

Who are you

A survey into our existence

Part 2

Five common realities

Emptiness

Jan van Origo

Carla Drift is a fictional person. No existing human has been model for her.

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

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

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*Though I always sleep
on my travels, each night
in another place,
the dream I always dream
brings me to my own house.*

- Rȳokan

*In every wave
Nothing comes and goes;
Shell in the tide*

Content

| | |
|--|-----|
| Introduction | 7 |
| To the end of the night: to the core of the cyclone | 11 |
| The wind takes you along: in transience and imperfection | 25 |
| The wind in the sails: volatile as life itself | 41 |
| Windlessness: emptiness within being whole | 55 |
| Mist: one within being whole | 71 |
| Form is emptiness, emptiness is form | 87 |
| Way of emptiness: what is the way? | 103 |
| Acknowledgement | 121 |
| Bibliography | 123 |
| Index | 137 |

Introduction

The quest for “Who are you” – in the form of a “survey into our existence” – is a contemporary Odyssey with 17 stages. At the end, we will look back on our journey. We will notice that everything is fulfilled in one sigh.

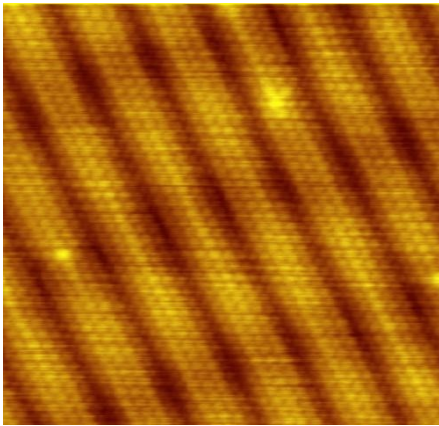
Before we resume our Odyssey by entering the world of everyday life, we will give a brief summary of the journey so far.

At the first stage you and I have experienced the perfect oneness from where we travelled via “Solipsism”, “The universe is but a dream”, “Pantheism” and “Indra’s net” to the second stage.



[1]

At the second stage the perfect oneness is disintegrated after the initial division of air and earth [2] in innumerable particles. Also you and I had been completely disintegrated in an awful lot of minimal particles. After an initial organisation within these particles we – the main characters Carla Drift, Man Leben and Narrator – returned in human form on our earth after an immense long time.



[3]

At the third stage, we saw how mutual trust and interconnectedness between people were realised and continued by placing “people, objects, sacrifices and words in the middle” between people and/or between uncertainties.



[4]

As preparation for the continuation of our Odyssey – wherein we will enter everyday life – an interlude followed and the three main characters described each other's biographies. The report of the first part of our Odyssey and the three biographies are available on the website of the Publisher.



During the second part of our Odyssey we will visit the following five common realities as stages for everyday life, because these points of view provide a good impression of the daily human experiences:

- o Facts and logic – available on the website of the publisher
- o Intensities and associations
- o Void
- o Change
- o Interconnectedness

Do these five common realities offer everything we need on our quest for “Who are you?”? [5]. Once we read that:

“If you use the five common realities in a correct way, then you are completely included in the perfect universe. Do you use these accesses in a wrong way, then you will stay a mortal being.” [6]

At the end of these common realities we will look back to see whether we are still normal mortals or we are included in the perfect universe.

[1] Source image: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indra's_net

[2] According to Genesis 1:1 – the first book of Old Testament – God created/ separated the sky and earth at the beginning of time. The verb root "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>

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 and Benner, Jeff A.A. *Mechanical Translation of the Book of Genesis - The Hebrew text literally translated word for word*. 2007

[3] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atom>

[4] Source image: <http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charlemagne>

[5] According Buddhism, the five skandhas provide everything that we need for our spiritual development. See also: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence – part 1*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2012 p. 172 - 183

[6] Source: The Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra. San Francisco: Buddhist Text Translation Society, 2002, p. 381 – 382. Remark: “Buddha-use” and “Store enveloping consciousness” are rendered by your Narrator as “perfect universe”.

To the end of the night *To the core of the cyclone*

N ight. A clear sky at new moon. Narrator drives the borrowed Skoda Superb Combi [1] from Amsterdam via the Noordoostpolder [2] to the marina at Lauwersoog near the departure of the ferry to Schiermonnikoog. Both headlights shine on the empty highway through the dark empty land that over 50 years ago was still the bottom of the Zuiderzee (Southern Sea). Carla dozes in the back seat. Man sits as passenger next to Narrator; in the dim light of the dashboard they look to the exit at Emmeloord that is lit by lantern lights in the far distance.



[3]

“Within the emptiness, the headlights – together with the street lights along the road in the distance – conjure a dark magic landscape wherein everything that we now see, emerges and immediately disappears like phantoms who are called to live in a flare, in order to slip away into the dark emptiness again. As boy in South Limburg, I have loved the dark nights with the infinite universe wherein I – engulfed – was one with all the stars and galaxies in the firmament. Now I feel myself floating within a vague white glow on an endless journey through the universe and thereby perfectly at home in this vessel. Tonight – before we were getting ready to depart – I had looked up a definition of Buddhist enlightenment [4]. One book gives the following definition:

“Enlightenment is realising the oneness of life” [5].

Yesterday I looked for this definition because we have ended our survey of “intensities and associations” with the question: *“One – what is that?”*, that had been asked by a Buddhist sage to a wise woman. She was unable to answer this question. I wonder whether the inability – or the emptiness – of the wise woman to answer fits better with the question *“One – what is that?”*, than this definition of Buddhist enlightenment.

Now we begin the survey of emptiness during our quest to “Who are you”. The Sanskrit word for emptiness in the Heart Sūtra is “śūnyatā”. Do you know the meaning of this word in Sanskrit?”, asks Man.

The car is nearing the exit at Emmeloord. Narrator slows down and takes the exit to Lemmer; hereby Carla is awoken and she asks: “Where are we?”. “Near Emmeloord in the Noordoostpolder, we are now heading to Friesland. I have asked Narrator for the meaning of the word “śūnyatā””, says Man.

“The word “śūnyatā” is usually translated with “emptiness” or “empty of self” [6], but this translation only reflects the core of the word, just like within the core of the tropical cyclone there is usually a clear sky and no wind; during daytime the core of the cyclone is sunny and “free” of wind.



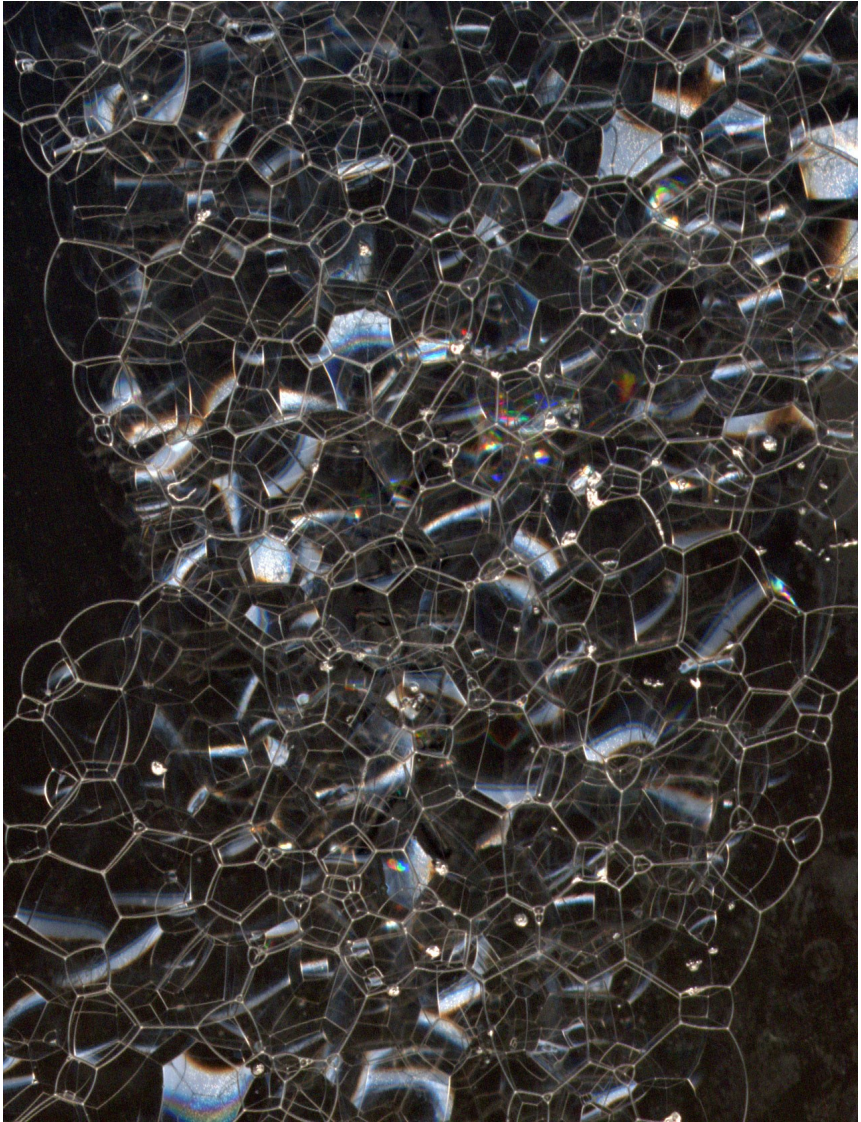
[7]

The word “śūnyatā” consists of the verb cores:

- “√śvi” – the weak form is “√śū” – meaning “to swell”, “to grow” and “to increase”;
- “ya” meaning “mover” and “incentive”. My father was of the opinion that “ya” is closely related to verb root “√yaj” in the meaning of “to sacrifice”, “offering for a higher – Godlike/ heavenly– purpose” (perhaps a “God’s gift” in reciprocity”) and,
- “tā” meaning “impassableness”, “inaccessibleness”, and also “inviolability” and “sacred” [8].

A contemporary Japanese Zen master in America had written in his explanation of “śūnyatā” that this word is not a negation of the concept of existence, but the word indicates that our entire existence – in all its forms – is completely dependent on the principle of cause and effect; we have read before that even the Gods are bound by the principle of cause and effect [9]. As the conditions of cause and effect are changing constantly, there is no static – fixed – existence possible. The word “śūnyatā” categorically denies the possibility of the existence of static – fixed – manifestations. All appearances are relative and interdependent according to this contemporary Japanese Zen master.

In addition, he writes that “śūnyatā” also means “zero”, a concept that became known rather late in Europe, but has been in use for much longer in India. Zero has no numerical value in itself, but it represents the absence of numerical values and thus symbolises at the same time the possibility of all numerals. Similarly, “śūnyatā” – through the concept of “zero” or “no” – represents the possibility of existence of all manifestations and it is also included in all forms that only exist in relation to their non-existence and by their interconnectedness [10]”, says Narrator.



[11]

“The definition of zero is too limited: but I will not go into it now. If I understand you correctly, “śūnyatā” refers to “emptiness from” and “emptiness to” just as – in my opinion – Erich Fromm is referring with the concept of “freedom” to “freedom from” and “freedom to” in mutual dependency [12]. Herewith I am reminded of the French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty who had argued that manifestations are caused by a creative process of giving meaning and taking meaning at the same time [13]. The Zen master adds emptiness – or space – as a precondition for creation of manifestations to the viewpoint of Merleau-Ponty”, says Carla.

“Quite interesting that you are referring to a creative process for the creation of manifestations. The Japanese Zen master indicates that an intuitive and immediate understanding of “śūnyatā” is the basis for all understanding. But before he states this, he mentions first “śūnyatā” of the ego, then “śūnyatā” of dharma [14] – the world order and duty [15] – and additionally “śūnyatā” of the subjective and the objective. Hereafter he concludes that everything – every manifestation and every being – only exists through the principle of interdependence bound by the law of impermanence. This intuitive and immediate understanding leads to knowledge and understanding of the four great Buddhist truths: impermanence, interconnectedness, manifestations and essence; maybe it's good to come back on these four truths later on. The Zen master goes further in his statement on the importance of impermanence – emptiness or vanity – and interconnectedness than Maurice Merleau-Ponty in the arising, or creation of all manifestations and of every being.

I have read this explanation of “śūnyatā” in the introduction of the commentary on the Buddhist Heart Sūtra by this Zen master.

I have remembered this description by the Zen master, because it fits so well with my perception of the ghosts in the night. As a child soldier within our militia in Africa, we had put the forest around a village on fire in the middle of the night. We had shot everything and everyone that had come out of the forest and we had been happy [16]. I still carry the ghosts of these villagers with me; their breath – in emptiness and vanity – has become my breath. At night they are as real to me as all the people I meet during the day; these spirits are connected with me in interdependence within the law of impermanence: during daytime they have disappeared”, says Narrator.

“Are these spirits really present for you here and now in this car?”, asks Man.

“No, driving the car I have directed my attention on the road, but if I do not focus my attention any longer, the ghost will come to life from the emptiness of the darkness just as real as a dream during sleep. Or to cite a quote often incorrectly attributed to Mark Twain: *“I am an old man and have suffered a great many misfortunes, most of which never happened”* [17]”, says Narrator.

“That is good, because otherwise I should have asked you to look for a parking place and we might continue our journey tomorrow during daylight. I have several versions of the Heart Sūtra in my luggage. Would you like to help me with the interpretation of Sanskrit?”, asks Man.

“That is fine. I have a copy with me of the commentary by the Japanese Zen master that I have mentioned before. Do you have a waterproof compartment for books on your boat?”, asks Narrator.

“Your book will easily fit within the waterproof compartment. When we will land at low tide, we will have plenty of time to read”, says Man.

“The definition of enlightenment that you have just mentioned, clearly shows one aspect of enlightenment in line with the interconnectedness within the metaphor of Indra's Net. It is only one side of the coin, the other side is “śūnyatā”. In Buddhism, the term “nirvana” – literally meaning absence of forest, or absence of barriers, or on the open plain [19] – is often used for enlightenment. In Hinduism one often addresses enlightenment with “moksha” [20] that comes from the verb core “√muc” meaning amongst others “to loosen, or to liberate”. With both interpretations, I am not happy, because in my opinion “śūnyatā” together with the metaphor of Indra's Net gives a better interpretation of the term enlightenment. I think it is a good idea that we do not only survey emptiness in the sense of “empty from” during this part of our quest, but also in relation to the four great truths of Buddhism and in relation to Indra's Net”, says Narrator.

“Good idea. When I had lain awake during my travels under the dark starry sky, I have felt myself fully included in space or in the infinite void. The boundaries between space and myself had dissolved and I had become one with everything around me. In a book on Zen Buddhism I had read two poems mentioning an empty mirror as metaphor for life; in the second poem also the illusion of the empty mirror was removed just like during this journey by car through the dark polder the sight on the landscape is non-existing. Do you know the text of these poems?”, asks Carla.

“The two poems had been written during the appointment of – or better the Dharma transmission to – Huineng [21] as the sixth Zen patriarch. In my own words: the fifth patriarch sensed that the obvious candidate was not fit for this position. He asked each monk who would like to be candidate, to write a short poem about the core of Zen and to affix it on the monastery wall. Only the obvious candidate anonymously published the following poem:

*The body is a Bodhi tree;
The mind like an empty mirror stand.
Time and again brush it clean
And let no dust alight. [22]*

Bodhi – with a sound (and a meaning via “et incarnatus est” [23]) akin to the English word body – means in Sanskrit “a tree of wisdom, or a tree where under a human becomes a Buddha” [24].

The next morning a second poem was affixed alongside the first poem with the following text:

*Originally Bodhi has no tree;
The empty mirror has no stand.
Originally there is not a thing.
Where can dust alight?*

In Sanskrit Bodhi has a second meaning: “perfect enlightenment” [25]. The fifth patriarch was aware that a humble firewood-gatherer – without any formal training as a monk – had written this second poem and he foresaw an uprising in the monastery to the appointment of this uneducated layman as Dharma heir. The following night, the Dharma transmission took place and at dawn the sixth Zen patriarch had to flee from the monastery. The monks have haunted him for a long time. Eventually after a long flight, he had been fully accepted as Dharma heir: every Zen master is in a direct line associated with this sixth patriarch. And reciting the poem I also reflect him in the emptiness of this night”, says Man.

“Splendid explanation. Shall we continue tomorrow? I would like to continue dozing”, says Carla.

“Then I will also take a nap. Tomorrow we have to get up early”, says Man.

Narrator drives the car with Carla and Man sleeping via Friesland and Groningen to the parking place at Lauwersoog near the ferry departure to Schiermonnikoog. He parks the car facing east to see the dawn within a few hours. Upon seeing the first twilight, he awakes Carla and Man.

“On this bright morning we have to see the sunrise before we will start rigging the sailboat at the marina”, says Narrator.

“Upon seeing the rising of the first sunrays trough this windshield, I think of the poem "*The Windows*" by Guido Gezelle, wherein he – as a Catholic priest at the end of the nineteenth century – has lightly repeated the iconoclasm.

In my opinion Guido Gezelle advocates with this poem – despite the beauty of church windows as windows on the world – an empty mirror without stand in God's face”, says Man.

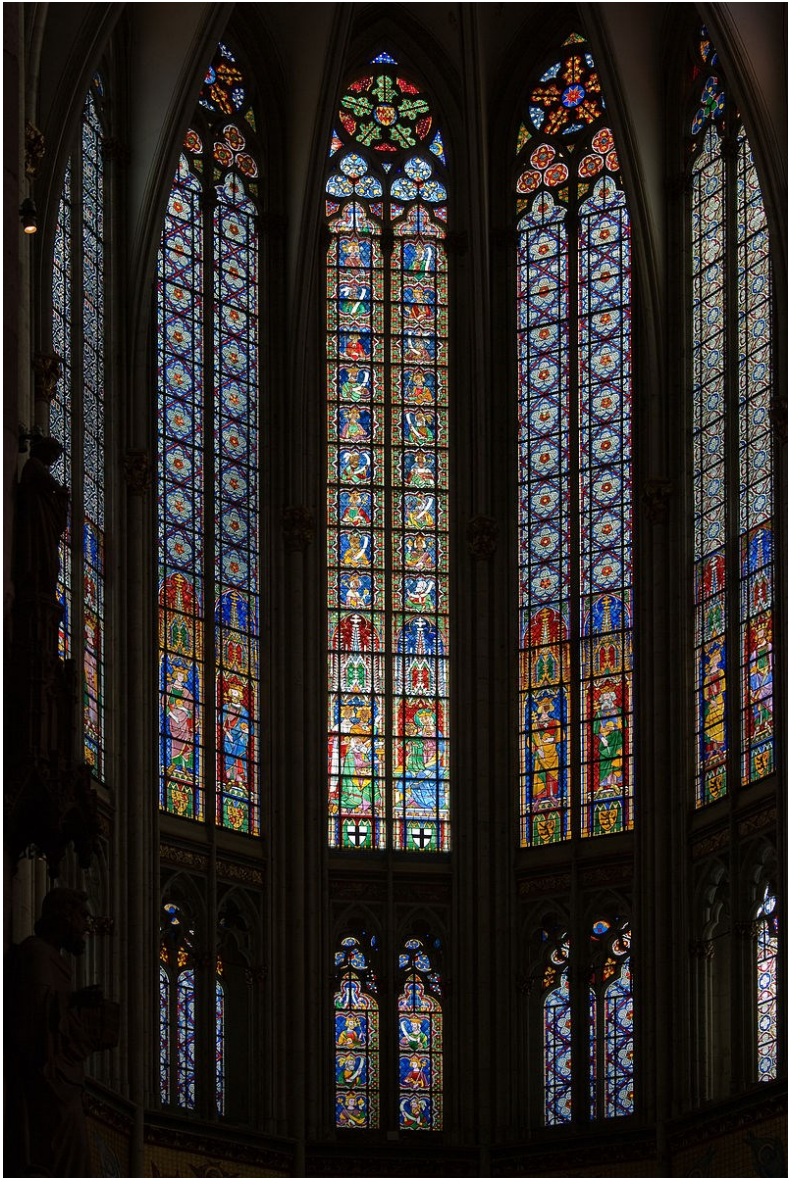
THE WINDOWS

*The windows are full of saints, mitred and staved,
Martyrized, virgin crowned, duked and knighted;
That the burning from the oven fire has glassed within the shard,
That, glittering, speaks all the tongues of the heaven arc's painting. [26]*

*Though scarcely the violence is again enkindled in the east
Of sun flame, and does touches the saints, so melted
The mitre from the mantle collar, the gold ware from the crone,
And all, even white now, shines and lightens even clean.*

*Disappeared art thou, dukes and counts then, so soft;
Disappeared, virgins, martyrs and bishops: forever
No palms, staves, stolen anymore, it is all gone, into
One clarity molten, in one sunlight – in God. [27]*

– Guido Gezelle [28]



- [1] See also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%A0koda_Superb
- [2] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noordoostpolder>
- [3] Source image: http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%A0koda_Superb
- [4] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bodhi>
- [5] Source: Bridges, Jeff & Glassman, Bernie, *The Dude and the Zen Master*. New York: Plume, 2014, p. 95
- [6] Source: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunyata>, see also the English Wikipedia-page on this subject
- [7] Source image: http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tropische_cycloon
- [8] Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta.
- [9] See: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence – part 2.1 – Facts and Logic*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2014, p. 85 and 122
- [10] Source: Deshimaru, Taisen, *Mushotoku Mind – The Heart of the Heart Sutra*. Chino Valley: Hohm Press, 2012, p. 28, 29
- [11] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9A%C5%ABnyat%C4%81>
- [12] Source: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence – part 2.1 – Facts and Logic*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2014, p. 97
- [13] See also for the “creative act of giving meaning to and taking meaning from”: Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, *Phenomenology of Perception* 1945 and Kwant, R.C. *Mens en Expressie – in het licht van de wijsbegeerte van Merleau-Ponty*. Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 1978, p. 45
- [14] Dharma means literally “placing of the self/Self continuously”.
- [15] Source: Badrinath, Chaturvedi, *The Mahābhārata – An Inquiry in the human Condition*. New Delhi: Orient Longman Private Limited, 2006, p. 68. See also chapter 4 for an introduction on Dharma.
- [16] 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
- [17] See: <http://quoteinvestigator.com/2013/10/04/never-happened/>

[18] See also: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence – part 1*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2012, p. 66 - 68

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

[20] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moksha>

[21] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huineng>

[22] Source: *The Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra*. Burlingame: Buddhist text translation society, 2002, p. 67

[23] Literal translation from Latin: he/she/it becomes flesh

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

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

[26] “mitred and staved” means: with signals of authority; “all the tongues from the heaven arc’s painting” refers to: showing all the paintings on the ceilings of the churches.

[27] Free translation of this poem. Original: <http://cf.hum.uva.nl/dsp/ljc/gezelle/rijmsnoer/ramen.htm> This poem is date by Guido Gezelle on 14th of April 1895.

[28] See also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guido_Gezelle

[29] Source image: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stained_glass

The wind takes you along

In transience and imperfection

Carla, Man and narrator have seen the sunrise. They are sitting in the car waiting for the harbour master to handle several formalities before they can start their sailing trip on the Wadden Sea.

“After your explanation of the word “śūnyatā” – via the core of a cyclone – I can better understand the symbolism of the black ink painted circle that Japanese Zen masters calligraphy in one smooth brush stroke. What is the name of this painted circle?”, asks Carla.



[1]

“The Japanese name for this circle is “ensō” and the circle symbolises a minimal simplicity – similar to the core of the cyclone in the metaphor for “śūnyatā” –, perfect enlightenment, strength, elegance, the entire universe and emptiness as “śūnyatā” in Sanskrit. The spiritual practice of ensō-painting and Japanese calligraphy with the aim of self-realisation is named “hitsuzendo” – or the way of the brush – in Japan.

Thereby “ensō” illustrates the various forms of “wabi-sabi” [2] or the Japanese all-encompassing world view and aesthetics in the acceptance of transience and imperfection via:

- *Fukinsei* (asymmetry, irregularity),
- *Kanso* (simplicity),
- *Koko* (basic; weathered),
- *Shizen* (without pretence; natural),
- *Yugen* (subtle profound grace),
- *Datsuzoku* (freedom) and
- *Seijaku* (tranquillity) [3].

This all-encompassing worldview of impermanence and imperfection – a lot of effort is given to strive for rest, purity and consistency during maintenance – can be seen in Japanese gardens.



[4]

Sailing in a small boat in rough weather with high waves does a great appeal on the same all-encompassing worldview of transience and imperfection in combination with rest, purity and consistency”, says Man.

“Just before we rang the doorbell at your friend’s house to pick up the keys of his car, you told us that it would be a basic car. In my view we have travelled very comfortably in a luxurious limousine. How does the Skoda Superb fit within the Japanese worldview of basal, impermanence and unpretentiousness? An outdated basal Renault 4 dating from the swinging late 60's – comfortably rocking on the road – would better fit into the worldview of “wabi-sabi”, or I am wrong?”, says Carla.



[5]

“From your point of view, you are fully right. Everything is relative: even the size and luxury of my friend’s car. Until his retirement he had worked for 40 years in large construction companies; the last 25 years as director of major construction companies, before he had started a smaller business for modular construction with me. In his world within boards of directors, success and prosperity must be shown – with possession of lavish houses and the latest models of cars from the absolute top class – in order to survive. After his retirement he has chosen on my recommendation a modest middle-class car wherein his sons who have very long legs, can sit comfortably in the backseats. In the worldview of my friend a Skoda Superb Combi is a very simple car; after purchasing the car he was teasingly asked if he had to earn extra money as taxi-driver after his retirement: of course everyone knew

better. He now lives in a – by his standards – simple house that was designed and built by our last company”, says Man.



[6]

“Has your friend owned several sports cars in his heydays?”, asks Carla.

“No, that does not suit him. He said: “When you're young enough for a sports car, you don't have the money for it; and if you do have the money for it, then you're too old to sit comfortably in it”. Actually, he is a sober man, but money came naturally to him within the construction business. With every construction project he had earned several millions within a few years: so after some 20 projects he was a very wealthy man. After the death of his wife, he lives sober given his background; he was 60 years old at that time. Their marriage was childless; they had two adoptive sons and he has – to my knowledge – no interest in other women. Half a year after the death of his wife, he asked me to start our company on modular construction. At that time,

we were both in need for a new purpose in life and with this company we had found it.

No, sports cars really do not interest him: that does not fit with his Jewish background. He gets satisfaction from helping others. My friend has financially helped many friends in his surroundings, and from the profits of each project, he had certainly given away 10% to charity [7]: at this point he is an old fashioned man", says Man.

"Maybe the all-encompassing worldview of "wabi-sabi" together with peace, purity and consistency is also possible in great wealth", says Carla.

"From my point of view his later life is an example of "wabi-sabi" with a good balance between the next ten characteristics for Jewish spiritual leadership:

1. Sacrifice,
2. Involvement,
3. Inspiration,
4. Servitude,
5. Overview,
6. Unselfishness,
7. Respect for predecessors,
8. Aversion of authority,
9. Practise what she/he preaches and
10. Leadership without structure [7]

Within his world he fulfils a role model for others", says Man

"How did sailing come into your life", asks Narrator.

“As my friend had adapted his lifestyle continuously to the circumstances wherein he was placed, in the same way the sailboats have been adapted to the circumstances in my life; I have made no effort: it came by itself.

As a boy at the beginning of elementary school, I was always playing with homemade model sailboats around a pond in the Beatrix Park near our former home in the Rivierenbuurt in Amsterdam. At the other side of the pond I collected the boats again. There were only very small meandering rivers in the vicinity of the village of my godparents in South Limburg; thus no possibility for sailing. After I had moved to Rotterdam, I have started sailing with classmates, first on the Bergsche Plas in a small training boat and not much later on the Rottemeren in a Valk sailing boat. At the end of grammar school we hiked during long weekends and vacations with sailing boats in South Holland.



[8]

During my student years, I started sailing at sea along the North Sea coast on a 10-meter sailboat owned by a father of my co-students. On this boat, I received my practical training to yachtsman. After my studies I have often sailed with friends who owned seaworthy sailboats.

Once our family had moved to Amsterdam and we had received a stable income from the trade in construction materials, I had bought a seaworthy Norwegian 7.70 meter Nordic Folkboat [9]. Herewith I have spent many weekends and holidays with friends and acquaintances on the North Sea and on the IJsselmeer. My wife and children did not like the – in their eyes – Spartan life on this boat; they were often seasick.



[10]

When my children were young, I have sailed with them in an Optimist boat on lakes near Amsterdam; at the end of primary school the interest of my children changed and I have sold this boat to acquaintances with small children who liked sailing.



[11]

At the start of the hike to the grave of my mother [12], the Norwegian Folkboat disappeared from my life; a friendly couple had bought this practical boat from me with the plan to make a trip around the world: they have sailed with this boat around a part of the world.

Between my divorce and my work for the modular construction material company, there have been no sailboats in my life. The wind took me over land to many places [13].

After having a foothold in the world again with the modular construction company, two new types of sailboats came into my life.

First, I bought a 4-meter Laser [14] sailboat, wherein I have started sailing for fun on many lakes in Europe: this Laser sailboat fitted on the roof of my station wagon. After my 70st birthday, I had sold this boat: transporting and sailing this boat was now too strenuous for me.



[15]

After my retirement, I bought a new versions of a Folkboat for the holidays: first a 6.63 meter long Drascombe Coaster with a small cabin. A few years later, I have exchanged this boat for a Drascombe Drifter, a boat adapted by myself to modern standards and with just a little more comfort. Later today, I will show you the adjustments I have made. By a mizzen – a third sail on the back of the boat – I can easily handle these Drascombe boats by myself and keep it on course.

Because of its shape and its rigging, the boat is pretty storm-proof”, says Man.



[16]

“Is such a small boat seaworthy?”, asks Narrator.

“Also this is relative. With similar boats, good crews did sail to the other side of the world. But I would not like to pass Cape Horn with my boat. For a full seaworthiness the boat is missing several components like a full railing. I have equipped my boat with air-tight chambers filled with foam, so the boat – even reversed – will always float. Breaking waves hitting the boat sideways from behind, can easily capsize sailboats [17]”, says Man.

“Fortunately next days’ weather forecast promises nice sailing weather with not too much wind”, says Carla.

“On a sailboat it is good to be always prepared to everything. During Ascension in 1983, it had promised to be a beautiful day for sailing in the Netherlands with a temperature of 14 degrees, moderate southerly wind, cloudy and in the afternoon a few tiny showers, but by mid-afternoon an unexpectedly brief heavy storm with gusts of wind force 11 raged over The Netherlands [18]. That day two friends and I had planned to make a long sailing trip on my Norwegian Folkboat from Muiden via the IJsselmeer to the Wadden Sea.

Mid-afternoon we saw in the distance a pitch-black sky rapidly approaching. Very quickly we had reefed almost all sail and we prepared the boat for a heavy storm. Ten minutes later we were in that very heavy storm that fortunately lasted less than half an hour. With good seamanship and a seaworthy boat, all had ended well for us, but that afternoon several water sports enthusiast had not survived the storm. The rest of the day we had helped crews of heavily damaged boats. The other days of the long weekend we had spent repairing the fortunately limited damage to my boat in the home marina”, says Man.

“There are no tropical cyclones on the Wadden Sea. I once read that in the summer and early autumn – when the sea water is quite warm – waterspouts can occur under clouds”, says Carla.

“That’s true, I have seen these waterspouts [19] a few times on the Wadden Sea. Usually these whirlwinds quickly loose power over land, but at sea these waterspouts can cause considerable damage to the sails. And a sailboat under full sail can easily turn over”, says Man.



[20]

“Is there also calmness in the core of a waterspout”, asks Narrator.

“I think that the diameter of the eye of a waterspout is too small to experience this calmness. The eye of a tropical cyclone can have a diameter between 30 to 50 km [21]”, says Carla.

“To come back to the core. Looking back on our life, have we personally fulfilled the ten characteristics of Jewish spiritual leadership?”, asks Narrator.

“I do not know if I have pursued spiritual leadership. But when I look at these characteristics, I have seriously sinned against “respect for predecessors”; this originates from my character and my position as an outsider in society. Also I might have offered a little more inspiration to

others and shown more openness about my investigations. In the past I had considered this openness too dangerous, now I see the relativity of danger and my personal life”, says Carla.

“I did my best, but usually I have not succeeded to give the all-encompassing worldview of “wabi-sabi” – including acceptance of transience and imperfection – a worthy place in my life. Until middle age, I had tried to provide security for my family but my intentions in this respect have entirely failed: with this endeavour, I have completely alienated my wife and children from me. Just like you, I am a sinner against the characteristics “respect for predecessors”: I try to do my best, but in my opinion it is not enough”, says Man.

“In my first three incarnations – first as Kṛṣṇa and child soldier, then as idol in Amsterdam, and afterwards as a player in the mirror palaces of secret services – I have sinned seriously against many different characteristics. In my last incarnation in this life – as bhikṣu or wandering monk –, it happened naturally to comply to all these characteristics; it is no merit, in the absence of any endeavour these characteristic come automatically – by itself – into my life”, says Narrator

“There is the harbour master. I have to settle several formalities with him and I will ask him for the last information on local currents and movements of shoals. I will also ask for a cart to bring our luggage and provisions to the boat”, says Man.

“Do you think we will be in time to sail with the morning tide to the Wadden Sea?”, asks Narrator to Man.

“That will certainly be possible, probably within half an hour we will leave the harbour sailing on the motor”, says Man.

Man goes to the office of the harbour master. Carla and Narrator bring their luggage and forage for a week with a cart to the boat and put it in

the cabin. Several minutes later Man arrives at the boat and together they store everything – according to instructions from Man – in the right place. Half an hour later, they leave the marina sailing on the motor to the Wadden Sea.

- [1] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ens%C5%8D>
- [2] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wabi-sabi>
- [3] Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ens%C5%8D>
- [4] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wabi-sabi>
- [5] Source image: http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renault_4
- [6] Source image: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huf_Haus
- [7] Source: Malachi 3:10 (book and prophet from the Tanakh (Hebrew bible; see also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanakh>). See also: <http://www.nik.nl/2010/01/parsja-simchat-tora-wezot-haberacha/>
- [8] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valk_\(boot\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valk_(boot))
- [9] See: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folkboot> and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nordic_Folkboat
- [10] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacht_\(scheepstype\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacht_(scheepstype))
- [11] Source image: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Optimist_\(Bootsklasse\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Optimist_(Bootsklasse))
- [12] See: Drift, Carla, *Man Leben: One Life – A Biography*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2012, p. 53 - 54
- [13] See: Drift, Carla, *Man Leben: One Life – A Biography*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2012, p. 50 - 111
- [14] See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laser_\(dinghy\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laser_(dinghy))
- [15] Source image: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laser_\(dinghy\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laser_(dinghy))
- [16] Source image: <http://www.nauticaltrek.com/12395-drascombe-drifter-a-vendre>
- [17] See also: Bruce, Peter, *Adlard Coles' Zwaarweezeilen*. Haarlem: Uitgeverij Hollandia B.V., 2010, p. 26
- [18] Source: <http://www.kb.nl/dossiers/nederland-algemeen/zomerstorm-hemelvaartsdag-1983>
- [19] See also: Youtube film showing a waterspout near Ameland (The Netherlands): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhpwuC8udzc>
- [20] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waterspout>
- [21] Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tropical_cyclone

The wind in the sails *Volatile as life itself*

Around 9 o'clock in the morning Carla, Man and Narrator are sailing on the outboard motor through the ferry terminal at Lauwersoog harbour. Passengers are boarding the 9:30 morning ferry to Schiermonnikoog: they wave to the small sailboat. Carla and Man wave back while they are busy getting the sails ready: Narrator has already entered the cabin to sleep. One passenger from the ferry calls: "Have a nice trip!" Man shouts back: "Have a nice day!" and Carla yells: "Good holiday!". A man calls back: "No problem, the weather will be fine!"

Upon leaving the harbour, Man puts the outboard off and tilts it out of the water. Then Man hoists the sails with help of Carla; first the headsail and the mizzen and afterwards the mainsail of this yawl-rigged [1] sailboat. A gentle breeze blows from the southwest. Then the miracle happens: from nowhere the sails curve with the wind while slightly flapping and the boat is propelled by the wind. Man trims the sails tight and the boat is well on track.

Half hour later the ferry catches up with them; again passengers and Carla and Man are waiving to each other. Narrator is still quietly sleeping in the cabin.

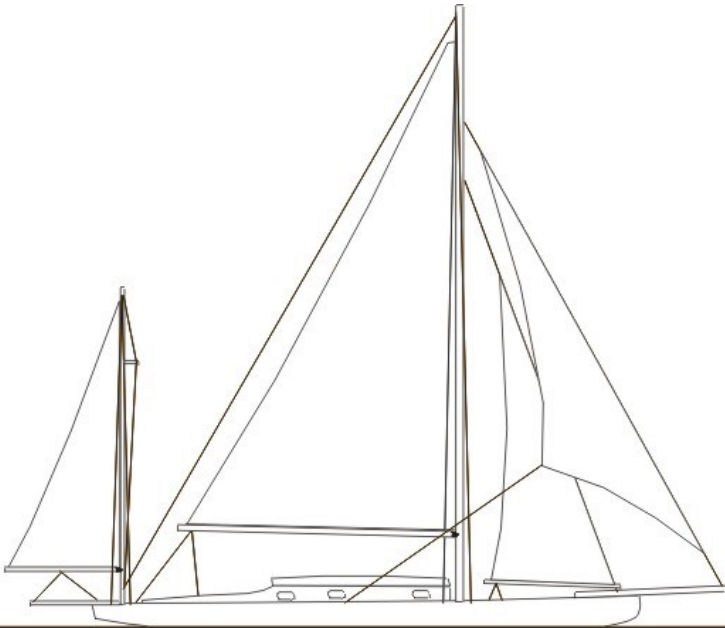


[2]

“Within half an hour we will sail with the tide of two knots; with this wind and tide, we will sail at a speed of seven knots for about two hours and after passing “Het Rif” we can land the boat around 12 o’clock during low tide on the tidal flats of the Waddenzee in the direction of Ameland. Then we may have lunch and wait for the next high tide by the end of the afternoon to land again – after several hours sailing – near Terschelling at nightfall”, says Man.

“A speed of seven knots is not bad, because with a waterline of around 5,80 meter, a speed of 5,90 knots is possible with this Drascombe Drifter according the rule of thumb “ $2.45 \times \text{square root of the waterline (in meters)}$ ” = hull speed”, says Carla.

“Maybe it's good that I will give you some instructions to operate the boat when something happens to me. In that case you may sail the boat on the outboard motor to a harbour. When it begins to storm it is wise to hoist only the mizzen sail, whereby the boat remains with the head in the wind and she will usually sail over the waves. When the engine fails, the boat will sail excellently with only the headsail and the mizzen. In case of emergency, you can always ask for help or you can land the boat at a beach”, says Man.



[3]

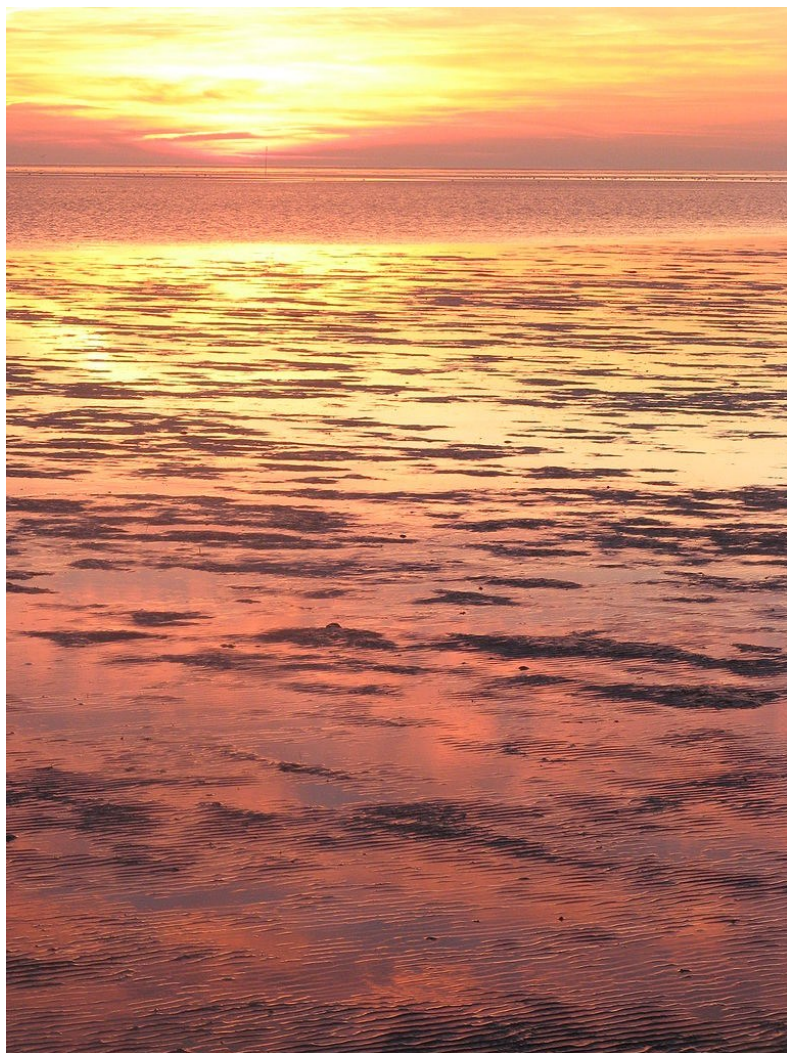
“Except during storm, we can also save ourselves with the oars. Let’s hope it is not necessary”, says Carla.

After three hours sailing Man raises the keel, lets the boat land and lowers the sails; Carla helps Man. On the two-burner gas stove Man bakes eggs for lunch. Carla wakes Narrator up and she sets the table

with bread, plates and cutlery. In the grand view of the tidal flats – exposed by low tide – they enjoy their lunch.

“Now I understand why you have invited us to go here for this boat trip. With the changing of the tide, water and flat lands are merging – constantly complementary – into each and other endlessly modifying, like emptiness and form. In the biography of Narrator you have included a part from the Heart Sūtra [4] with the stanza *“Form is emptiness, as emptiness is form”*. Until now I have seen “form” and “emptiness” as complementary similar to “one” and “zero” within computer sciences that has created a completely new way of human communication via displays; without emptiness no form as without form no emptiness: both replacing each other like – in graphics design – letters on a blanc sheet replace emptiness.

Here on the flats on “Het Wad” during the tidal changes, the boundaries between form and emptiness fade; still form and emptiness keep each other alive. Now I don’t see both as separate and complementary, but as interconnected and constantly intermingling in one other”, says Carla.



[5]

“Yes, I always have come back to “Het Wad” to experience this seemingly timeless intermingling of tides – according to the strict regularity of the tidal – and at the same time constantly changing, always different. Within a

day of sailing on “Het Wad”, I am one with the rhythm of the tidal and my hectic daily ego has faded. Thereby, it requires a constant discipline and overview to take care of a safe boat journey. Here, I have always felt at home under all circumstances, even in bad weather and storm”, says Man.

“On my journey from Kenya – my mother’s land – to Rome, I have had the same experience of merging between form and emptiness in the outer skirts of the desert and in desert steppe, on the boat on the Nile and during my boat trip across the Mediterranean; herewith I had grown to a new life in a different environment [6]. Now in my life as bhikṣu, I am back into the eternal womb of mother earth; and the wind takes me, in its volatility of form and emptiness”, says Narrator.

“Maybe an idea: shall we survey “change” – the next common reality on our quest to “Who are you” – in Africa, for example in Kenya? I have never been in Africa and for you it may be an excellent opportunity to revisit that part of the world. I can easily cover travel and subsistence from my means. Maybe something to come back to at the end of this boat trip.

As far as I am aware, form and emptiness are key concepts within the Heart Sūtra. What does the title of this Sūtra mean in het Sanskrit”, asks Man to Narrator.

“Shall we translate the Sūtra from Sanskrit?”, asks Narrator.

“That is one of my hidden wishes. Herewith my study of Sanskrit can be useful for everything and everyone. Without your help it will not be feasible”, says Man.

“Good idea. Then I will give comments from my background and general knowledge”, says Carla.

“Let us begin with the title of the sūtra. The full title “*prajñāpāramitā hṛdaya sūtra*” is often translated with “*Complete transference of the heart – or the core – of wisdom*” [7].

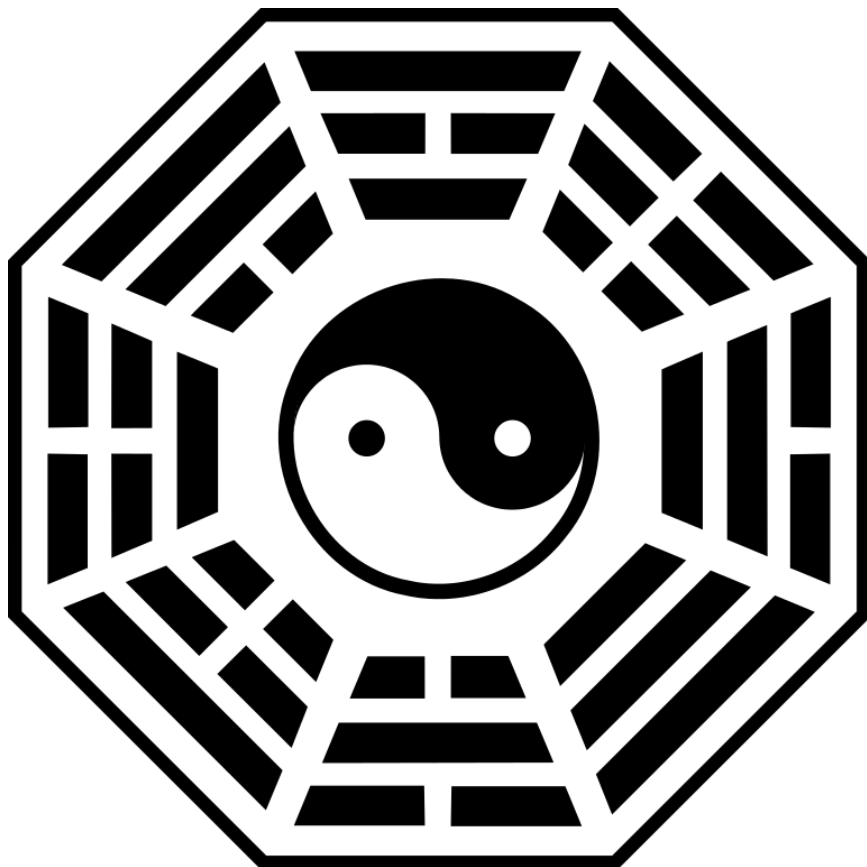
My father has explained the meaning of “prajñāpāramitā”, “hṛdaya” and “sūtra” by showing the separate parts of these words in their consistency.

According to my father the word “prajñāpāramitā” is composed of the main parts “prajñā”, “pāra” and “mitā”.

The word prajñā – mostly translated with wisdom – consists of pra and √jñā, wherein:

- pra has the meaning of “before, forward, in front, away, excessive” and “filling, fulfilment, resemble, and like” – just as the Latin word “pro” opposed to “contra” – and
- √jñā has the meaning of “knowledge, apprehend, perceive, remember, familiar with” [8].

In its composition “prajñā” has the meaning of “wisdom (of life), intelligence, know about, discrimination and/or wisdom of a wise/sensible woman/mother”. This last meaning points at “Tao” or “course of life” in the first chapter of the Tao Te Ching wherein “Tao” – in the form of “name” – is the “mother of all things” [9], says Narrator.



[10]

“I have read somewhere that Buddhism knows three kinds of “prajñā”:

- wisdom within our daily world, wherein the temporality within our life is seen as permanent, where illusions are experienced as real and wherein the transitory ego is considered as the Real Self. Most people live within this framework of wisdom.

- Wisdom within the metaphysical world, wherein the permanent manifestations are seen as temporal, where reality is experienced as an illusion, and wherein the manifestation with a “self” is considered without a self. This wisdom is attainable with meditation and philosophy.
- Wisdom that surpasses our daily and metaphysical world, wherein the manifestations are seen as neither temporal nor permanent, and are experienced as neither pure nor impure, neither with a “self” nor “without self”, and where all is unconceivable and inexpressible.

While our daily wisdom and metaphysical wisdom results in attachment to manifestations, illusions and characteristics, the third form of wisdom remains free hereof [11].

What kind of wisdom is meant with “prajñā” in Sanskrit?”, asks Man to Narrator.

“My father says that “prajñā” precedes all wisdom without going beyond any wisdom: it contains All and One without surpassing the variety of things in our daily life, the ideas and thoughts in science and the knowledge and wisdom of the unconceivable and inexpressible”, says Narrator.

“Your father is a wise man”, says Man.

“Within all his limitations and bondages. Shall I continue with pāramitā?”, asks Narrator.

“That is good”, say Carla and Man.

“The word “para” is used in Sanskrit in three ways with the following meanings:

- Pāra meaning: crossing, the other side, the other shore, guardian, fulfil, go through, to bring to a close. In Buddhism “the other shore” is used as metaphor for enlightenment.
- Parā meaning: away, off, aside
- Para meaning: highest, supreme, old, ancient, better or worse, and sometimes also superior or inferior.

Here the first way and meaning of the word is used; my father had added that while using one way and meaning of the word “para”, the other ways and meanings are always gently resonating.

The main part “mitā” is the nominative (or subject) plural of the word “mita” – related to the Latin verb “mittere” with the meaning “do go” or “send” and “let go” – that in Sanskrit has the meaning “fixed, established, measured, containing, moderate, of a Godlike being”.

Via this analysis, the word “prajñāpāramitā” has next to the meaning “perfect wisdom” also a reference to “Tao” from the first chapter of the Tao Te Ching as “name” – not the “Immortal Name” but “the mother of all things” – at one hand in designation and on the other hand in volatility and inevitability.

In Buddhism – with a creative explanation of pāramitā that might be compose of “pāra” and “ita” meaning “gone”, “returned”, “obtained” and “remembered” in Sanskrit, and therefore as combination meaning “go/return/recall to/of the other shore” [12] – the wisdom of “the other shore” or wisdom of the state of enlightenment is often meant with the word “prajñāpāramitā”, whereby “the other shore” is interconnected with “the shore” of daily life by the river or the source [13], just like in

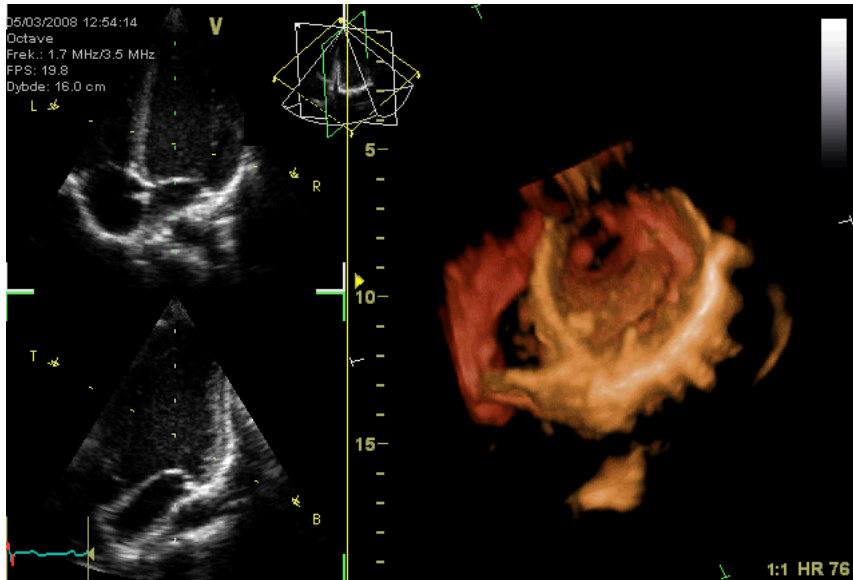
the metaphor of the cyclone, the core is connected by a wall of wind with the tolling tropical storm.

The word “hṛdaya” is often translated with “heart” or “interior of the body” and “heart, core, essence, best, dearest or most salvaged part of something” [14]. According to my father the word hṛdaya consists of the parts “√hr̥”, “√da” and “ya”:

- “√hr̥” meaning “take away, present, steal and offer” – as in the cattle-cycle [15], whereby this verb root is possible connected with the German word “Herr” – and “destroy/lose (also of one’s own ego), receive, win, charm, fascinate”
- “√da” meaning in Sanskrit “give”, “grant”, “offer”, “produce” and “cutting of (as separating from the “All and One” according to my father)” whereby √dā (dadāti) has the same meanings with addition of “to bind”
- “ya” meaning “mover” and “incentive”. My father was of the opinion that “ya” is closely related to “√yaj” in the sense of “sacrifice”, “offering for a higher – Godlike/heavenly – purpose”. My father uses this verb always in the form of “yayate”, whereby the fruit of the action of offering (or giving) reflects on the giver or on the All-encompassing self and it is probably a “God’s gift” in complete reciprocity. He also says that “ya” is closely related to our word “Yea” as a positive agreement and confirmation. In Holland, “yes” – with mercantilism always in mind – is closely related to a deal, but I think that my father points at recognition of the other and at a consenting attitude towards the other.

Via looking at the meaning of the parts of “hṛdaya”, this word receives next to “heart, core, essence, best, dearest or most salvaged part of something” also the meaning of “empty core” similar to the core of a

cyclone or a waterspout with far fetching consequences for all and everyone.



[16]

In the word “sūtra” we see the two cores “sū” and “tr̥”, whereby “sū” in the Vedic time – and as prefix in words – had the meaning of “good”. Later the meaning has changed in “create, procreate, vivify, produce, grant and bestow”. And “tr̥” has the meaning of “crossing”.

With this addition by my father, the usual translation “*Complete transference of the heart – or the core – of wisdom*” gets an extension and a transparency – and at the same time a volatility – as life itself. Actually, this title is referring to life itself, in all its richness and facets”, says Narrator.

“During your explanation, I have thought constantly of the pearls and all the separate reflections in the metaphor of “Indra’s Net”. Until now I

have always looked at the metaphor of Indra's Net as an entry into the unconceivable. With your explanation – completed by your father's wisdom – of the title in Sanskrit Heart Sūtra, it is clear that Indra's Net is also a metaphor for our daily life", says Carla.

"Upon a closer examination, all serious religious philosophies consider the same constantly. It is time to end this extensive lunch, and we have to wash the plates and cutlery. We must prepare ourselves for the next part of our boat trip during the following high tide. Tonight we shall have our supper in darkness after we have landed again. Now we must do the dishes, because it will not be easy during darkness before our supper. Besides, my mother said that only Bohemians wash the dishes before meals. I have nothing against Bohemians, but sailing a tidy boat is more enjoyable", says Man.

"Do we have enough water for washing the dishes?", asks Carla.

"I will put the kettle on: that should do, when we rinse our plates and cutlery before in seawater", says Man.

After they washed the dishes, the high tide slowly arrives. Man and Carla prepare the boat for sailing.

"At this landing, I have placed the front of the boat in such a way that we can sail away at once with the flow. We do not need to push the boat against the tide to deeper water. Over there, between Schiermonnikoog and Ameland, I already see the tide coming. When I will give a signal, please raise the anchor", says Man.

With the arrival of high tide, they sail away to their next landing at low tide.

- [1] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yawl>
- [2] Source image: [http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wagenborg_\(rederij\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wagenborg_(rederij))
- [3] Example of a yawl-rigged sailboat. Source image: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yawl>
- [4] See: Leben, Man, *Narrator Nārāyana – One way – A Biography*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2013, p. 110 - 112
- [5] Source image: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wattenmeer_\(Nordsee\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wattenmeer_(Nordsee))
- [6] See: Leben, Man, *Narrator Nārāyana – One way – A Biography*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher 2013, p. 31 - 36
- [7] See also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heart_Sutra Zie: Lopez, Donald S., *The Heart Sutra explained*. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1990, p. 21 – 31. Zie: Red Pine (Bill Porter), *The Heart Sutra*. Washington D.C.: Shoemaker & Hoard, 2004, p. 29 - 40
- [8] Source translation of words from Sanskrit: electronic version of dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta.
- [9] See: Red Pine (Bill Porter), *Lao-Tzu's Tao Te Ching (revised edition)*. Port Townsend: Copper Canyon Press, 2006, p.2
- [10] Symbol commonly used to represent Tao and its pursuit. Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tao>
- [11] Source: Red Pine (Bill Porter), *The Heart Sutra*. Washington D.C.: Shoemaker & Hoard, 2004, p. 30 - 31
- [12] Source: Lopez, Donald S., *The Heart Sutra explained*. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1990, p. 21-22
- [13] Sources: Lopez, Donald S., *The Heart Sutra explained*. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1990, p. 21-22 and Red Pine (Bill Porter), *The Heart Sutra*. Washington D.C.: Shoemaker & Hoard, 2004, p. 32
- [14] Source translation of words from Sanskrit: electronic version of dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta.
- [15] See: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence – part 1*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2012, p. 94 - 95
- [16] Image of 3D echocardiogram of a human heart. Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heart>

Windlessness

Emptiness within being whole

It is almost dark; the wind has dropped. Half an hour ago Man had lowered the sails; Carla, Man and Narrator are sailing on the outboard to their next landing place near Terschelling in the direction of Vlieland. With the onset of darkness, Man lets the boat strand and he lowers the anchor so that they will not float away with the next high tide. Man lights the gaslights in the cabin and on the aft deck, and they make the boat and beds ready for the night. Thereupon Narrator makes preparations for a simple supper; Carla gets a bottle of red wine from her luggage, uncorks it and pours three glasses. They smell the wine.

“Good wine from a good year; the smell blends nicely with this quiet evening in a salty area”, says Narrator.

“Mmm, the wine also goes well with the old cheese. Thank you for this wine”, says Man to Carla.

“I thought that red wine may fit well with this beautiful evening with the lights on the islands in the distance. I'm glad you appreciate my gesture”, says Carla.

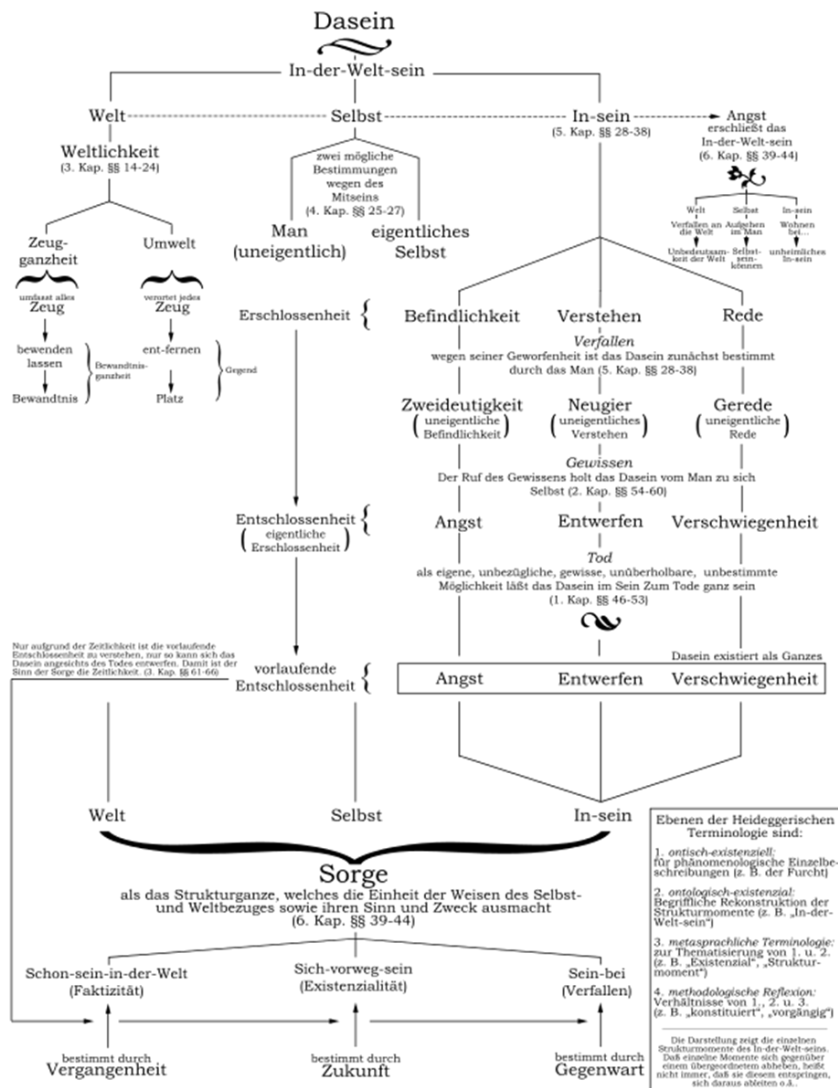
“While you took the wine from your overnight bag, I noticed that you have two books of Martin Heidegger [1] with you; I recognised a Dutch version of “*Being and Time*” [2] – I have understood that this is the most important work of Heidegger – and the title of the other book I could not identify. Professor Luijpen mentioned “being in the world” – one of the core themes in the work of Martin Heidegger – during his lectures in philosophy at the Technical University in Delft that you and I

had attended in the late 70s. Are you studying Heidegger's work?", asks Man to Carla at the beginning of the meal.

"I have read *"Sein und Zeit"* (*"Being and Time"*) during my study in Amsterdam to take note of the views of Heidegger on humans and beings involved in the world. I did remember that Heidegger had also paid attention to being whole – or in our words the "All-encompassing One" – in this book, but he had given little attention to this idea due to inability, because "being whole" is by definition unapproachable in his opinion.

Zusammenhang der Hauptbegriffe in Heideggers „Sein und Zeit“

aus Wikipedia der freien Enzyklopädie <http://de.wikipedia.org>



The second book with work of Martin Heidegger – published in an English translation more than ten years after his death under the title “*Contributions to Philosophy (from Enowning)*” – I have bought a few months ago in the sale at bookshop Broese in Utrecht. I have bought this second book because Heidegger continues on “being whole” – or All-encompassing One – in this book where he had stopped in “*Sein und Zeit*” (“*Being and Time*”) due to his inability at that time”, says Carla.

“Could you summarise after our meal what Martin Heidegger has written on “being whole”? Afterwards I may tell – as prelude to the Heart Sūtra – the introduction by Thich Nhat Hanh in his commentary to the Heart Sūtra [4]; the Dutch version has the title “*Form is empty, empty is form*”?”, asks Narrator.

“When we have coffee after finishing our meal, I will tell you what I had noticed and remembered upon quickly reading both books again. By the way, the perennial Gouda cheese you took with you, tastes delicious with the brown bread and the wine”, says Carla.

“An old friend with a cheese shop has offered it yesterday afternoon after I had helped him cleaning his shop. He thought that this old cheese – as solidified and preserved life – may fit well with the “emptiness” of our boat trip on this part of our Odyssey. And he is right”, says Narrator.

“Shall I make coffee now or would you like to continue enjoying the wine?”, asks Man.

“Let us enjoy our cheese and wine for a while in this quietude without a single breath of wind”, says Carla.

After fifteen minutes, Carla gets into warmer clothes, Narrator cleans the dishes and Man puts the kettle on for coffee and a few minutes later he pours the boiling water through the coffee filter. When the coffee is ready, Man gives each a mug of coffee.

“Good to get warm again by drinking this coffee. Shall I now give my summary – or rather my impressions – of these books by Martin Heidegger?”, says Carla.

“That is good. Important works may well give rise to many impressions and based thereon a lot of different interpretations. I understand that the work of Heidegger has also provoked negative reaction”, says Man.

“That is right. Partly due to the position that Heidegger has adopted at the rise of – and during – the Nazi regime and also by its abundant and distant – and at the same time, precise to the millimetre language with a distant engagement – view on our “being” in its different facets. His critics did not feel any connection with Heidegger’s positive attitude toward the Nazi regime, and thereby they cherished another kind of engagement than Heidegger’s distant contemplative engagement that according to his critics was placed outside daily life. It is interesting to note that Heidegger had written his book “*Sein und Zeit*” (“*Being and Time*”) in a chalet far away from the urban world”, says Carla.



[5]

"Afterwards it is easy to criticise the attitude people have at the onset and during a particular regime. The other regime in Germany has been extreme, but almost all regimes and religions have stark dark pages in their history: *"Those of you who is without sin, may cast the first stone"* [6]. And, we – on our quest – are now also far away from the daily urban world: sometimes this is necessary for contemplation", says Man.

"You are mild in your judgment. My memories of *"Sein und Zeit"* (*"Being and Time"*) by Martin Heidegger are coloured by the rest of my life and by our quest; I have studied this work over 30 years ago. In my memory Heidegger distinguished various forms of "being". These forms are: "being in the world" (*"Insein"* in German) is our human foundation for "being-t/here" (*"Dasein"* in German): it is the human basis for being, that I am myself [7]. A human is not alone on earth, we are with the other people (*"Mitsein"* in German) or with things around us (*"Mitdasein"* in German). We are aware and knowingly in the world [8] with the other or with things; this knowing is connected to "being in the world" (*"Insein"*) in German" [9]. "Being t/here" (*"Dasein"* in German) gets shape and form – in my capacity as a human being – in the context of "being in the world" in relation to the other or to things: herewith arises "being t/here" (*"Dasein"* in German) as my being [10]. These separate ways of "being t/here" (*"Dasein"* in German) are for me perfectly clear with the metaphor of Indra's Net [11] in mind.

Additionally Martin Heidegger explored in this part of *"Sein und Zeit"* (*"Being and Time"*) a loss of being – amongst others – by death. Within the metaphor of Indra's Net, this loss plays no role, because "being" inside Indra's Net is present ungraspably ever-changing within every glass pearl that reflects the whole pearl game, in the entire pearl game and within the emptiness of the pearl game. By its variability, elusiveness and omnipresence in every pearl, in the entire pearl game and in the emptiness, the loss of "being" is only a problem when Indra's Net solidifies in time and every change does stop, the emptiness

disappears and the pearl game will come to a standstill – similar to a continuous darkness wherein the lights and lighthouses on the horizon come forever to a standstill – and/or light (life) disappears within the pearl game.

As far as I know, Martin Heidegger gives in his work *“Sein und Zeit”* (*“Being and Time”*) a very limited answer to the question “Who are you”: you and I exist (“being t/here” or “Dasein” in German) in mutual relation to each other (“being with the other” or “Mitsein” in German) and to the things around us (“Mitdasein” in German) in the world (“Insein” in German).

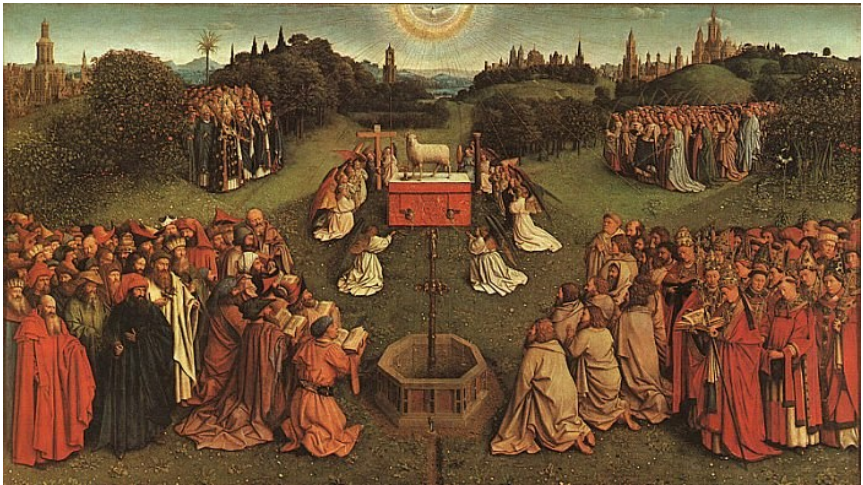
In the second part of *“Sein und Zeit”* (*“Being and Time”*) Martin Heidegger addresses “being whole” (“ursprünglichen Ganzheit” in German); he concludes that “being whole” is by definition the end of all other forms of “being” in the world: because in case “being” as separate being exists, it has not accomplished “being whole” [12]. The moment “being whole” has arrived, then this situation results in a complete loss of being in the world. “Being whole” can never be experienced according to Martin Heidegger [13]; I think that Heidegger made this statement because there is no one left to experience “being whole”.

During our stay at the first stage of our quest at the All-encompassing One, we have experienced that the All-encompassing One cannot be captured in words that are intended to distinguish.

Martin Heidegger does not dwell on “being whole”, probably he concludes with Ludwig Wittgenstein that *“Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muß man schweigen”* (“Whereof we cannot speak, thereof we should remain silent”) [14]. He continues with subjects as temporality, worldliness and historicity. This is my recollection of *“Sein und Zeit”* (*“Being and Time”*), says Carla.

“Impressive and a good accessible summary of a book that is seen by many as inaccessible. Probably Martin Heidegger – with his Roman

Catholic background – had difficulty with the All-encompassing One, because within “being whole” also the separation of human beings with the Catholic Divine Trinity [15] and thus the existence of God and of humans is eliminated: the existence of humans coincide completely with the existence of God. Sticking to the conceptual framework of “being whole” was certainly a bridge too far for Martin Heidegger in his time”, says Man.



[16]

“During your introduction I have noticed that Martin Heidegger is so close to our quest and – like a bird in flight – he swept right past us without any touching. Maybe this is caused by the limitations of language or perhaps even by the limitations of human understanding. The Heart Sūtra is slightly closer to the All-encompassing One without leaving daily world. I hope being able to show this during our boat trip. How does Martin Heidegger continue with “being whole” – or the All-encompassing One – in his later work?”, says Narrator.

"In *Contributions to Philosophy (from Enowning)* – published after his death – Martin Heidegger makes a distinction between normal "being" in the sense of daily life, and "be-ing" in the sense of the All-encompassing One. Looked from the perspective of separate humans and/or beings, be-ing is no human or being, because "be-ing" in no "being" – so no human and/or separate living being –; "be-ing" is according to our normal way of thinking "the nothing". I do not know if "the nothing" of Martin Heidegger coincides with our concept of "emptiness" [17].

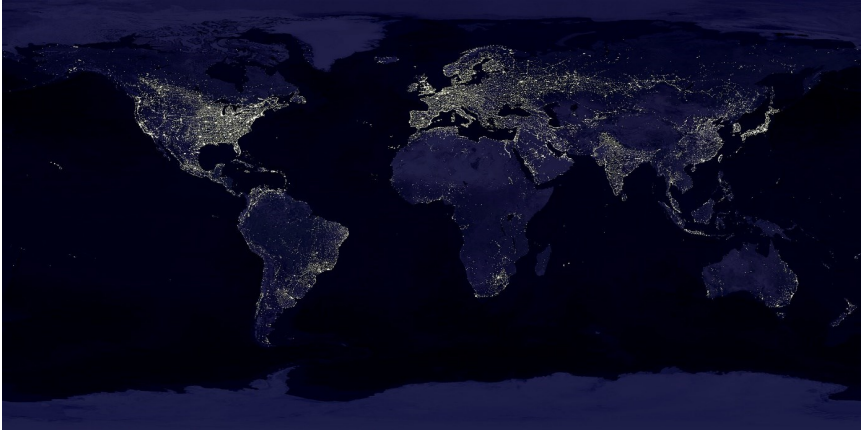
He continues with the position that: *"be-ing" is the basis of the All-encompassing* ("Da" in German), and that *"being" is the basis of our daily world wherein we live* [18]. "Be-ing" does not surpass humans and beings, but exceeds the separation between "being" in the world and "be-ing", and herewith at once goes beyond the possibility of surpassing "being" and "be-ing" [19]. Via the "All-encompassing be-ing" (Da-sein in German) humans are involved in the world of daily life ("Dasein" in German). "Be-ing" creates the basis for our involvement in the world [20]. By mentioning being in our daily life ("being") separately from the All-encompassing One ("be-ing") and at the same time letting both coincide with each other, Martin Heidegger tries to link "being t/ here" ("Dasein" in German) with "being whole" ("ursprünglichen Ganzheit" in German).

The manner wherein Martin Heidegger creates this connection, corresponds to the way in which one and zero are reciprocally related to each other: without "zero" (or emptiness) there can exist no "one" (or All-encompassing One), because without "zero" there is no place for "one", and without "one" the concept of emptiness or "zero" is completely empty of everything and thus without meaning and value", says Carla.

“Your explanation of Martin Heidegger’s “being in our daily world” along with “being in the All-encompassing One” shows similarities with the explanation hereof in some Buddhist books wherein the “Great Being” – also sometimes addressed with the “other shore” – is distinguished from “ordinary (human) being in everyday life”.

Personally I think this distinction is artificial, because everyday life is completely included – or encompassed – in the “All-encompassing One”; any distinction between both, immediately forms the first schism in the “All-encompassing One” whereby the “All-encompassing One” ceases to exist as “being whole”. The same applies to “emptiness” and “form”: both create each other within the space of the “All-encompassing One”. To show this space of “emptiness” and “form” within the “All-encompassing One”, I have invited you for this boat trip on the Waddenzee”, says Man.

“It will be difficult to improve your explanation of “being whole” and “being t/here” in the work of Martin Heidegger. Martin Heidegger was a man of his time wherein “yes” and “no”, “zero” and “one” and “afterwards all other numbers starting with two” were clearly separated from each other. Surpassing these distinctions and then going beyond any kind of surpassing, I regard as a major intellectual achievement by Martin Heidegger in his time. Within the “All-encompassing One” the work of Martin Heidegger is comparable with a light spot on the horizon, as the light of one of the houses in the space of the dark distance. In my way of thinking, the light of one of the houses coincides at the same time with the dark distance “one” and the “All-encompassing One”. My last sentence may not fully reflect the unspeakable wonder hereof. In my opinion Thich Nhat Hanh succeeds better in describing this miracle in the introduction to his commentary on the Heart Sūtra [21]. Shall I continue herewith, or do we need more discussion on the work of Martin Heidegger”, says Narrator.



[22]

“The work of Martin Heidegger certainly requires more discussion: the libraries written about his work have still a lot of room left for works with new insights and outlooks. But tonight we have no time for a further deepening of Heidegger’s work”, says Carla.

“Beautiful metaphor: the light of one of the houses. Examining this light in the world – with all the abilities and wisdom of humanity – will miss the core that Martin Heidegger – I think – had tried to interpret in his work. I’m looking forward to the introduction of Thich Nhat Hanh”, says Man.

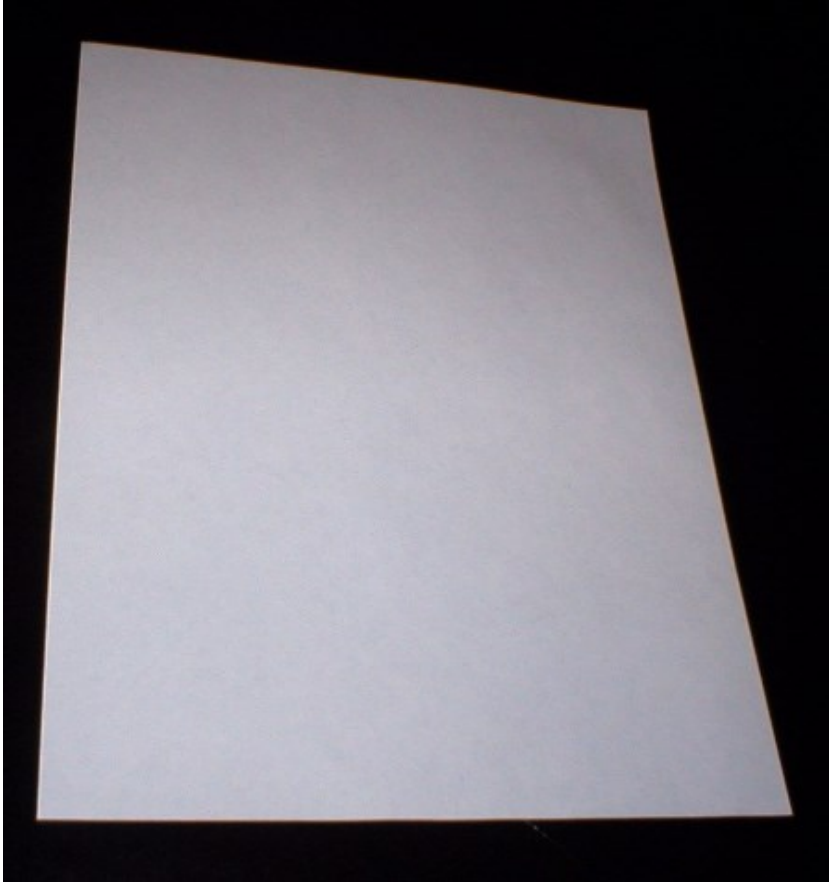
“Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh begins his commentary on the Heart Sūtra with the chapter “*Inter-being*” that – I think – goes beyond “being in reciprocal relation to one another” (or “Mitsein” in German) by Martin Heidegger, because the interconnectedness of “inter-being” is complete and because within “inter-being” the boundaries of the manifestations (phenomena) are diffuse at best and usually only artificial/imaginary as an illusion.



[23]

The chapter “inter-being” starts with the point of view of a poet who sees clearly that there is a cloud floating in the paper whereon he is writing his poem; and the sun also shines in the paper. Without the sun there is no rain, without rain the trees cannot grow, and without trees there is no paper for writing the poem. The woodcutter of the tree, the papermaker, etc. watch from the sheet of paper, without them there will be no sheet of paper for the poem. And also their parents and ancestors watch from the sheet: without them there would be no woodcutter, no papermaker, etc. If we look closer then we ourselves – the writer, the future reader with all their loved ones, with all of our culture and civilization – are within this sheet of paper: without them no future bundle of poetry and no future readers of the poem. You can designate “nothing” that is not “on one way or another” connected to this sheet of paper. All – or “being whole” (or “Ganzheit” in German) by Martin Heidegger – coexists with this sheet of paper.

According to Thich Nhat Hanh, you cannot be on your own; or you wish or not, you must co-exist or “inter-being” with everything and everyone around you: the sheet of paper is created solely by “non-paper” humans and things.



[24]

Carla – especially for you – Thich Nhat Hanh gives an interesting interpretation to the problem of the origin. Suppose you may wish to

trace the rain, sunshine, or woodcutter to their origin H₂O, the sun or the ancestors of the woodcutter, is the paper of the poet then still possible? Thich Nhat Hanh says that the paper of the poet will not be able to exist: even how thin the sheet of paper is, the entire universe is inside.

The Heart Sūtra even goes one step further than:

- Martin Heidegger who states that “being whole” is by definition the “nothing” or empty, because there is nothing to distinguish, and on the other hand that our being in the world is full of “being in”, “being with” and “being t/here” and
- Thich Nhat Hanh who rightly points in the chapter “*Inter-being*” of his commentary on the Heart Sūtra, that a simple sheet of paper mainly is composed of “non-paper” as people, beings and things,

because the Heart Sūtra states that all things are empty. Later at this boat trip, I hope it will be possible to explore this statement on the subject “emptiness” in de Heart Sūtra”, says Narrator.

“The explanation of “inter-being” has many characteristics of the metaphor of Indra’s Net and perhaps “inter-being” – as meant by Thich Nhat Hanh – may well be similar with this metaphor. The addition to the problem of the origin that you have mentioned is only part of the problems I have herewith: later during our quest maybe more. I’m starting to get chilly; shall we prepare for the night?”, says Carla.

“Good idea; I have missed some sleep last night in the car”, says Man.

“I will hold the night watch. It is already a little foggy: are we outside every sailing route at high tide tonight?”, asks Narrator.

“The boat is stranded stable and outside every sailing route. In case of emergency you may wake me”, says Man.

[1] See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Heidegger

[2] See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Being_and_Time

[3] Source image: http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Heidegger

- [4] See: Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Heart of Understanding*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1988, p. 3, 4
- [5] Chalet where Martin Heidegger had written *Being and time*. Source image and see also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Heidegger
- [6] See: New Testament, John 8:7
- [7] See: Heidegger, Martin, *Zijn en Tijd*. Nijmegen: Uitgeverij Sun, 2013, p. 80
- [8] See: Heidegger, Martin, *Zijn en Tijd*. Nijmegen: Uitgeverij Sun, 2013, p. 88
- [9] See: Heidegger, Martin, *Zijn en Tijd*. Nijmegen: Uitgeverij Sun, 2013, p. 89
- [10] See: Heidegger, Martin, *Zijn en Tijd*. Nijmegen: Uitgeverij Sun, 2013, p. 67
- [11] See: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence – part 1*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2012, p. 65 - 68
- [12] See: Heidegger, Martin, *Zijn en Tijd*. Nijmegen: Uitgeverij Sun, 2013, p. 302
- [13] See: Heidegger, Martin, *Zijn en Tijd*. Nijmegen: Uitgeverij Sun, 2013, p. 302
- [14] See: Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Amsterdam: Athenaeum-Polak & Van Gennip, 1976 p. 152
- [15] See: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence – part 1*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2012, p. 145 - 159
- [16] Source image: part of http://www.bertsgeschiedenis.nl/middeleeuwen/eeuw15/jan_van_eyck.htm
- [17] See: Heidegger, Martin, *Contributions to Philosophy (from Enowning)*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999, p. 173
- [18] See: Heidegger, Martin, *Contributions to Philosophy (from Enowning)*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999, p. 174
- [19] See: Heidegger, Martin, *Contributions to Philosophy (from Enowning)*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999, p. 177
- [20] See: Heidegger, Martin, *Contributions to Philosophy (from Enowning)*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999, p. 177
- [21] Zie: Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Heart of Understanding*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1988, p. 3, 4
- [22] Source image: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nacht>
- [23] Source image: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wattenmeer_\(Nordsee\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wattenmeer_(Nordsee))
- [24] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Papier>

Mist

One within being whole

At the beginning of the night, Narrator stands guard in foggy weather while Carla and Man are sleeping. Halfway through the night, the sea fog is getting thicker and thicker, whereby the sight at the start of the morning is less than 20 meters.

As agreed, Narrator awakes Man and Carla around 7 a.m.. After a brief look outside, Man says to Narrator that in the next hours it will be impossible to sail with a visibility less than 200 meters; he proposes to take over the guard, but Narrator prefers to sleep during the day while sailing, because then the boat is rocking pleasantly. Man asks to be awoken at 9 am at the latest or earlier in case the fog will decrease. Carla and Man go back to sleep again.

At 9 a.m. Narrator starts making breakfast with fried eggs and cheese. Carla and Man are still dozing, but the smell of fried eggs makes them awake. They get up, wash themselves with cold water and put quickly warm clothes on. Visibility is still poor.

“Low tide is nearing. It does not make sense to sail away this morning, because we do not have enough time to arrive at a next good landing place. We may enjoy this view until the next high tide. When the sun will start shining it may be quite comfortable. Nice that you have already prepared our breakfast”, says Man.

“Delicious: fried eggs and coffee to start the day. After our discussion last night about “being whole” that – according to Martin Heidegger – is by definition “empty” or “the nothingness”, I had dreamed this night

about the wise women in the Buddhist question last week at the end of “intensities and associations” [1]; she was unable to answer the question: “*One - what is that*” [2]. Until tonight I thought that this wise woman was struck dumb, because the Buddhist sage had uncovered with this question her ignorance and misunderstanding about “*One - what is that*”.

In my dream I knew that the sage and the wise woman were entirely encompassed in “being whole”; they were one – question and answer was one, speaking and silence was one and understanding and misunderstanding were united into one – and herewith an answer was unpronounceable: it was not necessary and not possible. Suddenly I had a great respect for the inability of the wise woman to answer. Now, during daylight, in this fog my understanding of this answer begins to fade, as if the centre of the cyclone moves on; swirls of the storm of daily life sweep away the oneness of “being whole”, says Carla.

“Man, would you be so kind to pour me some coffee? Thank you. Until recently, I have studied a Buddhist question about “being whole” and diversity named “*A woman comes out of meditation*” [3]. Very briefly this question is as follows:

Once, long ago, “being whole” – or All-encompassing One – was present in a place where many Buddha's [4] had gathered. When Mañjuśrī – teacher of the seven Buddhas and an excellent bodhisattvas [5]; his name comes from the verb cores $\sqrt{\text{mañj}}$ meaning “to cleanse or to be bright” and $\sqrt{\text{śrī}}$ meaning “to mix, to unite, to cook” whereby his name refers to perfect enlightenment in our earthly existence – arrived, the Buddha's disappeared to their original abode. Only a young woman – in deep meditation – stayed behind near Shakyamuni [6] Buddha's seat. Mañjuśrī asked Buddha: “Why can a young woman be near the seat of Buddha while I cannot?” Buddha replied: “Get her out of meditation and ask her yourself”. With all his knowledge and super-natural powers,

Mañjuśrī was not able to get her out of meditation. The All-encompassing One told Mañjuśrī: “Countless Mañjuśrī are not yet able to get her out of meditation. Far beyond more countries than there are grains of sand in the world's oceans, lives a junior bodhisattva who will be able to awaken her out this meditation”. Immediately this junior bodhisattva appeared and after snapping his fingers the young woman came out of her meditation.



[7]

This Buddhist question includes several sub-questions:

- How can Mañjuśrī – a bodhisattva – be the teacher of Buddha’s?
- What is the original abode of the Buddha’s and why do they return to their original abode at the moment Mañjuśrī arrives?
- Why can a young woman be near Shakyamuni Buddha’s seat while Mañjuśrī cannot?

- Why can't Mañjuśrī – an excellent bodhisattva – get this young woman out of meditation, while a student bodhisattva can do this with a snap of his finger?

A Zen master [8] gives an explanation to the question how Mañjuśrī as bodhisattva can be the teacher of Buddha's. This is possible, because Mañjuśrī is symbol of prajñā or wisdom of “being whole” – also called the complete emptiness or absolute equality from where everything is born and to which all returns – that surpasses the mundane and metaphysical world. This “being whole” is nothing more than the realisation of the enlightenment of all Buddhas. Hereby Mañjuśrī is called the master of the Buddha's: in the world of Mañjuśrī there is no subject and object, no getting up and no sitting down, no getting into meditation and no coming out of meditation. The junior bodhisattva symbolises worldly distinction: in his world we can freely stand up and sit down, being absorbed in meditation and come out of meditation.

This Zen master continues his explanation:

Everything in the world has two aspects of “being whole”: an essential aspect of “being whole” and a phenomenal aspect. Based on the essential aspect, all and everything is empty: it has no shape, no colour, no size and no surface. Herein all is the same. On the basis of the phenomenal aspect, everything has a shape, a colour, a size and a surface. Herewith all is unique and completely different. We, human beings, have two aspects: an essential manifestation and a phenomenal manifestation. Our entire oneness and our absolute differences are two aspects of one “being”. Intrinsically both aspects are one and the same of our “being whole”. Therefore we can say that everything has a form and at the same time has no form, and in the same way we take no step when we walk and in the middle of a hectic city we are in the core of a deep silence. The complete understanding of the Buddhist question stems from a complete understanding of the combination of the

essential – or empty – manifestations in conjunction with all phenomenal manifestations within the "All-encompassing One".

This Zen master gives the following explanation to why the junior bodhisattva can get the young woman out of her meditation while Mañjuśrī is not capable hereof:

Mañjuśrī and the junior bodhisattva both have freedom to act within their possibilities. Mañjuśrī is free to not get the young woman out of her meditation and the junior bodhisattva is free to let her stand up, just like a horse is free to gallop and a snail is free to crawl on the ground and free to not gallop. Not being able to gallop of a snake is an elegant way to give substance to this freedom. The horse and the snake have in common that they both have the ability and freedom to fulfil their core of deep silence or rather their "being whole" within their "All-encompassing One"; so Mañjuśrī and the junior bodhisattva within their "whole being" in complete interconnectedness with all manifestations are completely free to reflect their Dharma [9] and their unchangeable "being whole" [10] within Indra's Net.

This question with the explanation of the Zen master is a good starting point for a further exploration of emptiness and a closer examination of the Heart Sūtra", says Narrator.

"This question and the explanation give words to my feelings of oneness in my dream, that I had as a result of our discussion last night about "being whole" and the All-encompassing One", says Carla.

"I am still looking – after all the years I have immersed myself in meditation – for a balance between the silence of meditation and the hectic pace of everyday life. I have explored the freedom to "be" in both worlds within my capabilities and limitations. In the separate worlds of meditation and everyday life, I am at home and I am experiencing regularly "being whole", but I do not know the full integration of the two

separate worlds within my life; maybe this integration is not given to me within my capabilities and limitations, or perhaps this integration is not possible within a human life. This Buddhist question is about this integration that I am trying to achieve.

The Zen master who gives this explanation, is using the word Samādhi for meditation. Do you know the origin and meaning of the word Samādhi in Sanskrit?”, says Man.

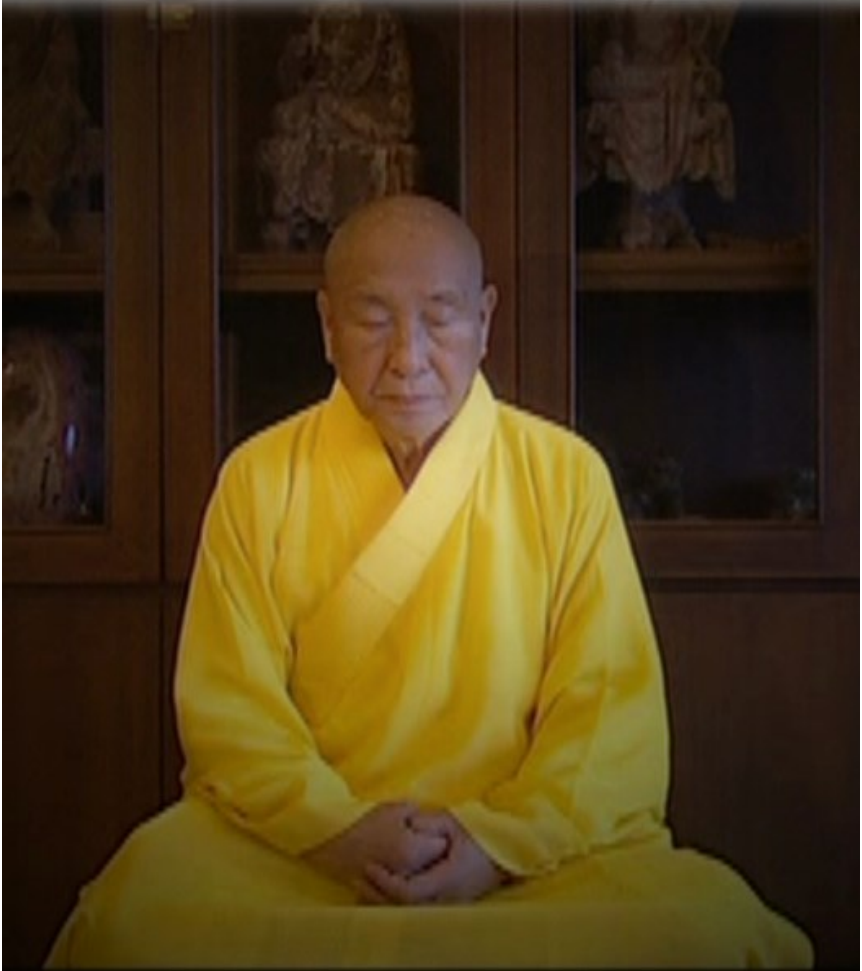
“The fog does not clear off yet; shall we make new coffee?”, says Narrator.

“I will make new coffee, then you can continue your conversation”, says Carla.

“Meditation is a good translation of Samādhi. In Sanskrit the word Samādhi consists of:

- “sam” meaning “conjunction, union, to join together, to place together, intensity, completeness”,
- “ā” meaning “backwards, back, giving a direction, completely, and also compassion and/or consent” and
- “dhi” – as a weak form of “√dhā”: “to place, to bring, to help, to grant, to produce, to cause” – meaning “delight, nourish, satiate, satisfy” [11].

My father said that “dhi” also refers to “the other” in conjunction with the All-encompassing One. Recently, while studying the Buddhist problem, I noticed in a dictionary the meaning “receptacle” [12] for “dhi”, whereby I immediately thought of the explanation by my father in the sense of: all separate fleeting manifestations in conjunction with “being whole” in the All-encompassing One.



[13]

I smell the coffee. The beans come all the way from Kenya; the land of my mother and of my youth”, says Narrator.

“We had in mind to translate the Heart Sūtra verbatim during this trip; I think this will not be possible, let us postpone the translation to a later

time when it's more convenient. I suggest to limit us these days to a discussion of the Sūtra", says Man.

"Good idea. Shall I hand you the coffee: the mist will last awhile", says Carla.

"Thank you, that will keep me warm and awake after the vigil of this night. If I am not mistaken, the long version of Heart Sūtra has the following structure:

- Introduction
- Question and answer
- Form is emptiness, and emptiness is form
- The negations and enlightenment
- The mantra "*Sadyathā oṃ, gate, gate, pāragate, pārasaṃgate, bodhi svāhā*" and
- The epilogue.

In the short version the introduction, the question and the epilogue are missing.

I have the impression that the introduction is added to the Heart Sūtra at a later stage to adjust this Sūtra to the structure of many other Sūtra's and to trace the origin of the Heart Sūtra back to the origin of Buddhism. For me the introduction of this Sūtra might be limited to "thus" or "evaṃ" [14] in Sanskrit, because herewith the Sūtra is completely traced back to the origin and to the manifestation of all phenomena.

After the introduction, the question raised in the Sūtra is in brief: "*How may humans achieve perfect wisdom (or "prajñāpāramitā" in Sanskrit)?*"

The answer – and this is the beginning of the short version of the Heart Sūtra – is:

“They should realise that the five skanda’s [15] – according to Buddhist doctrine “form, sensation, perception, thoughts and consciousness” and during our quest “facts and logic, intensities and associations, emptiness, change and interconnectedness” – are essentially empty.”

One commentator [16] gives the following explanation to this “empty of inherent existence”. There are five types of “emptiness”:

- Emptiness of what did not exist before, such as the sailing trip we cannot make this morning due to the fog;
- Emptiness of what does not exist anymore upon being destroyed, for instance spoiled whipped cream that can never be changed in good whipped cream;
- Emptiness of the utter non-existence, like dividing by zero with a fixed finite outcome [17];
- Emptiness of one not existing in the other, for instance a dog cannot exist within a cat;
- Emptiness of any entity and any distinction, like “being whole” according Martin Heidegger.

According to this commentator, the Heart Sūtra refers to the last form of emptiness: the five skanda’s are empty of any distinction and in this way empty of any inherent existence [18]. Another commentator gives as example of “emptiness of any inherent existence”: a cairn in the mountains that is mistaken from a distance to be a human [19].



[20]

After my education as architect, I have always given a lot of attention to the experience of space and herewith to emptiness, and the limitation and boundary of space.



[21]

The emptiness of the five skanda's surpasses the emptiness of the free spaces and the emptiness to use this freedom. The emptiness of the five skanda's is both unmentionable – because inside “being whole” nothing can be distinguished and mentioned – and mentionable because “being whole” includes the four other ways of emptiness and thereby all possible manifestations that are apparently illusions upon a closer look, as cairns being mistaken as human beings from distance.

It's a little lighter now, but visibility is still bad. This morning we cannot sail”, says Man.

“Very interesting way to highlight that the five common realities on our quest – “facts and logic, intensities and associations, emptiness, change and interconnectedness” – are essentially empty and herewith as manifestations – or illusions – are indivisible and simultaneously as illusions distinctively included in “being whole”. I have read somewhere that life is but a dream; according to the Heart Sūtra it is a dream included – or perhaps partly superimposed [22] – within the emptiness of “being whole””, says Carla.

“Although I still do not sleep much at night – because memories of past atrocities continue to haunt me in the dark – a short poem by Ryōkan has accompanied me many years on my travels:

*Though I always sleep
on my travels, each night
in another place,
the dream I always dream
brings me to my own house.*

- Ryōkan [23]

This short poem gave me comfort, acquiescence and connection within my nomadic life in Europe; and also it connected me again to the nomadic life in my childhood, with my mother as Maasai nomad travelling around with her small herd in northern Kenya, with my brothers and sisters, whereby it was always a treat when we met my father on his trips as storyteller.

In recent years – as bhikṣu [24] – I carry this poem still with me in a slightly altered form:

*Though I always sleep
on my way, every night
in another place;
in the dream I always dream
I am always at home.*

- Ryōkan [23]

The interpretation of “my own house” has expanded to the “All-encompassing One” or “being whole” by Martin Heidegger and “the dream” has shifted from my nocturnal dream to “everyday life” including my nightly vigils and my vision at night of my misdeeds.

After my nightly vigil, I am going to take a nap now until lunch”, says Narrator.

“Of course. Sleep well. At lunch we will wake you. We will guard the boat and hope that the fog will clear off”, says Carla.

“I think the fog will be gone around lunch. Then we can take a walk on the dry Waddenzee, and sail away around mid-afternoon”, says Man.

[1] See: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence – part 1*.

Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2012, p. 134 - 135

[2] See: Caplow, Florence & Moon, Susan, ed. *The hidden lamp – Stories from twenty-five Centuries of Awakened Women*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2013, p. 33

[3] See: Shibayama, Zenkei, *The Gateless Barrier*, Zen Comments on the Mumonkan.

Boston: Shambhala, 2000, p. 293 – 298 en Yamada Kōun Roshi, *Gateless Gate*

(Mumonkan). Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1990, 199 – 203

[4] In Sanskrit the name Buddha consists of the noun “bud” meaning “bud or knop” as “bud” in rosebud in the film “Citizen Kane” directed by Orson Wells – and the verb \sqrt{dha} meaning “place, grant, bestow”. Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

[5] The word bodhisattva consists of two words “bodhi” and “sattva” meaning “perfect knowledge, wisdom” and “being, conscience, living being” in Sanskrit. The school of Mahāyāna Buddhism knows the bodhisattva ideal. According to this ideal, a human who is on the verge of enlightenment – named bodhisattva, will refrain of entering until the complete universe and every particle is capable to enter enlightenment. In the meantime a bodhisattva will prepare everyone. See also:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bodhisattva>

[6] Shakyamuni consists of “śākya” meaning “possible or being able” and “muni” meaning “seer or sage”.

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

[8] See: Yamada Kōun Roshi, *Gateless Gate* (Mumonkan). Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1990, p. 201 - 202

[9] An explanation of Dharma is given in: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence – part 2.1*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2014, p. 34 etc.

[10] See for the second part of this sentence also: Shibayama, Zenkei, *The Gateless Barrier*, Zen Comments on the Mumonkan. Boston: Shambhala, 2000, p. 298

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

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

[13] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samadhi>

[14] In Sanskrit the word “Evam” consists of the verb √e meaning “approach, reach, enter” and the noun “va” meaning “wind, ocean, water, stream, going”. Source: electronic version of the dictionary Monier-Williams – MWDDS V1.5 Beta

See: Lopez - *The Heart Sutra explained*. 1990, p. 34; *The commentary Vajrapāṇi has high praise for the word Evam (thus), the word with which sūtras begin. Those four letters are the source of the 84.000 doctrines taught by the Buddha and are the basis of all marvels.*”

See Red Pine (Bill Porter) – *The Diamond Sutra*. 2001, p. 41-42; *Commentaries have written volumes on the profundity of evam (thus). Does it mean “like so”, or does it mean “just so”? And what is the difference? Is this sutra the finger that points to the moon, or is it the moon itself?*”

See: Holstein, Alexander- *Pointing at the Moon*. Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle Company 1993, p. 49; *in the enlightened mind of a Zen master, probably, there is no distinction what the ordinary mind calls “to point at” and “the moon”. To the enlightened mind, the relation between the two is similar to the relation of an ocean to its waves.*

[15] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skandha> ; and see also for a brief introduction: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence – part 1*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2012, p. 172 - 174

[16] The name of this commentator is Praśāstrasena. Source: Lopez, Donald S. - *The Heart Sutra explained* Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1990 p. 53

[17] See also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Division_by_zero

[18] The Heart Sūtra uses the word “svabhāvaśūnya” in Sanskrit for “empty of inherent existence”. The word svabhāvaśūnya consists of “sva” meaning “self”, “bhāva” meaning, “being or to be” and śūnya” meaning “empty” referring to “being whole” from Martin Heidegger.

[19] See also: Leben, Man, *Narrator Nārāyaṇa – One way, One biography*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2013, p. 54

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

[21] Source image: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glass_House

[22] See also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Superposition_principle

[23] This Tanka is freely translated from: Tooren, J. van, *Tanka – het lied van Japan*. Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 1983, p. 170

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

Form is emptiness, emptiness is form

Waves' game within being whole

Around half past one in the afternoon the fog slowly disappears. Carla awakes Narrator and says that Man and she will start preparing lunch. Man proposes to have a warm lunch, so in darkness of the evening at the next landing a simple meal will suffice.

When Narrator is fully awake, the warm lunch is ready.

"A simple, but wholesome meal. I hope you will enjoy this meal", says Man.

"Enjoy your meal", answer Carla and Narrator.

"I think we will have sufficient visibility to sail away at high tide", says Man.

"That would be nice, because then I will be able to take a nap at the end of the afternoon in a rocking boat", says Narrator.

"Mentioning the rocking of the boat: a few minutes ago I saw a few ducks floating by on the puddle of water next to the boat. Upon seeing the waves' game in the wake of these ducks – caused by kicking their feet – I thought of our conversation this morning about our life as a dream superimposed within "being whole". The waves' game in the water – a metaphor for our life as a dream, because the waves' game in the water surface is a superposition within the surface – is a metaphor for "being whole", says Carla.



[1]

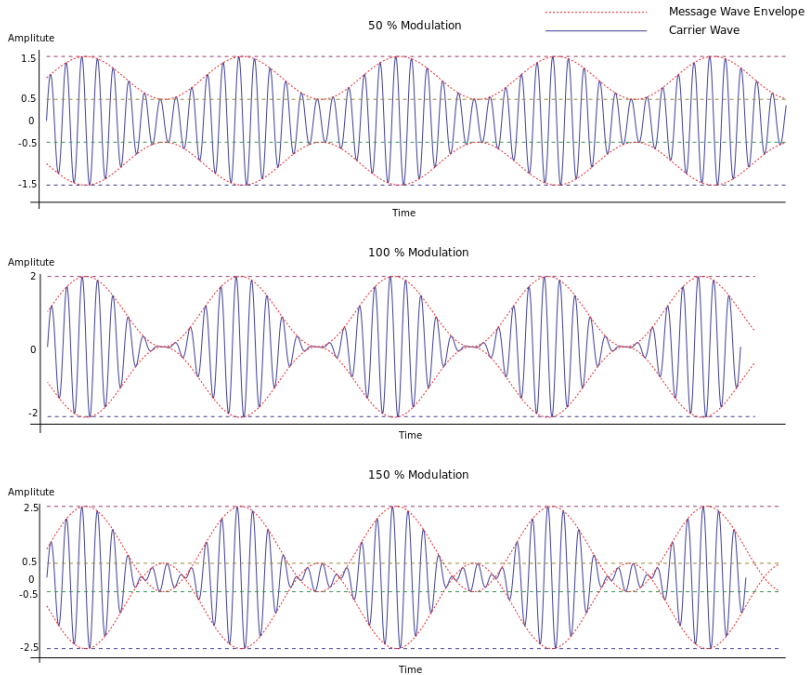
“A nice example of the combination of “being whole” with the swirling manifestations of daily life”, says Man.

“Now mentioning it, could you hand me some water?”, asks Narrator to Man.

“Please”, says Man.

“I believe we have now arrived at the core of the second part of our quest to “Who are you”. “Being whole” and “you” appearing in daily life together within the ineffable All-encompassing “being whole”, whereby we – the other and I in our everyday manifestations – are superimposed in the “wholeness like a dream”.

Now I am reminded of a radio signal – superimposed on a carrier – that is transmitted as one signal through space. Without the carrier no transference of a radio signal, without space no transference of the signal: they are mutually interconnected and interdependent in space.



[2]

I come back to the question: “*One - what is that?*” to the wise woman in the Buddhist question whereupon she was unable to answer. Like a wave as manifestation, and the ocean as “being whole”, inseparably superimposed on each other, is the “not knowing” of the wise woman

also superimposed on “being whole” or is it fully encompassed in “being whole”?, asks Carla to Narrator.

“Both:

*Night kisses the stars
And lets the waves wobble
Within the cosmos.
The dream of dreams a complete
Answer to: “One – what is that”*

And:

*A silent answer
To the quest: “One – what is That”;
Being whole in all*

And together in one haiku:

*In One whole breath
Form – empty, and empty – form
United in All*

Herewith we have arrived at the heart of the Heart Sūtra according to one commentator [3] and this core of the Sūtra is:

*“Here, form is emptiness and emptiness is form.
Emptiness is no other than form; form is no other than emptiness”.*

Or in Sanskrit:

*iha rūpaṃ śūnyata śūnyataiva rūpaṃ
rūpāṇna pṛthak śūnyatā śūnyatāyā na pṛthagrūpaṃ*

wherein we encounter several times the word “śūnyata”[4] for emptiness. The other keywords are:

- “iha” is usually translated as “here, in this world, in this place”. This adverb is composed of “i” meaning “compassion”, and “ha” meaning amongst others “meditation, knowledge, the moon, to destroy, to remove, to leave and as last letter of the alphabet also a last breath or to kill”. Herewith the word “iha” has simultaneously the meanings of “removal of illusions with compassion” and “meditation and/or enlightenment in this world”
- “rūpaṃ” – the accusative of the word “rūpa” – usually translated with “form” and it has also the meanings of “dreamlike appearance, inner nature, image, graceful shape and symptom”. The word “rūpa” comes from the verb core √rūp meaning “to form, to figure” and also “to exhibit by gesture” and “to show oneself”. My father said that “to show oneself” is to realise – and to give shape to – the All-encompassing One or to “being whole”.
- “na pṛthak” is usually translated with “not without” or “not separate of”. [5]

According to the core of the Heart Sūtra, not only our everyday life and the manifestations thereof are empty, but also “the realisation of the All-encompassing One” and herewith “being whole” is empty”, says Narrator.

“In the Heart Sūtra, several times an explanation is given to Shāriputra, for example: *“Thus (evaṃ) Shāriputra, all Dharma’s are empty without characteristics, not arisen, not disappeared, nor immaculate, nor polluted, nor complete and nor unfilled”*. What is the meaning of the name Shāriputra?”, asks Carla to Narrator.

“The name Shāriputra is composed of “Shār” meaning in Sanskrit “wind, arrow and injure”, and “putra” meaning “child” [6]. Herewith the name Shāriputra refers to “child of the wind” – volatile and always everywhere present – and thereby “child destined to remove the illusions (like an arrow in one sigh)”. Because of this destination Shāriputra is described in several Mahayana texts standing with one foot in “being whole” and with the other foot in “the phenomena of everyday world”; by this double role, Shāriputra is an ideal person to act in the “All-encompassing One” and at the same time within “the delusion of daily life” as part of “being whole”. Shāriputra [7] is one of the most important disciples of Shakyamuni Buddha. According to Buddhists, Shakyamuni Buddha is the historical person Siddhārtha Gautama after his complete enlightenment”, says Narrator.

“Your explanation of the core of the Heart Sūtra reminds me of the name YHWH for God in the Tanach [8] – and in the Old Testament of Christianity – meaning “Eternal” or “Always” and this name can also be understood as the Hebrew verb “הָיָא” or “is” from the verb “to be”. Usually “הָיָא” is translated as “He Who is” but the originally meaning is just “is” without further interpretation. While voicing their core, many religions fall back on the “unmentionable” for example in Hebrews 7:3: *“Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life”* for the Messiah (or the eternal priest). But immediately after the mentioning of the “unmentionable being”, religions begin to explain this “unmentionable being” within daily life and afterwards to

secure the place of the followers within “being whole” and in relation to the “unmentionable being””, says Man.

“Similarly, the Heart Sūtra. After the core: *“Form is emptiness and emptiness is form. Emptiness is no other than form; form is not different from emptiness”*, the Heart Sūtra begins slowly to turn again like a cyclone, because hereafter is restated that – in addition to form – the four other skanda’s are empty: *“In the same way feeling, perception, thought and consciousness are empty”*. Then – as Carla mentioned before – the Sūtra says that all forms of self / Self are empty without content:

“Thus [9] all Dharma’s [10] are empty without characteristics, not arisen, not disappeared, nor immaculate, nor polluted, nor complete and nor unfilled”.

I can only read this as: all Dharma’s are – via “emptiness is form” – fully included in the All-encompassing One” or included the unmentionable and indivisible “being whole” of Martin Heidegger. "

And the Sūtra continues with a large number of negations:

“Therefore, in emptiness there is no form, no feeling, no perception, no memory, no consciousness, neither eye nor ear nor nose nor tongue, neither body nor mind nor form, neither sound nor smell nor taste, neither feeling nor traces of perception from eye to conceptual consciousness, nor causation from ignorance to old age and death, neither end of causation from ignorance to old age and death, nor suffering, nor relief, neither way, no knowledge, no achievement or non-achievement”

With these negations the Sūtra begins (after *“Form - emptiness and emptiness – form”*) slowly to take fully form (and emptiness) again – like a photo immersed in a photographic developer – within the All-encompassing One.



[11]

Ah, finally the sun, within a short while the fog will disappear. With some luck we can soon look around again. When are you planning to sail away?", asks Narrator to Man.

"I propose to raise the anchor at high tide about three o'clock and start our return boat trip to Lauwersoog. Due to the fog this morning we have not been able to begin the last part of our trip to Vlieland. When we would sail this last part this afternoon, according to the weather forecast we will have a chance to end up in bad weather within two days: in my opinion we should avoid this. Now we can arrive in the marina before the weather change. And I can have the boat ready in time for the transfer to my friend", says Man.

"I've spoken so much that I've forgotten to eat. Could you hand me the bread and cheese?", asks Narrator to Carla.

"Please. Are bread and cheese also empty according to the Heart Sūtra? I think I know the answer, but what do you think?", asks Carla.

"Both are no permanent – independent – forms: they are arisen by baking bread and ripening of cheese and they will change into another form during digestion. Even if they are not eaten, they will spoil within a short time. The generally accepted idea of "bread" and "cheese" are also no permanent independent forms: they receive meaning and value within a human society, they have originated once in the course of history, they have change and they will disappear once again. In this way, bread and cheese are form and emptiness simultaneously within our lifetime. In addition, they give form and emptiness to our lives within our "being whole".

Herakleitos had said according tradition:

"πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει" καὶ "δὺς ἐς τὸν αὐτὸν ποταμὸν οὐκ ἂν ἐμβαίης" [12]

or very freely interpreted:

"All changes and nothing remain still, and we cannot stay twice in the same tide".

Just like our sailing trip on the Waddensea: every form is constantly changing, and no form is permanent. The fog that has just fully enveloped us, is gone. This reminds me of a short poem at the end of a Buddhist question. I have made this a haiku from this poem:

*Sun shines in the sky
On vanishing of the mist
As bright as always*

Although we will consider “change” during the next part of our quest, I ask the question now: “Is the constant change within “being whole” empty too?”

This question is important because the Mahābhārata states on one hand that everything – even the gods – and perhaps “being whole” is bound to dharma [13], but according to the Heart Sūtra, the dharma’s are empty and simultaneously included in “being whole”. Is “being whole” also empty?”, asks Man to Carla en Narrator.

“Based upon “facts and logic” no answer is possible according to the two incompleteness theorems [14] by Kurt Gödel [15]. Briefly – and focused on the question “Is “being whole” empty” – the theorems read:

- In case a system – “being whole” or finite – is consistent (or empty), this system cannot be complete and
- The consistency of the axiom’s like “*Is “being whole” empty*” cannot be proven from within the system – “being whole” or endless – itself.

I come to this conclusion because “being whole” is so unknowable huge, that there is always place for something additional within it. I think “being whole” is endless because mathematics permits the concept of

“infinity” easily, but I cannot prove that “being whole” is infinite, because it is – due to indivisibility – by definition unknowable and incomparable in size.

From a metaphysical point of view, I think that “being whole” has by definition no distinction and is therefore indivisible; hereby “being whole” is empty of all discrimination and understanding, because there is nothing to understand or grasp. I think this definition – as all assumptions – is debatable.

Besides, there are of course various temporary manifestations superimposed within “being whole”, like photos immersed in a photographic developer. These manifestations are as real as when I squeeze you in your arm and as volatile, empty and real – as form is emptiness and emptiness is form – within the metaphor of Indra’s Net”, says Carla

“This lunch was excellent; shall we have some coffee?”, says Narrator.

“I will make some coffee”, says Man.

“Your haiku is based on the poem in the Buddhist question “*Wash you bowls*”. Summarized and adapted to our time this question is:

“A student enters a monastery and asks for instructions. The teacher asks: “Did you have your lunch?” The student answers: “Yes, I have”. “Then”, the teacher says: “Wash your plate and cutlery”.

And the poem is:

*Because it is so clear
It takes longer to realise.
If you acknowledge at once that candlelight is fire,
The lunch has long been prepared. [16]*

Or said in another way: “A fish discovers water last of all. So it takes a long time to realise “being whole”, because it is omnipresent. When you recognise that all forms are completely included in the All-encompassing One, then this lunch has long been prepared”.

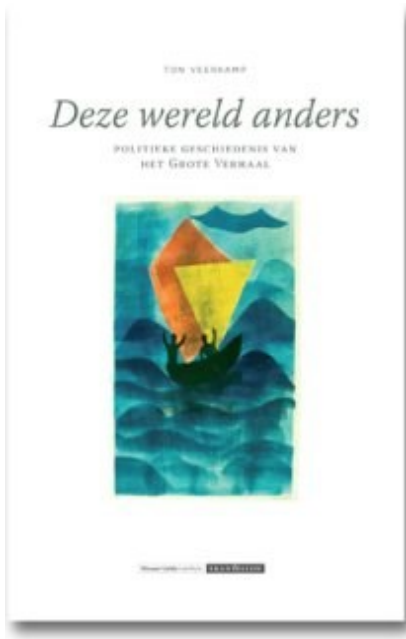
The poem gives immediately – or directly and instantaneously – an answer to the question where we may find “being whole”: “Here (“iha” in Sanskrit) at this place where we sit” and “Here in the shoes wherein we stand”. Because it is so obvious, it will go unnoticed.

The non-dualistic Vedānte [17] – amongst others based upon the Upanishads and the Bagavad Gītā – often refers to the All-encompassing One, where after at once a distinction is introduced, for example between the castes in India, student and teacher, higher beings and humans [18].

This same distinction within “being whole” immediate arose within the Tanakh and the Old Testament where God – YHWH (or “is”) – and humans are separated after a few words thereby entering our manifestations within everyday life.

Recently I read on the back cover of “*Deze wereld anders – Politieke geschiedenis van het grote verhaal*” (This world different – Political history of the grand story) by Ton Veerkamp:

“Christianity focused on heaven – the heaven of the folk religions – and the afterlife. Everyday life and the “here and now” was a side issue and thus Christianity has often excessively adapted itself to a world of power and oppression.” [19]



I think every religion has done this in to some extent: nothing human is excluded from religions.

The Heart Sūtra continues after mentioning the core of “being whole” – and after a large number of negations of daily realities that are empty of content and form – by entering the path of the bodhisattva.

“Therefore without attainment, the bodhisattva’s [20] – via perfect wisdom (prajñāpāramitā) – are without obstructions on their life course. Without obstructions and thus without fear they surpass their illusions (within daily life and within “being whole”) and nirvana [21]. Due to the perfect wisdom (prajñāpāramitā) all past, present and future Buddha’s realise the “All-encompassing One”. ”

The All-encompassing One” is “Here (“iha” in Sanskrit) at this place where we sit” and “Here in the shoes wherein we stand”.

In this manner the Heart Sūtra – although in words that distinguish and create distance – has tried to describe life course (or Tao) within the non-dualistic All-encompassing One.

Time to wash my plate and cutlery”, says Narrator.

“With your plate and cutlery the “All-encompassing One” is also washed within our world. This is perfectly clear within the metaphor of “Indra's Net”.

In everyday life, I notice a limitation of the scope of washing your plate and cutlery, because the transfer of information – the light within the metaphor of Indra's Net – has obvious limitations and because our way of perception does affect our way of seeing.

Approached from the world of phenomena and viewed from everyday individual objects, it is utterly impossible to wash only the plate and cutlery without having an impact on the environment, because there is always an influence on dishwasher, soap and the dishwater needed for washing, and the water had an initial temperature by the sun before it is heated etc. etc.

In my life, I experience both worldviews as fully real and practical, but I cannot completely overlap both in one all-encompassing system: the metaphor of superposition of the world of phenomena within “being whole” helps, but is not fully satisfactory for me”, says Carla.

“The Heart Sūtra is a scripture originated from Mahāyāna Buddhism. This form of Buddhism is also called the “middle way”, because within this religion one tries to unite the world of “being whole” with everyday life. This “middle way” takes shape in the bodhisattva ideal. A bodhisattva – with both feet standing in the worlds of “being whole”

together with “everyday life” – will only enter the All-encompassing One together and at the same time with everyone and everything. Within this ideal a bodhisattva enters – here and now – constantly “being whole” and “daily life” to save everything and everyone from life’s suffering”, says Narrator while washing his plate and cutlery.

[1] Source image: http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Superpositie_%28natuurkunde%29

[2] Source image: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amplitude_modulation

[3] See: Lopez, Donald S. - *The Heart Sutra explained* Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1990 p. 57

[4] See for an exposure of “śūnyata” the post: “*Emptiness: to the end of the night*”

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

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

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

[8] Source: *Tanach* Heerenveen: Uitgeverij NBG, 2007, p. 113

[9] The Heart Sūtra uses the word “evaṃ”. See for an explanation footnote 14 in chapter “Mist”

[10] Dharma means literally “continuously placing of the self/Self”.

[11] Source image: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darkroom>

[12] Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heraclitus>

[13] See for an explanation of Dharma: Origo, Jan van, *Who are you – a survey into our existence – part 2.1 – Facts and Logic*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2014, p. 34 e.v.

[14] See also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurt_G%C3%B6del

[15] See also: Origo, Jan van, *a survey into our existence – part 2.1 – Facts and Logic*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2014, p. 62 - 64

[16] See also: Shibayama, Zenkei, *The Gateless Barrier, Zen Comments on the Mumonkan*. Boston: Shambhala, 2000, p. 67 – 71 and Yamada Kōun Roshi, *Gateless Gate (Mumonkan)*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1990, 40 – 43

[17] See also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vedanta>

[18] See: Venkataramanan, S. *Select Works of Sri Sankaracharya*. New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 2003

[19] See: Veerkamp, Ton. *Deze wereld anders – Politieke geschiedenis van het Grote Verhaal*. Vught: Uitgeverij Skandalon, 2014

[20] The word bodhisattva consists of two words “bodhi” and “sattva” meaning “perfect knowledge, wisdom” and “being, conscience, living being” in Sanskrit. The school of Mahāyāna buddhism knows the bodhisattva ideal. According to this ideal, a human who is on the verge of enlightenment – named bodhisattva – will refrain of entering until the complete universe and every particle is capable to enter enlightenment. In the meantime a bodhisattva will prepare everyone and everything for enlightenment.

[21] Literally: absence of forest (or barriers) or the open plain

Way of emptiness

What is the way?

Note: the original title of this chapter “Weg van leegte” has three meanings in Dutch: “Way of emptiness”, “Way from emptiness” and “Loving emptiness”.

Halfway through the afternoon – when the boat is floating again by the rise of the tide – Narrator raises the anchor. Carla and Man hoist the sails and with a breeze from the west they sail with the flow in the direction of Lauwershaven.

“Where shall we land tonight?”, asks Narrator to Man.

“With some luck southeast of Ameland. Tomorrow at the end of the morning – well before the change of weather – we will be back in the marina near Lauwersoog”, says Man.

“You are completely at home while sailing this boat: it seems that the boat, the waves, the wind and you are fully united. I recognise this, because looking back on my life, I have always been completely at home in my four separate incarnations [1]: these have always fit me just like the left eye and the left hand go together with the right eye and the right hand. In my third incarnation as wandering bhikṣu in Europe – following the annual migration of birds between South and North Europe – I have been completely absorbed in the emptiness of meditation during my wanderings. My sense of time was gone, I lived in a timeless endlessness. Looking at you sailing in a relaxed and focused manner, I perceive natural meditation in action: the boat goes – with help of small movement of helm and sail – smoothly by itself over the waves”, says Narrator.

“For me, sailing is a form of meditation; I already sail a long time. As a high school student, I aimed to sail as fast as possible and let the boat – without loss of speed – spectacularly cut through the top of waves. Now I let the wind and waves do their work together with the boat and the sails; I steer only occasional, as during meditation I let the lingering thoughts drift away”, says Man.

“It is very easy for you”, says Narrator.

“That is partly true, I have to keep my attention and thoughts focused on the direction that we aim to go and on the shoals that we must avoid. Meditation on a pillow is endlessly easier for me”, says Man.

“That is true for humans. I am not sure whether this is also true for other beings. A Buddhist teacher compares meditation with sitting like a frog [2]. Sitting is an everyday activity for a frog. The teacher says:

*“When you are completely yourself, you see things as they are
and you become One with your surroundings”.*

In everyday life, I see humanity often focused on a small part of Oneself. Because of this, they lose sight of the things as they are – they confuse a wave with the ocean – and thus they estrange from their surroundings.



[3]

Before we have sailed away this afternoon, I saw the high tide arriving
in waves; observing the interplay of waves and shells on the flats, this
haiku originated:

*In every wave
Nothing comes and goes;
Shell in the tide*

Maybe this haiku has come forth from the poem “*Shell*” by the Japanese
poet Shinkichi Takahashi:

*"Nothing, nothing at all is born, dies", the shell says again and again
From the depth of hollowness.
Its body swept off by the tide – so what?
It sleeps in sand, drying in sunlight, bathing in moonlight [4],
Nothing to do with sea or anything else.
Over and over it vanishes with the wave [5]*

30 years ago – at the opening of blossom buttons in the warmth of the sun – saying goodbye to my beloved [6], this poem had come into my life and has never left", says Narrator.

"This haiku and poem give a voice to my perception of unicity – in oneness and uniqueness – while sailing", says Man.

"Almost always, when I'm busy with only one activity, I experience this feeling of oneness. When doing several things at once – for example: quickly packing luggage for a journey and also dealing with all kind of practical matters, such as paying bills, telephoning people, etc. –, my experience of oneness evaporates in the cross swell caused by dividing my attention", says Carla.

"The boat rocks so beautiful now; I will go back to sleep. Would you like to wake me at the beginning of the evening? Or no, please wake me when the boat has landed at low tide", says Narrator.

Man sails the boat with assistance from Carla to the planned landing place. Carla and Man lower the sails, drop the anchor and let the boat land. Carla wakes Narrator as promised.

"You have already ignited the lamp in the kitchen. Shall I prepare the supper for tonight? What would you like to drink? I have one last bottle of red wine", says Carla.

“That is delicious, I think we have enough bread tonight and tomorrow”, says Man.

“I would prefer some water first, do we still have enough water left?”, asks Narrator.

“More than enough for two days”, says Man.

“Before I had gone to sleep, I was thinking that this afternoon – during our conversation while sailing – I have done injustice to everyday life. A Buddhist question focuses on the importance of everyday life. The question is as follows:

A student [7] asks a teacher: “What is the way (Tao)?”

The teacher answers: “Daily life [8] is the way of emptiness”.

The student asks: “Should we direct ourselves to it or not?”.

The teacher answers: “If you direct to it, you go away from it”.

The student asks: “If we do not direct to it, how can we know it is the way?”

The teacher answers: “The way of emptiness does not belong to knowing and not-knowing. Knowing is an illusion, not-knowing is emptiness of consciousness. If you realise [9] the way, you perceive this way as vast and boundless as the endless empty firmament. How can the way be seen as right or wrong”

With this answer the consciousness was like the full moon. [10]



And the poem – accompanying this question – is:

*Flowers in spring, the moon in autumn,
A cool breeze in summer, and snow in winter;
If there is no vain cloud in your mind,
For you it is a good season.*

After reading this poem I have made this haiku:

*Every season
Without a cloud in your mind
Is a good season*

This question covers by all means – at once – the way of emptiness, the way of the All-encompassing One and the way of everyday life”, says Narrator.

“This is a famous question from the Mumonkan [12] – in English the “Gateless Gate” – the gateless gate to the gate of emptiness whereby every distinction within the All-encompassing One (or “being whole” according to Martin Heidegger) is lifted. Via this question a Buddhist teacher has realised enlightenment: the voice of this teacher still sounds within all and everything. A student of this teacher was once confronted with a famous phrase by this teacher; thereupon the student said: “My teacher has never said this. Please do not gossip about my teacher”. I think this student is referring to the universal teacher inseparable included within the All-encompassing One, wherein also his former teacher completely coincides [13].

Mentioning the “Gateless Gate”, I think that we have arrived at the mantra of the Heart Sūtra. Can you explain the meaning of this mantra in Sanskrit”, asks Man to Narrator.

“Delicious cheese with bread. Please, could you pour me some wine?”, asks Narrator to Carla.

“Please”, says Carla.

“The wine tastes wonderful with this cheese and bread. It is real last supper on this short boat trip.

The Heart Sūtra is one of the few sūtras with a mantra; hereby one can see that it is a later Buddhist sūtra, because mantras became popular in India well after the onset of Buddhism [14].

The mantra is as follows:

tadyathā / gate gate pāragate pārasaṅgate bodhi svāhā

Wherein the separate words have the following meaning:

- “Tadyathā” consists of:
 - “tad” meaning “also, in this world”,
 - “ya”: we have seen this word in śūnyatā and it has the meaning “mover” and “incentive”. My father was of the opinion that “ya” is closely related to “√yaj” in the sense of “sacrifice”, “offering for a higher – Godlike/heavenly-purpose” (perhaps “God’s gift” in reciprocity). My father has also told me once that “ya” is connected with our word “yeah” as positive consent and confirmation,
 - “yathā” meaning “in this manner”,

Hereby “tadyathā” has the meaning: “All thus”. The full literary meaning is: “All-encompassing One” or “being whole” here and now in all its glory – as “God’s gift” in complete reciprocity.

- The word “gate” has for me a very special meaning. I had lived one year of my life with my beloved in the Prästgatan – the priest street – on the island of Gamla Stan in Stockholm [15]. In Sanskrit “gate” is not only a conjugation of the verb “√gam” meaning “to go”, but it is also the “locative or place-conjugation” of the noun “gata” derived from the verb “to go”. Thereby “gata” has the meaning of “disappeared, disappeared from this world, deceased, dead, gone, come, come forth, near, arrive, know, and spread everywhere” [16].



[17]

- The word “para” is used in Sanskrit in three ways with the following meanings:
 - pāra: crossing, the other side, the other shore, guardian, fulfil, go through, to bring to a close. In Buddhism “the other shore” is used as metaphor for enlightenment.
 - parā: away, off, aside
 - para: highest, supreme, old, ancient, better or worse, and sometimes also superior or inferior.

Here the first meaning of the word is used; my father added that while using one way and meaning of the word para, the other ways and meanings are always gently resonating.

- The word “sam” meaning: “together, binding, intensity, complete, and completely destroyed”,
- Bodhi: perfect wisdom, enlightened mind,
- Svāhā: exclamation at an offer, hallelujah or “amen”.

Usually this mantra is not translated; freely rendered the meaning of this mantra is:

*All thus, gone, gone, gone beyond,
all and everyone gone together beyond, enlightenment, amen!*

One commentator [18] has written that the first "gate" refers to the deep inner desire to enter the path of the Bodhisattva, the second “gate” refers to obtaining inner maturity and the third “gate” together with “pāra” to a perfect maturity – or probably enlightenment.

I think that every form of “gate” and every word in this mantra – like every word that we speak – directly and without distinction refers to the All-encompassing One or “being whole” as described by Martin Heidegger.

In the long version of the Sūtra, several confirmations of the truth of the contents of the Sūtra and a few words of praise for the attendees follow after the mantra; in the short version the Sūtra ends with this mantra.

Time for some bread and wine”, says Narrator.

“What can I add to this introduction on the Heart Sūtra? Of course, a complete study – as lifework – can be made on many details and on the content and the influence of this sūtra. But I think the biggest challenge is integrating the content of this sūtra in our daily lives. I do my best, but I am often carried away by everyday concerns and ordinary issues”, says Man.

“The daily concerns and issues of the day are part of our “being whole”: these concerns and issues are perfectly encompassed in “being whole” and they certainly require attention – or better compassion – to receive a suitable place within our “being whole” without outshining everything and causing a Buddhist hell. This compassion is nicely displayed in the words “All-encompassing One” for our “being whole””, says Narrator.

“Until now, I have followed the introduction without giving significant additions, also because I want to take note of this new way of looking at emptiness. Now we have come to the end of the introduction, I see that the merger between “being whole” and our everyday life provides a good basis for ethics; many ethical principles and assumptions of humanity and compassion are in some way based hereupon.

I understand this basis – static and dynamic – intellectually. But emotionally, I struggle to unite change, renewal and aging in our lives within the merger between “being whole” and everyday life. In addition, I do not know how the miracle of “life” relates to the merger between “being whole” and the issues of the day via superposition. Or in a metaphor: how does the hologram of impressions – that we have – relate to the whole interplay within Indra's Net, and also, where does the light within Indra's Net come from?”, says Carla.

“The miracle of the origin of life, the light and the origin of change seems to be beyond our comprehension, although we are constantly right in the middle of this miracle: just like a fish who will discover water as last, although this fish is completely immersed in water. Via being complete involvement, we live it constantly and completely”, says Narrator.

“What do you think of my following proposal: shall we locate “change” – the next common reality during our quest to “Who are you” – on a holiday tour in Kenya? It is my wish to go once in my life to Africa, and I understand that Carla also would like to return to Kenia once again. I can easily offer the travel and stay from my funds. Narrator, I understand that you cannot travel to Africa because of your past as a child soldier and your former role in the worlds of secret services for which you are still on the run: maybe we should forget this proposal”, says Man.



[19]

“No, I think it’s a very good idea. I would like to hear a report of this tour to the country of my mother and my childhood. During the report, I will give the necessary additions. In the meantime, I can make preparations for the first two sub-parts “Ishvara” and “Et incarnatus est” of stage three of our quest. These two sub-parts of the third part are well in line with "emptiness" in the form of “being whole””, says Narrator.

“I would like to accept this offer gladly, but I have reservations about the absence of Narrator on this tour”, says Carla.

“From a distance I will travel with you constantly: I will breathe with your breath and I look with your eyes. If you will not go, I will not breathe the air of Africa and I will not see my homeland again with your eyes. I will join you on this tour within the emptiness of the “All-encompassing One”, says Narrator.

“Would you like one last sip of wine from the bottle? Maybe Man and I should fulfil our desire to visit Africa”, says Carla.

“Let us now share the last sip of your wine with my bread and cheese before you go to sleep and I will stand guard. And you should definitely go: I look forward to hear your experiences and learn the changes that have taken place in my homeland”, says Narrator.

“Yes, please one last sip of your delicious wine. We will sail away tomorrow at dawn. It’s good that Carla and I go to bed early; would you

like to wake me up when you wish to transfer the vigil?”, asks Man to Narrator.

“I will stand guard all night; I will wake you at dawn, because I cannot sleep under the starry sky”, says Narrator.

After a few moments, Carla and Man go to bed. The next morning they sail to the marina near Lauwersoog. There they prepare the boat for the transfer to the friend of Man.

Mid-afternoon Carla and Man say goodbye to Narrator at the bus station.

“I am looking forward to see my friend in Groningen. Over 25 years ago we were both lovers within a turbulent life in Amsterdam, but now we are good friends who both have a pleasant life: he as an associate professor in Groningen and I am a wandering monk. Our passion for one another is gone, but the mutual compassion has remained. We are pleased to be able to see each other again: many of our friends did not survive the AIDS-era in Amsterdam. Meeting him again, I will also meet the deceased common friends. I wish you a nice trip in Africa during the coming weeks. When you are back, I will contact you”, says Narrator.

“I am looking forward to your postcard for our next meeting”, says Man.

“I will let you know when I am back at Schiphol Airport. There is the bus to Groningen. Send my regards to your friend”, says Carla.

“And mine too”, says Man.

Near dinnertime the boat is ready for the transfer. At sunset Carla and Man drive to a hotel for overnight stay nearby.



[20]

During the next morning a storm rages over the Wadden Sea and hunts the water forth.

*Voidness of the storm
In the water of the sea,
Hunts the waves forth*

[1] See: Leben, Man, *Narrator Nārāyana – One way – One Biography*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2013, p. 202

[2] Source: Suzuki, Shunryu, *Zen Mind, Beginners Mind: Informal Talks on Zen Meditation and Practice*. New York: Weatherhill, 1980, p. 80

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

[4] In Buddhism the Moon is often referring to religion – or to the All-encompassing One.

[5] Source: Stryk, Lucien & Ikemoto, Takashi, *Zen Poetry*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd, 1981, p.133

[6] See: Leben, Man, *Narrator Nārāyana – One way – One Biography*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2013, p. 131 - 135

[7] This student is the later teacher Zhaozhou Congshen, who is also known as Joshu (the name whereby he is known in Japan). See also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhaozhou_Congshen

[8] Free rendering of “The ordinary way”

[9] Narrator has already given an explanation of “realise”: “My father has heard from his ancestors the meaning of the keyword “realise” that is composed of “re”, “all”, “Īśe” [this is the locative of Īśa whereby Īśa means in het Sanskrit amongst others “God in celestial heaven”, “One who is completely master of”. The sound of Īśa has similarity with “ich” – the German first person singular]. Herewith realise means amongst other “honouring” “again and again”, “all”, “in its all-encompassment”. See also: Leben, Man, *Narrator Nārāyana – One way – One Biography*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2013, p. 126

[10] See also: Shibayama, Zenkei, *The Gateless Barrier, Zen Comments on the Mumonkan*. Boston: Shambhala, 2000, p. 140 – 147; Yamada Kōun Roshi, *Gateless Gate (Mumonkan)*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1990, 93 – 97; Green, James, *The Recorded Sayings of Zen Master Joshu*. Boston: Shambhala, 1998, p. 11

[11] Source image: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Full_moon

[12] The Mumonkan – in English mostly translated with Gateless Gate – is a collection of 48 Zen Koans that is compiled by the monk Mumon in the 13th century AC.

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

[13] See also: Shibayama, Zenkei, *The Gateless Barrier, Zen Comments on the Mumonkan*. Boston: Shambhala, 2000, p. 262, middle of the page; Yamada Kōun Roshi, *Gateless Gate (Mumonkan)*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1990, 178, last paragraph

[14] Source: Lopez, Donald S. - *The Heart Sutra explained* Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1990 p. 109

[15] See also: Leben, Man, *Narrator Nārāyana – One way – One Biography*. Amsterdam: Omnia – Amsterdam Publisher, 2013, p. 103 - 133

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

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

[18] The name of this commentor is Śrīmahājāna. Source: Lopez, Donald S. - *The Heart Sutra explained* Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1990 p. 111

[19] Source image: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maasai_people

[20] Source image: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waddenzee>

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Index

A

A woman comes out of meditation, 73
All-encompassing One, 56, 58, 61, 62, 63, 64, 73, 74, 76, 77, 84, 92, 93, 94,
99, 100, 101, 102, 110, 112, 114, 116, 119
Amsterdam, 11, 23, 24, 31, 32, 33, 38, 40, 54, 56, 70, 85, 86, 103, 117, 119,
120

B

Badrinath, Chaturvedi, 23
Be-ing, 63
Being and Time, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61
Being in the world, 55, 60, 61, 68
Being whole, 56, 58, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 68, 72, 73, 75, 76, 77, 80, 82, 83, 84,
86, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 110, 112, 114,
115, 116
Being-t/here, 60
Bhikṣu, 38, 46, 83, 104
Bodhi, 19, 23, 79, 85, 103, 111, 113
Bruce, Peter, 40
Buddha, 19, 73, 74, 75, 85, 86, 93, 100
Buddhism, 18, 48, 50, 79, 85, 101, 111, 113, 119, 120
Buddhist, 12, 16, 24, 64, 73, 74, 75, 77, 80, 90, 97, 98, 105, 108, 110, 111,
114, 120

C

Caplow, Florence, 85

Core, 13, 18, 25, 26, 37, 46, 51, 52, 55, 65, 75, 76, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 100

Cyclone, 13, 25, 26, 37, 40, 51, 52, 73, 94

D

Dasein, 60, 61, 63

Da-sein, 63

Deshimaru, Taisen, 23

Dharma, 16, 18, 19, 23, 24, 76, 85, 93, 94, 97, 103, 120

Drascombe, 34, 42

E

Emptiness, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 26, 44, 46, 58, 60, 63, 64, 68, 75, 76, 79, 80,
82, 83, 88, 91, 92, 94, 96, 98, 104, 108, 110, 114, 116, 121

Enlightenment, 12, 18, 19, 26, 50, 73, 75, 79, 85, 92, 93, 103, 110, 113

Ensō, 26

Essential, 75, 76

F

Firmament, 12, 108

Folkboat, Nordic/Norwegian, 32, 33, 34, 36, 40

G

Gamla Stan, 112

Ganz Heit, 66

Gate, 79, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 120

Gateless Gate, 85, 103, 110, 111, 119, 120

Gezelle, Guido, 20, 21, 23, 24
Glassman, Bernie, 23
God, 13, 21, 23, 51, 62, 93, 99, 111, 112, 119
Gödel, Kurt, 97
Great Being, 64

H

Heart Sūtra, 12, 16, 17, 23, 44, 46, 53, 54, 62, 64, 65, 68, 76, 78, 79, 80, 83, 86, 91, 92, 93, 94, 96, 97, 100, 101, 102, 103, 111, 114, 120
Heidegger, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 68, 69, 70, 72, 80, 84, 86, 94, 110, 114
Herakleitos, 96
Hinduism, 18
Hitsuzendo, 26
Holstein, Alexander, 86
Hṛdaya, 46, 47, 51
Huineng, 18, 24

J

Jewish spiritual leadership, 30, 37
Jōshū, 119
Jōshū's wash your bowls, 97

K

Katz, Ruth Cecily, 23
Khandava forest, 23
Kṛṣṇa, 23, 38

L

Lauwersoog, 11, 20, 41, 96, 104, 117
Lopez, Donald S, 54, 86, 102, 120
Luijpen, Prof. Dr. W., 55

M

Maasai, 83, 120
Mahābhārata, 23, 97
Mahāyāna, 85, 101, 103
Malachi, 40
Manifestation, 16, 49, 75, 79, 90
Mañjuśrī, 73, 74, 75, 76
Mantra, 79, 111, 113, 114
Meditation, 49, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 85, 92, 104, 105, 119
Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 16, 23
Messiah, 93
Mitdasein, 60, 61
Mitsein, 60, 61, 65
Moksha, 18
Moon, Susan, 85
Mumonkan, 85, 103, 110, 119, 120

N

Nirvana, 18, 100
Nothingness, 72

O

One – what is that, 12, 73, 90, 91
Ordinary mind is the way, 107
Origo, Jan van, 23, 24, 54, 70, 85, 86, 103

P

Pāramitā, 49, 50
Phenomenal, 75, 76
Porter, Bill, 54, 86
Prajñā, 47, 48, 49, 75
Prajñāpāramitā, 46, 47, 50, 79, 100
Prästgatan, 112

R

Red Pine, 54, 86
Rūpaṃ, 92
Ryōkan, 83

S

Sacrifice, 13, 51, 111
Sanskrit, 12, 17, 19, 26, 46, 49, 50, 51, 53, 54, 77, 79, 85, 86, 92, 93, 99, 101, 103, 111, 112, 113, 119
Schiermonnikoog, 11, 20, 41, 53
Sein und Zeit, 56
Shakyamuni, 73, 74, 85, 93
Shāriputra, 93
Shibayama, Zenkei, 85, 103, 119, 120
Shinkichi Takahashi, 106
Skanda, 80, 82, 94
Stryk, Lucien, 119
śūnyata, 92, 103
śūnyatā, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 25, 26, 92, 103
Superimposed, 83, 88, 89, 90, 91, 98
Sūtra, 46, 47, 52, 79, 91, 94, 111, 114
Suzuki, Shunryu, 119

T

Tanach, 93, 103
Tanakh, 40, 99
Tao, 47, 50, 54, 101, 108
Tao Te Ching, 47, 50, 54
Thich Nhat Hanh, 58, 64, 65, 67, 68, 70
Tooren, J. van, 86

U

Ursprünglichen Ganzheit, 61, 63

V

Vedānte, 99
Veerkamp, Ton, 103
Venkataramanan, 103

W

Wabi-sabi, 26, 27, 30, 38
Wadden Sea, 25, 36, 38, 39, 118
Waterspouts, 36
Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 61, 70

Y

Yamada Kōun Roshi, 85, 103, 119, 120
YHWH, 93, 99

Z

Zen master, 14, 16, 17, 19, 65, 75, 76, 77, 86

Zero, 14, 16, 44, 63, 64, 80, 86

Zhaozhou Congshen, 119

