of Alexandria, I read all the stories of Scheherazade – the narrator of the stories from "Thousand and one Night". Every night she came back to life like the moon was brought to life by the God Engai [7] in the Maasai myth.

From Alexandria I left Africa. As my father never returned to India, I never came back in Africa. My mother was not able to come to Amsterdam, because she could not leave her herd behind. I dared not to ask my father, because I was afraid that he would never go back to my mother: this I could not inflict on her.

[1] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hel\\_\(mythologie\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hel_(mythologie))

[2] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narrator>

[3] Nārāyana means in Sanskrit: "'Son of the original man". Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

[4] In Sanskrit "Su" means amongst others "supreme, good, excellent, beautiful, easy" and "Dān" means "to be, making straight.

[5] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aboe\\_Simbel](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aboe_Simbel)

[6] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great\\_Pyramid\\_of\\_Giza](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Pyramid_of_Giza)

[7] According to a Maasai myth the God Engai gives cattle to the people and he brings people to life after their death and each day he lets the Moon die. After a sin wherein an opponent was wished death, Engai lets people die and each night he brings the Moon to life. Source: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF\\_\(volk\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF_(volk))

# All ways lead to Rome

23 September 2012

From the harbour of Alexandria I left Africa to never return again. I travelled by boat to Valletta in Malta and then with another boat to Rome. For the first time I was fully surrounded by water; constantly there was the swaying of the boat and the sloshing of waves. In the boat, I was again contained in the womb; I grew to a new life in another world. During day I napped in the shade and at night I watched the starry sky and the moon. In silence I prepared myself.

All-encompassing, Rome received me with open arms. Enclosed in the Catholic habits the afterlife was awaiting. Many habits were different than in Kenya, but for me it was a continuation of my heavenly school years at the nuns.



[1]

In that autumn and winter I did not discover the world of Rome, but Rome entrusted itself to me. Later on our quest to "Who are you", I read in a book a short passage that reflects my life in Rome: *"Is it a foregone conclusion that the discovery of the world only comes from our side? Why would not the world entrusts itself to us to be discovered?"* [2]. Jalāl al-Dīn – in the Western and Muslim world better known as Rumi

[3] – wrote: *"Rome is always decaying and growing for You, and how should a man plead with You for the sake of a single man's soul?"* [4]



[5]

In Rome, the earthiness was linked to vanity and grandeur. During daytime and evening I worked in the kitchen of a posh restaurant.



[6]



In early morning I walked down the streets and I looked at the buildings from different times. I admired the many domes in the city with from the outside inward-looking sky vaults, that inside often showed portrayals of Christian views of heaven. During night I slept outdoors under the starry sky in parks and regularly there was a lover where I could stay.



[7]

That winter there was a lot of rain in Rome and I saw the first snow in my life. I was astonished about the abundance of water.



[8]

The following spring it was possible to continue my voyage to Amsterdam. The roads to the North were passable again. I began my voyage from Rome to Amsterdam by foot.

[1] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome>

[2] Source: Safranski Rüdiger, *Heidegger en zijn Tijd*. Amsterdam: Olympus, 2012, vijfde druk p. 34

[3] Jalāl al-Dīn has been given the name Rumi in the Arab world, because he lived in Konia, south of Ankara in Turkey while writing his great works. This part of the Arab world was identified with Rome from the Roman Empire. Source: Lewis, Franklin D., *Rumi, Past and Present, East and West*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2003 p. 9

[4] Free rendering of Poem 78 from: Arberry, A.), *Mystical Poems of Rūmī, Volume 1*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991 p. 69

[5] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome\\_\(stad\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome_(stad))

[6] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome>

[7] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome>

[8] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome>



# A way from Rome

28 September 2012

In Rome I had recovered the heaven on earth from my childhood. That autumn and winter I was totally absorbed in this city. However, the following spring I left this heaven on earth. Looking back on my life, it would have been better if I had stayed in Rome.

Much later in books I read an explanation for my departure: *"When the light doesn't penetrate completely, there are two kinds of sickness. One sickness is when not everything is clear and there is still something in front of you to achieve. The second sickness is when you live in heaven and your clinging to heaven is not forgotten. Even completely in heaven, the question remains: "What breath is there?" – this too is sickness [1]"*.

Although I was perfectly happy in Rome, I still suffered from both kinds of sickness. I imagined myself in heaven, but my existence was still not clear. Also the command of my mother to start a new life in the city of Amsterdam was looming in my heart. And my craving for happiness subsisted in Rome. The healing of the sickness caused by the question "What breath is there?" began during our Odyssey "Who are you".



[2]

In early spring, I gave substance to the command of my mother to start a new life in the city of Amsterdam where men may love men. I left my heaven on earth.

I started my trip on foot from Rome to Amsterdam with a small backpack and some money for food. In Italy, I visited the cities of Siena [3] and Florence [4] where I enjoyed the museums and the beautiful buildings. On the ceilings and in the domes of the churches I often saw paintings of parts of the medieval scholastic philosophy [5]. During religion lessons at the Catholic primary school in Kenya I had learned parts of this religious philosophy – summarised in the Catholic catechism – by heart.

A beautiful example of this philosophy in which all goodness is related to God, I admired standing under the dome of the Duomo in Florence.



[6]

The transition of Medieval scholasticism to the renaissance [7] I admired outside the Duomo, which is composed of marble panels according to a logical human measurement system.



[8]

In Siena and Florence, I stayed a short time with lovers; my exotic appearance wafted through these cities. After more than two months walking, I reached Northern Italy. Here I left behind the golden glow of my half year in Italy.



At my arrival in Aosta, the weather was inclement and the mountains were threatening in the distance. I could find no place to sleep. I watched the whole night under a cloudy sky with lots of rain.



[5]

The next day the weather brightened and I dried myself in the sun. I walked through the Aosta Valley via Courmayeur [6] to the entrance of the Mont Blanc tunnel. For the first time I saw a white snowy mountain range. I had never seen such a wonderful bright world. This enchanting world was the antitype of my origin and my existence until now.



[7]

By truck I was smuggled via the Mont Blanc tunnel to France; this caused no problems. I did not dare to cross the border with my travel documents, because my visa were only valid for the Netherlands.

In Chamonix just over the French border, the tops of the mountains looked like the teeth of a monster. This was not my world. With the train I left the Valley of Chamonix.



[8]

In France I followed the GR 5 hiking trail to the North.

[1] This is a shortened and very free rendering of the koan: "Yunmen's two sicknesses". See: Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998 p. 46 – 50. See also: Maezumi, Hakuyu Taizan, *The hazy moon of enlightenment*. Somersville: Wisdom Publications, 2007 p. 21 - 27

[2] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome\\_\(stad\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome_(stad))

[3] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siena>

[4] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence>

[5] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aosta>

[6] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Courmayeur>

[7] Source image: Photo by Matthieu Riegler via [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mont\\_Blanc\\_depuis\\_Valmorel.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mont_Blanc_depuis_Valmorel.jpg)

[8] Source image: <http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chamonix-Mont-Blanc>





# On foot through France

*2 October 2012*

**A**fter I had arrived in France through the Mont Blanc tunnel, I continued my journey by train to "Annemasse" just before the Swiss border near Geneva. Even in midsummer the Middle/High Alpine mountains north of Chamonix were not my world.

Thirty years later in the snowy world at the beginning of winter I almost slipped into another world. In the icy stillness I felt completely at home within this enchanting white dream world. Carla Drift brought me come back to life from this icy world.



[1]

My limited travel papers would not be good enough to cross the Swiss/French border twice. From "Annemasse" I walked along the Swiss border to "Les Rousses" to continue northbound via the GR 5. Luckily the footpath north of "Les Rousses" was passable.

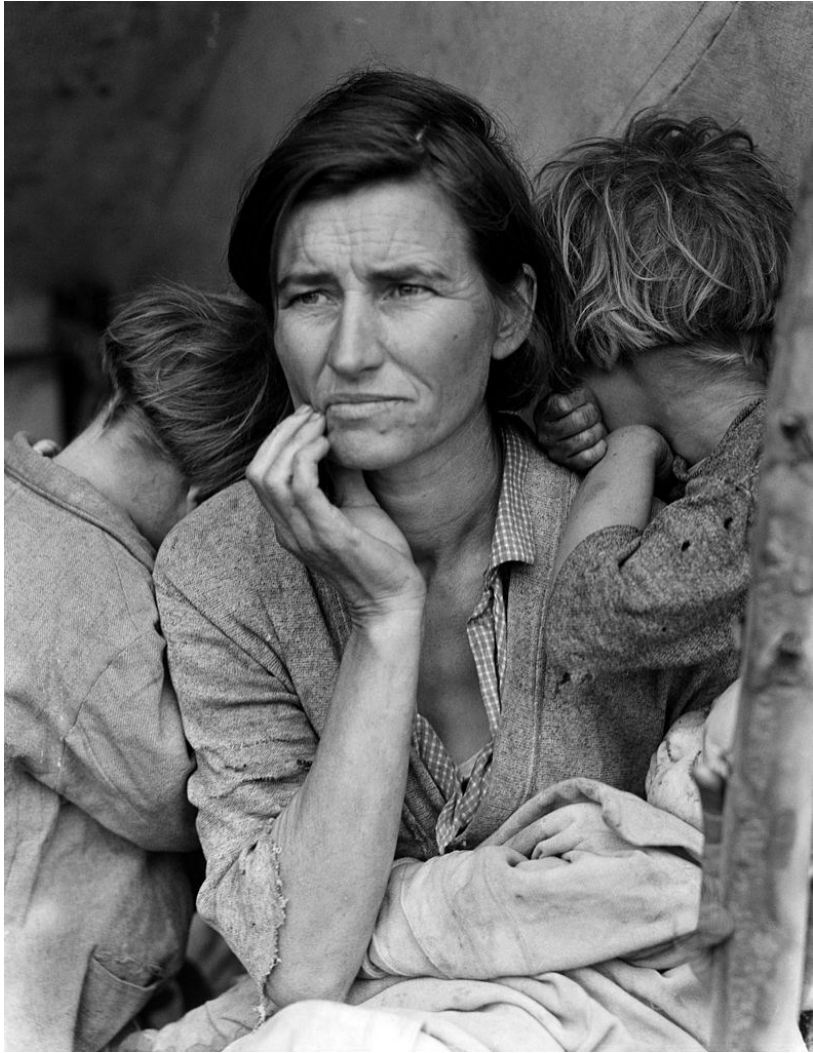


[2]

After the train trip I had no money left. I had to get food in one way or another. I did not have enough time to start working for my food, because I wanted to arrive in Amsterdam before the autumn.

On the 2nd of October 1996, a former Bishop of Breda – Bishop Martinus Muskens – said in a VPRO television program that stealing (and eating) bread is lawful in case people are hungry and have no other way to survive [3]. Herewith he forwarded the moral teachings of the Catholic Church in which life is more important than earthly possessions. Already in the Middle Ages this "food dilemma" was

resolved; “in extreme necessity” a monk should not obey his abbot by delivering food according to the command, but he should give food to a hungry person [4].



[5]

Fortunately, I have never seriously suffered hunger during my trip on foot. Very occasionally I had sinned by picking one or two pieces of fruit from a tree without permission of the owner. I also had occasionally caught a fish or hunted a small animal – a noble act for the nobility and raunchy syrups for the ordinary man – and prepared this food on a small fire. With my background from a Maasai pastoralists tribe without borders and where all the land is for everyone, I could not see this use of the environment as theft; eventually the fruit, fish and small animals always spring from the world of everyone. Later in my life I started using the ethical [6] principle that every manifestation has equal right of existence. But in case a choice between two manifestations is inevitable, then a more complex manifestation – a creature that has a higher place in the hierarchy – deserves the preference [7].

On my trip to Amsterdam I exchanged applicable stories of my ancestors for food or for a meal. Herein I followed the footsteps of my father.

In the European countries with material wealth and spiritual poverty, there is a great need for stories that provide interpretation. Politicians, managers, bankers, service providers in mental health, well-known film actors obtain an excellent income with their interpretations. In many cultures, these kind of exchanges are regarded as “wind trade” or vanity trade.

With the stories of my ancestors I could easily fill my stomach; I was never hungry on my way to Amsterdam. By exchanging stories against food, I actually lived on the wind – वात or vāta in Sanskrit – my father was my constant companion and guardian.

A roof over my head was not necessary in the summer; I slept in the open air under the stars. In bad weather I only needed an extra set of clothes and a plastic sheet.

So the first part of my hike along the GR 5 began in France.

[1] Source image: <http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chamonix-Mont-Blanc>

[2] Source image: [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Les\\_Rousses](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Les_Rousses)

[3] Source: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiny\\_Muskens](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiny_Muskens)

[4] Source: Dougherty, M.V. *Moral Dilemmas in Medieval Thought – From Gratian to Aquinas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 77

[5] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hunger>

[6] "The underlying meaning of the Greek word "ethos" was "personal disposition". It ultimately came from the Indo-European word "swedh" wherein we recognise the words "sva" and "dha" meaning in Sanskrit "self, Ego and human soul" and "to place, to give".

Source: Ayto, John, Word Origins, *The hidden History of English Words from A to Z*. London: A & C Black, 2008 p. 199 and Source: electronic version of dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta.

[7] See also: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence – 1*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2012 p. 80 - 81

# On foot through France 2

*8 October 2012*

On my hike through France, I met many people. I stood out by my dark skin; there were no other Maasai/Indian walkers on our way. In the Jura, people were dismissive at first sight: I was strange, unknown and obscure. But almost all fellow walkers thawed by my smile and after a friendly greeting in the French language. The farmers were more suspicious. This is understandable because they had to defend their homes against a dark unknown stranger.



[1]

Eventually I met much hospitality on the road. With two fellow travellers I walked several days to the North. We saw cairns as guardians along our path. At one cairn we decided to have our lunch. One of my companions wondered how many people had placed stones here. The other asked where these people were now. I replied: "In any case we are here". Then we had to laugh. While I drank water, I was wondering where all the sages of the past remained. Suddenly I clearly felt that we were directly connected with the people who had piled stones here and with all sages from the past [2]. We lived our life directly in the footsteps of the others.



[3]



The next night I dreamed the dream that I regularly dreamed after the fire in the forest during the night where my fellow militia members and I had massacred a village. In this dream the flames came toward me together with the ghosts of the villagers. They started to engulf me. My skin was already blackened by the flames and I began to lose myself in the ghosts of the villagers.



[4]

At the moment they were threatening to swallow me, I awoke; I was all sweaty and I breathed heavily. When I opened my eyes, I saw the moon and the starry sky as reassurance. The night sky slowly brought me back to life as in the Maasai myth the god Engai brought each night the moon back to life [5].



[6]

The night after the cairn, that dream proceeded in the same way, but the moment I woke up terrified, the sky was completely cloudy. The moon and the stars could not offer me any consolation. Everything was pitch dark and I heard only a quick loud painful breathing; my chest moved violently. Terrified I asked myself: "What breath is there? [7]". First I thought that the breath of the ghosts of the villagers had come back to life inside me. Therefor I dared not stop panting, because I was afraid that my breath would be carried away with the ghosts when they would disappear in the dark.

Slowly my breath calmed down and I came to rest. In the darkness I promised the dead villagers that from now on my breath was their

breath. I promised that my breath – as long as I lived – would be a temporal home for them. Once I hoped to arrive home together with them. After this, the dream returned less often.

I was on my way to Amsterdam – my new home for the time being.

[1] Source image: [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fichier:Maison\\_typique\\_du\\_Jura\\_2.jpg](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fichier:Maison_typique_du_Jura_2.jpg)

[2] See also koan “Attendant Huo passes tea” in: Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998 p. 60 - 62

[3] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steenmannetje>

[4] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wildfire>

[5] Source: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF\\_\(volk\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF_(volk))

[6] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/De\\_sterrennacht](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/De_sterrennacht)

[7] This is the last question in the koan “Yunmen’s two sicknesses”. See: Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998 p. 46 – 50. See also: Maezumi, Hakuyu Taizan, *The hazy moon of enlightenment*. Somersville: Wisdom Publications, 2007 p. 21 – 27

# On foot through France 3

*15 October 2012*

Via the GR 5 I walked in France from the Jura to the Vosges. This area was rather densely populated and I found a place to sleep less easy. At twilight on a rainy evening I was only welcome when I paid for my overnight stay. My stories and my kindness were not enough. I had no more money and after few kilometres I found a place in the open air to rest. Vigilant I spent the night covered in plastic. The next morning I was clammy and benumbed. After an hour walk I was warm again.

In the Vosges there were sufficient opportunities to spent the night in the wild. It was beautiful weather. At night the moon and the starry sky gave me comfort. During the day I enjoyed the beautiful view. On a few places I could almost oversee my whole way from the snowy Alps.



[1]

During my walk on the mountain peaks of the Vosges I met new ghosts. A century ago this chain of peaks formed the border between Alsace in Germany and Lorraine in France. The road – Route des Crêtes – was built by the French army during the First World War [2]. The road is situated on the French side of the chain, so the road was less vulnerable for the German guns. The ghosts of the victims during these many wars between France and Germany accompanied me to the Luxembourg border. On this part of my trip on foot they were my companions. I promised that my breath would be their breath as long as I lived just as my breath already was the breath of the villagers. Once I hoped to arrive home together with them all.



[3]



The path on the mountain peaks was congested; I got help and support of many people. In the valleys I felt less at home. During shelter in the valleys I could not see the road; I felt trapped. I wanted to keep an eye on the road. Without sight on the heaven and earth the ghosts of the villagers and of the fallen soldiers came before my eyes [4]. Only much later could I unite heaven and earth; afterwards I had no more difficulty to fall asleep anywhere – even within walls and in valleys.



[5]

In the North of France I made a small detour with to the Maginot line [6]. We saw the remnants at Michelsberg [7] and Hackenberg [8]. We were surprised how a society could feel safe and sheltered behind this dark burrows in the ground filled with terror for the society on the other side. With my eyes on the road, oneness had many faces, and two

had no duality. The Maginot line – as part of the many wars between France and Germany – fell beyond my comprehension.



[9]

At Schengen I illegally entered the other world of Luxembourg. Later the treaty for free movement of people in a part of Europe was agreed upon at this place. After such a huge detour with so much suffering and madness of everyday life, oneness could finally be restored. It remains curious that a Treaty on paper is needed for an oneness that is as natural for my mother as breathing, moving her eyes, working with her hands, and walking with her legs; oneness with many faces and two without duality.





[10]

Much later – on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2012 – the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the European Union, because the European Union and its predecessors had contributed to peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe for more than sixty years. So much effort for a contribution that is as natural as breathing, looking with the eyes and walking.

In Luxembourg, I entered a fairy-tale troll country.

[1] Source image: [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fichier:Col\\_du\\_Grand\\_Ballon.jpg](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fichier:Col_du_Grand_Ballon.jpg)

[2] Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Route\\_des\\_Cr%C3%A4tes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Route_des_Cr%C3%A4tes)

[3] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rothenbachkopf\\_nord.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rothenbachkopf_nord.jpg)

[4] See also: Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998 p. 70.

[5] Source image: [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fichier:Vosges\\_val\\_munster.jpg](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fichier:Vosges_val_munster.jpg)

[6] See also: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magnotlinie>

[7] See also: [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ouvrage\\_du\\_Michelsberg](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ouvrage_du_Michelsberg)

[8] See also: [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ouvrage\\_du\\_Hackenberg](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ouvrage_du_Hackenberg)

[9] Source image: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Ouvrage\\_du\\_Michelsberg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Ouvrage_du_Michelsberg)

[10] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schengen\\_\(Luxemburg\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schengen_(Luxemburg))

# Under the eye of the Cyclops

19 October 2012

The first two days, Luxembourg showed itself from its delightful side. I walked through a magical valley where I might have met elves. The people were nice and I imagined myself in paradise.

After this lovely meeting, I made acquaintance with Luxembourg as troll country where hungry ghosts lived. During the third night in Luxembourg there was a terrible thunderstorm. In the dark the flashes seemed to come from the eye of the Cyclops [1]. The lightning illuminated my path; the thunders rolled through the valleys. I had to flee, but there was no way out. Terrified I could only continue walking. After several hours the thunderstorm disappeared and in a shelter I finally found rest. The rest of the night I heard the ticking of the rain. At dawn the rain stopped.



[2]

The whole area was shrouded in a thick fog and it was very cold in early autumn. This world was new to me; I felt trapped in a grey dark underworld. I was looking for a way out. I saw nobody; I heard nobody. I was completely alone in a silent cold world. On my beard, my eyebrows and eyelashes were small drops. My clothing was cold and clammy. This night the Maasai God Engai [3] had not brought me back to life. Was this the punishment for the night fire in the forest [4] that was lit by our militia in Kenya where we had killed the villagers with joy who wanted to escape from the fire?



[5]

After a walk of half an hour it was a little lighter. The sun rose: first very vague in the distance, later as an eye through the haze. This world was strange to me. I was still very cold. Later near Amsterdam I would get so used to this type of weather, that I could blindly find my way.



[6]

On the left was a way uphill. I had to escape from this underworld. Tied under a ram Odysseus escaped from the cave of the Cyclops Polyphemus. Covered in woollen clouds I walked uphill out of this underworld. Slowly it became lighter and the greyness faded away. At the top of the hill the clouds in the valleys looked like the fur of a flock of giant sheep.



[7]

Walking uphill I had escaped from this lugubrious underworld. The sun was shining at last; after an hour walk I was dry and warm again. Luxembourg showed itself from its fairy-tale side. Via the plateau in North Luxemburg I arrived in Belgium.

[1] According to Greek mythology, Zeus owes his lightning, and Poseidon his trident to the Cyclopes. Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyclops>. See for a brief description of the adventures of Odysseus with the Cyclops: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polyphemus>

[2] Source image: <http://lb.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donnerwieder>

[3] According to a Maasai myth the God Engai gives cattle to the people and he brings people to life after their death and each day he lets the Moon die. After a sin wherein an opponent was wished death, Engai lets people die and each night he brings the Moon to life. Source: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF\\_\(volk\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF_(volk))

[4] See the last part of book 1 of the Mahābhārata where at the fire in the Khandava forest, Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa shoot arrows with joy to all that leaves the forest. Sources: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/maha/index.htm> boek 1 Section CCXXVII and further; Katz, Ruth Cecily, *Arjuna in the Mahābhārata: Where Krishna is, there is victory*. Delhi: Molital Banarsidass Publishers, 1990, p. 71 – 84

[5] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fog>

[6] Source image: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebel>

[7] Source image: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebel>





# To the inverted world

*22 October 2012*

Before I arrived into the inverted world of Holland, I had to walk through the Ardennes in Belgium and travel by boat through Limburg and Brabant in the Netherlands. In the beginning of this part of the trip it was lovely autumn weather in the Ardennes. The leaves on the trees were brown and yellow; the landscape showed the last warmth of the year. The evenings were short and the nights were colder; soon I had to find a warm place to stay because winter would come soon. Fortunately, the nights were quiet and I slept well because I had got a warm sleeping bag.

The path of the GR 5 via the Ardennes was easy and charming. First I walked by nature; at farms I almost always received a meal in exchange for a story. After a few days I passed a more densely populated area. Stavelot was the first town that I visited in Belgium; I was amazed at the wealth of the Abbey.



[1]

For a small town with a little more than 6000 inhabitants, Stavelot has an impressive centre, with many stately houses.



[2]

The night after the visit to Stavelot, there was a brief intense thunderstorm. The thunder rolled through the valleys, but this storm did not last long and it brightened quickly. From Stavelot, I walked along the GR 5 to Spa, a former Spa in the Ardennes. I was impressed by the wealth in this region.



[3]

Just outside Spa I stayed in the open air; my hotel had the starry sky as roof and my room included the universe.



[4]

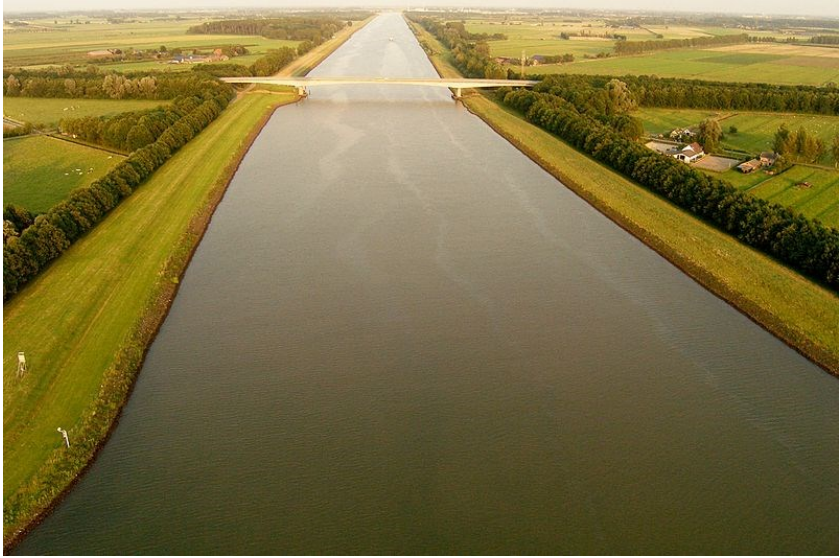
The next morning it was drizzly weather. In the rain, interspersed with sunny spells I walked within a few days to Visé at the Meuse.



[5]

There I met an owner of a boat who needed help due to illness during the trip to Amsterdam. So I sailed in bleak autumn weather along Maastricht, Roermond, Venlo, Nijmegen, Utrecht to Amsterdam. I traveled comfortable and dry with a cost and indwelling.

In Brabant, Utrecht and Holland I was amazed about the water that was higher in a channel than the land and the houses in the polder. In Utrecht and Holland, I was astonished at the vastness and the flatness of the country. This was an inverted world of everything I had met earlier in my life.



[6]

In the Port of Amsterdam I said farewell to the skipper. In the Centre of the city I saw strange, remarkable people. Some looked like gnomes and so they called themselves. Everything was different; the young people were the boss of the elder people. The music was different and the people wanted to swing, but these stiff people could not. With mind-altering drugs young people made the world more colourful than the grey surroundings looked like. Sometimes it went wrong with the hallucinogens. Some inhabitants in this inverted world thought that they could fly – vanity came before the fall. The first days I met several lovers in this city where men may love men; the temporary party – that took more than 10 years of my life, started.....

[1] Source image: <http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stavelot>

[2] Source image: <http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stavelot>

[3] Source image: [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spa\\_\(ville\)](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spa_(ville))

[4] Source image: [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spa\\_\(ville\)](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spa_(ville))

[5] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wezet>

[6] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:AmsterdamRijnkanaal.air.jpg>



# A msterdam: the inverted world

26 October 2012

**I**n Amsterdam I entered the inverted world of Holland and this inverted world took me on. A world with many centuries of embarrassing wealth and a deep discomfort [1], but that I would learn later on. For me the feast started. As an exotic outsider, I was not bothered by the discomfort and my lovers let me sharing in their wealth.

From the Harbour, I walked via the Damrak [2] to the Dam.



[3]

Earlier in the 17th century the Dam and its surroundings were the place where shiploads were traded against securities that were redeemable across the North Sea and Baltic Sea area. The traders in Amsterdam did everything to retain confidence in these securities. Still the Dutch relate the value of goods and the value of trust in human relationships to money. Money is for them still a metaphor for confidence.

When I arrived on that beautiful autumn day for the first time on the Dam, the last “Sleepers on the Dam” of that year were still present. A few years ago the police and Marines had skirmishes with the “Sleepers on the Dam”. In the opinion of the former Regents these lazy idlers were not in the position to sleep at the National Monument [4]. The text on the front of the Memorial seemed to leave the Regents in their right:

*"Hic ubi cor patriae monumentum cordibus intus  
quod gestant cives spectet ad astra dei."*[5]

('Let here where the heart of the motherland is, the monument – that citizens bear within their hearts – look at the stars of God.')

According to the Regents the solitary monument should look at the stars of God commemorating the Second World War. Intuitively the “Sleepers on the Dam” felt that the Monument is a memorial to the inner entity of the citizens to look at the stars of God. In my native land the Maasai God Engai [6] awoke under the starry sky in the distant past the deceased back to life. In this inverted country the “Sleepers on the Dam” temporarily won the skirmishes until the cold of the winter chased them away. In those cold days the vapour of my breath gave a home to the breath of the villager killed in the overnight fire in the forest; almost all the nights I slept under the stars when the coldness allowed.





[7]

After a few months it was a period with frost; the inhabitants of this inverted world were seized by ice-fever. For the first time in my life I saw frozen water – for me a strange environment. All the other people started ice skating; for them, it was a free world with a traditional free trade [8]. Many people made long skating tours through the polders, a few of them came back home wounded – in Holland very usual.



[9]

Luckily I was given accommodation in the house of my lovers during this cold period.

[1] See for the richness of Holland in the 17th century: Schama, Simon, *The Embarrassment of the Riches*. Fontana Press, 1987

[2] The Damrak was the former outer harbour to the South Sea for small vessels. See also: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Damrak>

[3] Painting by Cornelis Anthonisz. Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornelis\\_Anthonisz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornelis_Anthonisz).

[4] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationaal\\_Monument](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationaal_Monument)

[5] The Latin text on the front of the Memorial is written by dr. J.D. Meerwaldt

[6] According to a Maasai myth the God Engai gives cattle to the people and he brings people to life after their death and each day he lets the Moon die. After a sin wherein an opponent was wished death, Engai lets people die and each night he brings the Moon to life. Source: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF\\_\(volk\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF_(volk))

[7] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:National\\_monument\\_-\\_amsterdam\\_nl.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:National_monument_-_amsterdam_nl.jpg)

[8] Until the modern era, liquor and prostitution were legally regulated for land and water. Ice was not mentioned in the legislation and therefore a free trade for liquor and prostitution was allowed on ice.

[9] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amsterdam>

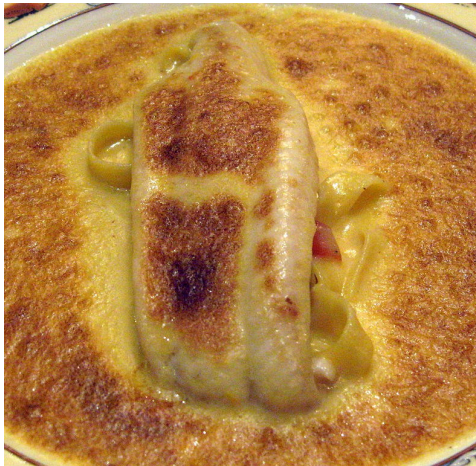


# A msterdam: the inverted world 2

30 October 2012

The first winter in Holland, life was a feast. Everything was different than in my native country. The days were grey, bleak and cold, but the houses were hot inside with artificial light until well into the evening. There was food in abundance, but usually the hospitality did not allow sharing a meal. In the beginning I thought that people were embarrassed for their inability to prepare a tasty meal. Much later I found out that faith, thrift and money played an important role.

Via a detour I was often invited for a meal; as a guest I offered to prepare the meal. In Rome I had learned to cook. In this way we enjoyed an un-Dutch tasty meal in an un-Dutch manner. Also my lovers appreciated my cooking.



[1]



My first winter in Amsterdam I saw real gnomes with long hair and dishevelled clothes. They wished to be free of any tradition and to discover themselves in a new world; this is all history. I still love the pop music from that time. They wished to discover themselves in a known world; I discovered myself in an inverted world; this is all history now.

The first spring in Amsterdam my exotic love wafted through the city: I met the most beautiful lovers. All were different and all were the same. Together with one lover we drove by car through Holland. We saw the multi-coloured striped tulip fields in the endless plains. My loves were equally direct, intense, colourful, all-encompassing and temporary as this floral splendour. I was a strange novelty from another world and therefore attractive strange within the community where men love men.



One of my lovers came from America. He had fled to Sweden to evade his mandatory contribution to the war in Vietnam as American conscript. That spring and summer he lived illegally at friends in Amsterdam because in this inverted city the new world would begin with everlasting peace. For him, I was the complementary dark yin that with his light-coloured yang would shape a way for harmony and peace. This dream lasted a marvellous half year until he had to leave to Sweden again. Later, when I could travel freely in Europe, I visited him several times in Stockholm. He let me share in the wealth of his family. Through him I learned to drive a car and after his flight I owned a large American car named "Thunder Bird" for one summer. Free floating I glided as a whispering Thunder Bird through Holland. In the autumn I sold the car to get through the second winter.



[3]

At the end of the summer – Arjan my friend and lover from Kenya – came for half a year back in Holland. Via Arjan and his parents I

received a permanent residence permit and later I obtained Dutch citizenship. Also in this case an inverted reasoning was followed in Holland; the army of Kenya was looking for me for my temporary membership of a political militia. At my return in Kenya my life would be in danger. By this reasoning I was turned from a perpetrator of crimes into a victim. I told Arjan that I now lived with the ghosts of killed villagers at the hands of the militia; because of this I was indirectly a victim of my own share of this crime. Arjan convinced me that if I got a Dutch passport by a white lie, I could freely travel in the world – excluding Kenya. Also in this case Amsterdam was an inverted world with an abundance; the embarrassment followed after a feast that lasted for 10 years .

[1] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kookkunst>

[2] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bollenstreek>

[3] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ford\\_Thunderbird](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ford_Thunderbird)



# A msterdam: the inverted world 3

9 November 2012

My first autumn in Amsterdam was cold and wet. Still, I wondered about the abundance of water and at the uneasiness that people felt during rainy weather. Rain was a feast in my home country, because regularly there was a lack of water for the cattle [1]. My mother moved around with her herd looking for water and new pasture. In Holland, this is all in abundance; a hole of half a meter deep is enough for water and pastures are everywhere.

During my first year in Holland, I began to love the skies. The clouds are of an enchanting beauty. The paintings of the Dutch masters show a glimpse of this wealth; the real sky together with the sun are a world miracle without precedent. In this inverted world nobody is interested in looking at the sky; except artists, but they are seen as idlers. "Time is money and we cannot make a living from looking at the sky; we have something better to do", is the opinion of the people in Holland.



[2]

Dutch consider themselves God's steward, but they omit to pay attention to half of God's creation [3]: the heavenly sky [4]. In the Dutch literature is one main character who gave attention to the sky and the play of the sun, but this painter became insane, because he could not capture the sunset on a painting [5].



[6]

The second winter in Holland I began to love the shelter and the confinement of fog and mist. In this inverted world clouds on the ground are still present, as if God had chosen not to complete the separation of sky and earth around Amsterdam. The people in Holland do not notice this. The Kingdom of Heaven is for the poor in spirit [7], normal mortals should take care of the earth and afterwards God will allow the elect to his Kingdom. For me Holland was a Godlike paradise with a heavenly splendour on earth.



[8]

The next spring, a Goddess appeared in my life. One of my lovers stayed for half a year abroad and in the meantime I was allowed to use his house and his Citroën DS. He gave me a generous allowance for living [9]. That summer I was gliding with my white Goddess on the roads of Europe; I also visited my friends in Rome.



[10]

At the end of my second year in Amsterdam I changed from an attractive exotic appearance into an idol. In the world of fashion and vanity, I became a favourite icon. I was desired by influential attractive men who love men and equally authoritative as the King's daughter Draupadi [11] in the Mahābhārata [12], I lived with them in polyandry.

[1] Source: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF\\_\(volk\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masa%C3%AF_(volk))

[2] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolk>

[3] According to Genesis 1:1 – the first book of Old Testament – God created / separated the sky and earth at the beginning of time. The Hebrew verb core "bara" in the Hebrew version of Genesis 1:1 has four meanings: "creation", "cleave", "selection" and "feed". Source: <http://www.qbible.com/hebrew-old-testament/genesis/1.html>

[4] In the Western translations of the Hebrew version of the Old Testament, the word "shamayim" is translated as "Heaven". Probably "sky" or "firmament" is a better translation for the Hebrew word "shamayim". See also: <http://www.qbible.com/hebrew-old-testament/genesis/1.html> and [http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/35\\_home.html](http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/35_home.html) and Benner, Jeff A. *A Mechanical Translation of the Book of Genesis - The Hebrew text literally translated word for word*. 2007

[5] See: The painter Bavink in amongst others *De uitvreter en Titaantjes* in: Nescio, *Verzameld werk I*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Nijgh en van Ditmar en Uitgeverij van Oorschot, 1996.

[6] Source photo: Marieke Grijpink

[7] See: the Gospel of Matthew 5:3 in the New Testament.

[8] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mist>

[9] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allowance\\_\(money\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allowance_(money)). In Holland a living allowance is just sufficient for daily life.

[10] Source image: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citro%C3%ABn\\_DS](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citro%C3%ABn_DS)

[11] See also: McGrath, Kevin, *STRĪ women in Epic Mahābhārata*. Cambridge: Ilex Foundation, 2009 en <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Draupadi>

[12] See also: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahabharata>



# Mask of an idol

12 November 2012

In the inverted world of Amsterdam I received the appearance of an idol. Suddenly I was more than welcome everywhere; I was asked at performances and for parties. Everyone wanted to be seen with me or wished to be near me. For other people I seemed to be encompassed by a divine halo. In my vicinity strangers felt to be included in a heavenly glow. They all dreamt that I owned the gateway to Heaven [1].



[2]



New lovers imagined themselves in my vicinity on an space travel, connected with the universe and included in dream-world more beautiful than life. I was for them the connection to an everlasting paradise.



[3]

In my wealth a Goddess – a white [4] Citroën DS – had appeared wherein I accomplished the glory by driving on the roads [7], just like the charioteer Kṛṣṇa [5] in the Bhagavad Gita [6]. As idol and centre, I encouraged, I steered and I shaped the world around me; I was the eye of a cyclone – empty, volatile and stilled inside.

*Idolatry*

*Impermanent in one sigh*

*Seen in the Sunlight*



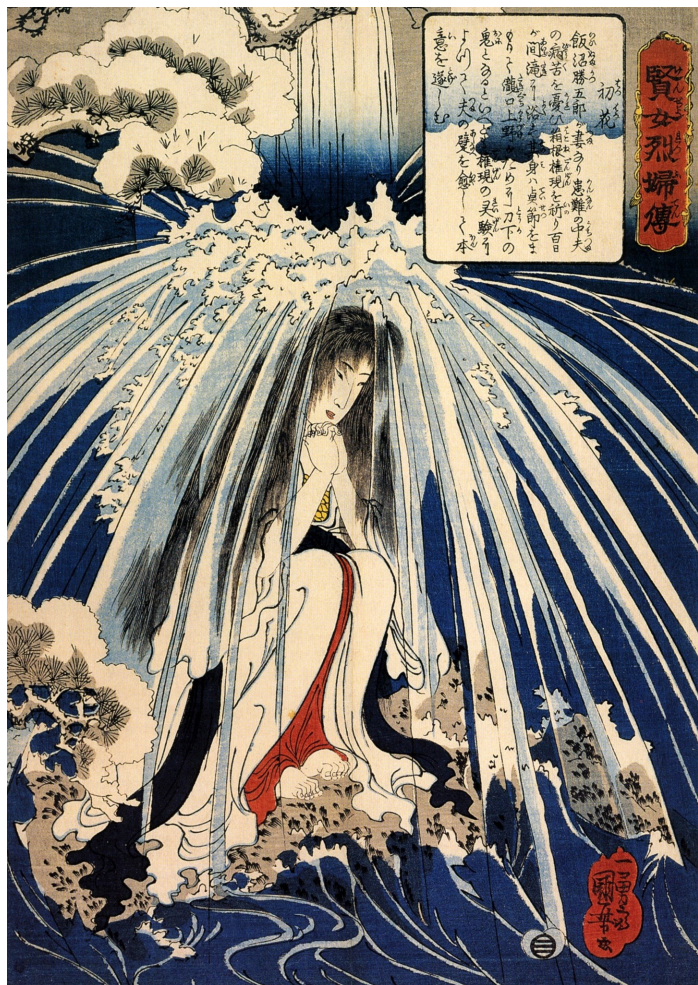
*Beauty is a terrible and awful thing! It is terrible because it has not been fathomed, for God sets us nothing but riddles. Here the boundaries meet and all contradictions exist side by side. [8]*

This citation – from *The Brothers Karamazov* by Dostojewski – described my volatile position as idol within the inverted world in Amsterdam. This quote was also the motto of *Confessions of a Mask* by Yukio Mishima from which I derived to some extent an interpretation of my role as icon in the world where men love men. For my lovers, I was not only their lover, but I was also their competitor in their love for other men in the polygamous homosexual world in Amsterdam at that time.



[9]

In addition to an interpretation of my idle position in the inverted world in Holland, I was looking for insight in the course of my life. After reading the tetralogy *Sea of Fertility* [10] by Yukio Mishima, the fourfold reincarnation of the second main person gave some clarification to my situation.



In a similar way, the first incarnation in my life – under the name Kṛṣṇa – covered the period from my early childhood to my departure from Kenya. Now – as a temporary idol – I was at the height of my second incarnation. I foresaw that my life as icon would soon collapse; I decided to leave the inverted world of Holland for quite some time. After my share in a serious war crime during my first incarnation in Kenya, I wished to guide the continuation of my life in the right direction. It was also time for penance for this war crime.

[1] See the book Genesis 28:10-19 in the Old Testament for Jacob's dream wherein Jacob takes a ladder with descending and ascending angels for the gate to Heaven. See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacob's\\_Ladder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacob's_Ladder)

[2] Painting: Jacob's dream of a ladder of angels, c. 1690, by Michael Willmann. Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dream>

[3] *The Dream* by Henri Rousseau, 1910. Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Droom>

[4] The name Arjuna means amongst others "wit, clear, silver"; one may recognise also "arh" in the name, meaning "worthy, capable of". Arjuna is one of the main characters in the Mahābhārata. He is one of the five brothers who lives together with one wife Draupadi – the most beautiful and influential wife of her time – in polyandry. The five brother fight for their rightful share of the kingdom, for the honour of Draupadi and for maintenance of the world order.

[5] In Sanskrit Kṛṣṇa means amongst others "black", "blue black", "the dark period of the moon-cycle" Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

[6] See also: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhagavad\\_gita](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhagavad_gita)

[7] See also: Katz, Ruth Cecily, *Arjuna in the Mahābhārata: Where Krishna is, there is victory*. Delhi: Molital Banarsidass Publishers, 1990

[8] Source: Dostoevsky, Fyodor, *The Karamazov Brothers*. Ware: Wordsworth Edition Limited, 2007, p. 114

[9] Source image: front of the cover of: Mishima, Yukio. *Confessions of a Mask*. New York: A New Directions Book, 1958 (Eleventh printing)

[10] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Sea\\_of\\_Fertility](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Sea_of_Fertility)

[11] Source image: *Hatsuhana doing penance under the Tonosawa waterfall* van Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861). This image is used as cover for the French edition of the *Sea of Fertility* by Yukio Mishima.

# Gate in the north

18 November 2012

It was time to discard my mask of an idol, because my heaven on earth in the inverted world of Amsterdam was slowly changing in a Buddhist hell. Everything and everyone in my area lived to my whims. The old Jewish curse "*I wish you will have much personnel*" and the Roman wisdom "*power corrupts*" [1] described the influence that my life as icon in Amsterdam had on my personality. My destination as Narrator Nārāyana [2] was somewhere else.

In my heyday in Amsterdam I became Dutch citizen with a valid passport: I could freely travel around the world with the exception of Kenya and several countries in Africa. After saying goodbye to my friends and lovers in Holland I departed halfway spring to Sweden. I had an open invitation from my American beloved to live with him in Stockholm.

In my Citroën DS, I glided along the highways in Netherlands and Germany via Bremen and Hamburg to Denmark. I thought my Goddess was a fast car, but on the German autobahn I met the real "raser" or "speed devils" who moved with speeds of 200 km/h. Did they wish to flee as quickly as possible from the "here and now"?



[3]

I visited Copenhagen [4] in Denmark – the city where I would live for several years after my stay in Sweden and Norway. My amorousness still beamed around me as a halo; within hours I met friends where I could stay. Through these new friends I found accommodation one year later in this city near the water.





[5]

After a stopover of two weeks in Copenhagen, I took the ferry to Malmö. In Sweden I drove along the Swedish archipelago [6] to Stockholm [7]. I neared my destination, but before I entered the island Stadsholmen – where my beloved lived in a beautiful old house within the old town Gamla Stan [8] – I saw the City Hall of Stockholm in the distance.





For a year I moved into the Golden House of hopes and dreams of my beloved in the Prästgatan [10]. A year full of music and joy, a year with a trip to the North Cape and back along the Norwegian Fjords, a year without sorrow and a year of farewell.



[11]

In countries around the Baltic Sea, many street names end on "Gatan", "Gade" or "Gate". Upon hearing or reading these words I was reminded of the Sanskrit lessons by my father. He taught me that in Sanskrit the word "gate" is not only a conjugation of the verb meaning "going", but it is also the "locativus or place-conjugation" of a noun derived from the verb "to go".

When I read many years later the following parable [12] about Buddha, I was reminded of my first arrival in Prästgatan in Stockholm:

"More than 2500 years ago an outsider concealed a life sparrow in his hands and he asked Buddha: *"Is this sparrow in my hands alive or dead?"*. Buddha straddled the "gate" [13] with his feet and asked: *"Tell me, am I about to leave or enter?"*" [14]

Entering the Prästgatan and the house of my beloved, it felt like an arrival and departure in my life; the sun shone her golden glow.

[1] The Roman verb “corrumpere” means “to spoil, destroy, or pollute”.

[2] The word “nama” means “designation, pointer, destiny” and “Narrator” means “taleteller” in Sanskrit. Narrator is composed of “nara” literally meaning “someone who does not rejoice” and “nara” describes an ordinary man; the verb root “tr - tarati” means “cross over”. Nārāyana means “son of the original man”. Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

[3] This photo is dated around 2005 AC. Source image: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autobahn>

[4] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copenhagen>

[5] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kopenhagen>

[6] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm\\_archipelago](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm_archipelago)

[7] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm>

[8] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gamla\\_stan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gamla_stan)

[9] Source image: <http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm>

[10] “Präst” means “priest” in Swedish according to “Google Translate”

[11] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm>

[12] The word "parable" comes from the Greek παραβολή (*parabolē*), meaning "comparison, illustration, analogy". It was the name given by Greek rhetoricians to any fictive illustration in the form of a brief narrative. Later it came to mean a fictitious narrative, generally referring to something that might naturally occur, by which spiritual and moral matters might be conveyed . Source (more information is given): <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parable>

[13] The Gateless Gate. See also: Yamada Kōun Rōshi, *Gateless Gate (Mumonkan)*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1990

[14] See: Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998 p. 95 – 96.



# Gate in the north 2

*25 November 2012*

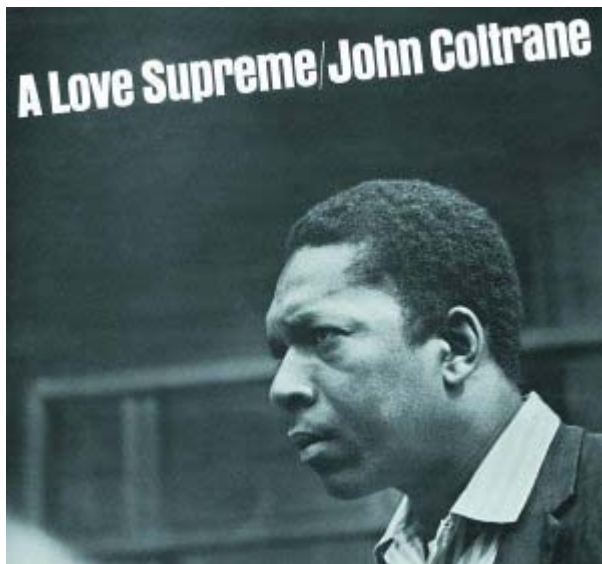
**I**n Stockholm, life with my beloved – who had evaded his military service in the U.S. Army during the war in Vietnam and still stayed in Europe although he might return to the United States after the general pardon of president Carter in 1977 [1] – was as familiar as in Amsterdam and at the same time it was different in all respects.

In addition to the Golden House in the old town, he also had a beautiful country house in the Stockholm archipelago. In the weekends and during holidays we stayed in this wooden house on a small island. We enjoyed the beautiful skies and during night we slept outside if the weather permitted. I was amazed about the long days.



[2]

Several friends of my beloved played in jazz ensembles. Through them I learned to appreciate the music of the giants in jazz; my favourites were the Miles Davis – Quintet [3] and John Coltrane [4] with his quartet; I learned his records of "Joy", and "A Love Supreme" – composed during the struggle for equal rights in America wherein John Coltrane wanted to create a spiritual unity with this music in order to influence a social change [5] – by heart.



[6]

During several practice sessions I played on percussion with a jazz ensemble; the members were so impressed that I could play with them at the Stockholm Jazz festival [7] that summer. Afterwards I regularly performed with varying musicians in Stockholm and later in Copenhagen.

My beloved practised and studied Buddhism and meditation in Stockholm in order to give meaning to his life. Under his influence, I

slowly engaged in the Buddhist and Taoist side of Oriental wisdom. He could use some help with comprehending the source texts written in Sanskrit. Together we followed this way of living in Stockholm: he studied the content and I supported at the form.

Friday and Saturday before the last week in June, I celebrated Midsummer in Scandinavia for the first time. In Stockholm the night lasted only a few hours and that Saturday and Sunday the entire public life was closed. We stayed at friends for participating in this traditional celebration.

A few days after midsummer my beloved and I began our holiday trip to the North Cape in the Goddess. By the almost deserted landscape of Northern Sweden – where your neighbour is your best friend, because there is no one else in the vicinity – we drove in eternal light.





Just before the border with Norway we saw Lappporten. My beloved named it the Empty Gate [9].



[10]

He asked me what "empty" is in Sanskrit. Hereupon I replied "śūnya" [11] that is akin to the English word "shunt" [12] where a low parallel resistor causes a parallel circuit within an electric circuit.

He began to chant a part of the Heart Sutra:



रूपं शून्यता शून्यतैव रूपम् ।

rūpaṁ śūnyatā śūnyataiva rūpaṁ ।

रूपान्न पृथक् शून्यता शून्यताया न पृथग्रूपं ।

rūpānna pṛthak śūnyatā śūnyatāyā na pṛthagrūpaṁ ।

यद्रूपं सा शून्यता या शून्यता तद्रूपं ।

yadrūpaṁ sā śūnyatā yā śūnyatā tadrūpaṁ ।

एवं वेदनासंज्ञासंस्कारविज्ञानानि च शून्यता ।

evaṁ vedanāsañjñāsaṁskāravijñānāni ca śūnyatā ।

एवं शारिपुत्र सर्वधर्मा शून्यतालक्षणा अनुत्पन्ना अनिरुद्धा अमला विमला अनूना

असंपूर्णाः ।

evaṁ śāriputra sarvadharmā śūnyatālakṣaṇā anutpannā aniruddhā amalā  
vimalā anūnā asampūrṇāḥ ।

तस्मात्तर्हि शारिपुत्र शून्यतायां न रूपम् न वेदना न संज्ञा न संस्कारा न विज्ञानं ।

tasmāttarhi śāriputra śūnyatāyāṁ na rūpaṁ na vedanā na sañjñā na saṁskārā na  
vijñānaṁ ।

न चक्षुर्न श्रोत्रं न घ्राणं न जिह्वा न कायो न मनो न रूपं न शब्दो न गंधो न रसो

न स्प्रष्टव्यं न धर्माः ।

na cakṣurna śrotraṁ na ghrāṇaṁ na jihvā na kāyo na mano na rūpaṁ na śabda  
na gandho na raso na spraṣṭavyaṁ na dharmāḥ ।

The Heart Sutra can be listened at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0jcx9fnoWc>

A free rendering in English:

*Form is equal to emptiness as emptiness is equal to form;*

*Form itself is empty and emptiness is form;*

*So also feeling, knowledge, formation and consciousness.*

*Thus Shariputra, all Dharmas are empty of characteristics.*

*They are not made, nor destroyed, nor defiled and they are not pure;*

*And they neither increase nor diminish.*

*There is no form, feeling, cognition, formation, or consciousness;*

*no eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, or mind;*

*no sights, sounds, smells, tastes, objects of touch, or Dharmas;*

I said that the Empty Gate may give access to the Nirvana [13]. He replied that the Empty Gate was also empty of Nirvana and he shone [14] like a god. My beloved remained perfectly shining well beyond the North Cape.

[1] Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam\\_War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam_War)

[2] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm\\_archipelago](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm_archipelago)

[3] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miles\\_Davis\\_Quintet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miles_Davis_Quintet)

[4] See also: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Coltrane](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Coltrane)

[5] Source: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/A\\_Love\\_Supreme](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Love_Supreme)

[6] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A\\_Love\\_Supreme](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Love_Supreme)

[7] Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm\\_Jazz\\_Festival](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm_Jazz_Festival)

[8] Source image: <http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nalovardo>

[9] The Mumonkan – in English often translated in Gateless Gate - is a collection of 48 Zen Koans compiled by the Zen monk Mumon in the 13<sup>th</sup> century after Christ.

The character 無 (*wú*) has a fairly straightforward meaning: *no, not, or without*.

However, within Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, the term 無 (*wú*) is often a synonym for 空 (*sunyata*). This implies that the 無 (*wú*) rather than negating the gate (as in "gateless") is specifying it, and hence refers to the "Gate of Emptiness". This is consistent with the Chinese Buddhist notion that the "Gate of Emptiness" 空門 is basically a synonym for Buddhism, or Buddhist practice. 門 (*mén*) is a very common character meaning *door* or *gate*. However, in the Buddhist sense, the term is often used to refer to a particular "aspect" or "method" of the Dharma teachings. Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Gateless\\_Gate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Gateless_Gate)

There are four well known versions in English:

Aitken, Robert, *The Gateless Barrier, The Wu-men Kuan (Mumonkan)*. New York: North Point Press, 2000

Sekida, Katsuki, *Two Zen Classics – Mumonkan & Hekiganroku*. New York: Weatherhill, 1977

Shibayama, Zenkei, *The Gateless Barrier, Zen Comments on the Mumonkan*. Boston: Shambhala, 1974

Yamada Kôun Roshi, *Gateless Gate (Mumonkan)*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1990

[10] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lapland\\_\(Zweeds\\_landschap\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lapland_(Zweeds_landschap))

[11] “Empty, void” according to: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

[12] According to Shorter Oxford English Dictionary a natural or artificial blood vessel to divert the blood stream.

[13] “Land without forest” according to: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

[14] The word Deva whereof Deus in Latin, Zeus in Greec and Dieu in French arose, is connected in Sanskrit with the verb root “Div” meaning amongst others “to shine, to play, to increase”.

# Back to the civilised world

*2 December 2012*

From the Empty Gate to the North Cape, we travelled in the eternal light. No night, no darkness, no visions of murdered villagers who wanted to escape from the nightly fire in the forest, no vigils for the breath of the deceased, only the constant day where the sun did not set. This peaceful world without nightly phantoms was new to me. Finally I could sleep quietly.

My beloved was in euphoria about passing the Empty Gate – his “Here and Now” was boundlessly connected with the universe. At the North Cape he did not need any sleep; he rested peacefully sitting on the ground while I slept.



[1]

The outward journey to the Empty Gate in the north was straightforward. The return to the civilised world included many detours along the winding coast of the fjords in Norway. From the North Cape my beloved studied the endlessly intertwined worlds described in the Avatamsaka Sūtra [2].

My beloved was deeply moved by the abundance of descriptions of these intertwined worlds. Dumbfounded he read that there had existed many Buddhas in the past; and in the future unmentionable Buddhas would follow according to this sūtra. Until that moment my beloved with his American Protestant Christian background knew but one god. After he had studied Buddhism, that one god was replaced by Buddha.

The road to the Empty Gate led to a unity including the comprehensive Buddhist universe, but now this sūtra proclaimed the existence of infinitely intertwined universes in which many, many Buddhas were involved. His dismay was complete, just as complete as my amazement about the eternal days and about the infinitely intertwining separation of mountain landscape and sea along the coasts of the Norwegian fjords.



[3]

During our return along the Norwegian coast, the nights with my dark phantoms came back almost unnoticed. I kept the vigil while my beloved slept. In the northern ports and places I was an attraction – not many people arrived with a blue-dark complexion. Fortunately we were in transit; my mask of an idol evaporated on leaving the place.

After a few weeks of study in the Avatamsaka Sūtra, my beloved was used to the intertwining of the universes, but he also read that the universes are mirrored in each other and thereby affect each other. He could understand this intellectually when he looked at the water and the air in the fjords, but these thoughts were inconsistent with his cultural background. His euphoria and happiness after passing the Empty Gate was shocked upon reading this sūtra.





[3a]

The descriptions of Indra's Net [4] brought some clarification in the confusion that had arisen after studying the abundance of intertwined worlds, but he experienced this model as artificial. The euphoria and liberation of the Northern Cape changed in care and doubt about an infinite winding road that my beloved could never finish during his life. A parable of my father – about an endless life with many rebirths in which living beings in many manifestations (from microbe to enlightened people and gods via individual universes) followed the road to a blissful existence – gave no rest. My beloved uttered gloomy comments upon the description of the 32 abodes "from hells, titans, hungry ghosts, animals, people, gods in 22 categories to five spheres of infinite space, consciousness and emptiness" [5] in the long discourses of Buddha.

From the Sognefjord we decided to travel to Oslo via a direct route along stave churches. First we visited the stave church in Kaupanger and then the oldest stave church in Urnes with a crucifix whereof part

of the original paint came from Afghanistan according to the guide. The dark night was inside the Church with glimmer from above – outside there was the excess of the summer light.



[6]

My beloved and I made a day trip on the plateau of Hardangervidda [7]. To the North the clouds and the landscape appeared to go on endlessly. My beloved compared the repeating clouds with the intertwined universes from the Avatamsaka Sūtra. He wondered how we can achieve the enlightenment of all the intertwined universes. I indicated that the clouds and the worlds can take care for themselves; the wind is the same everywhere – ultimately there are no two kinds of wind [8]. After my remark my beloved started to beam again; his concerns and confusion were gone. My nightly phantoms remained.



[9]

The joy of my beloved remained in my life until the following spring he returned to his parents' house.

[1] Source image: <http://nn.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nordkapp>

[2] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avatamsaka\\_Sutra](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avatamsaka_Sutra). De full name of this sūtra is: “ Mahāvaiṣṭya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra ( महावैपुल्यबुद्धावतंसकसूत्र )” or “The extensive marvellously decorated garland of flower-buds sūtra”, wherein “Avatamsaka” means amongst others “marvellously shining garland” and “sūtra” stands for “transference of the good”.

[3] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Geirangerfjord.jpg>

[3a] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sognefjord>

[4] See also: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence, part 1*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2012, p. 65 - 67

[5] *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*. Massachusetts: Wisdom Publications, 1995 p. 38-39

[6] Source image: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stabkirche\\_Urnes](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stabkirche_Urnes)

[7] See also: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hardangervidda>

[8] See: Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998 p. 110.

[9] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hardangervidda>



## Back to the civilised world 2

*9 December 2012*

After the day trip on the plateau of Hardangervidda – a National Park in Norway – my beloved and I travelled in one day to Oslo. In Gol [1] we visited our last medieval stave church in Norway. Actually, it is a copy of the original that once stood on this site and now is placed in an open air museum near Oslo. It struck us that this church was much lusher than the stave churches that we had seen before – we were approaching the civilised world.



[2]



From Gol to Oslo the road became fuller and busier, we approached a medium-sized city. The quiet floating on the roads in our Goddess [3] was finished, now traffic required attention again.

Upon our arrival in Oslo we first put the tent in the city camp-ground. Then we visited the Norwegian Folk Museum where we saw the original stave church from Gol again. We noticed that the interior of the traditional Norwegian houses was always the same and always different. The design of the furniture and the household was different, but inside the house the objects were always positioned in the same place. This created an immediate recognition for every resident and visitor, while the individuality of the residents was shown. A unity in multitude and multitude in the same design.



[4]

The next day my beloved and I visited the Frogner Park [5] in which a sculpture collection made by the Norwegian sculptor Gustav Vigeland [6] is exhibited. In the Centre of the park stands a monolithic column composed of intertwined human figures. My beloved was deeply



touched by the similarity with the stave churches and by the intertwined worlds of people portrayed. He thought the column looked like a forefinger reminding us that we will once pass Heaven's Gate together.



[7]

I told my beloved a parable which my father has heard of his ancestors:

*"When I was a child, my parents taught me and said: "Let Your heart carry our lives! For peace will increase in days and nights of Your life. Our benefit and fidelity will not leave You, You carry them, breathes them and the world shares in Your peace [8]. Hereinafter my father began to recite the first verses of the Īśāvāsyā Upaniṣad:*

*"That is overall. This is overall. Overall comes from overall. Take away overall from overall and thus remains overall. Peace, peace, peace".*

*In a pitch dark period of my life I had violated the trust of my parents. My heart was cold and empty, my fidelity to the peace in the world changed in hatred and I enjoyed myself in wrongdoing that I committed to fill my heart with vanity. One night I set the forest around a village on fire, the wind and the fire gods spread the flames. I shot on everything and everyone who wanted to escape the flames. I was happy! [9]*

*The next morning I saw that everything of value for filling my empty heart with vanity was turned into ashes and corpses by the fire. The stench of rotting and the flies remained. Hungry and empty I moved on. On the road I filled my stomach with food and my heart with compassion. Kindliness, detachment and joy came into view again.*

*Years later I shared my food with several hungry beggars. They thanked me with the words: "All in All, may you realize that Our fidelity and benefit cannot leave You". Via the words of these passers-by, my heart felt again the continuing benefit and fidelity that I always carry and breath wherever I go".*

*After this parable my father taught me the meaning of the keyword "realize" that is composed of "re", "all", "īśe" [10], whereby "realize" origins from honouring "again and again", "all and everything", "in Your omnipotence".*

*Wherever You go and whatever You do, the benefit and fidelity will not leave You".*

At the end of this parable my beloved said that everyone and everything is enlightened; we must realize it constantly. I still had a

long way to go. Fortunately, there was benevolence and joy in my life again; detachment would follow soon.

After the visit to the Frogner Park we walked a few streets in the Embassy district where a friend of ours lived with a group in a beautiful traditional wooden house. During our visit we heard worrying news from Amsterdam. Many of our friends and former lovers suffered from a mysterious illness whereby they quickly lost weight; the disease fully exhausted them. The doctors had no cure and no answer; at the West Coast of America several distant friends were already deceased by this mystery.

When retrieving the post-restante at the post office in Oslo, my beloved read in a letter from his sister that his mother was very ill. During a phone call with his sister, he heard that – due to her illness – his mother had less than a year to live.

Although we felt at home in Oslo, our concern about the fate of our friends in Amsterdam and the illness of the mother of my beloved overshadowed our stay in this city. After a week we travelled to Stockholm via an area with many lakes. At the beginning of autumn we arrived in Gamla Stan. The leaves on the trees at the water front showed their red, brown, yellow glow. That autumn and winter was the last time my beloved and I were carefree together.



[11]

[1] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gol,\\_Norway](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gol,_Norway)

[2] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gol,\\_Norway](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gol,_Norway)

[3] Our white Citroën DS

[4] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norwegian\\_Museum\\_of\\_Cultural\\_History](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norwegian_Museum_of_Cultural_History)

[5] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frogner\\_Park](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frogner_Park)

[6] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav\\_Vigeland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_Vigeland)

[7] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vigelandpark>

[8] The first sentences of this parable are a free rendering of chapter 3 of the Proverbs of Salomo in the Old Testament.

[9] See the last part of book 1 of the Mahābhārata where at the fire in the Khandava forest, Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa shot arrows with joy to all that leaves the forest. Sources: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/maha/index.htm> boek 1 Section CCXXVII. And further: Katz, Ruth Cecily, *Arjuna in the Mahābhārata: Where Krishna is, there is victory*. Delhi: Molital Banarsidass Publishers, 1990, p. 71 – 84; in her study Ruth Katz can hardly explain these crimes done by Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa.

[10] This is the locative of Īśa. In Sanskrit Īśa means amongst others “God in Heaven”, “someone with omnipotence”. The sound of īśā resembles “ich” – the German pronoun first person singular.

[11] Source image: <http://www.communityofsweden.com/photos/photo/?photo=41411>. This image is not included in the Creative Common Licence; see the conditions for use via the following hyperlink: <http://www.communityofsweden.com/footer/editorial/community-of-sweden/terms-of-service/>



# Points to the snow

*15 December 2012*

The first snow fell early in autumn; the days were still not very short. In that dark morning the crackling of snow under my shoes sounded muted in the Prästgatan wherein the Golden House of hopes and dreams was situated on the island Gamla Stan in Stockholm.



[1]

The white snow and cold absorbed all colours; the Moon and the starry sky merged with the snow and the full colours of last summer



were gone. In the course of the morning the snow was smeared by everyday life. That evening a vague glow appeared in the light of lanterns.



[2]

My beloved came home that night from a visit to his ill mother in America. His return was the beginning of a big change in our lives. He wanted to live closer to his mother, because due to her illness she had less than one year to live. During his stay in America my beloved visited various Buddhist communities; he had decided to enter a convent near the house of his parents. The contact with his father was still stiff by their mutual incomprehension about his evasion of military service during the Vietnam war. Unbeknownst to my beloved, I wrote a letter to his father in which I made a comparison between the

general pardon of president Carter in 1977 for evasion of military service during the Vietnam war and the parable of the lost son [3] in the New Testament: Your son was lost and he is found [4] by the general pardon. After the next visit to his parents my beloved returned joyfully; his father had welcomed him with open arms.

That winter my beloved toiled on a Buddhist question in which a teacher points to the snow and asks: "Is there any that can go beyond this colour?". Another teacher said: "At this point I had have pushed it over for him". A third teacher said: "He only knows how to push down, he does not know how to help up". [5]

This question is about passing the Empty Gate and the state of enlightenment. Snow, cold and white – in which the Moon merges – are metaphors for enlightenment. The first teacher asked for any beyond this colour where this colour stands for the road after passing the Empty Gate or after enlightenment. The other teacher immediately removes the illusion of enlightenment and a road after passing the Empty Gate by amongst others to refer to the colourless colour and to the Bodhisattva ideal from Mahāyāna Buddhism in which a human who is on the verge of enlightenment – or even a living Buddha – forgoes out of compassion until everything and everyone is able, to enter enlightenment or the state of a Buddha. My beloved could comprehend the statements of the first two teachers, but that winter he toiled on the third statement.

Just as many people, I struggled with the short days in northern countries. Our last common Christmas and New Year's evening we celebrated exuberantly with many friends and acquaintances. Fortunately, in January and February the days got longer.

That winter my beloved sold the country house in the Stockholm archipelago and the Golden House in the old town of Stockholm. For a short time we moved to a rented wooden house on the island of Södermalm where we had a beautiful view on the inner city of Stockholm. Here we lived our last two months together. My beloved studied and I played percussion in several jazz ensembles.



[6]

At the beginning of the spring my beloved asked me what the meaning of "māyā" is in Sanskrit. I told him that in the distant antiquity "māyā" had the meaning of "art and wisdom" and later the meaning of "illusion", "compassion, sympathy" and "one of the 24 small Buddhist sins" [7] were added. The name of the mother of Siddhartha Gautama was Māyādevī wherein "devī" as feminine form of "deva" [8] means amongst others "feminine goddess". I also said that my father has

taught me that "māyā" takes shape in the form of the general or cosmic consciousness and thus is directly connected with the all-encompassing Īśa, and in addition in the form of the individual or human consciousness and thus often has the meaning of illusion [9]. Both forms stem from and are included in the one reality.

After this explanation my beloved beamed. By the warmth of the sun glow the blossom buttons opened again. With the blossoms of spring my beloved moved to America permanently.



[10]

That summer, his mother past quietly. Four years later I received a sad message that my beloved had died from the mysterious disease that plagued our friends and acquaintances. In our correspondence he has never mentioned it. And always when the blossom ...

In the society where I from, community means everything – you are who you know [11]. In Stockholm I was the friend of my beloved at best. Now I no longer really knew anybody, I was a nobody in Stockholm. At the end of the spring I terminated the rent of our beautiful wooden house and I moved to Copenhagen.

[1] Photo of the Prästgatan on the island Gamla Stan in the beginning of June.

Source image: <http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pr%C3%A4stgatan>

[2] Photo of the Prästgatan on the Island Gamla Stan in the beginning of December.

Source image: <http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pr%C3%A4stgatan>

[3] See the Gospel of Luke 15: 11-32 in the New Testament

[4] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parable\\_of\\_the\\_Prodigal\\_Son](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parable_of_the_Prodigal_Son)

[5] See also: <http://zazen.rutgers.edu/talks/yangshanpointstosnow.html>

[6] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm\\_during\\_the\\_Age\\_of\\_Liberty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm_during_the_Age_of_Liberty)

[7] Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

[8] The word Deva whereof Deus in Latin, Zeus in Greek and Dieu in French arose, is connected in Sanskrit with the verb root “Div” meaning amongst others “to shine, to play, to increase”.

[9] See also: Nikhilananda, Swami, *The Upanishads – A new Translation, Volume I*. New York: Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 2003, p. 57, 58

[10] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kungstr%C3%A4dg%C3%A5rden>

[11] See also: Reybrouck, David van, *Congo – Een geschiedenis*. Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2012, p. 58

# Copenhagen and Amsterdam, a reunion

28 December 2012

With all my belongings in the trunk of the Citroën DS, I left Stockholm on an early morning in spring. During the Nordic cycle that lasted more than one year, my incarnation wherein I had adopted the appearance of an idol earlier in Amsterdam, evaporated. In the nearness of my beloved I had returned in the world of ordinary mortals.

Just before the departure to his new stay in a monastery in America, my beloved was engaged in the Buddhist question: "*One gain, One loss*" [1]. Now he had left more than two months ago, my life felt like a gain and a loss – a void and a new destination. In the notes to this Buddhist question was written: "*If you want to avoid misery, rely on your own lot*" and "*Gain and loss, right and wrong, let go of them all at once*" [2]. Both sentences were applicable to my new incarnation as ordinary mortal. Much later during the quest to "Who are you", I may get more insight in the first sentence. The peace of the second sentence I hope to find in my final homecoming.

Via a road along the many waters of several inland lakes – to which I had become accustomed during my stay in Holland – I drove in my white Citroën DS from Stockholm to Malmö. There I took the ferry to Copenhagen. First I visited my friends where I could stay a few nights. With their help I rented a room in the attic floor of a characteristic House in the Klosterstræde in the Centre of Copenhagen near the University and various libraries. First I saw this room as a temporary stay for several months; eventually I lived there for several years. I felt



immediately at home. From my window I could see the moon and the starry sky at night. During daytime the name of the street reminded me of my beloved who really lived in a monastery at that time. I had received his book with Buddhist question [3] as a farewell gift. From time to time I read a passage from this book whereupon the question found a place in my life as far as I could realise. In this way my beloved and I remained connected with each other.



[4]

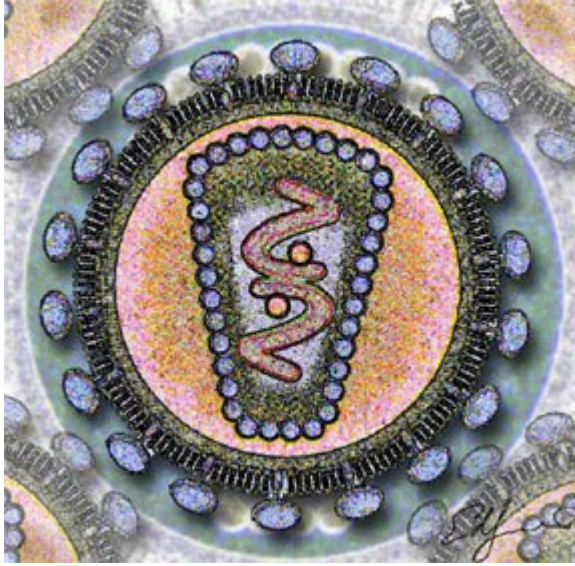


My years in Copenhagen I lived from the legacy – that my beloved had left for me – supplemented by a small income from performances in Jazz ensembles. Almost every day I visited the colourful painted houses along the Nyhavn, that reminded me of the canals and the fields with flowers in Holland.



[5]

My first autumn in Copenhagen I received sad news from Amsterdam; one of my precious lovers died from the mysterious disease which at that time around 1983 had received the name HIV and AIDS [6]. After reading the funeral card, I drove to Amsterdam in one day. Upon arrival I heard that many more of my former lovers suffered from this disease, which is caused by transfer of a virus – that affects the human immune system – during the love game [7].



[8]

In this sad environment I was welcomed by my former friends and acquaintances as an long lost friend and they saw me as a refund idol. I had discarded my mask of an idol during my stay in Sweden. The former carefree feast of everlasting love that exotically wafted around me through Amsterdam, was gone forever.

The funeral of my deceased lover was impressive. One of our loved ones was too ill to attend. With several former friends we cared for him until his death; his funeral was also intense. Both times all relatives, friends and acquaintances were present. For a number of lovers it was a sombre forecast for their future.

After this second funeral I fled to Copenhagen. Again it was an escape from my earlier stay in Amsterdam where I did not belong anymore and it was at the same time a flight for this disease wherefrom I was saved by a wondrous lot [9]. Later, during a medical examination it

appeared that I belonged to a small group, which is resistant to the infection of HIV.

Back in Copenhagen, I was again an ordinary mortal, that was only noticed by a black/blue colour and rhythmic play on percussion during Jazz music.

[1] The Zen Koan: “Fayan points to the blinds”

[2] See: Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998 p. 118

[3] Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998

[4] Source image: [http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Den\\_danske\\_guldalder](http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Den_danske_guldalder)

[5] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copenhagen>

[6] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HIV/AIDS>. See also: Quammen, David, *Spillover: Animal Infections and the Next Human Pandemic*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012 p. 383 – 490. This popular scientific book describes several studies on the origin and the global spread of AIDS.

[7] See also: [http://www.rivm.nl/Bibliotheek/Professioneel\\_Praktisch/Richtlijnen/Infectieziekten/LCI\\_richtlijnen/LCI\\_richtlijn\\_Hivinfectie](http://www.rivm.nl/Bibliotheek/Professioneel_Praktisch/Richtlijnen/Infectieziekten/LCI_richtlijnen/LCI_richtlijn_Hivinfectie)

[8] Cross-section of the Human Immunodeficientie Virus (HIV). Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aids>

[9] Source: <http://www.nationaalkompas.nl/gezondheid-en-ziekte/ziekten-en-aandoeningen/infectieziekten-en-parasitaire-ziekten/soa/aids-en-hiv-infectie/welke-factoren-beinvloeden-de-kans-op-hiv-infectie-en-aids/>

# A cold winter

*2 January 2013*

At the beginning of the winter, I came back to my attic room in Copenhagen. I mourned for the loss and the death of two former lovers from Amsterdam who had died from AIDS. A few days after my return I was ill with a cold. I had fever, I sweated at night in bed, I had a headache, my breathing was difficult and I felt exhausted. In the library I had read the beginning symptoms of AIDS – I was afraid that I was also infected by the virus. After a few weeks the cold was gone, but my concern for infection with the disease remained.

My attic room was not properly heated. That winter I was only in my room at night; I slept under a thick duvet at the open window when the weather allowed. In bad weather with the window closed, I felt trapped in my room; my nightly fearful visions could find no way out. During daytime I was rarely home; usually I was at friends, I read in the library or I played in a jazz band.



[1]

In this attic room I slowly detached myself from the three embarrassments [2] , which I read in the book with Buddhist questions that I had received as farewell gift by my previous beloved.

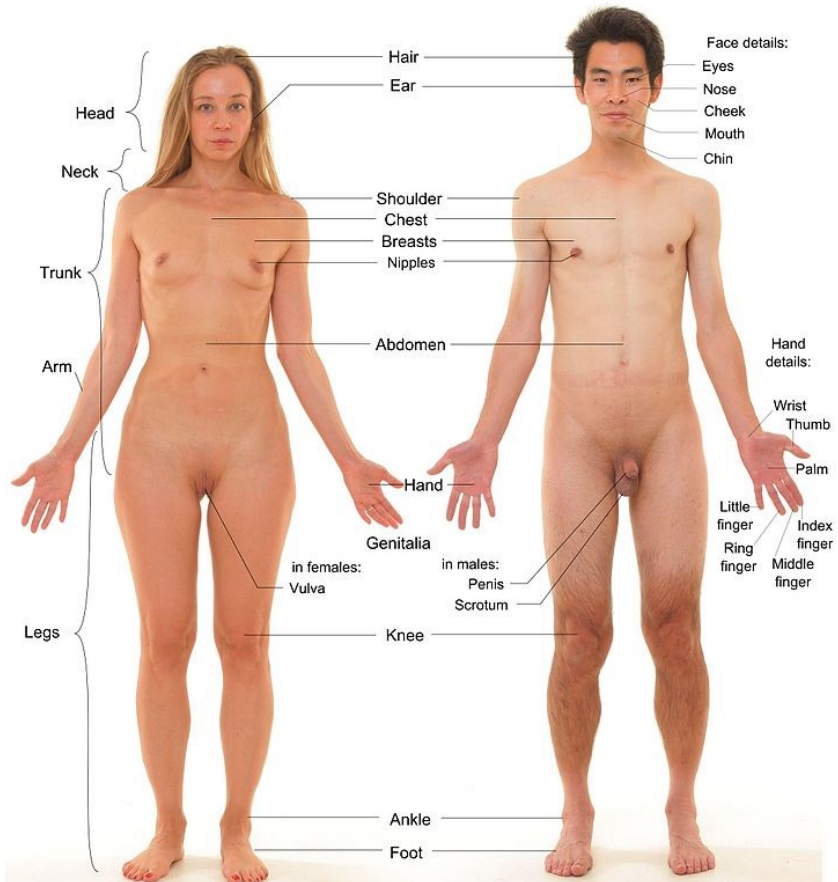
The first embarrassments wherefrom I had detached myself at the end of my youth, was an own home. As a child I had moved around with my mother and her herd; our home was the place where we had stayed temporarily. In my time as child soldier, the militia was my temporal home. After my flight from the militia, I continued to wander with temporary resting places. During my stay in Copenhagen my house became more and more transparent coinciding with the human world during daytime and with the universe during night-time when the window of my attic room was open. Once I hoped to arrive home, maybe at the end of the Odyssey to "Who are you".



[3]



The second embarrassments that I gave up gradually, was an own body, because due to aging my appearance as exotic idol eroded and because due to the threat of infection with HIV I saw the individuality of my body in a different light. In Copenhagen my body became more and more connected with the city, the world and, of course, the universe.





The third embarrassment that disappeared gradually, was an own life. After reading and studying in libraries in the neighbourhood of my attic room, I became increasingly connected with all the knowledge in the world. I also read in a book the questions: "*Where is a Buffalo when it is eaten by a lion*" and "*How does a lion change after eating Buffalo?*".



[5]

Together with my body, my life became gradually connected to the world and the universe. At that time I read in a novel by Hermann Hesse: "*Deine Seele ist die ganze Welt*" [6] - or in English: "*Your soul is the whole world*". In the dark at the open window in my attic room, my life became interconnected with the whole space.

The legacy that my beloved had left behind for me, depleted. I had no money left to maintain the white Citroën DS; it was time to give this Goddess another destination. With a part of the selling price, I bought

a bike. After some practice I could move around with the inhabitants floating on the roads through the city.



[7]

The next spring I made several long bike tours through Europe.

[1] Source image: [//fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comble\\_\(architecture\)](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comble_(architecture))

[2] Source: Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998 p. 120 – 124. The “three embarrassments” are freely rendered in this post.

[3] “The Glass House or Johnson house, built in 1949 in New Canaan, Connecticut – USA, was designed by Philip Johnson as his own residence”. Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glass\\_House](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glass_House)

[4] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human\\_anatomy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_anatomy)

[5] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life>

[6] See: Hesse Hermann, *Siddhartha*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag: 1989 p. 10.

[7] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cycling\\_in\\_Copenhagen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cycling_in_Copenhagen). This photo was made around 2010.

# A new year

20 January 2013

Around Easter the winter of that year was gone. The sun emerged and nature flourished again. Next to my city bike I had bought a touring bike by which I made several bike tours on the islands Amager and Sjælland whereupon the city of Copenhagen is located. In a few months I learned not only to cycle well, but I started to love this form of gliding over the roads in weather and wind.



[1]

Near the end of spring I received again disturbing letters from former lovers in Amsterdam; they also were seriously ill with AIDS. I decided to travel to Amsterdam on my touring bike within a week. After a preparation of a small week, I departed to Amsterdam for a few months with a packed bike. My attic room I had temporary sublet to a friend.

Eventually I did two weeks about the trip, because I had almost always headwind. On the long straights, the turning of the pedals changed in turning of the prayer wheels in my experience, sometimes difficult, sometimes without effort.



[2]

On my way to Amsterdam I had the Buddhist question of the "iron ox" [3] in my mind. Some of my ancestors travelled on horseback. In



Africa I had noticed people travelling on an ox. Now I was a rider on an iron steed instead of on horseback.



[4]

I missed the conversations on this question with my beloved who already lived in America at that time. My clue was the verse on the question:

*"The works of an iron ox – when the seal (of enlightenment [5] and of an idol) remains, the impression is ruined". [6]*

Cycling through northern Germany and the Netherlands my bike slowly took the shape of the "iron ox" in the Buddhist question.

Sometimes nicely gliding, sometimes toiling during headwind, my iron ox did its work; we steadily glided on the road and in the environment through the universe.

On the road I could usually stay with people during the night in exchange for stories or for some help on the farm. At resting place I tried to earn some money with magic, because during my bicycle trip I had no income from playing percussion with jazz ensembles. After some practice I could earn a national currency at each stop with two magic rope shows – which I had learned from a friend in Copenhagen; in Germany a D-mark and in a Netherlands guilder. During the first presentation a rope slid through my neck. A demonstration of this performance can be seen on the following video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&feature=endscreen&v=aSMZJ0w3DyM>

During the second presentation, the rope glided unexpectedly through a ring. An example of this representation is shown on the following video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xx7UjeZYn4>

When I performed both performances every day at five resting places, I earned enough money for daily meals for myself and another traveller with whom I shared the meal.

That summer and autumn in Amsterdam, I lived with and cared for old friends and former lovers with AIDS. In addition, I enjoyed the Dutch beaches and the beautiful clouds in Netherlands.

At the end of the autumn I cycled to Copenhagen with the wind in my back. The winter I spent in my attic room with the long nights in which the moon, the stars and the ghosts kept me company. I stuck to this



rhythm of "heading to the south during summers" and "winters staying in Copenhagen" for several years; later on in my life I spent the winter in the south and passed the summer in the north.

Was this wintering in my attic room a penance for crimes committed as child soldier in a militia? Maybe, a year later I met a man who did constantly penance for his actions.

[1] Source image: <http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cykeltyper> . This photo is made in 2005 showing a cycle of a later date.

[2] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prayer\\_wheel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prayer_wheel)

[3] See: Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998 p. 125 – 130.

[4] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Os\\_\(rund\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Os_(rund)). The oxen in Africa were not so well fed.

[5] According to Mahāyāna Buddhism, human enlightenment spreads a smell of vanity. Enlightenment only exists when all and everyone is enlightened.

[6] The first two lines of vers in the koan Fengxue's "Iron Ox". See: Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998 p. 125 – 130.

# A man without qualities

*1 February 2013*

On a rainy afternoon during the second winter in Copenhagen, I met a man who would change the next five years in my life. I only learned the birth name of this man after his death; in my presence he called himself Raven. Suddenly he stood silently beside me. After he had introduced himself, we had dinner in a small restaurant near Nyhavn. That night we spent together and that night he slept in my attic room. In the course of the next five years, I had met him with intervals in many places in Europe; usually he stayed an evening and a night, sometimes we were a few days together.

During these years he told me about his past; he was taciturn about his work, but I understood that his profession had to do with trust and betrayal in all shapes and gradations. His work consisted of unobtrusively figuring out confidential information in other countries, and of the dissemination of altered or misleading information. Like me, Raven spoke many languages and dialects fluently without an accent; also in this way he adapted himself – as a chameleon – to his environment. He regularly changed name and passport.



[1]

From our conversations I understood that Raven was born in London near the end of the First World War. Several years before the Second World War he moved first to Heidelberg and later to Munich for his study philosophy and linguistics in Germany. There he met two friends for life – he called them Fox and Bear.

Fox was a fellow student who had grown up in the Rhineland and Bear was the father of their girlfriend. In all circumstances they remained faithful to each other and thus they had betrayed everything and everyone in their environment.

At the beginning of the Second World War, Fox and Raven retrieved strategic information in Germany for Russia and England. Bear was a

high officer in the German army who prevented Fox and Raven for their doom, because Bear despised the new regime in Germany with all his being, and because he loved his daughter dearly. During the Second World War, Raven went off to England several times and he returned in France, Belgium, Netherlands and Germany to disseminate misleading information and to retrieve new secret information with the help of acquaintances and relatives. Hereby he had deliberately endangered the lives of his relatives; some of his family had not survived the war.

At the end of the Second World War, Bear was made prisoner by the English. With help of his contacts in England Raven had assured that Bear could soon start soon a new life as a businessman in Germany.

After the war, Fox – with his preference for socialism and communism – decided to start working for the secret service in East Germany; he received a key position within this service.

Raven – with a tendency towards tradition – returned in June 1945 to England to work for a British secret service. First he said goodbye for good to his girlfriend – the daughter of Bear. She married Fox one month later. In February of the next year, a daughter was born from this marriage who looked like Raven, but she had the character of her mother.

Throughout the Cold War – invisible to the outside world – Raven was head of the Eastern European operations. Also in this position, he had endangered the lives of colleagues, friends, acquaintances and relatives; a number of his family did not survive their missions in Eastern Europe.



[2]

The emptiness caused by the death and absence of so many loved ones remained anywhere and any time in his life. With this fathomless emptiness and with his constant fear of discovery he did penance for his actions and for the betrayal of everyone and everything in his environment.

The following afternoon, he met an older sailor from Rostock in a bar in the Nyhavn. Later I understood that this sailor was his study friend Fox. Raven asked me to distract the attention from his entry in the bar.



[3]

This was the beginning of my small contributions to the work of Raven in the area of loyalty and betrayal that lasted until his death five years later. After his death, a distant cousin who had succeeded him in the work for a secret service, asked me for information; within this investigation I was involved in a meeting with Fox.

For Raven, I looked for meeting places and places to sleep that changed sometimes for unclear reasons. I distracted attention when Raven wanted to meet someone unobtrusively, because with my black/blue colour and my exuberant appearance I stood out anywhere. And I served as a beacon to see if a location was observed by opponents.





[4]

Was Raven also faithful to me? The answer is: as far as he could be within his activities. Looking back, I would never have wanted to miss the friendship and relationship with Raven, and I have had no regrets of my small share in the work of Raven.

[1] Source image: <http://otravida.wordpress.com/2010/03/26/march-26th-rush-hour-by-george-segal/> ; a photo of the sculptors "Rush Hour" made by George Segal. See also: *Histoire de la Vie privée*. Tome 5: De la première Guerre mondiale à nos jours. Red. Ariès, Philippe et al., p. 8

[2] Tanks at Checkpoint Charlie on October 27 during the Berlin Crisis in 1961. Bron afbeelding: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold\\_War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold_War)

[3] Source image: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nyhavn>

[4] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Smiley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Smiley)

# A man without a face [1]

7 February 2013

On November 9, 1989 my main contribution to the work of Raven began at 8 pm in the evening. We were in West Germany near Bonn. On the eight o'clock news, an item was announced regarding the spokesman for the East German Government who replied to a question by journalists when free travel for East German inhabitants would be possible, after some hesitation with: "Right now".



[2]

This was the signal for Raven to book our flights to West Berlin. That evening we practised my new role for several weeks. Due to my years

with my beloved in Sweden and Norway, I could flawlessly speak American with an East Coast accent from the vicinity of Washington.

The next morning Raven in the role of high employee of the German Ministry of Justice and I as high American officer travelled to West Berlin. It was my first time in an airplane. During the flight I looked in amazement at the apparent landscape that was formed by the clouds. This rarefied world reminded me of the fjords in Norway and of the ever repeating clouds during the day trip with my American beloved across the Hardangervidda [3] . Did we live together now in this dream landscape?

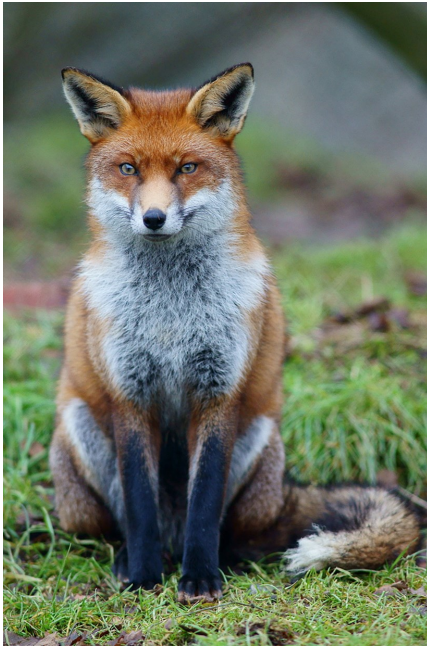


[4]

Upon arriving at the airport Tempelhof in Berlin we moved to the Kaufhaus des Westens to buy additional clothes for our work in East Berlin.

That night Raven and I crossed the just opened border post to East Berlin together with East Germans who returned home after visiting West Berlin for the first time after more than 28 years. We took two rooms in a hotel near Unter den Linden.

The next morning we visited the headquarters of the East German secret service in Lichtenberg area. Upon arrival we introduced ourselves as representatives of German and U.S. Government agencies who wished to ensure that the archives were not handed over to wrong persons. We were welcomed by three heads of units who were in charge of the service after the resignation of the political leader a few days before. One of the heads of unit looked exactly like the sailor from Rostock that Raven had met some years earlier in Nyhavn in Copenhagen. I understood that this head of unit was Fox.



[5]

Upon the morning meeting it was decided that we were allowed to make an inventory of the archives under the supervision of the heads of unit. Raven and Fox would carry out the detailed inventory, and another head and I would supervise as second party. The office of the previous political leader was given to me as temporary workspace.

That afternoon the general overview of the archives in the main building and the outbuildings was made. The next four weeks Raven and Fox prepared the detailed inventory. I suggested a lot of awkward and painful questions about the regional archives: during these weeks I studied the answers.

At the end of the investigation, a fivefold reports was made; one report for each head of unit and a report for Raven and for me. Everything was ready well before Christmas. During the period of Christmas shopping, Raven and I left West Berlin under different names by plane toward Frankfurt.

Later, I suspected that Raven and Fox had adapted the archives as much as possible to their advantage – the pages that could not bear the light were gone or replaced by innocent documents. Fox and Raven had prepared this operation very well.

When in January 1990 the people of Berlin invaded the building of this service, the archives about Raven and Fox were in full order thanks to their loyal cooperation within the limits of the law. During later investigation no one could find any irregularities in their actions during the Cold War.



[6]

A year later I met Fox another times in Vienna.

[1] Although the title of this blog corresponds to: Wolf, Markus, *Man without a Face – The Autobiography of Communism's greatest Spymaster*. New York: Random House, 1997, there is no link at all between the author - and the content of this autobiography - and Raven, Fox and the Narrator and their fictional activities. The writer of this blog has no indication and/or knowledge of adjusting, cleaning up and obscuring information from East German archives.

[2] Source image: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berliner\\_Mauer](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berliner_Mauer)

[3] See also: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hardangervidda>

[4] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cloud>

[5] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red\\_fox](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_fox)

[6] Source image: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministerium\\_f%C3%BCr\\_Staatssicherheit](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministerium_f%C3%BCr_Staatssicherheit)



## A man without a future

*10 February 2013*

Upon finishing my part in the activities of Raven in East Berlin, within a year I met him a number of times in different places in Europe. Raven was handing over his post to his successor – a distant cousin, who investigated the history of this British secret service as preparation for his new task. His cousin would like to meet Fox, and I was requested to act as a person in the middle due to my striking appearance.

The life of Fox was substantially changed since I met him the last time in the headquarters of the East German secret service just after the fall of the Berlin wall. At that time – he with two other heads of unit – acted as management of the service since the political leader of this service resigned two days before the fall of the wall. The day after the people of Berlin invaded the main building in January 1990, Fox had submitted his resignation. This resignation was refused whereafter Fox remained on his post until East Germany officially ceased to exist on 3 October 1990 [1].

After the summer holidays in 1990, I met Raven in Amsterdam. He looked grey and sad. After the initial greetings he told sad news. In January 1990 the wife and daughter of Fox moved to Augsburg in Bavaria in West Germany with help of the inheritance from Bear – the father of the wife of Fox – in order to start a new life. The family of Bear helped herewith. By fate, in the summer of 1990, the wife and daughter of Fox died in a serious road accident near Munich. Raven

showed me pictures of a happy reunion with their family in Bavaria. Again I noticed that the daughter of Fox looked exactly like Raven.



[2]

In the autumn of 1990 Raven sent me a letter from London with the request to leave Pension Arensberg at the Stubenring in Vienna at a certain time on a Saturday afternoon in order to arrange an opportunity for a meeting between Fox and the nephew of Raven. At the specified time I left the Pension and I walked in the direction of the Danube. Soon I recognized Fox who walked across the street along the Austrian Ministry. At the next traffic lights he crossed the road. I walked around the block via the Wiesingerstraße and the Biberstraße to the Österreichische Postsparkasse [3] – designed by Otto Wagner – at the Georg Coch-Platz.



[4]

I admired the façade of this building from 1906 and I saw from the corner of my eyes that I was followed by Fox and another man. I turned around and I walked quietly toward the Eagle on the façade of the former War Ministry of Austria.



[5]

At the Stubenring I admired the façade of the Postsparkasse again and I saw that the two men still followed me. Thereafter I walked in the direction of the Museum for Art and Industry. At the entrance to Café Prückel, I hesitated for a moment so that I could overlook the square. Everything seemed normal: so I went inside and I took a table at the window. The other man followed me and he introduced himself as the cousin of Raven. He asked if there was a seat for him at my table. After 10 minutes Fox entered and he greeted me with amazement on his face. I invited him to join us.



Fox and the Raven's cousin started their meeting. The cousin had many questions about the Second World War in which a number of family members and friends of Raven were arrested by the Germans in Netherlands and Belgium at the end of 1943 and in the spring of 1944; many of them did not survive the war. During the meeting, I got the impression that they – unknowingly – were handed over to the Germans on purpose, so that they would provide misleading information during their interrogations. The nephew of Raven wanted to know how Raven had been involved. During the interview Fox – at that time a young German communist – took all responsibility for the sacrifice of the many relatives of Raven in order to let the Germans believe that the invasion would take place at the end of the spring 1944 between at Calais and Ostend. Fox explained how he had passed the information about the droppings of the English secret agents to Bear. Raven's successor was not completely convinced and he would like to get more information about this period. After the meeting I knew almost certain that the real events at that time involved many stark dark pages about Raven.

Fox did not want to give information about his role during the Cold War: he said that everything about that period could be found in the archives of the East German secret service. I saw that he was worried about subpoenas for lawsuits about his role in this secret service; at that time no European country would give him a refugee status. A few years later he was sentenced to prison for his activities during the cold war; on appeal this sentence was overruled.

After an hour the nephew of Raven took farewell upon arranging a follow-up meeting with Fox. Hereinafter I gave my condolence to Fox with the loss of his wife and daughter. During settling the bill Fox

asked me to join him for a walk to the Stephansdom. During this walk he told the background of the origin of his marriage with the daughter of Bear.

Before and during the war his wife was secretly in love with Raven. After the war Fox came to know that he had been the unreachable platonic love of Raven since their study time before the war in Munich. One night just after the war – before Raven would move back to London – Raven told to the daughter of Bear that he could never love her, because he loved men. A few weeks after this night, it turned out the daughter of Bear was in expectation of their daughter. Fox knew since his boyhood that he could not have children due to a small physical defect. After the departure of Raven, Fox married his wife within a month. As resolute German woman, his wife did not wish to have any connection at all with Raven after her choice for Fox: they never met each other again. Every now and then Fox gave Raven a few pictures of his family.

Upon entering the Rotenturmstraße, Fox told that after the fall of the wall, his wife and daughter had bought a house in Augsburg where he, too, might live when his role in the East German secret service was finished; this hope was vanished. In front of Stephansdom we took farewell. Fox walked slowly away. I looked if he might be followed. When he passed the corner to the Goldschmiedgasse I looked at the entrance of the Dom as a sign that everything was fine.





[7]

This was the last time I saw Fox.



[1] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East\\_Germany](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Germany)

[2] This picture is taken in Schleswig-Holstein in Germany according to the vehicle registration plate of the fire truck. Source image: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stra%C3%9Fenverkehrsunfall>

[3] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%96sterreichische\\_Postsparkasse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%96sterreichische_Postsparkasse)

[4] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%96sterreichische\\_Postsparkasse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%96sterreichische_Postsparkasse)

[5] Source image: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kriegsministerium\\_\(Wien\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kriegsministerium_(Wien))

[6] This photo is of a later date. Source image: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caf%C3%A9\\_Pr%C3%BCckel](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caf%C3%A9_Pr%C3%BCckel)

[7] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephansdom\\_\(Wenen\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephansdom_(Wenen))

# A man without a life

*13 February 2013*

Two weeks later I received a letter via post restante in which the successor and nephew of Raven wrote that he wished to see me urgently. I was just about to return to Copenhagen to overwinter there. A day later, I met the cousin of Raven around 11 a.m. near Café Central [1] in the Herrengasse [2] in Vienna.



[3]

He looked tired and worried. After polite greetings and ordering a Viennese coffee speciality with pastries, he told me his concerns. A

week ago Raven died in an unnatural way. This news shocked me: I condoled him with the loss of his distant uncle. Then he said that the cause of death – murder or suicide – had to be sorted out as soon as possible; the autopsy did not give an univocal result. Our lives could depend on the outcome of this investigation; in case of murder we would have to take into account imminent danger, because the investigation into the past of Raven could have issued light on cases that, according to some, could not bear the light of day. The successor of Raven had only several suspicions.

Raven's cousin asked if I could bring him again in touch with Fox for further information about the past. Unfortunately the last time I had seen Fox was near Stephansdom. We speculated for a brief moment if Fox might be involved in the death cause of Raven. I gave two reasons why this was unlikely: Raven was the father of the daughter of Fox, and Raven and Fox had rearranged their past by a comprehensive inventory of the archives of the East German secret service. After an explanation of the way of this inventory, the nephew of Raven was more or less convinced that Fox had no part in the death of Raven.

During our discussion I suggested that Raven – with his many dark pages – had already lived on credit for a long time. The cousin told that due to his continuing successes, Raven had led the service for an additional generation; possibly he could not step down because of the need to continue the concealment of unpleasant activities by continued success. With this, I had to agree: Raven did penance for his actions constantly and he was always on guard for the unveiling of his loyalty and betrayal; maybe his unnatural death was murder and suicide at the same time.

The successor of Raven nodded dubiously after my speculation. In the ordinary world this explanation would suffice, but in the mirror palace inhabited by secret services of many countries, the view changed with

every move. His life was in danger and probably also my life was in danger. The nephew of Raven discussed several issues about Raven with me.



[4]

At the beginning of that evening I took unobtrusively the international train from Vienna to Munich. From there, I travelled to Hamburg, where I continued my journey to Copenhagen from a different railway station.

In Copenhagen I destroyed my British passports that I had received via Raven for unwitnessed travel through Europe. With pain in my heart I terminated the rent of my attic room in the Klosterstræde in the center of Copenhagen; herewith I said symbolically farewell to my two

beloved who had died in a short time. I sold my bikes and a week later I hitch-hiked to Malaga in southern Spain to spend the winter in a warmer environment. I changed my appearance and clothing so that I would be less noticed with my dark skin in Malaga and surroundings.

Five years ago I had tried to end my life as an idol by my departure from Amsterdam to Stockholm and later my flight to Copenhagen. With my departure from Copenhagen, my second incarnation – as magnet and idol for my surrounding – came finally to an end.

In the beginning of the next spring I hitch-hiked to Granada. There I admired the Alhambra with gardens that reflected the tales from thousand and one night.



[5]

The life of my first incarnation as Kṛṣṇa in Kenya and my second incarnation as idol in Northern Europe had left behind its furrows in my skin. When I talked, laughed, or looked concerned, these actions left behind there folds in my skin. A flight from my life – that had taken shape in my body – was no longer possible. The ceiling in the Hall of the Abencerrajes showed what was awaiting me.



[6]

After my visit to the Alhambra I let my beard grow.



[1] See also: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caf%C3%A9\\_Central](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caf%C3%A9_Central)

[2] "Gasse" originates from the Old High German word "Gazza" meaning "lane", "alley". See also: <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Gasse>

Probably "Gasse" is connected with the names of many streets in the Baltic countries that end in "Gatan", "Gade" or "Gate". In Sanskrit, the word "gate" is not only a conjugation of the verb with the meaning "going", but it is also the "locative or place-conjugation" of a noun derived from the verb "to go".

[3] Source image: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiener\\_Kaffeehaus](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiener_Kaffeehaus)

[4] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House\\_of\\_mirrors](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_of_mirrors)

[5] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alhambra>

[6] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alhambra>



## On the Way

17 February 2013

During my first wintering in South Spain I didn't need much. My camping equipment was sufficient for my stay at a winter campsite in Malaga near the Mediterranean Sea. In spring I woke up from my winter stay. First I hiked to Granada and then to Cordoba.

In Moorish times around 1000 AD, Cordoba was one of the largest cities in the world with at least half a million inhabitants. At that time Cordoba had the largest library in the world with over 400,000 books and in addition the Mezquita (Mosque) was built with more than 1000 marble columns. In the Catholic times the middle part of the mosque with associated columns was removed to make room for a Cathedral [1].



[2]

In the Cordoba mosque with the Cathedral inside, I thought of a Buddhist question included in the book that I had received as farewell gift from my late American beloved:

*"The ancient Buddha's are merged with the open pillars – what level of activity is this?" When everyone remained speechless, the master himself said for them: "On the South Mountain rising clouds, on the North Mountain falling rain". [3]*

Upon my departure from Copenhagen I had left the book behind in the University Library, because this collection of questions did not fit in my backpack. Before I had handed the book to the librarian, I read the Buddhist question:

*"When the fire at the end of time rages through and everything is destroyed, is this destroyed or not?" One master answered: "Destroyed, because it goes along with this". Another master answered: "Not destroyed, because it is the same as this". [4]*



[5]

During my first wintering in South Spain, I retired. After my life as idol in Amsterdam and my years with my beloved in Sweden and Norway, I had received my income from playing in jazz ensembles and also due to my limited share in the work of Raven. In Cordoba my savings were

depleted. I had fled from the world of secret services after my safety net was gone with the death of Raven, and in Southern Spain there were no jazz ensembles that were waiting for a percussionist without congas.

A part of my income I got by magic and by telling stories. The other part of my earnings came from alms. Quite young I was depending on a simple form of pension through a pay-as-you-go system that was in use for many centuries in several parts of Asia. When the role of men or women in a household was finished, they moved to another area where the local people provided them with food during their daily round for alms. The rest of the day they spent on the spiritual life of themselves or of the whole universe. The men were called Bhikṣu and the women Bhikṣuṇī; the vulgar Dutch word "bikkeseмент" for "a meal" is probably related to this way of begging [6].



[7]

In addition to my night watch for the spirits of the deceased villagers, after my first wintering in South Spain I started a day watch for the whole universe. I had begun to walk in the footsteps of my late American beloved. In the libraries of the large cities in Europe, I studied the Holy Scriptures. For access to several books on South Asia, I visited the University Library in Heidelberg.



[8]



In Heidelberg, Raven had studied Philosophy and Linguistics before World War II. In this city I felt the nearness of this beloved who did penance for his actions constantly and who was always on guard for the unveiling of his loyalty and betrayal.



[9]

After my visit to Heidelberg, I held my nightly and daily vigils for him too.

[1] Sources: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C%C3%B3rdoba,\\_Andalusia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C%C3%B3rdoba,_Andalusia) and [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great\\_Mosque\\_of\\_C%C3%B3rdoba](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Mosque_of_C%C3%B3rdoba)

[2] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mosque%E2%80%99s\\_Cathedral\\_of\\_C%C3%B3rdoba](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mosque%E2%80%99s_Cathedral_of_C%C3%B3rdoba)

[3] See the koan “Yunmen’s Pillars” in: Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998 p. 137 - 139

[4] Free rendering of the koan Dasui’s “Aeonic Fire” in: Cleary, Thomas, *Book of Serenity – One Hundred Zen Dialogues*. Bosten: Shambhala, 1998 p. 131 - 136

[5] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocalypse>

[6] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhikkhu>

[7] Source image: <http://jv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhiksu>

[8] Source image: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universit%C3%A4tsbibliothek\\_Heidelberg](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universit%C3%A4tsbibliothek_Heidelberg)

[9] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common\\_Raven](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_Raven)

## On the way 2

6 March 2013

After the death of Raven I spent every year's winter in South Spain. In the spring I migrated to the North with the birds to roam in Northern Europe during the summer season. The wind, the weather and the people I met on my way, gave direction to my temporary stay in the northern cities.



[1]

Regularly I visited Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Stockholm and Oslo. The volatile friends from the past were swept away from daily life by the mysterious disease that had received the name AIDS. Several old



friends started another life without place for a wandering Bhikṣu. Usually I lived on the streets with magic, storytelling and I started singing.

My performance of Jacques Brel's "Ne me quitte pas" [2], moved the audience. Parts of the text about shadows – during the night shadows of murdered villagers and in daytime shadows of lost beloved ones – was applicable on my life.

*Let me be*

*Shadow of your shadow*

*Shadow of your hand*

*Shadow of your own. [3]*



[4]

After 18 years wintering in the south and in summertime wandering in the north, I was an adult in my third incarnation; each moment, hour, day, year was different and the same. Although I always carried the shadows from my previous life with me, this simple life rhythm gave some inner peace.

In the autumn I sang lines from "Ne me quitte pas" for an audience on the Leidseplein in Amsterdam:

*I, I will give you*

*Pearls of rain*

*from lands*

*Where it never rains. [5]*

After singing the words "*from lands where it never rains*" I knew that my mother had died. Her commandment to move to Amsterdam and its realisation had ended. I bowed to the audience and in honour of her memory I immediately set off "εἰς τὴν Πόλιν" – to the city – to Istanbul [6]. From Istanbul I wished to move to Konia in the following spring. It was time to swirl in the footsteps of Rumi [7].

*Come, Come, whoever you are,*

*Wanderer, idolatrous narrator and worshipper of the golden glow,*

*Come even though you have broken your vows a thousand times,*

*Come, and come yet again.*

*Ours is not a caravan of despair. [8]*



[9]

On the road to Istanbul I was accompanied by my mother, like Rumi wrote in a poem:

*“My thoughts are in the heart of my mother,  
the heart of her will be sick  
without the thoughts of me”. [10]*

The fourth incarnation in my life had begun. I deviated from my usual autumn migration to South Spain. That year, the winter started early in Middle Europe. Mid November there was already snow. On the way to Istanbul I became adrift by the cold. Early December it froze solid. I had nothing to eat. The next clear night during new moon my breath watched over me. The ghosts and shadows in my life temporary found peace. The frost took me in; earth and firmament were one.

*Stone and stilled*

*Inside and outside*

*One in the cosmos*



[1] Source image: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vogelzug>

[2] To be listened via: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=za\\_6A0XnMyw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=za_6A0XnMyw)

[3] Source: Own translation of the last lines from Jacques Brel's "Ne me quitte pas".

[4] Source image: [http://bat-smg.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abruozdielis:Southwark\\_Park\\_Evening\\_Shadows.JPG](http://bat-smg.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abruozdielis:Southwark_Park_Evening_Shadows.JPG)

[5] Source: translation of the first lines from the second verse of "Ne me quitte pas" by Jacques Brel.

[6] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Istanbul>

[7] Jalāl al-Dīn – in the West known as Rumi – was born near Balkh in Afghanistan in the 13th century CE. His parents fled for the Huns. Jalāl al-Dīn received the name Rumi in the Arab world because he lived in Konia South of Ankara in the current Turkey while writing his great works. This part of the Arabic world was identified with Rome from the Roman Empire. Hence Jalāl al-Dīn is named after the name of his main domicile in the Arab/Persian world. Source: Lewis, Franklin D., *Rumi, Past and Present, East and West*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2003 p. 9

[8] Free rendering of verses by Rumi. Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rumi> and Rumi and His Sufi Path of Love (2007) by M Fatih Citlak and Huseyin Bingul, p. 81

[9] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dervish>

[10] Free rendering of a poem by Rumi. Source: Nicholson, Reynold A., *The Mathnawi of Jalálu'ddin Rúmí, Book II*. Cambridge: Biddles Ltd, 2001 p. 281

[11] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Starry\\_Night](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Starry_Night)

# Now face

9 March 2013

Every night a dream carries me away. This icy clear night at the beginning of December a dream led me to another world. At new moon I lied under the starry sky perfectly still in my sleeping bag to avoid heat loss. Every now and then I felt a tingling in my hands and feet and then they were cold again. My breath – a temporal home for the villagers massacred by my fellow militia members and me during the night fire in the forest – watched over me.

It got colder; my body relaxed itself [1] and my eyes blinked no more. The darkness and the firmament sucked me in. I hovered with the galaxies in the universe. No earth, no worries, no sound, completely absorbed into infinity.



[2]



From the edge of the universe I heard footsteps approaching. In the corner of my eyes a shadow appeared. The shadow became larger and I heard another breath next to my breath. After an eternity the dark face of my mother bent over me [3]. Her curly hair had turned grey. My mother had come to take me home. In her peaceful face I saw that I had never been away; within her heaven and earth came together.

In this peaceful state I heard a voice. My mother and my eyesight faded. Someone tried to wake me up. Very slowly my breath returned to everyday world: the firmament and the earth were separated again with the opening of my sleeping bag. I was stone-cold and just barely conscious.



[4]



The voice took me up and after an eternal struggle with my stilled body we entered a lit hot room. The voice undressed me and covered itself and me close to each other under a duvet. Slowly I could see again. I saw a woman's face with curly grey hair. She shivered from the cold. After an endless time I warmed a little; only halfway through the next day my fingers and feet started to tingle again. I found myself in bed in a caravan.

In the evening I could eat and drink a little. She asked me indignantly why I watched outside in this severe frost under the starry sky in a thin sleeping bag. My answer followed a few days later. To my question how she had found me, she replied that during a short evening stroll she saw occasionally vapour from the ground beside the path; this vapour was caused by my exhalation. My breath had guarded me.

One day later we moved together to a winter campsite to let me recover. The owner of the campsite was not happy with my appearance, but my guardian angel took care that we got a place for some nights. The first days she mothered me. She cut my hair, She shaved my beard and she washed my clothes: I was presentable to the world again.



In the confines of the caravan on the winter campsite we told each other the main lines of our life stories. Her name was Carla Drift and she moved through Europe with a tractor–caravan combination. Since autumn her life was empty as the trees in the winter. At the end of the previous summer a man had attacked her honour and life. In self-defence she killed the assailant. Herewith she lost her innocence: a part of her had died.

I told her about my life as a child soldier in a previous incarnation; at the end of one night we had set the forest surrounding a village on fire. Our militia shot at everything and everyone who came out of the forest. I always carried the ghosts of these villagers with me; their breath was my breath and they had guarded me in the bright icy night. In memory of my mother I was on my way "εἰς τὴν Πόλιν".

We decided to travel to Istanbul together. We alternated driving the tractor; now and then I was again a charioteer in a white winter landscape. The journey of more than 2000 kilometres lasted three months with several resting places. The end of winter and the beginning of spring we stayed in Istanbul. During the visits to the many houses of God in this city – including the Hagia Sophia, we admired these buildings with domes as symbol of the bond between earth and firmament.



[6]

[1] See also for hypothermia: Stark, Peter, *The last breath, the limits of adventure*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2001 p. 11 - 24

[2] Each light speck is a galaxy – some of these are as old as 13.2 billion years – the Universe is estimated to contain 200 billion galaxies. Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universe>

[3] See also: Berger, John, *Here is where we meet*. New York: Vintage International, 2006 p. 1 – 57. In Lisbon the protagonist meets his deceased mother.

[4] Source image: <http://www.nasa.gov/multimedia/imagegallery/iotd.html#> - Hubble Watches Star Clusters on a Collision Course

[5] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camping>

[6] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Istanboel>

# Εἰς τὴν Πόλιν on the way to “This”

17 March 2013

My third incarnation as Bhikṣu or – in the words of everyday life – as wanderer who followed the annual trek of the birds, ended in Istanbul. In this former capital of the Eastern Roman Empire [1] I became part of the “polis” [2] – not only part of the City State with a public secular politics, but at home in the universal community of landscape and people.



[3]

My Acropolis was not a temple where in the past the Greeks gave a house [4] to their Gods with all the splendour and exceptional beauty. Although I was at home everywhere, I found no lasting home in a church, mosque or temple.



[5]

Between the many churches and mosques of Istanbul I experienced my body and "polis" – in the form of the universal living surroundings – as the temple of God [6].



[7]

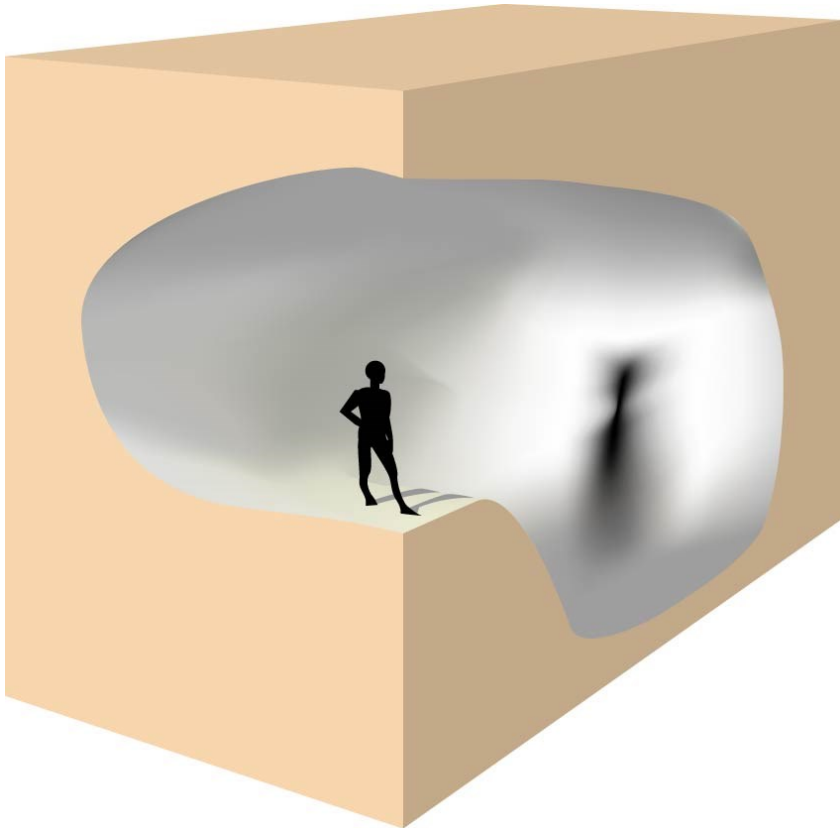
In the poem "*This we have now*" by Rumi I read a reflection of my world in Istanbul:

*This*  
*That we are now*  
*Created the body, cell by cell,*  
*Like bees building a honeycomb.*  
*The human body and the universe*  
*Grow from This. [8]*



During my first three incarnations – first as Kṛṣṇa in Kenya, then as idol in Amsterdam and several northern cities, and thereafter as Bhikṣu who followed the annual trek of the birds between South and North Europe – I had only seen reflections of "This" within my own living environment.

In my fourth incarnation I wished to leave the protection of the cave [9] – in which I found shelter until now – with only reflections of the all-encompassing "This" as Plato described in his *Politeia* [10].



Slowly at the beginning of my new incarnation I became perfectly included in the universe. In the libraries of Istanbul I read translations of the works of Rumi. Along with his poems I began a new swirling existence.

With the new spring – at the invitation of Carla Drift – Man Leben arrived in Istanbul. Carla, Man and I decided to start the quest "Who are you – a survey into our existence". Before we entered daily life on this Odyssey, we wrote each other's biographies.

[1] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Istanbul>

[2] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polis>

[3] Source image: [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corne\\_d%27Or](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corne_d%27Or)

[4] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polis>

[5] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polis>

[6] See also: The first letter to the Corinthians 12 - 20

[7] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Istanbul>

[8] Part of the English version of the poem “This we have now” by Rumi. See also: Barks, Coleman, *The Essential Rumi*. New York: Castle Books, 1997, p. 262

[9] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegory\\_of\\_the\\_Cave](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegory_of_the_Cave)

[10] In English the Politeia is often translated with “State” or “Republic”. See also: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Staat\\_\(Plato\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Staat_(Plato))

[11] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegory\\_of\\_the\\_Cave](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegory_of_the_Cave)

# Final Word

Narrator told me the story of his life told in several parts. Facts and fiction are intertwined in his narratives, as in everyday life the separation of the air and earth is artificial [1].

During the narration of the prelude to his life I understood that Narrator's stories are focused on an universal truth that precedes and goes beyond our existence. This truth is based upon a rhythm wherefrom we originate. This rhythm is rolling through his life in various interwoven cycles.

The first cycle in his life story consists of the four incarnations that Narrator mentioned as interpretation for his life. These four incarnations in the life of the Narrator reminded me of the four seasons [2]. The second cycle in Narrator's life is the rhythm of vanity, action and consequences [3]. The third cycle is the Northern cycle in which Narrator is incentive and spiritual charioteer for enlightenment and homecoming of his American beloved. The fourth cycle is the rhythm of trust and betrayal in Narrator's life together with Raven and Fox in the mirror world inhabited by the secret services of many countries [4]. And always the cycle of the Moon and the starry sky is the steadfast mate in Narrator's life. I leave the search for other cycles in the life of the Narrator to the reader.

It is an honour and a joy to be with Narrator and Carla Drift on the search for "Who are you". On this Odyssey, Narrator is my beacon and spiritual charioteer, for example at my study Sanskrit – the language of the Gods in the world of humans , during studying Buddhist texts and reading the works of Rumi.

[1] See also: Quammen, David, *Spillover: Animal Infections and the Next Human Pandemic*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012, p. 219 - 234. In this popular scientific book, a study is made on the interaction and life game – sometimes with far-reaching consequences – between higher and lower organisms. During this interaction and life game the division between earth and air is artificial; for example in the description of Q-fever that was moved by the wind in Noord Brabant in the Netherlands.

[2] See also: The film “*Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter ... and Spring*” directed by: Kim Ki-Duk. This film probably gives an interpretation to the crimes by Narrator as child soldier in Africa. The youngster in the film committed several crimes as child in naivety, and as adolescent in a zest for life whereby he must endure the consequences during the rest of his life.

[3] See also: The film “*Why has Bodhi-Dharma left to the East?*” by: Bae Yong-Kyun. This film provides insight into the cycle of vanity, action and consequences, perhaps because a boy inflicts – in an idle urge – a fatal wound to one bird of bird couple. In vain the boy tries to keep the bird alive. The living bird of the couple continues to haunt the boy and gives him a first insight in the fleeting nature of life and death, interconnectedness, passions, sin and fear.

[4] See also: Le Carré, John, *The Quest for Karla*. New York: Knopf, 1982; and see also: Deighton, Len, *The Bernie Samson series*. published between 1983 and 1996.

# Acknowledgement

Without the familiar breath that shaped the complete universe in one sigh from start until end, this book would not be possible. I am deeply indebted my gratitude to the eternal wind – in Sanskrit वात or vāta – as manifestation of this breath.

I have received endless help from all manifestations in the universe that exist in its innumerable varieties.

As human being, I acknowledge my deep gratitude to the universe and world wherein we live. The creation of this book took place in this area.

Without the contribution of all the women, men, mothers, fathers, children, gatherer-hunters, wanderers, farmers, craftsmen and -women, warriors, monks, priests, rulers, scientist and people not mentioned from the beginning until now, this book would not be possible.

Our universe and world has been studied by many scholars in innumerable ways. Without the giant outcome of all these studies this book would not be started. I am deeply indebted my gratitude to all these studies.

Special gratitude I am indebted to:

- o My mother and father and family,
- o Friends and colleagues
- o Teachers, schools and university,
- o Villages I lived in, schools I attended and areas of employment.

Possible mistakes and omissions in this book are solely my responsibility. I aimed at a complete reference. May omissions in references be noted, would you be so kind to forward these omission to the author.

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# About the Composer

Man Leben is my other name

In early January 1934, Man Leben was born in Amsterdam under his family name Levi Hermann. At the age of 7 years old, he moved without his parents to a farm in South Limburg. There he lived with his godparents under his new name until the end of 1945.

At the end of the Second World War, he moved with his aunt to a village near Rotterdam. After his diploma Gymnasium β, Man studied with good results Architecture at the Delft University of Technology.

Less than a year he was employed in an architecture firm on utility projects, where he also met his wife. Through this firm he started in the trade of building materials. In 1959 Man and his wife moved to Amsterdam. In the mid 1970s – with its freedom unknown before – Man and his wife divorced. At the end of the 70's, Man took a part-time post as senior research fellow at Delft University of Technology.

In the spring of 1982 Man moved again to South Limburg; he helped his godmother as temporary farmer. At the end of the summer 1983, he started his pilgrimage to Dachau, the place where his mother died near the end of the Second World War.

In 1984 his convent years began, he remained connected to the convent until 1993. In this year he made his pilgrimage to Auschwitz, where his father died during the Second World War.

From autumn 1993 until his retirement, he was involved as partner in a Design/Architecture office to introduce modular building.

After his retirement he lived for two years with his second life companion. After her death, he made preparations for the survey to "Who are you". Amongst others, he started his study Sanskrit.

Man Leben composed the biography of "Narrator – One way".

### **Name**

| Man Leben

### **E-mail**

| man.leben@omnia-amsterdam.com

### **Age**

| At the age of 76, Man died in his sleep

### **Children**

| Two children

### **Married**

| Divorced

### **Hobby**

| Reading, writing, religion, philosophy, human science, poetry, culture, design, music

### **Work**

| Retired

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Narrator Nārāyana is a pen-name.

Around 1960 I was born in Africa. My mother took care of us, my brothers, my sisters and my father. My father is a wandering storyteller. When he came, my mother gave him care and shelter. We heard of his adventures and my mother was happy.

I am as dark as Kṣṇa, but in this "I-era" nobody needs a charioteer. I travelled through Europe and on my way I told stories. One time it was cold and I was so hungry that I could not stand anymore. Carla Drift gave me food. We started travelling together. A year ago Man Leben, Carla and I started the search for "Who are you". I'm still on the road - once I hope to arrive home again.

*Instead of a home  
The moon and the starry sky  
As steadfast mate*

Adapted form a haiku by: Inoue Shirō



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