

THE LOOK OF MEANING



Dario Ergas

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THE FLOW OF A HUMANIST WRITING

Writing book prefaces is part of my publishing work. So, when Dario Ergas asked me if I'd write the introduction for this book, I started to think and immediately realised that it was a difficult and, at the same time, fascinating task.

The present book escapes the classical definitions of literary genres. As it doesn't follow the usual rules of narration, it isn't a novel. Despite often including poems, it isn't a poetry book. Maybe it's an essay by one of those anthropologists or philosophers who touch on—as the title seems to promise—profound arguments? Or is it something more directly mystical, like some 'sacred books' that are circulating in these times? Despite more closely approaching the latter, it doesn't have their characteristic form either.

So, what is it? In my opinion it's a new way of writing. To be a little more precise, it would be wrong to say that this is the first expression of this form for two reasons: firstly, because the author has written another book, *The Meaning of Nonmeaning*, in which we've already begun to experience this way of writing; secondly, because we can find some indicators of the intention that this way of communication generates in some of Silo's works such as *Humanise the Earth* but also in *Letters to My Friends* where the following passage about Human Beings reveals this writing style:

Let us speak, then, of human life. When I observe myself, not from a physiological point of view but from an existential one, I find myself here, in a world that is given, neither made nor chosen by me. I find that I am in situation with respect to phenomena that, beginning with my own body, are inescapable.¹

The central thing in this mental placement, this perspective, is in the phrase: 'When I observe myself,' in other words, when I connect with my experiences. And this is the starting point for all humanist writing: it starts from the specifics of personal experience to then go on to communicate something that may have universal scope.

Another of the particularities of this way of writing has to do with the relationship of respect, of opening and of proposal for true dialogue with the reader as if in a relationship of peers. So, this is a work that can't be considered finished because what is trying to be

¹ Silo, Fourth Letter, *Letters to My Friends*, Collected Works, Volume 1, Latitude Press, 2003, p 467)

said and communicated isn't absolute and eternal, but rather always allows for a margin where the reader's interpretation may freely arise and even be prolific.

Finally, the intention is to share experiences and reflections that may be useful on the path of liberation that, without doubt, each of us must travel.

Olivier Turquet

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

This translation has been done by Tony Robinson with the help of Silvia Swinden in the chapter on Valid Action.

As with all humanist written productions there are challenges with translations mainly due to the language used not being every day language. Within circles familiar with the works of Silo the language is familiar, but those new to this style of writing might consider that the words have been mistranslated. One hopes that this is not the case in this work.

There are two particular questions that have arisen in this work. Firstly, the Spanish original text uses the expression "lo humano", which literally translates as "the human". In other English translations of humanist writings, including those of Silo, it has been translated as "what is human" to try to help the reader grasp the concept but we've decided to stick to the literal translation in this current translation because the author, shortly after the first use of the expression, goes on to define it and elaborate its definition.

The second question concerns the use of the third person pronoun 'su' which in English can be translated as 'his', 'her', 'its' or 'their' and in some translations 'his or her'. The author writes about an entity called an 'inner guide', which is an internal representation that can have human characteristics. Some have developed a representation with a definite gender but in this case, and on consultation with the author, it has been decided to be unspecific by using the third person plural form 'their' to indicate this indefinite gender avoiding the use of the more awkward 'his or her'.

INTRODUCTION

Nonmeaning has accompanied me and spurred me on throughout my life.

Does life, my life, really have a meaning?

In *The Meaning of Nonmeaning*² I tried to journey through the states of consciousness that have most suffering, seeking the way out of the dark labyrinths in which meaning becomes trapped and lost. My interest was in ridding ourselves of the crudest suffering so that then we'd be able to truly ask ourselves the fundamental question about life and its meaning.

In this new book the aim is set, not now on the reconciliation of particular issues, but on accessing the experience of Meaning.

We'll try to turn the way to approach life upside down. Until now the entire path to conquer suffering has been an arduous trek away from nonmeaning, trying to distance ourselves from it. While distancing ourselves, there was always a trap that returned us to the abyss, and once at the bottom, we'd have to start the difficult task of getting out once more so that we could leave the darkness of the consciousness and go towards the light.

We'll position ourselves differently when facing this question. We'll assume that life does have meaning and we'll try to reach intuitions that facilitate this experience. In other words, if life has meaning, and affirming that it does, then we should find the way to approach it and understand its significance. If on the way we stumble upon experiences that affirm this hypothesis then we will affirm it and from there we'll seek to approach the state of meaning. We need experiences and not only intellectual comprehensions as the latter will always fall into the field of doubt and discussion.

If we confirm this working hypothesis then the consequences will be enormous. It doesn't matter how we may feel right now, it doesn't matter if the world is turning upside down, or if some circumstance has us spellbound, or if our asphyxiating routine leaves us no time to stop a moment and reflect. Whatever the situation may be in which reading this book takes you by surprise, accept the hypothesis that life does have meaning, that it isn't over with death and that everything has meaning.

² Published in Spanish by Virtual Ediciones, Chile, in 1998 by the same author.

If there's something truly important in life and in the human then this something must somehow manifest itself and there must be a path to access this greatness. As our hypothesis is that this does exist, therefore it's worthwhile seeing how to get there. It's also valid to ask ourselves why, if there exists something so enormous and true that gives meaning to existence, is it so difficult to recognise and explain? We already know where we want to get to even if we don't know how, or exactly what we'll find, but with this attitude the act of searching generated in us will gather more and more strength.

Will we find something in human beings that doesn't depend on the body? Or are we just a body?

If there is something, if something exists that doesn't depend on the body, something that existed before and exists after the body then how can you recognise it? How can you access it?

If there is something then it must be giving off some kind of signal and we need to know how to capture it. If it's giving off a signal, the consciousness must be somehow translating it and so it'll be reflected in some human manifestation.

What am I being invited to know when the Oracle of Delphi spoke this ancient phrase, 'know thyself?' What do we have to know in order to know the future? How am I going to know myself, if I assume that I co-exist with myself? Perhaps this is the most important thing that the Oracle said. Maybe I co-exist with someone I don't know? Could it be that very close to me there's someone very important called 'yourself', 'myself' or 'oneself' who I don't know? If there's something in me that doesn't die, something essential that's there, before and after the body, it would be very interesting to know it. Dear yourself, that's where we're going.

When we speak of Meaning, we're using at least two definitions of the term. As 'significance': life—beyond its evolutionary mechanics or beyond being an aside to nothingness—has a significance. We're also using the term in its definition of 'direction': life has a direction; it's going somewhere specific and coming from somewhere specific. To ask about meaning is to ask about significance and direction.

If life has meaning then the human isn't an accident of life. We usually see the human as a product of evolution. Evolutionary life becomes increasingly complicated, it generates

consciousness and we assume that the human and consciousness are almost the same. Could it be?

When did the human become present? When hominids stood on two feet? Or was it already present a long time before that?

It could be that the human has accompanied life right there from the start. That the human has been working until reaching consciousness. The human: a spark of freedom that has accompanied life from the start and that was first ignited in some sort of monkey millions of years ago, taking it out of its animal dream. The human: something that operates through, and will continue to awaken, the consciousness until it's fully expressed in the world.

We usually have objectives and pursue them so that they may be fulfilled. This mode of action through goals we confuse with meaning. It seems to us that our lives have meaning through the tasks that we set ourselves. These tasks can take a short time or many years. When we fulfil or exhaust a goal, have we achieved the meaning in life? Because, life continues after the goal. We don't die when we fulfil our objectives. Life continues and we seek something else to give us meaning, but what is meaning then? Something you invent? In any case, if everything that we can imagine has a timeframe in which to be done, and if this timeframe ends with death regardless of the distance away from the objective we find ourselves, then we won't be able to finish it after we're dead. And, if things continue after death, if in fact life continues after death, what will be our objective or goal then?

We're accustomed to moving in short timeframes and believing that meaning is these objectives we set on the way. We assume that the objective will be fulfilled more or less simultaneously with the end of the road. But if the road has no end, how do you travel an endless road? How do you travel a road that doesn't arrive, whose essence is in being a road? A long road home. Regardless of the difficulties and the melancholic zones and the digressions, it's a long road home. I arrive home and it vanishes like a mirage and once again I see a long road.

It was from Silo's Message that circulated towards the end of the year 2001, from the work with the Force that's explained there and the meditation about 'The Path' that I

started to change the way of approaching reality. My intuition told me that I could look at life from Nonmeaning and painfully try to get out of it or I could look at life from Meaning and dodge the difficulties that obstruct the encounter with this experience.

I'm going to write to you from deep within myself,

Don't flee my words so quickly.

Don't flee if they shock you, don't flee if they burn you.

Don't consider that you already know what I'm telling you.

I'll open my heart and there are no two ways that are alike.

Follow my words, hear them within you, feel them.

I'll travel as far as I can to get close to you.

I'll go where few dare to go, to reach you.

THE ERA³

The Passage of Time. Western Disillusion. The Direction or Meaning of History

Why is it so difficult to experience meaning in life?

Because you are the era and the era is characterised by disillusion.

You feel what the era feels, you dream what the era dreams and you believe what the era believes.

Your generation is travelling with you to what is to come. You're a moment in time between your parents and your children, between your parents and those who will be your children, a wave of existence that moves until bursting into a spasm of reality.

When the first morning rays of the sun light up History, on seeing its silhouette, Being is experienced, is felt, and we predict joy at its expression in the passage of time.

When History reaches its noon, the sun is over our heads and we can no longer see it. We know that it's there, Being occupies all the space, but our eyes are blinded if we look ahead. We need to capture it, to explain it and to reach it through the shadows that its light generates when it clashes with us, with the human.

At sunset, we once more see the silhouette of the sun that sets in the sea and the night is born. We look at the evening with the look of nostalgia, with the look of what I could have been and was not and will not be. The last rays of the sun chill the soul.

It has already been some time since the last rays of the sun hid from the West. The night has made itself present hiding the significance, forgetting the question about being.

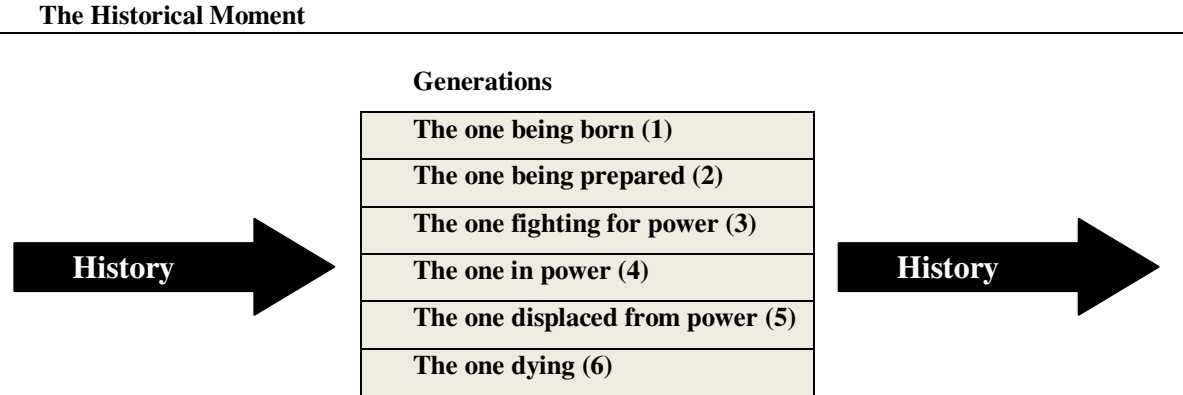
The Passage of Time

History is a continuum produced by generations that fight each other for power and are replaced one after another. When the generation in power becomes old and dies, other, younger ones substitute them and even younger ones fight with those in power. We use the term 'Historical Moment' in order to grasp this continuum and attempt to comprehend

³ Based on the work done with Francisco Ruiz Tagle for the Future Global Situation Commission, created by the Assembly of the Humanist Movement at the end of 2001.

where we're coming from and where we're heading. The Historical Moment is an abstraction in which an instant of time is photographed. Within it different generations co-exist and act: the one being born (1), the one being prepared (2), the one fighting for power (3), the one in power (4), the one displaced from power (5) and the one dying (6).

The Historical Moment



Several generations make up an Historical Moment. Several Historical Moments make up an Era. Several eras make an Age. Ortega taught us that we can distinguish three ages in a civilisation: the Traditionalist Age, the Rationalist Age and the Disillusioned Age.

The first age, Tradition, is characterised by its attachment to a revealed truth. Life gravitates around religion, gods, their commandments and their church. The yearned-for future is a 'lost past'. In the birth of civilisations we can notice the connection with a strong giver of meaning. A new civilisation is a new spirituality that starts to shape its creativity in the world of mankind.

The second age is Reason in which through it people hope to reach the world of utopias, people believe in great ideas and strive so that reality adjusts to them through revolutions. The future is thought out and built through revolution. The look is set to the future; science and technology—both products of reason—are tools to transform the world.

The last age is Disillusion in which neither tradition nor reason can get us close to the desired world, to happiness and to liberty. The soul is disillusioned and loses hope for the future. Consciousness starts to look to the skies in search of something magic to shake it

from its loneliness. Here is the description that Ortega made in the epilogue to *The Sunset of Revolution*⁴ to describe this Disillusioned age:

After the defeat of all his daring idealist aims man is left completely demoralised. He loses all spontaneous faith and does not believe in anything that works along manifest and disciplined lines. He respects neither tradition nor reason, neither collectivity nor the individual. His vital resources weaken because, definitively, it is the beliefs we cherish that keep such resources at concert pitch. He has not sufficient strength in reserve to maintain a suitable attitude before the mystery of life and the universe. Universal cowardice begins to prevail: a strange phenomenon which appeared equally in Greece and Rome and has not yet received its due emphasis. In such ages of waste valour becomes an unusual quality which is only possessed by a few. Its practice is made a profession whose exponents form a soldiery hostile to all public order and stupidly oppressive of the rest of the social body.

This universal cowardice becomes apparent in the most delicate and intimate recesses of the mind, and projects itself in all directions. Men are terrified once more by lightning and thunder, as they were in the most primitive times. No one relies on his own personal vigour to enable him to triumph over difficulties. Life is felt to be a formidable accident, in which man is dependent upon mysterious and occult wills, acting in accordance with the most puerile caprices. The debased mind is incapable of offering resistance to destiny, and turns to superstitious practices in the hope of propitiating these hidden powers. The most absurd rites attract the adhesion of the multitude. Rome submits to the dominion of all the monstrous divinities of Asia, which had been so honourably disdained two centuries before.

In short: the spirit of the time, being incapable of maintaining itself in equilibrium by its own unaided efforts, searches for some spar that will save it from the wreck, and examines its environment with the anxious and cringing look of a dog, hoping it may find someone to help it. The superstitious mind is, in effect, a dog in search of a master. Men cannot now even remember the noble gestures of pride they once assumed; and the

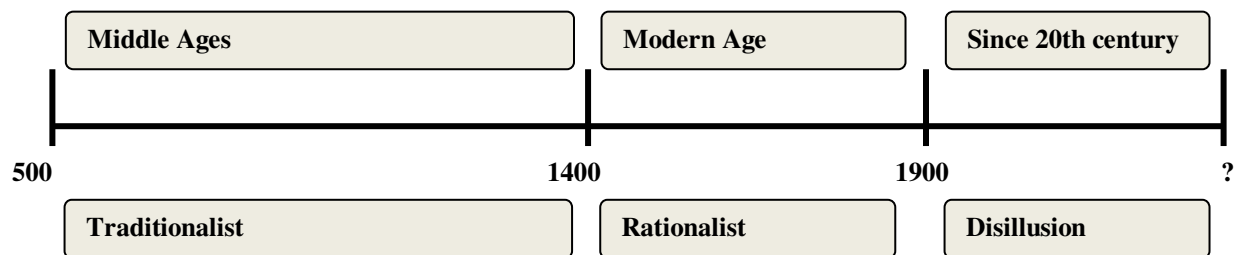
⁴ Translation by James Cleugh, published in the book "The Modern Theme", Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1961, pp 133-134

imperative of liberty that resounded in their ears for centuries would now be totally incomprehensible. On the contrary, they feel an incredible anxiety to be slaves. Slavery is their highest ambition: slavery to other men, to an emperor, to a sorcerer or to an idol. Anything rather than feel the terror of facing single-handed, in their own persons, the ferocious assaults of experience.

Perhaps the name that best suits the spirit that comes into being beyond the sunset of revolution is the term, spirit of slavery.

The duration of these periods does not have an exact chronology due to variations in the acceleration of historical *tempo*. That this acceleration is increasing means that the values and beliefs of an era need fewer and fewer generations to consolidate and wither. The Middle Ages, for example, the Traditionalist Age of the West, lasted for around 1000 years. The Rationalist Age, on the other hand, only lasted 300 years. The current age, Disillusion, will surely take less than 300 years to complete, given the velocity with which styles, customs, values and beliefs are created and wear out.

Traditionalist, Rationalist and Disillusioned Ages of the West

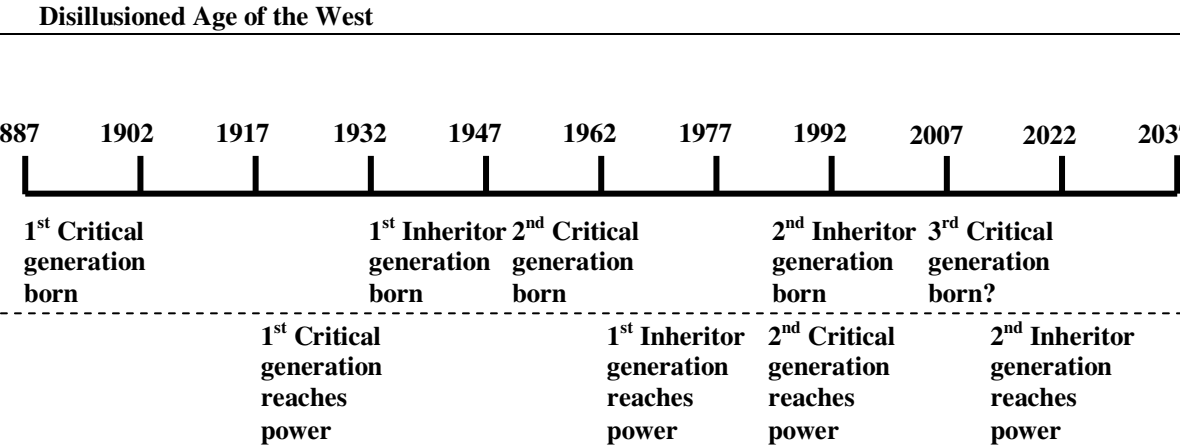


There's a critical generation that marks the change of era. It's one born in a moment in which styles and customs of society lose strength and fall into disuse, that is, the values and beliefs of the era find themselves in crisis. It's a generation in search of new answers. It formulates questions but can't find the answers or they aren't yet rooted in the social landscape. The critical generation expresses itself 30 to 40 years after its birth when it comes to power (power in the wider sense and not only political). Its formation landscape is the search for something that no one even knows very well what it is.

An inheriting generation is born when new styles and customs of the era have been rooted in the landscape. It's the generation that encounters or inherits the answers that the critical generation was seeking. It's the generation that formulates this new thing that the critical generation didn't manage to glimpse.

The amplitude of a generation, that is, the cycle during which it acts until being installed in power can be established at around 15 years.

Western Disillusion



The generation in power is formed in a 'social and historical landscape' of around 30 or 40 years before the moment in which it rises to power. This point is highly important as the historical dynamic is produced through the battle between different formation landscapes. The generation in power is always conservative and tries to impose a landscape on the world which no longer exists. The generation that struggles for power changes the social setting in this attempt and when it rises to power it once more tries to impose its landscape that has also ceased to exist. We're speaking of social time in motion. The distance between the values and beliefs of the formation landscape of one generation and the values of the world that corresponds to the moment of occupying the social centre is today so vast that the acceleration of the historical *tempo* can take an unpredictable rhythm.

Today we're approaching the end of the Disillusioned Age. The tendency to concentrate power and wealth and the destructuring of old institutions that put the brakes on global

capital will finally end in the last era of the Disillusioned Age of Western Civilisation: the World Empire.

When we wrote this essay at the start of 2001 everything seemed to indicate that Western culture would be called upon to constitute the first World Empire. Even if different cultures co-exist with the western one (China, India, Japan, Islam, Indo-American), it's the West that has the political, economic and military power to advance on all the others. During the Traditionalist and Rationalist Ages, the centre of Western Civilisation was Europe. Today in the Disillusioned Age, the centre of power has moved to the United States, a new people, almost without history, which has taken full grasp of technology (a European invention) and based its action and power on it.

Nevertheless, with only three years having passed since this study, observing the reactions to the terrorist attacks in New York, having seen the US invasion of Iraq, the growth of the European Community towards the countries of the East, China's spectacular economic development and the proliferation of nuclear power in different zones, the US would seem to be losing the possibility of becoming the epicentre of the global empire. It might be that this phenomenon of concentration will be produced in a multi-polar way in different regions of the planet with Europe, Russia, China and India being poles alongside the United States. As for the others, Islam—convulsed by western aggression and established not only in Africa but also in Europe and Asia—could also become a pole of power in this new global setting.

The start of the Disillusioned Age in the West can be recognised with the emergence of Nazism, Stalinism and the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We're talking of the generation of Hitler, Stalin and Truman, but also of Ortega, Heidegger, Sartre and Picasso. As a reference date we can fix the start of Disillusion in 1887 as in this moment the generation that would come to power in the Second World War was born. In this year, Ortega was four years old and Hitler turned three; we're talking about the final years of the 19th century.

The failure of Reason (Rationalist Age) can still be seen in the irrationalist ideologies that occupied the social scene at the beginning of the 20th century and which would end up unleashing the most monstrous war of the entire historic period. In addition, physical-mathematical reason produced the danger of extinction of the human race, and philosophy

stopped at phenomenology, existentialism and historical reason. From this moment, philosophy started to decay and lose its vision of process until it practically disappeared.

When in Europe the age of revolutions was already over, in Latin America it had only just begun. The world was still not synchronised or globalised. The Cuban Revolution and Liberation Theology were the remnants in the 'New World'—America—of an era that had already died. It can be observed in the guerrilla movements of the sixties, an irrational romanticism that pertains to Disillusion. We can recognise the change of this era in different parts of the world with the simultaneous expression of the youth phenomenon of the sixties and the first manned moon landing. The era that would come to be known as 'globalisation' had started.

We can clearly distinguish how globalisation was expressed in the eighties. It was the era of the expansion of Disillusion. Consciousness became pragmatic, short-termist and anti-historical. Communication technology united all points of the planet, money became value and truth, and technology developed in all its splendour. At the end of the eighties the Soviet Union fell, ending the bi-polarity that had dominated the world scene since the post-war, and the path towards the first global empire had been embarked upon, this time without a counterweight. The nineties were when globalisation matured. Disillusioned consciousness—pragmatism—was found in abundance: 'The end of History'.

The generation born between 1950 and 1965 was the so-called New Right or New Left. It's the generation of the contraceptive pill, the struggle against established morality, the imagination to power that displaced the generation formed in the heart of the Second World War. If the social scene at the time of Ronald Regan and Margaret Thatcher was occupied by pragmatism, then with the following generation in power that phenomenon expanded and consolidated. The members of this generation (born between 1950 and 1965) are kind of destructured, pragmatic free-thinkers without a system of thought to sustain them, neither on the Right nor the Left. They take very short-term decisions. Their horizon isn't even their own life time; it's their 'parliamentary time' or their 'term of office'. The world is experiencing danger.

Generations of the Historical Moment in the year 2001

Generations of the Historical Moment, 2001

GENERATION	PERIOD	MOMENT
The one born	1996-2010	
The one being prepared	1981-1995	Internet
The one fighting for power	1966-1980	Globalisation
The one in power	1951-1965	Post-war
The one displaced	1935-1950	Totalitarianisms

The generation currently in power is opposed to the one born in the seventies and even more so to the one born in the eighties; those who received an abundance of globalisation during their formation landscape, something that for them is ‘natural’. This generation puts pressure on regional governments, through inter-regional agreements, through global institutions and through global control technologies. As we know, it’ll try to impose its formation landscape. But, for the moment, values, styles and customs are being displaced in society. In what direction? Probably towards a growing militarization and acceptance of imperial power.

The Direction or Meaning of History

Civilisations are attempts by a set of peoples to translate Being in the world.

Since the beginning, human effort has been in transforming itself to gain consciousness and freedom. History is the story of how human beings have been gaining space by conquering nature and the animal characteristics that condition and imprison them.

Civilisations are initiated when human beings make contact with a profound truth, a revelation of being. They initiate their process to translate this revealed truth into a social construction.

All civilisations, initially isolated from one another, have failed in their project but in the process they’ve converged, approached each another and constituted a global society in which all corners of the planet are found to be united and in communication. Today we’re close to Western failure, the last of the primitive civilisations. We’re at the doors of the State of Empire and the start of its decline.

The failure of the West is at the same time the prelude to the irruption of a new revelation of being for disillusioned consciousness. The first planetary civilisation will make its attempt in history to make a truly human society, the Universal Nation.

It's the movement of generations which constructs history. The Generation that accedes to power tries to shape their values and beliefs—ingrained into them during their childhood and youth—in society.

It's very probable that we're close to the appearance of a new critical generation that will mark the change of era and seek to leave behind the desperation and nonmeaning. We don't know precisely if this generation is about to appear or has already appeared. In any case, this event makes it urgent to plant the possibility of a planetary civilisation and the ideal of the Human and Universal Nation in the social landscape, ideals that could be useful as beacons in the irruption of this critical generation which will be called upon to express itself during the final decline of the West.

The possibility of a planetary civilisation is the landscape that we must pass on to the critical generation that's dawning or soon to dawn.

EXTERNALITY

Identification. Materiality. The Body. The Me. Dreams and Reality.

*“Within this region is the cemetery
of Epicurus and his followers,
all those who say the soul dies with the body.”*

Sixth circle of Dante’s Inferno

Identification

Why is it so difficult to experience meaning in life?

Because you’re stuck to externality. Your being is stuck to stimuli and circumstances and is fused with them. Therefore you’re no longer yourself, but rather you’re the thing, the stimulus, the circumstance.

Perhaps you’re lost?

Perhaps you’ve hidden in the day-to-day to avoid discovery?

Perhaps you feel like a stranger roaming the world without knowing what you’re doing here and where you’re going?

You look around you and everyone seems to know something you don’t. Others do not feel strange, nor do they hide or fear. They don’t have this fear of living that sometimes possesses you.

I walk through the fog of my life. I head to the only places I can make out; places shown to me by others who seem to know how to move in the fog. I grab onto them believing that this is my life. In such dense fog I hardly notice those around me. I walk through the fog and everything is blurred and after a while only the dense vapour envelops me. A cold sweat comes over me, I grope my way ahead and I see nothing to fix my gaze upon, nothing to affirm my path, fear becomes asphyxia, panic imprisons me, I run trying to escape. Finally I stumble into something. I get a grip of myself and grab it. I believe that this is my life. I won’t let go. I won’t let go. There I was in the heavy fog, grabbing

onto anything to allay my fear. My claw-like hands grabbed hold of what I stumbled into in the thickness. My family, my work, my profession, my cause, my love, I fused myself with them to such an extent that I didn't know who I was or who they were.

Situations were blowing me around like the wind on dry grass. Like an autumn leaf blown against a rock wall, so I was stuck to stimuli and situations. It seemed to me that we were one thing: me and the situation, me and the circumstance. When time accelerated, stimuli, situations and circumstances started to spin rapidly and the centrifugal force pushed me away, letting me fall without direction, leading me to desperately seek a new rock to hold on to.

Cerai was young and lived in the foothills of the mountains. When Cerai was born, the Gods of the mountain came down from the snowy summit and gave him the most valuable treasures. They gave him love, kindness and wisdom. One day, Cerai was walking along the river, listening to the stones bouncing of each other in the waterfalls when he saw a young woman whose eyes and charm captivated him. In that moment love awoke within him. Shyness and bashfulness appeared and soon Cerai's love had a face and a name. "Nocoy is the owner of my love," Cerai told himself.

He continued on his way and bumped into an old man reading a book, an old book of noble bearing with pages faded from so much use. Cerai took the book and started to read it, and everything that it said there awoke the truths given to him by the Gods. Cerai said, "Here is wisdom."

He continued along his path by the river, jumping from rock to rock, when he stepped badly and fell into the river and was dragged along by the currents. A man rescued him and helped him to breathe, lit a fire to warm him and, before leaving, gave him his coat. "Here is kindness," thought Cerai.

On his 25th birthday, the Gods came down from the summit to see what had happened to the gifts.

"Love!" exclaimed Cerai, "No! You didn't give it to me, it was Nocoy who did."

"Wisdom? No! You didn't give it to me. Wisdom is contained in this book."

"Kindness? No! The man who saved me from the river, there is kindness."

And the Gods felt pity for Cerai because he had the gifts but he didn't have the eyes to see them and he would have a long road ahead to learn how to see.

Materiality

Why is it so difficult to experience meaning in life?

Because you are externality and you hope that externality transforms you.

You hope that the answer to your question comes from outside of you.

Real is what my eyes see, real is what my ears hear, what my nose smells.

I stand up in front of you frowning and I bang the table that separates us, repeating to the rhythm of the bangs: this-is-re-al-it-y,-my-friend,-do-you-un-der-stand?

Touch the table with your fingers, feel the touch of the wood and the smell of the pine tree it was cut from, listen to the percussion of the sound that enters your hearing and shudder.

This is reality; everything else is embellishment, adornment, superfluous things that reality can do without.

What is real is material, what is material is real. Everything else is ravings of the head. It's ok. Let's concede to the pedantry of the case that they're important for 'inner life', but we're not going to confuse internality with reality. So, this table is real.

But could this table exist, be real, if some human being had not previously imagined it? No, it could never have been built. No one would have felled the pine tree to get the wood and nobody would have carved and assembled the wood to make it into a table. But this image never occupied a space in the external world, nobody could touch it with their hands and experience its touch and feel. Nevertheless, without this image existing in the consciousness of someone, this table would never have been produced. This has enormous consequences. That image which did not occupy physical space, that image produced in human consciousness in times past, in the past, maybe recent, maybe long ago, maybe remote, that image managed to be shaped outside of the consciousness and materialise. Now I can point out the measurements of the table, its weight and how old it is.

It's impossible for you to reach the table without its image in your consciousness. Moreover, affirming reality as just materiality or as externality, I divest it of a fundamental part of its being. I divest it of the consciousness that conceived it and represented it in an image, I divest it of the intention that that consciousness had when it was conceived and I

divest it of the human marvel of being capable of converting an image that doesn't exist in time and space—but which does exist in a time and space of the consciousness—into existence, into the external, material world of finite time and space.

That reality that I capture with the senses is only one part of reality. It's the crudest part, the coarsest part, the part that the senses are capable of perceiving. The senses capture the externality of what is real. On confusing reality with what my senses capture, I live like in a dream, believing that externality is everything. If I'm unable to grasp the historicity and subjectivity of objects, I lose myself in them and I don't experience meaning.

On top of the table we've been discussing there's a cup. I take it, I wave it around, I can throw it and break it. Now I observe the cup and I think about someone, a person in some part of the world who imagined this cup, who looked for the clay, who moulded it various times until getting the desired object. They put it in an oven, subjected it to high temperatures, drew something that they wanted to express on it, looked for coloured pigments, painted it and time passed until it landed on this table. The smell of coffee suffuses the atmosphere and I'm transported back to the old dreamers who crossed the ocean searching for Heaven on Earth and who arrived in America bringing this plant that I savour today. All of this historicity and subjectivity isn't captured by the senses... and I was on the verge of breaking a cup that's now full of significance and contents.

The senses only see the most external aspect of what is real.

What do you see when you look at a human being?

Bodies, many bodies, clothed, naked, different colours, bodies that are here today, tomorrow are food for worms, or ashes or dust. Perhaps you see the bond between one human being and another? With which sense do you perceive the bond between a couple, between two friends, between a father and son or between a slave and his master? What sense do you use to perceive the human?

The senses only see the most external aspect of the human. They see the body, they hear the sounds that the body makes, the smell that it gives off and the softness of its skin but the senses don't perceive the human.

The Me

Why is it so difficult to experience meaning in life?

Because you believe that you're what you call 'me'.

The affirmation of 'the me' is a path that has the taste of meaning but which leads to suffering. I need to be recognised as me. 'The me' experiences problems if there are no looks that recognise it as me. 'The me' has a name and documentation and, above all, other people who recognise it as me. 'The me' experiences fear of extinction and does many things to not be extinguished. 'The me' reminds other people that it exists. 'The me' has property, space, an age, time (a little, but it has). 'The me' has people who love it, who hate it, a wife and children. 'The me' fears to be forgotten, fears that its space will be taken away, fears that its time will be taken away. It fears that its body will be taken away. Without the body, 'the me' dies. 'The me' has a great deal of fear. 'The me' believes that it won't die, that the body will persist and will be with it for ever. Because 'the me' is very important. 'The me' has space. 'The me' has existence in the memory of others who recognise it and say, "Hello you," to it. "How are you? Get out of the way, you! You're disturbing me, you. I want you and I love you. Shut up, you! How beautifully you write, you!"

'The me' has a space in the memory of others who recognise it as you. 'The me' is afraid of being forgotten. Being forgotten is what is called loneliness. 'The me' has a great fear of loneliness because there are no others to grant it this space in the consciousness, this space in the memory, this space in existence!

'The me' produces. 'The me' is useful. 'The me' occupies a space in the social fabric. 'The me' is useful for others because it produces, creates, makes websites, searches for stars in giant telescopes, transports passengers, creates works of art... 'The me' is useful for society and society gives it money so that 'the me' can look after its body, so that it can cherish its body and so that it can give pleasure to its body.

The only meaning that 'the me' can experience is relief from its terror, increased security and bodily pleasure. 'The me' can build in order to be secure. 'The me' can destroy in order to be secure. 'The me' wants to ensure its existence.

‘The me’ acquires spaces conquering the consciousness of others. ‘The me’ appropriates other mes, other bodies. ‘The me’ grows fatter and fatter.

me me me me me me me me me me me me

It doesn’t matter what actions ‘the me’ does. Anything that Mr. Me does carries the seal of me, carries the seal of its search for security and the fear of death. The way ‘the me’ moves is with suffering, a lot of suffering, essential suffering, because it’s permanently threatened with disappearing. The path of ‘the me’ is a road of thorns.

‘The me’ has a problem.

It concentrates everything and doesn’t allow any sensation, stimulus or memory to escape. This me is a sort of concentrator that maintains a psychological unity, an ‘identity’. I see, I hear, I think, I feel.

‘The me’ concentrates what I perceive, what I feel, what I remember and what I do. ‘The me’ concentrates everything.

When the body dies, I no longer perceive and a part of me dies. When the body dies I no longer remember and another part of me dies. When the body dies I no longer feel and another part of me dies. When the body dies, I can no longer do. When the body dies, ‘the me’ dies.

Am I only me?

If within myself there were a region, something, to which ‘the me’ had no access and therefore was unaware of its presence... If this something were to exist beyond the bodily then it would have to be giving off signals that are impossible for the consciousness to structure and could not be trapped by ‘the me’. These signals that this something would give off couldn’t be conceived within the concept of ‘my belongings’. Even if ‘the me’ were impeded from going there, the consciousness could somehow capture these emissions and translate them. If such a psychological region were to exist then we’d need a way of accessing it, a way of experiencing it.

How could I communicate with you, with your 'me' trapped in the world of contradiction and in pain, unable to connect with the meaning that could transform and colour your life? I try to communicate and I find myself with you, with me, with you, with something that captures it all, with the biggest selfishness, ego-me, me-ism, that great concentrator of energy, the black hole *par excellence*. The black hole that doesn't even let light escape the force of its gravity. This 'me' will dissolve when the body is gone.

But are you only 'the me'? Are you only concentration and possession, a black hole from which nothing escapes?

Are you only nonmeaning, me-ego-concentrator-for-itself?

The Body

Why is it so difficult to experience meaning in life?

Because you are your body and the body is born, gets stronger, withers, dies and disintegrates.

How could you move, communicate, work, love or exist if it weren't for your body? This body that carries you, transports you, communicates you, this marvellous body. Fat or thin, ugly or beautiful, healthy or ill, in the body is existence. I exist, I exist, I exist. I'm alive and my body carries me here and there. I'm writing to you. Through my hands come my thoughts, my feelings, my life. I touch you, I move you, you're alive, you exist, you're another body, you shiver, I continue to get closer.

What does your body want if not pleasure?

Needs are experienced in the body, desires are experienced in the body. The body is pushed, protests, hurts, frets and is desperate to relax, to let go of tension, to be satisfied. The body is desperate for pleasure.

The exercising of pleasure is always associated with ways of reducing bodily tension, concentrating energy and discharging tension. This discharge is experienced as pleasure.

The body seeks pleasure, necessity seeks satisfaction, tension seeks relaxation, desire seeks its reverie and the reverie its realisation, and the wheel of pleasure and pain turns and turns forever. The wheel starts to turn and with every turn the body grows older, with every turn it becomes weaker, until on one turn it will be no more.

Life distances itself from pain and moves towards pleasure. This search orientates life. This movement towards pleasure leaves a taste of meaning, an illusion of meaning until the body dies and can no longer experience this delight.

Dreams and Reality

I'm so identified with everything that I experience in life, that I call 'reality' everything that happens to me. While I'm immersed in dreams, everything that happens to me I also call 'reality.'

There are dimensions of existence that my senses don't capture. My senses are open to the world and it seems to me that the world enters through them. When my body is awake it seems that reality enters through the senses and when I'm asleep it seems that I no longer participate in this reality.

If my body is awake then I capture the world through the senses, but this world that enters is affected by my existence. This condition is due to the action of the body, moved by things that happen somewhere within it; a psychic substance, that didn't enter through the senses, is influencing this externality. This flow that comes from the body and transforms the world isn't perceived by my senses and I always believe that it's only externality that enters through them.

While we sleep, we aren't capable of recognising that dream images come from within and we believe that they're perceptions. Nothing during sleep makes us assume that we're dreaming. We identify with what we dream about to the point of taking it as reality. We listen, we look, we smell, we walk, we fly and ride dinosaurs. We experience all sorts of sensations and nevertheless nothing enters through the senses.

The charge of truth with which I experience what happens to me, both in sleep and in a vigilic state, is total. In the latter I believe that my perceptions are only the product of the external world without them having anything to do with sensations and memory. We're sure that we capture reality because we cannot recognise how reveries constantly colour our vision of the world. Unaware and completely identified with the images produced by the consciousness, our way of being turns out to be quite hallucinatory.

When we wake up from sleep we realise that we were asleep but it's not possible to know that while we're sleeping. The state of vigil, even if it's very different, has aspects that make it similar to the state of sleeping consciousness. We're completely suggestible to perceptions and it escapes our notice that they're coloured by reveries and memory. Besides this, everything we perceive is immersed in a belief system so deeply rooted that we have no notion of it operating on perception. Finally, despite the regular irruption of non-perceptual worlds, the consciousness tends to deny the reality of these worlds thereby sheltering the belief in death and therefore constituting the vision of what is real.

Imagine that one day as you go to work you experience a force that envelops you. It seems to you that you could touch it with your fingers if you were to stroke the air around you. Imagine that all your movements seem to respond to a law of life that has such an impressive energy that to break it is something not just absurd, but rather ridiculous. Imagine that while you continue heading to work an enormous joy arises within you and this force seems to charge the atmosphere wherever you go. For an instant, everything is good, as if you were moving through non-time. Something hits you, waking you up, and you see that everything is to do with you. The smallest and remotest movement is somehow related to you. You continue walking to your office and it now seems that not only does everything have to do with you, but also from where you—or whatever it is that's doing the looking—look you see the same thing in everyone, the same in everything, everything is one. You feel your breathing, you cannot say a word and you're bathed in gratitude.

Imagine that after this your lucid consciousness feels that something within it that remains connected to this force, to what is alive, to what is being expressed. Your lucid consciousness observes how this something within it leaves its world and builds this one. To think about death is something inappropriate, like being afraid of a grain of sand in the middle of a sandpit. Then you know that reality has a lot to do with dreams and for a moment you make contact with the maker of dreams and destinies.

INTERNALITY

Inner World. Guides. Models. Inner Strength. The Others

Inner World

The body seems to be the separation of the external from the internal: from the body towards the outside and from the body towards the inside. Is the body itself inside or outside? The body, perceived by the senses, is outside. The body is confused and fused with the person who uses it. This human being in front of me, where is it? Outside of me, given that I see their body outside of me. When I see a body, I see it from my senses in the same way that I see a table or a cup. I perceive only one aspect of its reality, its externality. Who is the person which lives in that body and where are they? Perhaps they're within that body? Within where? What is this 'within'? If a person is 'within' the body, what does 'within' mean?

I look at you and I say to myself that you're within the body that I'm observing, within your body. But 'within' continues to seem outside of me. If I'm in my 'within' and you're in your 'within' ... what is it that's outside?

Where is friendship, solidarity and love?

Where is hatred? Where is revenge?

Where is hope?

Here is my friend with whom I've shared part of my history. Where is that attribute that I give them by calling them 'my friend'? In their clothes? In their body? Where?

We're living in such a way that it seems to us that everything comes from outside, that we capture everything through the senses, and this we consider to be real.

All of the fundamental truths for existence are in the inner world. It's in this world where we have to find the answers to our desires. But it's here that this world is totally degraded. In the inner world you can find the human and meaning. The divine has its dwelling here and also the clouds of forgetfulness. Here is the past, the whole of the past,

from the beginning of time and the stone tablets of destiny. All aspirations are found in this world waiting for some look to illuminate them and bring them into the external world.

The inner world has been constantly degraded and devalued. This degradation starts by categorising it as unreal or imaginary, then as an unconscious world where instinctive forces live which dominate human freedom. Its irruption is associated with a distortion of what is real. It has been put on a secondary plane to the world of objects, almost like something that unfortunately has to be reckoned with in order for us to disentangle it from objects which are what really matter.

Everything that comes from the inner world is anaesthetised or interpreted as something secondary. When that world gives off stronger signals, precisely because they've been blocked, then these signals end up being considered as symptoms of an illness.

Even mystical experiences, experiences of communication with something transcendental are usually considered to be hallucinations or an escape from the real world. From time to time it's accepted that some people can access these experiences, but it's accepted as an experience of momentary madness from which the Saint or the Mystic could extract some useful teaching without remaining in the madness.

This inner world is erupting like a volcano ejecting fire and matter from its bowels, without respecting anything it finds in its path. Nothing can control it, not psycho-active drugs, recreational drugs or mass communication technology.

This degradation of the inner world has separated us from the possibility of experiencing the fundamental thing in our human life, it has blocked us from the experience of significance and it has us wandering through life without meaning.

Inner Strength

There are very important forces within us: forces that aren't necessarily ours, but are found there, in our internality. It would seem that everything in this internality belongs to me because it doesn't come from outside. But it could be that in the internality there are worlds, forces, energies and images that, even if they inhabit my interior, aren't exactly 'mine' and don't personally belong to me.

To accept this can change everything, can change my whole life.

What is outside doesn't belong to me. I make use of things for a time as I pass through this life. Sometimes I acquire something, I buy it. But this belonging is transient. What is outside doesn't belong to me. I use it for a while.

What is within me doesn't belong to me either. I make use of it or it expresses itself through me for a while.

There are impressive forces within. There's a force called love and another called hope. How could it be that such enormous energies exist here, within, so close, and yet we don't know it and we don't know how to use them?

Hope is the energy of dreams, of ideals. It's the energy of the future. Hope is a bath of life that makes us run through time. Hope is dressed as tomorrow, as the dawn, as the rising sun, as rays that warm the hours little by little in the measure that the day goes by.

Once upon a time, in the first origins of the West, the Gods inhabited a mountain called Olympus. A Titan called Prometheus, moved by the misery that befell mankind, left Olympus where the gods lived, and stole fire, the sacred fire, the fire of life, in order to give it to human beings. He kept it inside a stalk to avoid discovery, and so, descending from Olympus, nobody realised that he was carrying this enormous life energy. The Gods, on feeling outwitted, became angry and wanted revenge. So they created a woman, the beautiful Pandora, and they gave her a box filled with virtues. Pandora opened the box and the Gods started to steal the virtues. Every time they stole a virtue, a calamity would befall human beings. By the time Pandora realised this, in her box, in the depths of her box, only the last virtue remained, hope. Pandora closed the box and hid hope so that the Gods could not steal it from human beings, and so the immortals could not exact their revenge. Since then hope has been kept in the depths of the heart.

There are very important forces within human beings. There are fundamental principles kept within us. There are beings that live in the silence behind the noise, at the base of consciousness. Sometimes these forces, these beings, express themselves through dreams, sometimes through human activity and sometimes through our simpler actions.

These forces, these principles and this energy do not belong to me, just as the water, fire and soil of this world don't belong to me, but here they are so that I may use them for a while, listen to their message and express it in the human world. Here is the greatest of the greatest, hoping that we detect it, feel it and express it in materiality.

If you prefer, all of this belongs to you, just as the rivers, oceans and mountains belong to you.

A dream, called Dream, spoke one day with a man called Man and asked him, “Man, can you take me, make me yours and bring me into reality, this reality that enters through your eyes, through your ears and which you like in your body?”

Man took Dream to his heart and wrapped it in hope. Then Man said to Dream, “Here you have hope so that you may live for ever, until you fulfil your destiny, achieve Reality and I can feel you with my body.”

So, Dream started to live within Man and Man carried it through time.

One day, Dream said to Man, “Man, I’m tired now, I didn’t achieve Reality and I don’t want to continue in this attempt. I’ll say good bye and disappear.”

Man suffered and cried, “You can’t just leave! You’re carrying the hope that I gave you by taking you into my heart!”

Man watched as Dream faded away and he felt that hope was fading with it and let out a cry as if his soul were being liquidised.

Then another dream called Dream approached the man called Man.

Dream asked Man to take it to the place called Reality.

“I can’t,” said the man. “Another dream already stole my hope and disappeared.”

“Yes, you can,” Dream said to him, “You always can!”

So Man once again took Dream into his heart and wrapped it with hope and brought Dream to the place called Reality. On arriving at Reality, Dream said thank you and goodbye before disappearing.

Man watched Dream fade away in Reality and felt that hope was fading with it.

Then another dream called Dream approached the man called Man...

Beyond the blackest nonmeaning, beyond the deceitful void, there’s a spark that doesn’t go out. This spark lights the fire that embraces dreams and dreams drive us so that we may bring them into the external world.

Inner Guides

I'd like to tell you about guides. It's not easy. I need to enter very deep within myself and call my inner guide, to ask them to be present, to feel their presence while I write. And I want that while I write, your innermost guide approaches you and accompanies you in this reading.

My guide taught me how to call them, to invoke them. When I went looking for my guide it was because I was in need. Oh! How I was in need...I don't like to need anybody, I don't like to disturb anybody, I like to believe that I can sort things out by myself, I don't want to have debts and I don't want to be dependent but in those days everything was tinged with desperation.

My inner world is in chaos. I close my eyes or I simply listen to my reasoning. The images that come into my head are a hurricane of contents that crash into each other, dragged by the strength of a wave of energy. I go in search of kindness and I find envy and jealousy. I go in search of beauty and I stumble across anger and resentment. I go in search of purity and I find myself with desires, and if I go deeper into them I find that all the desires imaginable are in my imagination.

What is this chaos in the inner world? I try to concentrate and I'm interrupted by my digressions that sometimes repeat themselves over and over again, without even displaying originality. Nevertheless I'm writing to you, you understand me, something has direction in this inner chaos. It's very surprising that in the midst of this chaotic inner world something has direction. It's very surprising that the external expression of this world is not only chaos but also the building of societies and civilisations.

Could the reason be that the chaos is giving order and direction to the expression of that internality? Reason does its part, no doubt, but it's not just reason. Dry reason cannot comprehend what is essential, it degrades it, and on degrading it, the essential becomes lost in nonmeaning. Reason has not comprehended this inner world and from reason we see it as chaos.

So, now that I make contact with my inner guide, now that through me a being will speak to you who will accompany me while I write and show you the way to find meaning, what will your reason say? Your reason will put up all kinds of resistances and your reading will start to accelerate. Observe yourself and that way you'll pass more slowly through these pages. In order to put order to chaos, reason imprisons it, subjugates it, and on doing so makes it dry, losing inspiration, shine and above all losing meaning. The strength of chaos breaks the prison of reason and so the unthinkable bursts from it. Little by little reason grows until it ends up imprisoning chaos, until it's able to think the unthinkable. Chaos and Reason are sons of a single God, like Ying and Yang, like opposing twins who seek each other looking for love.

When reason is rolled up in chaos, pride and arrogance flee in terror, I therefore recognise the Need and mounted on it I call my guide.

I enter the chaos of my inner world and I ask if kindness is found there. I travel through my memory searching for an expression of kindness. Just like the sun that gives its light and warmth to everyone without asking who deserves it and who doesn't, without asking who admires it and who doesn't, without asking anything, without losing anything, morning after morning, I recognise the kindness of my guide.

I go to my inner world and ask if strength is found there. I search in my memory for something so strong that nothing can make it bow down. Something so strong that it can sustain itself in the darkest night, in the stormiest storm; a fortitude so great that it doesn't lose its calm in the face of any phantom; a conviction so deep, that howls of terror cannot frighten it. So I approach you, my guide and I feel your strength.

When you approach, your advice is charged with wisdom. Just as the mountain guide knows the mountain, as the lover knows love, as the knowledgeable one knows through experience, so knows the one who speaks to me after death among the chaotic voices of my inner world. I hear what you say and your calm allows me to recognise you.

Therefore I experience you, a presence, here amid the noisy whirlwind of my emotions, thoughts and feelings. I feel your friendly presence and I ask you who you are. Perhaps you're the product of my imagination? "Yes and no," you reply. You're the product of my imagination, I insist. "What is your imagination?" I hear. "Perhaps you can imagine

something that has no image? Can you hear something that makes no sound? Can you maybe feel something that has no time? Then, I'm your imagination and I'm not your imagination."

I observe that I can degrade this sensation, this presence, as one more product of the intellect or accept it as a special being with whom I can make contact in my inner world. Yes, it's my inner guide! And gratitude is born within me. Something moves me, makes me slightly dizzy and lightly engulfs me in my chair, and something that doesn't exclaim covers and bathes my being, expressing thanks.

With time, my guide and I have got to know one another and we've built trust, just like friends that aren't afraid of disturbing one another and call and consult one another other constantly on important things and also on small things. So I build the relationship with my guide and sometimes it takes my hand and writes to you—we write to you—words that awaken profound guides in you, ancient voices, future memories.

Models

A very dear friend of mine who I met after a number of years said to me, "The moment will come in which all utopias will be demanded, not just the mystical but also the social ones, and this time when dreams were within our grasp will be valued, just like picking apples from the apple tree."

"Now the world is very real," he continued, "there's no room to dream."

Oh! I don't know in which moment this book will fall into your hands, if this real world will have already suffered the unreal calamities that await it or if they'll soon come to pass. How can I tell you, dear friend, that this dream and this utopia will continue in time, will outlive our generation and will be interpreted by others until finally coming to pass in human space? How can I tell you that this dream that our noble hearts cherish will live longer than this flatness that seems so real to you. This dream that spurs your hope will be born in every new generation until it takes shape in perceptible reality. This real world will soon disappear and will be replaced by another real world and another real world and another real world. How mobile and changeable real things are.

Utopias are in a place that doesn't exist and in a time that doesn't exist either. But they exist somewhere, because otherwise how could we speak of them? They're a construction of reason and with this answer we calm down. Nevertheless, the strength that utopias have awakened, the irrationality with which men and women have been disposed to get them and the violence that they've produced and are still producing aren't explained by considering them as simple intellectual constructions.

If we could immerse ourselves in the inner world as if it were an ocean in the dangerous underwater currents we'd find voracious sharks pursuing tender shoals, zones of icy silence, serpents winding through the sand, crabs fleeing from danger, hydras spitting venomous darts at everything that approaches them, oysters that close at the smallest grain of sand that tries to reach them and seemingly bottomless, dark and black abysses.

If we could immerse ourselves in the inner world as if it were an ocean then we'd find lost cities where the secrets of old worlds are kept, beautiful multi-coloured fish, precious corals that we'd endlessly gaze upon, grottos with emerald sands, rocks of intense blue and melodies of crystals that would transport us to marvellous worlds.

The inner world, this magma of life's substance, small vessel that contains all the universes and that contains what it contains.

When I look inside it, I don't like what I see, just as I don't like worms, scorpions and the violent Minotaur who defends the yearned-for treasure of rubies and emeralds.

I don't like what I see and I leap from the ocean back to the real world with altered breathing. And in this real world I distance myself from everything to do with the suggestive ocean, I find people closed like an oyster facing a small grain of sand, people in dark abysses wishing for death, people with beautiful arms spitting deadly poisons and winds of fear lashing populations, panic, anguish, multitudes behaving well, very well, because although there are no sharks on dry land in any unexpected instant something could devour them.

When I enter the inner world I don't like what I see very much. Is that within me? Perhaps this is the inner world? Yes, this is also the inner world, but it's not only that. There's also kindness, justice, compassion, peace and love.

I heard a story that Silo told a few friends many years ago that was very important for me to accept my inner world.

In Biblical times, King Solomon made a call to the artists of his Kingdom for them to paint his portrait. Artists came to the palace from everywhere to paint the King's portrait. The painting that Solomon would choose would be set in the most prominent place in the palace and its painter would be rewarded with gold. The day arrived and all the artists brought their paintings for Solomon to choose from. Solomon inspected them, one by one, 'Solomon the Wise', 'Solomon the Just', 'Solomon the Great'...and so on, observing dozens of paintings that the artists had brought. Suddenly he stopped at one titled simply 'Solomon'. In this one, the face had wrinkles, anger, deceitfulness, envy and was far from being the most beautiful portrait.

So, the King chose the painting titled 'Solomon'. He put it in the centre of the palace and showered the creator with gold.

The moral that accompanies this story is that Solomon was not great because kindness and greatness were living within him, but rather because despite having all sorts of violent impulses, he was capable of transforming them into just and good works.

The inner world is incredible, here are all the universes, all possible possibilities. Some will make it into the external world and others never will.

Victor Frankl said that in the Second World War everyone suffered with hunger in the concentration camp where he was. Nevertheless, there were some among them, very few, but as hungry as all the others, who were capable of giving their food to those who were very bad and unable to provide for themselves. The scene moves me even now as I repeat it. From where does this action come and where does this image that moves me reach?

If you remember some scene that moves you, you'll see that here a probe is launched that enters very deeply into your inner world, crashing into your soul, rocking it and something very true, very longed-for emerges for an instant.

When you see a poor beggar on the streets of your city never offend him, because within him there's something very great that cries out to the skies. I heard it also from Silo and still today it moves me.

In this inner world, crossing the most superficial layers of day-to-day tensions, crossing the layers formed in our remote biographies, models are found that are waiting for their moment to inspire human action and materialise in the external landscape. These models are difficult to know but they give signs of their existence in these moments when we're moved and on those occasions in which we feel full of meaning.

Kindness, Justice and Peace aren't the inventions of some philosopher, or fiction to lull the naïve. They're models engraved in the depth of being, waiting for their moment to materialise in the human world. In all eras and in all ages they've been present, re-inventing themselves time and again, motivating and orientating.

The Others

*Perhaps you can touch human beings.
Your body, my body is only a moment,
a mountain breeze blows through it,
it blows and ignites it,
it's set alight and creates,
it creates and blows.*

I fall silent in order to listen to you, I want to feel you.

How noisy silence sometimes is. Everything is filled with voices, with complaints, discussions and opinions, everything is full of memories and things pending and others that aren't you but that irrupt while I listen to you. How do I find you? Where do I look for you? Is silence noisy for you too?

We don't exist without others and what I say isn't a metaphor.

I'm me and others are others. However, this me has been formed with the marks that others have left on it. When I say 'me', it would seem that I'm speaking of something very different to 'you', very different to others. That's how I experience it. Nevertheless, these others are the basis of 'the me'. They're the substance that constitutes what I call 'me'. Suffice to imagine what would happen to you if I take away the memories and sensations of

just one of your friends, let alone if this friend was very dear, or your father, or your mother. What you believe you are—this ‘me’—would be very different.

Others are in you. You’ve been formed and constituted by their actions, their examples, their affection and their opinions. All of them have left behind something in you and you’ve had to learn or reject their attitudes, their thoughts and their emotions. All of them are in you. Who am I, if not what others have left in me?

On the other hand, my actions, my thoughts and my emotions have reached each one of these other people and they’ve had to accept them, reject them, learn from them or forget them. I’m also in each one of these other people and I’m a constituent and very important part of who they are.

Other people are fundamental constituents of what I am. I, in turn, am a fundamental constituent of each one of them.

You’re reading me, I’m your other person, each phrase is entering inside you and you accept or reject it. I’m forming part of you, constituting your existence. You, the reader, who I imagine accepting or rejecting me, are entering into my life and forming part of my existence.

All the people around you are in your inner world, they’re part of you. Everyone you’ve ever been aware of is part of you. You’re many people and what you are has to do with them. And in turn, you are part of many people: something of you has been established in the inner world of many people.

Don’t believe that just because you reject someone you leave them outside your world. They’re there, forming part of you, showing you part of what you are and don’t want to be.

We don’t experience this overlap of ‘the me’ with others so often. Usually we experience separation, affirmation of ‘the me’ and the denial of others. But sometimes it breaks and in our intuition is the possibility of another way of existing and experiencing. Love, friendship and communion are only an instant, but that instant suspends time and we savour eternity.

If other people are part of your inner world, if they’re the substance with which we’ve constructed ‘the me’ then what I do or don’t do to others has an enormous existential dimension. This existential dimension is what can sustain morality. But let’s not get ahead of ourselves.

My friends, my companions, those I've met throughout my life, those I've loved, my guides, my parents, my brothers and my family, all of them are part of me and part of what I'm writing now and when I connect with this truth a well of gratitude envelops me and my 'me' fuses with all of theirs.

MEANING

Contact. Search. Dialogues with Death. An Endless Road. Impulse. Illusion. History

Contact

I take a path that will lead me to the place I've always sought. When I enter here an intense joy takes me. The emotion is so profound that it brings me to tears and you feel that everything is good, very good. On the path I encounter obstacles and people who hold me back. I hurdle the obstacles with grace and humour and I distance myself from the people, leaving them with smiles and hopes. The path bends backwards and snakes into the distance. I travel without moving and I find myself further and further away. Someone accompanies me and although I don't see them, they wrap me in trust. I cross the threshold on the path and I arrive in the calm zone. Everything is very slow, nothing moves, I feel the passage of time, I minimise movement in the calm.

"Who are you?" I ask.

"Are you, are you, are you," like an echo, responds the calm.

"Who am I?" I ask.

"Am I, am I, am I," like an echo, responds the calm.

"Where am I going?" I ask.

"Going, going, going," like an echo, responds the calm.

Then a limit disappears and nothing interrupts, nothing separates 'you are' from 'I am', from 'I am going'.

All of us, even you, have contact with experiences that aren't usual and which put us in resonance with something very important. This something is difficult to express with words because these experiences are all-encompassing. It's like making contact with a whole that even contains words. Words want to capture it and are drowned. The emotions that accompany these moments are of feeling moved or of communion or of total comprehension.

The first times I discovered these things, I thought they were very interesting but far away so I preferred to quickly move on to other sorts of questions in which I felt more comfortable. Of course, I was thinking that if someone had felt these marvels then they'd never forget them. And as I couldn't recall them rapidly, I concluded that these experiences happened to other sorts of people. Besides, it was unimaginable that in the life of any of us, you could get up one morning and see everything differently or that a joy could come from within you and colour the picture and the landscape behind the window. You could greet your people and feel marvellous for the sole fact of seeing them alive, existing. You could go to the street and be bowled over from within by hopeful hope colouring everything it touches. Impossible.

If someone in my family gives me good news then I'm filled with joy. If I hear good news for the month to come then it'll make me feel hopeful. But this other thing—that from within, and without any external motive, something great can colour my life—is very rare. It's so rare that every time it happens I forget it and try to give it an explanation that converts it into something common and everyday.

We all want something extraordinary to happen to us but the extraordinary is so outside of logic and what is acceptable that when it happens we can't take it in. Within a short time of something extraordinary irrupting, I question if it happened as I remember, or if rather it was a dream or a hallucination, and I doubt this experience to the point that I manage to fit this thing that seemed so extraordinary into daily or ordinary logic.

In order to be able to accept the extraordinary, we expect it to present itself in an ordinary way, in other words, perceptual, through our eyes, our ears and our touch.

Yesterday the most beautiful young woman came to my house. She put her hands on my heart and kissed my forehead. She looked at me sweetly and whispered to me that everything would be ok. When she left, I thought I heard a flapping of wings and a warm wind refreshed my face. Since yesterday I've been accompanied by a very great joy that I wanted to communicate to the whole world.

This story is only the product of my imagination but it's fairly easy to accept because everything that happened comes through perception. That joy and that faith come to me from outside, a mysterious person gives them to me. Perhaps she's an angel, a goddess or a

muse casually passing by. What was in fact imagined, we can come to believe is true. On the other hand, anything else that irrupts from within me and transforms my perception, we cannot accept and yet this is, in fact, what happens.

Extraordinary things are in the inner world and there are scenes of the external landscape that sometimes shake this world and make them emerge. Something extraordinary emerges and modifies my way of perceiving, feeling and doing.

The extraordinary isn't extraordinary because something happens outside that I can't believe, but because something springs up from the human interior, modifying the ordinary way of being.

Search

When I've lost something I look for it and when I find it I recognise it because it was exactly what I'd lost. When I look for meaning I look for it as if I'd once had it: I lost it and now I can't locate it. I look for meaning in the same way as the house keys that I lost in a trunk. But there's a dramatic difference and it is that I actually had the keys, but this isn't so in the case of meaning.

The act of searching for meaning seems more like that of an explorer who is navigating the universe finding unknown worlds than that of the lost traveller who is making efforts to recognise the route.

The great problem when we're in nonmeaning is to believe that we were in meaning to start with. We lost it and now we have to recover it. What happens is that we weren't in contact with the meaning when we believed we were. As long as we're unable to accept that there was no meaning either at the starting point, or on arrival, the search is painful because we're searching for something where we believe it to be and it's not there. It never was, nor will it be.

If what I seek isn't there in that moment when I believed I had meaning, where is it? And what was it that I was experiencing then? This makes me dizzy, I lose my references and I don't know what to base the search on.

It's like drawing back a veil and opening the possibility to discover an inner truth, something true that doesn't depend on the waves of circumstance, something profound that doesn't depend on either the body or the era... to find Meaning.

If we can communicate to each other through this text about something, if somehow your experiences coincide with mine then you'll have to accept that we are similar, that we aren't so different. It's not that you've made a mistake in your way of searching. I believe that we're describing a state of consciousness in a moment of life. We're looking at the state of the situation and trying to leap over it. Consciousness, populated with reveries, tries to leave behind its habitual sleepiness in order to find something deeper and truer. We cannot discover this truth outside human beings. This truth is kept in the depths of being and here it must be found, communicated and shaped as a direction of human actions.

Once, there was a traveller whose destiny was the land of the sun. He started his journey but it was a long road. So long was it that sometimes he became bored. He thought that to make it more entertaining he could stop from time to time at the towns he came across. Longer and longer he stayed in the settlements and less and less he spent on travelling towards his destiny. One fine day, he spent so much time being entertained in one of these places that he simply forgot that he was on a journey towards the land of the sun and forgot his destiny. Time passed and a drought scorched the town and all the traveller's entertainment disappeared. Then he remembered what his destiny was. He became furious with the town that had diverted him from his journey and he remained there crying and grumbling about how he had been deceived. On seeing him there, another traveller passing through felt sorry for him and said, "Before you were laughing because of the entertainment of the town, now you're crying because of the deception, both have detained you. Forgive yourself, laugh and take the road once more towards the land of the sun. How do you want your friend, Death, to find you? Protesting your bad luck or walking towards your destiny?"

Many situations separate us from the profound search, but all of these misfortunes strengthen us to take the thread of our life into our own hands.

Recognition that we need to find this truth is an important condition for the search. If you feel that you've already found truth, or that you're about to find it, or that from this point of your life you haven't achieved it because it doesn't exist, then the act of searching

is still very weak. On the other hand, if you feel the failure of having searched without finding, if your dreams and hopes haven't led you to happiness then your search will become stronger and stronger, as if it were an instinct that needed to be satisfied.

The lack of meaning that we experience isn't just a personal problem; it has to do with the era we're living in and with the moment of evolution of the consciousness. This is where we're heading, this is where evolution is heading and surely it's possible to produce qualitative leaps in consciousness and in society.

Dialogues with Death

One day I was in my room mulling these things over, looking at my own pain and contradiction when someone knocked on my door. It was a dry, repetitive sound. I couldn't help but think of the stories of Edgar Allan Poe. I opened the door to the night and saw no one. I closed it, and immediately a rapping started banging in my ears. "Who's there?" I asked, and only the silence of the night replied.

I closed the door and discovered a woman inside my room. Her beauty made me forget that I hadn't seen her enter. I stared at her, hallucinating at her strange loveliness. I felt attracted. I wanted to embrace her, to kiss her, but at the same time I was shocked and afraid. Her kiss was the sweetest of kisses, but when I got closer she terrified me, making my hair stand on end. Suddenly I recognised her and I was paralysed... Death! You! It can't be. You're mistaken. It's someone else, someone else. I need more time. I've things to do. Everything's pending. I looked at her and her attraction had an enormous power over me. Inside I was struggling between yes and no.

I started to remember my life with unusual strength, as if everything was flashing before my eyes, simultaneously, in one go. Today. What happened today? I wander through life without knowing where I'm going or what this life is, without meaning, without destiny. It's as if I were trapped in stories, in tales that lead nowhere. My entire life flashes through my head at full speed. I hear a humming of turbines and acceleration as if I were living it all again but in an instant. Suddenly, the train of images flashing through my mind stopped.

I saw myself on that day in which I decided to find the land of the sun, that day in which my life took a true path, that day that I decided something good, the truest moment of my life. My life started to advance in my mind, slowly, that true moment, and the next one and the next, I recognise my destiny. I find my life and its meaning.

Emotion clouds my eyes and I calmly look at the beautiful figure of Death.

“Very well,” she says to me, “you have found your life. What will you do to not lose it again?”

When life loses its meaning it becomes lost in the superfluous, in the adornments, in what has no importance. Human life falls into a dream. It dreams and becomes lost. It dreams of eternity while the body withers. It dreams of happiness while the emptiness grows.

When life finds meaning, the human is shaped in the world, the human is expressed and social construction humanises life, and meaning distances life from pain and suffering.

If you lose meaning, if you lose the direction of your life, then only contradiction and violence will occupy your soul. If contradiction and violence occupy the soul then it will be contradiction and violence that you’ll bring to your people and to your society.

“Death, don’t take me! Give me the opportunity to convert my life and follow its meaning!”

And Death says to me, “How much time do you need to convert your life and orientate it towards meaning, towards the land of the sun, towards the true moments of your life?”

“One day is enough,” she says to me without waiting for an answer.

“One day!” I thought, desolate.

“One hour is enough,” she repeated as if she knew what I was thinking.

“One hour! One hour!” her voice bounced around my head as if there were an inner echo.

“You can do it right now,” Death continued.

“Right now?”

Then I felt a remarkable Force born in the centre of my heart, reaching all the cells of my body, a force that came from I know not where but that was stronger than my physical strength, stronger than my psychic strength.

Soon I realised that Death had gone, I was alone in my room, everything was as before but now I wasn't the same.

An Endless Road

We confuse meaning with goals. We set ourselves objectives and we confuse the motivation that drove us to achieve them with the meaning of life. Death prevents the setting of new goals and we're unable to project life beyond it.

Our road is cut off by the wall of death that will flatten us when we get there. If we take away this wall and imagine an endless road then these objectives that seemed so interesting to us start to lose their shine and they'll seem to us more like necessary digressions in order to not have to contemplate that infinite and solitary journey.

There's something worse than the wall of death: empty and desolate eternity.

It's very difficult for me to contemplate these scenarios, so I cover them with aims that I must achieve. These aims seem very important to me, they absorb me, but their importance lies in the fact that they conceal that wall and that loneliness from me.

I confuse meaning of life with the motivation that I experience on achieving a goal. In this confusion the goal absorbs me in such a way that I'm capable of anything as long as I achieve it. If I'm capable of 'anything' then it's because the consciousness has been lost and nothing matters to it. Good and bad are relative depending on the help they lend to achieving my objective. This way of living is a way of living in nonmeaning. Death awaits us at the end like a frog that swallows an unprepared fly with its long tongue.

I believe I'm going in a straight line and in truth I advance on the curve of a sphere, as if orbiting a planet, a galaxy, a universe. To travel an endless road is to travel in a circle. A circle has an interesting point which is its centre. While I'm moving I believe that I'm going in a line towards the horizon, however, the road is curving without me perceiving it. At all times I'm attracted to the centre. The centre sustains me at all times, it gives me energy at all times and gives me life at all times. I turn, I turn, I turn but every movement depends on the centre, always, in the centre is the centre, life, meaning, the start and end of the road.

I advance along the endless road. Fascinated by the goals and objectives, I believe I move along an infinite line without knowing that I'm being pulled by the centre of a circle. Drawn by the force of gravity, I can feel the energy that drives me on and I communicate with it.

Just like water sustains the heavy ships, the wider they are, the greater the force from the surface; the more we're aware of this centre, the more force it will drive us towards the world with.

Impulse

It may seem to you that the inner world is small in comparison with the thousands of millions of stars that populate the cosmos or with the unlimited multiplicity in which life manifests itself. The inner world that only reaches from the eyes to the nape of the neck, doesn't occupy much space in comparison with the enormity of the external world and, nevertheless, every time you open your eyes it expands to everything that you perceive. When you perceive, you're also observing the inner world.

The inner world completely affects this external reality. It's not simply coloured according to the mood I find myself in. Within human beings intentionality exists. This intentionality is an impulse that brings everything that the inner world contains to the outside. This intentionality brings the inner world outside of human beings, outside of oneself, constructing reality and not only colouring it with the filter of the inner world. If internally we're full of contradictions and suffering so will be the materialisation of reality in the external landscape. If, on the other hand, we're in contact with a truth or with meaning, oh! How we'll contemplate in awe the construction that we're making.

What is there in this inner world that the consciousness attempts to bring into the external world? What are we searching for outside ourselves?

This impulse is of such a force that the consciousness is willing to transform the entire world to complete it. It's willing to even transform itself to bring into existence that which is kept very safely within it.

There's an inner world, there's an external world and there's an impulse that moves this inner world towards the outside of oneself. Consciousness is to be found between these two worlds.

If we deny the inner world then the external world becomes mechanical and empty. If we deny the inner world, we empty life and the world of content and significance. This process is known as dehumanisation. Dehumanisation is the denial of the impulse that communicates internality with externality. Dehumanisation is a look that denies the possibility of making a cherished and profound world in the exterior. The human isn't just another form of life achieved through an evolutionary mechanism. The human isn't just a sophisticated way of life to feed itself and reproduce: the human is an impulse that comes from very far away and seeks to bring something very important that comes from this far away place into a place that you can see and behold.

Sometimes you have the image before your very eyes or the sound of what you bring from so far away and then you experience an extraordinary moment; an emotion as if all the good had been given to you in one go, you're overwhelmed. From outside whoever observes you sees nothing special, nevertheless you're in the presence of the Gods.

Illusion

Our life is orientated by reveries that we want to make real. These reveries are related to power, money, fame, sex and stability. Pursuing these reveries, we believe we get closer to happiness. However, what we find on the way is pain and suffering.

For the majority of our life the question about meaning is a false question. We formulate it in our heads as an intellectual diversion but our heart and our action are pledged to one of the numerous reveries and desires that live within us. Despite the intellectual games that we can play, what we feel is that by reaching this position, this salary, this man or this woman then we'll fill our existence.

This pursuit of reveries, desires and pleasure is the normal function of the consciousness in the state of vigil. Just as the characteristic of sleep is that our entire capacity to receive information from the external environment diminishes and we're filled with dreams and fantasy images, leaving the body immobile in bed, so the characteristic of daily vigil is to

pursue our reveries and desires and mobilise ourselves in seeking them. They take me and, possessed by them, I believe I have meaning. In fact, meaning is in achieving this reverie. If we were to be frank with ourselves in these moments then we should answer the question through the meaning, telling ourselves that the Meaning of Life is to win over this person who excites me (or inspires me), or things of that order. There's nothing bad in this because it's how we work but there's no freedom in this, not even when we pursue the noblest cause.

Whether it's because I don't achieve what I pursue or because finally I fulfil my desire there's always a moment in which failure is experienced. It's then that I can produce important changes in the direction of my life. For a short time, here I have in my hands the thread of liberty. Soon I'll return to the hunt for a new reverie and this will make me believe that it's the highest reason that I, and the whole of the human species, exist. That's why failure is so important, because for an instant we stop being hypnotised. It's a brief moment when we can take a look at what's real, at what's beyond the illusory mechanism. Instead of resenting those people apparently to blame for the failure of our reverie, we make contact with something in us that awakens us from an illusion.

Is there something beyond? Is there something beyond my yearnings that seem so important to me and that fade away as life goes by?

Of course there is. There is something more and that's the incredible thing.

Trapped in our reveries it's very difficult to investigate this something else. We can't move forward and throughout the whole of this book we're going round and round this subject. We turn up extraordinary experiences, re-discover the moments of rupture of the illusion which we call failure, study the process of life and also attempt to intuit a direction to the story.

This something else is what is real, what exists, what truly exists and works through dreams and reveries giving a meaning to life and history. 'Something else' is expressed at the beginning of the Universe, then in the beginning of life, later in the unconsciousness of vegetation, in the profound semi-sleep of animals and continues to be expressed in the reveries of human beings.

Reveries and desires don't just translate our deficiencies, they don't just compensate our needs, they transport this 'something else'—the meaning of being—translated, deformed and converted into a caricature.

History

What is surprising isn't the chaos, but rather that in this web of desires, violence and fury, life, consciousness and human beings continue their evolution. It's very impressive that in the magma of chaos, suns, planets and everything that we watch peacefully moving in harmony have been formed. When the original chaos reached stability and universes were created, what was the need for life to appear? That nascent life was in turn a creative magma that showed itself in multiplicity. But once life reached this stability, for ever regenerating itself, what was the need for consciousness to appear? And consciousness appeared full of struggling forces, images and fictions in search of stability.

History is also an endless road and it's also circular.

Nevertheless, we usually represent it linearly and it seems to us that there has been constant progress. We feel very superior to our prehistoric predecessors as if discovering fire and language were simpler than the computer chip! We're under the illusion of a belief in progress and in some turn of history we'll realise that it's not like that. When that happens our guides will want to remind us of the opportunity that failure gives us to make contact with what is real.

There's a centre around which history turns. In each spiral we move further away from this centre and in each failure we move closer to it. We go around and around while the centre tries to expand in concentric circles.

At this point, I imagine that you're asking me what this centre is. I'd like to turn the question back to you. What do you believe this centre is? And what is its nature?

The circle is able to expand or contract, tracing its perimeter. It could take more or less time, but the centre remains immutable at the same time, irradiating the same energy and attracting each point of the circumference with the same strength. In this centre is the reason why the line curves, why the path starts at its beginning, why there's expansion, why there's concentration, why me, why you, why yesterday and why tomorrow.

Before consciousness, life appeared and before that there was matter and before matter there was a centre and from there came matter, life, consciousness and it continues unfolding towards supra-consciousness.

In this creation process, the human appeared. Science recognises it a few million years ago in the first hominids but maybe this impulse that brought non-existence into existence has accompanied evolution since the beginning of time. So, inert matter moved and awoke life, and life awoke consciousness, and consciousness glimpsed freedom and, with that, the possibility to deny meaning and choose destruction. Consciousness, rousing itself from its drowsiness, recognises the presence of the human.

The human: inexpressible marvel like the very centre from where everything came. The human can strengthen meaning, invent it or reject all meaning and prefer nothingness: this creative and autonomous spark in the midst of circumferences in expansion.

Because of meaning it's possible to choose nothingness or experience emptiness. Because of meaning my actions either have meaning or don't. It's Meaning that drives us to leave behind nonmeaning and to disbelieve in death.

We're driven by a meaning and we're attracted by a meaning. Meaning is behind us and ahead of us. We don't see it because we're looking at the horizon which we assume to be infinite, unable to perceive that it's curving.

The human is the impulse that's seeking to bring meaning into time and space. This is what we call humanisation. The human can also deny meaning and deny itself and this is what we call dehumanisation. To humanise is to discover the meaning within us and shape it in this, our world. This meaning will be translated in many ways in successive eras until making society truly human. This society, imagined by men and women of all times, an image that has accompanied us since long ago, since time immemorial, appears in every corner of history and inspires us so that we may find the way to make it exist.

Dehumanisation is the eclipse of the human, the expression of nothingness. It's to empty the external and internal worlds of significance. Nothing matters, it's all the same, life is body and the body withers. Nothing means nothing. Nonmeaning empties the human heart. There's nothing to build, nothing to do, nothing to believe.

The struggle has always been between humanisation and dehumanisation, between meaning and nonmeaning, between hope and frustration, between violence and nonviolence.

All actions that contribute to humanise society and to defeat suffering have meaning and all actions that don't contribute to this have no meaning. Every action that helps others to defeat pain and emptiness communicates with the depth of being and the human finds existence. The human comes into being.

It is possible to awaken the Force and to fill life with hope. It is possible to unite with others, it is possible to resist violence and it is possible to carry out actions that make life, and the human, grow.

LOST

Panic and Depression. The Crumbling of Truth. In Search of the Centre. Projection of the Inner World

Panic and Depression

One day you wander alone into a dense forest of big trees. You wander for an hour. On the way back you find that all the trees look the same. The branches that you were breaking as signs you confuse with others broken by animals previously passing that way. Soon you don't know if you're coming or going, if you're getting closer or farther away, as the hours go by and the night draws in. Suddenly you become desperate and you run, trying to recognise where you came from. Your heart beats faster and faster, it wants to escape your body and you fall to the floor with a bitter cry.

It's unbearable to be lost. A while ago I visited a cavern with a friend. We explored narrow places and each time the tunnel branched, I made a mark to distinguish the path we took. On the way back there were many signs drawn on the tunnels that had been left by previous visitors and not only the scratches that I'd made. I continued a while as if nothing was happening, although I knew that the torch battery was getting low. Soon I was panicking. You can't stay much time in this state because it's unbearable. Then it seemed that I'd found the path and I convinced myself I'd found it. I calmed down a bit and followed it with conviction. It wasn't it.

When what you believe without doubt falls to the ground, when something that you took to be undoubtedly true shows its falseness, you struggle against the evidence desperately trying to deny it. So you try to affirm that this belief, which you know in your heart to be false, is still valid. In this struggle consciousness is lost and panic enters.

Panic is a response that we give when we don't accept that we're disorientated and lost. Disorientation is produced when a truth we affirmed shows itself to be false. When certainty ceases to be certain and becomes just a possibility and finally turns out to be false,

consciousness is lost. In this vertigo, consciousness tries to advance as if nothing had happened, but it stumbles, it feels like it's dying and it becomes desperate and panics.

Instead of going on, the friend who accompanied me in the cave when we got lost started to go back. We retraced our steps until we reached a place we both recognised and our tracks could still be seen. Without doubt this was the place where we rested. From here we restarted our return, carefully we retraced our steps, we recognised where we went wrong and found the right path.

I kept this lesson in my memory.

When you're lost and accelerate in order to escape the situation, if you do not stop yourself, you'll panic. Stop and calm down as if you were already panicking. Then retrace your steps until you recognise a truth in some moment of your life. Retrace your steps further. Don't force a lie to be true. When you recognise, with sincerity, some truth within you—simple and unembellished—then re-start the route from there, slowly. Very soon you'll find the point where you became lost and you can continue, this time without going wrong.

Something crumbled that you believed to be very solid, you've nothing to base yourself on and the rocks that were the signs for you to locate yourself have gone. You want to continue as if nothing happened, but you can't. The scenery has changed and you recognise nothing that could orientate you. First you neglect to notice the symptoms of anguish. You keep on. It can't be that things aren't as you believed them. When you decide to react it's already too late: desperation and panic take you. In this situation you have to find a refuge. Go back until you find it. Go back and you'll find the person or place where you feel safe. Reflect here about this world that crumbled and no longer exists: this world, the one in which you put all your faith and which no longer exists. Accept the failure, relaxed truth of the sufferer, and a peaceful hope will softly illuminate your way.

The other face of panic is depression. Both are the era's responses to the same situation. The root of both is that the world has collapsed. Not the world, the one you believed in, the maxims supporting your world.

You arrive at depression following expectations that orientate your steps. You follow them for a good part of life. Those expectations lead you nowhere and instead of reflecting about their falseness, you prefer to find those to blame for the things that didn't work out the way you expected. Resentment will eat away at you to the point of depression. Soon you'll be in a flat, desert-like space in which not even the lightest breeze moves. It doesn't matter where you go because the landscape doesn't vary in any direction. It is nonmeaning. Call it depression if you like. In this desolate place you forgot your expectations, you concealed your desires and even those to blame lost the charge that made you angry. Remember them. Remember, you didn't come here by chance. You followed deceitful idols. Remember and recognise that they lead you nowhere other than the desert in which you find yourself. Accept failure, resting place of the traveller, affectionate encounter with yourself, crossroads of all your searches.

The Crumbling of Truth

I set off on the journey towards destiny. I'm driving a car accompanied by friends. As I don't know the way, they navigate for me, making me turn left, then right, then straight on. Go up. Go down. Time passes and I start to doubt we're heading in the right direction.

At my side, my travelling companions insist that I go faster, assuring me that everything's ok. Time continues to go by and one by one my friends start to fall silent and their faces reflect ignorance and concern. I get angry because I believe that they deceived me. Then I calm down because neither they nor I knew where to go.

We look from a point of view. But this point of view is based on certain coordinates that aren't usually present. These are the basic beliefs from where I look. Beliefs are everything that we consider to be unshakeable truths. These truths are so far away from doubt that it's difficult to know which ones they are. There are moments in which those beliefs fall down and we simply cannot believe the data coming from our senses. "Incredible!" we say.

The day in which the Twin Towers fell down in 2001, we watched the pictures from the United States through television over and over again, not to be morbid, but because we couldn't assimilate the data. Not only had a building fallen, but also an unshakeable truth.

The look is based on these basic beliefs in order to be directed towards the world. They're solid. If they fall then our look dances and we become lost and disorientated.

We're living in an era whose technology has put us at the doors of conquering the stars, prolonging life and defeating pain; an era with all material possibilities and nevertheless 80% of us live below the poverty line. Life has become insecure and delinquency is already a phenomenon of the masses. Terrorism will soon have nuclear and chemical capability. The project of the future is to defend oneself against the dangers that society is generating. An era in which travelling companions—those who said we were going in the right direction, fear and confusion reflected in their bulging faces—have shut up.

These travelling companions are the ideologies that no longer orientate human action, and the religions that have become sick with fanaticism. The ideology of money is still standing. Are you shocked that we speak of money as an ideology or as a faith? We believe that it can bring us tranquillity, health, education, culture and entertainment. We believe that it decides governments and destinies. Without doubt it's the root of a good part of our anxiety and depression because we assume that nothing is possible without it.

We're living in this era, in this world, in this time, we're sharing this historical moment and it's down to us to confront the situation. The situation is of general crisis and it affects us directly and personally.

Nothing important works, nothing offers a basis and what seems to function will stop doing so. We're grappling with an ideology and this leads us to violence. We're grappling with a creed and we have to justify why one part wants to destroy the other. We're grappling with the family, but the family is also in crisis. Traditions serve as a nostalgic refuge, but they don't help us in the hour for action. What are the signs so that we don't get lost? Where is this firm ground on which we can walk? What is the staff on which I can lean to climb the mountain? Are my feet shaking or is it the shaking Earth? I lean on an aged oak tree that has been here for centuries, but on laying my hand on it, it comes crashing down. We're in danger and beware the tree you lean on because it could turn into a monster that devours you.

Nor can we cherish a lost past, because we weren't living in the best of worlds then either. Injustice, violence and discrimination were, like now, our Masters.

What will the future hold? Are we at the gates of the stampede of the species, running out of control, destroying whatever we find in our path? Or are we in front of a marvellous opportunity to find what is truly human?

This destabilisation will continue like a domino effect. When one domino falls over it pushes the next one, and this one pushes the next one in turn. You may say that after the storm comes the calm. That's true even if it seems that the world is falling down. But we have to hold onto something during the storm and we have to do something during the calm.

It isn't possible to put the breaks on a crisis, just as it's not possible to hold back the force of water when a dam bursts. The dam broke because it was no longer big enough to contain the river. We need new material to build and contain much more water for much more time. This is the opportunity that the crisis brings. We didn't choose it: it befell us to live in these times. We didn't produce it: it overwhelmed us. We have no alternative than to find these new truths that give us reference and orientate us towards meaning.

In Search of the Centre

I was in the midst of a crowd. There was a lot of chattering and you had to speak very loudly for your neighbour to hear you. It was impossible to move forward and in the midst of the throng someone was playing heavenly music. The excited crowd pushed with increasing strength to get to where the musician was. I realised that I'd never get there and that this marvellous sound would soon fade away. A cry of desperation clouded my eyes. Then I steadied myself, closed my eyes and sharpened my hearing. To start with I could only hear my disappointment. When the disappointment calmed down, I heard the sound of the people shoving in their attempt to reach the centre. What I was seeking was in this noise of the crowd. I listened even more intently and quietened my expectations without paying attention to the racket. Suddenly I heard a chord. When the echo of this celestial music brushed my hearing my heart leapt and its beating drowned out the sound that I had just managed to hear. On seeing me in such concentration, my neighbours closed their eyes imitating my attitude and a silence fell around me. The notes came more

frequently and more clearly. The circle of silent neighbours also grew. Suddenly and for an instant, we were filled with a melody that came from I don't exactly know where.

If I want to find Meaning, the only possible hypothesis is that in fact it exists. A meaning exists, a spring, an irradiating centre that's permanently giving off a signal and affecting the human. To find it means to recognise that we're affected by this centre, that even when our motivations are driven by our reveries and desires, there's something else operating in the background.

I don't know how many resistances you just experienced in the previous paragraph. Relax so that we may develop it a bit more.

Sartre, in *Existentialism is a Humanism*, attempts to honestly develop all the consequences arising from God's non-existence; in this way he affirms the human condition of being free in existence. What we're saying distances us from this conception and questions whether the existence of a meaning prior to existence annuls human freedom. Life is prior to existence and by deciding if I want to live, or cease to do so, then I affirm human freedom. A meaning can be prior to existence and on accepting or rejecting this I also affirm human freedom.

Reason has always tried to trap meaning in life. It's tried to explain it, formulate it, generalise it and often fallen into terrible nonmeaning, sometimes even into a murderous nonmeaning. Perhaps this happens because we confuse reason with intellect and some things—which the concept of reason should contemplate—we call 'irrational'. In any case, a certain humility of reason—a recognition also of its failure—would help us in the attitude for our search.

In general, the motivation for our actions, we call meaning. But in some moment, whether because we fulfil our aspirations or because it was impossible to fulfil them, this meaning that drove them runs out. The hypothesis is that there is a meaning that doesn't conclude either with the carrying out of our actions or with the materialisation of the projects we start. This meaning shows itself throughout our life despite us being unaware of it: a meaning that does not weaken as time goes by, not even when life comes to an end.

If such a thing were to exist then we should be able to note it somehow on seeing the unfolding of our biography or history. But this intuition wouldn't be enough for us, we should have some direct contact with it in order to accept its reality.

We'd have to capture the signal of this spring otherwise there would be no way for this meaning to influence our action. If there's a meaning operating then the consciousness has to capture it somehow. This signal must be mixed with all the noise of the consciousness itself, making it very difficult to differentiate the information that comes from daily life from that which comes from something immortal. Despite the hubbub within the consciousness, this signal must affect dreams, reveries and, through them, action. It should also affect 'rational arguments' that justify our actions. Among all of this 'noise' there would also have to be the signal that comes from meaning that we don't know how to recognise.

In psychology, much has been studied about trauma, compulsions and instincts that move us without sufficiently attending to the fact that a transcendent force could be operating here that could sweep away, with a feather, all those problems that weigh us down. It's true that when we're crushed by inner noise it's so enormous that the subtle signal of meaning is drowned out by this whirlwind. But how important would it be to find an equilibrium so that we can hear this music and not just obediently hum along to the chorus of the commercials? Society today is inhuman and drives us crazy and any therapy that doesn't contain this premise is only an imprisonment technique.

As the sound becomes clearer, so we perfect the look, so we calm the tempestuous consciousness to experience the subtle presence of the enormity...

Projection of the Inner World

How can I search for meaning in life? With my eyes? My ears? My nose? Does the meaning of life have a smell? When we seek an object or carry out an action we do so with the senses and with our body. But, what sense do you use to discover meaning?

The inner world is a world full of images, labyrinths, dreams and sensations. The paths to enter are paths written in the language of poets and its doors open with the key of those who seek the truth in the depths of their hearts. The external world, the one that seems to

enter through the senses, is mixed and confused with the aspirations, hopes and passions of the inner world.

This separation between external and internal worlds has a pedagogical purpose, but it's also a concession to the interpretation that we make of our direct experience. The inner world totally colours the external one and in addition transforms it as it seeks to shape itself there. The external world imposes its laws and its perceptions and incites the inner world to grow and develop itself. These worlds are one and it's not possible to observe them otherwise. There are very few occasions in which we have the experience that there's no separation between the external and the internal, and so this is when we manage to approach the experience of what is real. They're the extraordinary moments. But they aren't the norm. Usually we wander around lost and hallucinating in the external world, believing that reality is what we perceive.

Our ordinary way of being in the world, the way we call 'vigil', isn't aware of the projection that we're making onto the external world. We know it as an intellectual elaboration, but the comprehension of how fundamental this subjectivity is, isn't trivial.

Imagine a machine capable of reacting to external stimuli of light and colour. Imagine that this machine is like a cinema projector. On launching the film images on the screen, the machine starts to react because of the differences in light and colour that the film itself projects. The machine reacts because of something that it itself provokes and, nevertheless, it never knows it.

That's what happens with the state of vigil in the consciousness. We project the contents of the inner world and then we react as if we were isolated from this drama. That's why vigil is usually spoken of as a state that's similar to sleep. In both we project the contents of the inner world. In one case onto an inner screen and in the other onto a more external screen, and in both, we're unaware of this projection. Both in dreams and in vigil we experience this projection as reality.

The love that awakens in me, emanates from me and cloaks the one I love. It's projected from me, but I perceive it as if it were coming from that person. Time passes, she leaves and we resent each other because she took it with her, she robbed us of love. Isn't our romanticism stirred by a lover dying when their loved one dies?

Love is something very big, it can grow, multiply and is kept in the inner and human world. Like everything in this world, it seeks a way out. Then enraptured, I contemplate it but I forget about what the origin of this beauty was.

It's like this with the entire inner world, the beautiful and the horrible, we project it and observe it in awe or terror, without recognising where it comes from.

The same thing happens with meaning. It presents itself to us as if coming from outside. If there are Gods they're outside, nevertheless these Gods reside in the innermost part of human beings and it's there we can find them.

This meaning takes shape in time and space through the human. On recognising it we're moved but usually we forget that we're projecting something that we carry within.

THE INNER LOOK

To Awaken. Consciousness of self. Self-forgetting. Transcendence. My Inner Guide. The Force.

To Awaken

If it were certain that the inner world and the external world aren't separate and, for one moment, we could leave the screen of consciousness and look at it, what we'd see would be Everything. But it isn't possible to observe Everything because the look always sees one particular detail of this everything. The look is an act of consciousness that starts from some part of itself. We look from a perspective. Not only do we look from a point of view, we also look towards a place. The look has a direction and it also has an intention with respect to what is being looked at. The looks of consciousness allow something, some aspect of reality, to be captured.

Despite this, we believe that our vision is complete and total. This even happens when we're dreaming. We experience dreams as if we were awake and in the same way you now believe that you're awake and reading a book. Nevertheless everything is coloured by your dreams and by your contents and you have no awareness of it.

When the inner look is asleep we're completely identified with stimuli and we believe that we're receiving pure stimuli without noticing the filter of consciousness, without noticing that what we're receiving is the reflection of our own consciousness. The inner look is asleep during sleep and it's also asleep during ordinary vigil. In both states the consciousness is projected and receives back these projected images; in the case of dreams, mixed with stimuli mainly coming from the intra-body and in the case of vigil, with stimuli also coming from outside the body.

In all ordinary states of consciousness we experience meaning. Generally we do everything believing that it has meaning. I involve myself in dramas that present

themselves and, just as in sleep, I'm unaware of all the inner contents that are being projected in this situation.

There would be no need to wake up from this hallucinating way of life if it weren't for a few experiences that present themselves in an improvised way and shake us. It's as if a bucket of cold water is thrown over us. They are the moments in which what we dream and believe clashes with external events and a separation between the projected, subjective world and the external event is produced. They are the moments that we've called 'failure'. It's the failure of a way of seeing, or of interpreting, that suddenly stops being useful and events cannot be integrated into the flow of consciousness. Even though this makes us suffer, it's also thanks to this experience that we can evolve. These experiences take us out of daily life, they burst into the sleeping vigil we're usually in and they shake us, awakening the inner look within us.

This inner look is what you're reading me with because if it weren't present surely you'd have got bored a long time ago. It's what you look at yourself with and what you use to compare what we're talking about.

It's a very peaceful and truthful look that draws us near to internality and little by little leads us to the centre, the meaning, to ourselves.

It's neither the look that criticises, nor the one that admires, nor the one that imposes; it's the one that observes, the one that observes without judgement, the one that sleeps through every judgement.

It's not the look that forces; it's the one that recognises forcing.

It's not the look that dispels digression; it's the one that sees it as inevitable.

It's not the look that liberates me from reverie; it's the one that observes how I move in it.

It's not the look that fills; it's the one that observes the void.

It's not the look that lets go; it's the one that observes imprisonment and selfishness.

It's not the look of guilt; it's the one of repentance.

It's the look with which my guide talks; it's the look that moves through the inner world.

We're tipped towards the external. Our identification with the senses and the body is such that we're confused with things and the world. When I don't obtain the thing I want, I

continue grappling with it, muttering about how to get it. I'm stuck to the world of things, attached to it, whether or not I satisfy my desires.

Failure is a profound experience that awakens the inner look which becomes aware of existence and 'the me' in the world.

Consciousness of Self

In this awakening of the look, I notice a different functioning in which I begin to recognise many things that I took for 'real'—understanding real as externality—as projections of the inner world. Until now we've spoken of reveries or tendencies and even compulsions that, coming from within, were perceived as arrivals from outside. But what happens with faith? With love? With Gods? With the sublime? With kindness? And with all human virtues? I also perceive them as outside and this is part of the illusory way of looking. So as the landscape can be charged with our compulsion, so can it be with our virtue. This virtue that I observe is also something inside that has been projected and it seems to me as though it were coming from outside.

*If you go, love,
you'll never leave because you're always here;
you'll never stay because you always leave,
the love which rests in the loved one,
the kindness that makes the abyss vanish,
and the joy of everyone that inundates
your strength which is also mine.*

The inner look is the human look, the look from within. Observe the dance between the world and the human, seen from the human.

When the inner look awakens, the human becomes aware of itself, of what there is in the world and what of the world is within it.

I can be frightened of the phantoms I observe but these phantoms are only guardians of those that have to be pacified in order to make it into reality. They're the bogeyman of children. When we get used to them they lose their power and the night changes its sign and here it is to allow us to recognise the dawn.

Here we found the look to observe meaning, history and the human. Sometimes we're blinded by the very presence of being, ourselves, of what we are.

Cruelty may exist, but compassion will never die.

Evil blights the landscape, but kindness will return to paint for eternity.

The body will die, but being will forever light up your eyes.

Meaning isn't found in things and it's not something that things can transmit to me. On the contrary, it comes from within, it colours the world and then I perceive coloured things that fill me. This I cannot know while I sleep nor when I'm in a state of vigil. But when the inner look awakens, it can observe and recognise it.

This act of consciousness, this look, awakens in failure but it can also happen that an extraordinary experience awakens it too. They happen suddenly, without asking, without wanting, without me doing anything special. They're all-encompassing, a joy that comes from within bursts forth, or a communion with everything and everyone. If I make contact with something truly important then this can change my life because I'll dedicate myself to finding it again. The distance between these experiences and the usual ones is such that it's very difficult to take in. With time, these experiences are kept on the same plane we keep dreams on.

Forgetting Oneself

How could we awaken the look without expecting events to put us in a situation of failure or without expecting an extraordinary experience to happen to us?

A simple trick to awaken the inner look is to remember that I exist. While I read, I realise I'm reading. I become aware of myself while I read. In a few seconds my consciousness broadens, I become aware of the images that are passing through my mind. I exist, I maintain the memory of myself, then I lose it, but rapidly I recognise that I forgot that I exist.

This remembering that I exist is a problem that makes me confront my fears.

To forget about my fears I'll also forget that I exist and I'll somehow become weakened, impeding the memory of myself. I'll flee myself, I'll escape outside of myself, distancing myself and driving myself mad, identifying myself with what's far away. The look will be

increasingly outside, it'll coincide with the senses and I'll identify with things and be taken by them. But the look will be externalised even more until I experience that I'm looked at from outside, judged by someone else, by a group of people or by something more abstract like a God or morality.

On observing 'the me' in the world, I find myself with an 'I' which we aren't used to. We'd like to see Superman in ourselves but we bump into Clark Kent. We believe we're Doctor Jekyll and we see Mr. Hyde. I go looking for my sheep and I find my wolf, as it says in my son's poem that I read recently. When what you want to see doesn't appear, you force it and, by forcing, the inner look hides.

When the inner look wakes up and we observe with it we run into the limits of 'the me'. This fantastic me; it turns out that it's not the exact representation of what I want to be and it doesn't have an infinite time in which to be achieved. Therefore, the look that observes this doesn't resist it and escapes, it fuses itself again with 'the me' and is externalised. I no longer observe 'the me', but rather I observe the world from 'the me'.

If I go down the street and suddenly I see something I don't like then my first reaction is to look away. It's the game the ostrich plays when it thinks it's hidden from danger by sticking its head in the sand. So, our young inner look will tend to hide each time we awaken it.

If you've managed to keep up with me until now then you'll realise that for an instant—at least for a moment—'the me' didn't occupy the entire consciousness, there was already something that was looking at it. This is very interesting. Who was looking at it? If there's something that's looking at 'the me' it means that not everything in the consciousness is me. This intuition that 'the me' has that it's not everything and that it's dying might be right; but what is that look that has more depth and that's looking at 'the me'? It seems that I'm not just 'the me'. Here we are coexisting, 'the me' and something else.

In order to strengthen this inner look I'll have to accept that 'the me' has many limits and that 'the me' depends on the body and that 'the me' dies with it. But with all its faults, 'the me' has accompanied me in this world. It's with, and thanks to, 'the me' that I've lived my human life. It's thanks to 'the me' that I can express meaning in the world. It's a

good companion and can't be blamed for not compensating my desires. I'll also have to adjust to its extinction given that it'll vanish with death. But what isn't clear is that I'm just me. In fact, this inner look that looks at 'the me' can be showing me another part of being that's more essential than 'the me' and arises from another depth and is announcing another transcendental reality.

Transcendence

*We are not the pain of the body,
the body withers.*

*We are not the pleasure of the body,
the body withers.*

*Something great and subtle, lives,
unites,
contains.*

The stone exists and doesn't know it exists.

Life exists and doesn't know it exists.

Consciousness exists and forgets it exists.

*In the silence of the mind
in the depths of the heart,
beneath the depths,
something great and subtle is for ever.*

That I might forget myself doesn't mean that I don't exist. I exist but without being aware of it. When death shows itself to me in all its crudeness the inner look awakens and I become aware of existence. I'll resist the evidence and try to flee, nevertheless the inevitability of death wakes me up and I remember that I exist.

I exist, but, who exists? I exist. I'm a part of the world, of things, of the days, the nights, the hours. But I'll cease to exist. If what exists is only 'the me' then existence is over with death. But perhaps it's not like this. When the inner look awakens and observes 'the me', who is observing? This observer isn't 'the me' given that 'the me' is being

observed. Is it 'the me' that exists or is it another being that exists and manifests itself through 'the me'? When death befalls 'the me' will it also reach this other being?

I'm aware of 'the me'. This is the daily awareness that I have but I'm not aware of this other being. Is what I am 'the me' or this other being that manifests itself through 'the me'?

If there's another being which is what truly exists then it should transcend 'the me' and therefore also death. If there's another being that truly exists then the memory that I exist will bring me closer to becoming aware of this being.

If there's another being that's what that truly exists then 'the me' is the vehicle or the seat from which this being manifests itself in the world. Therefore the meaning of 'the me' is to serve as a support in the world for this being.

If there's another being that truly exists, what is its meaning?

Is it possible to become aware of this being?

My Inner Guide

When the storm rocks my ship and the waves carry it to the edge of the dark night, I call my guide. With the gentleness of the sun they approach and an enormous force turns the rudder towards the shore and there's no wind or wave that can divert their tenacity.

My guide, as friendly as the sun, brings light, warmth and life to everyone equally.

When your guide sees you happy they shine with joy, when they see you sad they shine to give you their light.

The sun was there before and after, my wise guide has seen everything. Their advice is the advice of experience.

Guide, light of my life, I want to feel your presence while I write and feel you also accompanying me in these lines.

What is the inner look looking at?

"Your inner look is looking at what can be seen. It looks at your sunset and your dawn. It looks at the meaning but also at the void. It looks at your hope but also at your shipwreck; true look that looks the same way as your guide, as the sun looks, without

punishment and without reward; light that announces the presence of the sun, origin of the look.”

How do I awaken the inner look?

“Follow the Path. Ask yourself, ‘Who am I?’ and ask yourself, ‘Where am I going?’ Every time you want to connect with the inner look, remember who you are.

“You are your body. Are you your body? Are you what you feel or what you think? You are what you believe. Are you what you believe or what you imagine? You are the energy. Are you the energy of your body, of your thought, of your feeling, of your action?

“Who are you?

“Every time that you want to connect with the inner look remember where you’re going.

“To your work. Is this the ultimate meaning? Is it work? Is it your family?

“To pleasure. Is this your meaning, bodily pleasure?

“To death. Does everything end or does something continue on?

“To something else. Is the meaning that you seek in something else?

“Where are you going?

“Inner look to see in a new way, true look to walk through the meaning, human look to communicate.”

So says my guide to me and to you.

And, tell me guide, who are you?

“A representation, I translate something very important so that it reaches your consciousness. I’m a representation of I am.”

And, tell me guide, who are the others?

“The rays of the sun. Sometimes their bodies let the light through and life is illuminated, sometimes their bodies don’t and they cast a shadow over life. Sometimes their me allows the sun to shine and sometimes the cloud of ‘the me’ completely obscures it.”

And is it possible to communicate oneself?

“The clouds allow the sun through, at times the sky clears.”

Guide, your company has been very good. I thank you for bringing me the breeze of another world.

The Force

I mentally survey my body. An energy circulates around it. I feel a soft vibration in some part. They are my legs and my hands. Now I notice my breathing, it is stirred, my heart is also stirred. I know, Reader, that you're with me, you're following me with your eyes and uncertainty goes through you because you're not sure where I'm taking you.

Now I feel the presence of an energy that's around. I interrupt my writing and put my hand on the centre of my chest. I feel my heart, my presence and this increasingly strong energy. Now you. Put a hand on the centre of your chest and feel the force in you. This force is what gives energy to your body and your mind.

This is the Force that gives life to the body. This force is truly life. It's the energy I feel my heart with and my mind thinks with. This force is what gives life to the inert. When the body dies what happens with this force is debateable. But it's not because the body exists that a life force appears, it's because a life force exists that matter comes alive.

The presence of this Force we can verify in ourselves and maybe we recognise it while reading some chapters of this book.

The nature of this energy isn't so easy to determine. It isn't mechanical, chemical or electrical energy. Nor is it atomic or thermal. We're speaking of life energy, but I'm not sure that it's so precise. I close my eyes and I imagine a juicy green apple: what type of energy am I using in the represented image, or, before this, what energy generates the act of consciousness?

To awaken the inner look, we need to obtain energy. We need this Force that circulates within us but we don't know how to use this energy. We can think, feel and act yet we don't control the force that it takes to do all of this. Energy tends to take the form it already has, it moves through its habitual channels. After recovering from sleep, in vigil the look becomes identified with 'the me' and from there—from 'the me'—I see the world. This is natural. But now, from vigil, I want to wake up again and internalise the look in order to observe 'the me' and the world. I'll need surplus energy for this.

The inner look isn't a natural look. It awakens in very particular moments that we've called failure. But we can awaken it if we want, on making the effort to look at the world and 'the me' from within.

Why would we want to make this effort? To know ourselves. To know the most important thing that could be known, the basis of the human, the essential, the oneself, that which is what it is.

To know oneself isn't to know our externality, it's to know what constitutes, what doesn't become, as Plato would say; what doesn't die, as Buddha would say.

The importance of overcoming suffering and contradiction is so that they don't interrupt true knowledge, the knowledge of oneself.

In order to find oneself, the base of the human, to experience what gives meaning and orientates actions to transform reality, we need to awaken the inner look. That's what allows us to find our centre.

This look becomes confused with things of the external world. The look is lost in the senses and it seems to us that reality is what arrives through them.

To be able to awaken it and find our own centre we need to increase the energy with which we usually operate in the world.

The Force is the energy that 'animates', that gives life to the body. The force is really life, it's what's alive. Knowledge of this energy isn't pure sensuality. It's not 'rich' registers; the force isn't a sensual experience, its indicators are registered as breadth and luminosity. Also like the inner voice of the guide that advises, consoles and orientates.

The Force can be trapped, diluted or directed. The energy of the force can help us to reach a new state of consciousness, to awaken the inner look.

Our energy is dissipated by suffering and contradiction. It's not the excess of activity that exhausts us, it's contradictory action that weakens us. There are actions that increase my energy. They're very special actions that remain with charge when I carry them out, I'd like to go back and repeat them and they produce a feeling of joy and peace in me. Others I'd prefer to have not done, they produce suffering and displeasure.

There are procedures to make contact with the Force. Many cultures in different eras have proposed procedures through dances, through sounds, chants, drugs or through prayers in order to make contact with it. Silo showed a procedure in his Message that requires neither smoke nor substances and allows a gradual approach to the Force and the experience of Meaning.

THE FALL

Death and Loneliness. Degradation. Success. Guilt.

Death and Loneliness

Is there anything more painful than losing meaning when you've brushed against it?

Why, when the light passes through our eyes, do we want to trap it and not allow it to escape?

Meaning lives within us. It illuminates life, the same way the sun brightens the day. It's not the night that hides the sun; the sun hides so that we may know the night.

The fragile flame of a candle can be extinguished, it's slowly consumed and the movement of a ripple can put it out. Will it last until dawn? Will there be a dawn? The rays of the sun ignite the Earth and I—still afraid of the darkness—continue to look at the day with the light of the candle. Oh my! Protected by the light of a lantern, when it's the very fire of the sun that envelops me!

I travel through the hours accompanied by two dreadful ladies. The dark night approaches as the day has scarcely begun. With it approach the ladies who I try to keep at bay with the quivering flame of the candle. Death and Loneliness: I carry them in front and behind me. The candle, always lit to hide the fear, simulates a long journey without nights, but also without days.

When meaning presents itself, the sun shines for you, the day is the day, the night is the night and the ladies vanish like holograms pierced by a strong light.

When meaning is hidden, Death and Loneliness, one on either side, come with me wherever I go. The three of us ride through time. When I go left, they come with me, when I turn they turn. I break or accelerate and they break and accelerate following my own gestures. I don't like them but they accompany me, I want to avoid it but they follow me like shadows. Soon the dawn arrives, I look at my companions and they're no longer there, vanishing with the intense light of the day. I look at my shadow and it's not there either. Am I also a hologram? Death, Loneliness and I travel together. When the sun rises,

meaning makes them disappear. At sunset, the twilight darkens their outlines, then night draws in hiding the meaning and we see the three riders galloping. In the total darkness I can't see 'the me' either, but the hollow sound of the hoofs of Death and Loneliness galloping in the void reverberates in my ears.

*Death who embraces and kisses me,
who petrifies and freezes me,
I escape from you without escaping.
Death and I,
opposite poles of the same magnet.*

*Me without you, I'm only me.
Me and you,
I'm no longer me.*

*Only me, loneliness and death
only you, death and loneliness
you and me
invisible thread of life
immaterial lasso from beyond life
you and me, we're no longer me.*

Degradation

The more 'the me' affirms itself as I, the heavier its companions tread.

Being and meaning are revealed through 'the me' and 'the me' believes it is being and meaning.

But how can it be that a hologram creates light?

This need of 'the me' to overpower everything is neither an error nor a personal problem; it's the way a state of consciousness functions. This super image that we call 'me' is diluted by death, in fact it'll disappear. So the fear of dying has something to hold on to. 'The me' is mortal and if we were only 'me' then we wouldn't return here again.

This 'me' translates basic instincts of survival and isn't ready to be liquidised into nothing. This is precisely the funny thing and it exists for this, to subject, to remain and to give the illusion that time is endless. 'The me' grapples with life in fear of death, its death.

But this 'me' isn't alive, it's an image of consciousness, therefore its disappearance isn't death either. 'The me' believes that it's alive and believes that it's going to die, however it isn't alive and therefore can't die. The material of 'the me' is the same as that of dreams and we don't say, "Last night's dream died," but rather, "I woke up from last night's dream," because fantasies aren't something alive.

If it's not 'the me' that's alive, who is it? Who's observing 'the me'?

Now I find myself with you. For a moment our 'mes' cross paths and fuse together. In the moment of fusion my me is a 'meyou'. It's a moment of communication. But suddenly 'the me' recovers from this bewilderment, seeks references and finds them in differentiation from you. My me starts to separate from yours and to do so it degrades you and in the measure that this degradation grows, loneliness surrounds me.

Every attempt I make to get closer to you, every attempt at communication is an attempt that dilutes 'the me' and it'll resist and manifest its existence, its importance and its affirmation in this world. In order to affirm itself in front of someone else so that it isn't diluted in the experience of communication, it'll degrade, it'll diminish the value of the other person making my own me stand out in my eyes.

Selfishness or me-ism is the desperation of 'the me' in front of its death.

Degradation closes the path to meaning which seeks to be expressed in the world. The expression of the essential transcends 'the me' as the human symphony is performed together with, and thanks to, others. Although I may try to appropriate and thereby degrade this opus, it has its origin in meaning and is brought into the world through the human. Through contact with others I can achieve recognition of this. It's others who allow me to remain in the attempt to bring meaning into the world. It's in the recognition of others, in the contribution of others, in the significance that meaning is expressing through others that I continue in the attempt.

In every encounter with meaning—and the experience of communication is just that—the register of 'the me' disappears. It's very beautiful but also unknown, unusual. Scared, I

believe I'm dying—effectively the death of 'the me'—and 'the me' flails around grasping onto existence and degrading the life of 'the non-me'.

Meaning makes its way through the web of 'the me' which tries to trap it. Despite everything, being is revealed and slips into the world. This effort by being to shape itself, this human attempt to mould being in the world, is what 'the me' doesn't recognise as being its own and degrades it in order to possess it. The degradation happens by reducing the enormity in order to include it within the smallness of the look. It is to stretch the ego in order to fit the splendid within it. I compare, I compete against and I diminish others so that their greatness may be contained in my vessel.

Degradation rapidly achieves its task, soon everything will be insignificant and nothing will have meaning. It starts with an innocent joke and ends up distorting the entire situation, highlighting the superfluous and minimising what has priority. It's like opening a small channel in the side of a stream that the water then widens, becoming larger and larger, until the entire flow is diverted.

I stop before the abyss of degradation and look at the mountain summit. With me comes the relentless human impetus that, through me and through you, flies beyond us. It doesn't matter what resistances it finds, it doesn't matter how many walls it must climb over because there will be neither rock nor sea that interrupts its passage. That which comes from ancient times stirs within us and will liberate itself from every prison. If it falls it will get up. Time and again, attempt after attempt, it will leap over the shadows. One effort, another effort and another one. Fragile strength of time immemorial, you are what's alive. You bring meaning and significance with you and together we draw them all the time. Monstrous things do nothing more than highlight you, human being, and I sing to you, and I exalt you. The cloud of degradation distances itself from me to admire your constant drive, your intense colours and the brilliant shine that you bring from other worlds.

The attempt by consciousness to recognise meaning is a brave path in which some of the appropriations of 'the me' are released. Glory is given to the whole, the magnitude of ignorance is discovered and it's accepted that what sustains us is faith. In this attempt, in which 'the me' is destabilised, an internal nagging starts which reconsiders the situation. The successes are personal, the errors are those of others, the successes of others are due to reasons of chance or anything else that allows us to lessen the quality of others' success.

The thing that I did is magnified and the things of others are degraded. Degradation is a reaction of 'the me' in front of its fear of disappearing.

I believe that this is a very common stumbling block for the consciousness. Few are the times it manages to transcend individuality and recognise us as part of something we're all a part of, that this makes us exactly the same and that thanks to the efforts of the parts, the opus has consistency today.

To leap over degradation is to recognise another person, to recognise them beyond their me, to recognise their drive, their existence, their being part of existence, to have an intuition of meaning expressing itself through their reveries and to foresee the marvel that lives within another person. How is this done? I don't know very well but it's not something intellectual. I learn to observe the inexhaustible human effort to fill the world with meaning. I learn to admire the permanent attempt to translate meaning, to humanise the Earth.

Success

After numerous frustrations, I go back to proposing myself the tasks and objectives that seem important to me. This time I seek the best attitude, the most worthy sentiment to carry them forward and inner peace to carry out actions without worrying about their results and without being a prisoner to the goal that I pursue. The look is placed in an inner centre and from there it observes. I start the task proposed.

Without much ado I discover that everything is going as planned. Nevertheless a small anxiety that I confuse with joy appears almost without me realising. Soon my action is recognised by others and the anxiety increases a bit more. Time passes and my objectives have totally changed. Now the important thing is the goal and not each step. Other people's view of what I do takes a disproportionate value and the meaning of the project is diverted and consists of attracting the attention of others to it. Time passes and the people who accompany me become instruments to carry out my ends. Anxiety increases and violence emerges with increasing frequency. Now I've completely forgotten what my project was, forgotten what I was looking to find through the work that I was doing. I only pursue success and it dominates me.

Success is like sweets that you try once and then can't stop eating. It makes us anxious and we start to do things just so that we may get more and more. We've forgotten the original motives that were driving our action and we're only orientated by what produces success. An amphetamine rush circulates through our blood and when we go at full speed we crash.

Many years ago I visited Silo with my partner who'd recently been elected to Parliament. The conversation derived from the explanation about a virus that's contagious in situations of success and power: Heights Virus. An attack produces a memory disorder in which the sufferer forgets all the help they received while reaching the position they find themselves in. They only remember their personal qualities as being those that brought them to that peak. To make matters worse, when the illness advances the successful person not only forgets the people who helped them but rather they start to mistreat them. Silo said that, to bear the critics, as hard as they may be, anyone can do; but the person who is able to bear the applause finds greatness. Then he told us about the slave that ran alongside Julius Caesar when he was victorious in battle whispering in his ear "remember you are mortal."

The strongest tests of our projects start when we acquire prestige. It's usual that when one is triumphant the original motives of the project that gave it meaning are forgotten. The primary thing is no longer the project's materialisation in the world, but rather to satisfy oneself with the recognition of others.

When meaning becomes an image and is translated into a project all our actions are charged with significance. It's being that projects itself through what we do. In this moment the centre is within and is brought out, projecting significance. When success arrives and we lose ourselves in it, the centre is outside, in the approval or rejection of others. The significance is no longer brought from within, but rather it's received from the outside through an external look. I'll not be able to recover from it until a crisis makes me reflect about what I've done so that I can retake the original motives of the action.

How can we maintain our centre when success clouds our task?

Juan Chambeaux, in his book *Heights Virus*, proposes a sense of humour and team work as a sort of antidote for this malady. But we must recognise that it's not at all simple, we don't have a vaccine for it. I think the best way to generate the antibodies is to not fear

infection. Surely when we emerge from the drunkenness of success we'll feel the hangover but it's no worse than this and we'll have learnt sufficient to take care of ourselves next time.

The point is to be able to remain in the direction we're going, whether they applaud or jeer us; it's to allow meaning to express itself without being deviated by recognition or criticism.

It could be that ancient resentments and revenge are pending issues of 'the me' that dazzle and trap it in the moment of success. But the being that lives behind 'the me' has nothing to do with that and its meaning is so strong that it can overcome the pettiness.

When the time comes and meaning is unfolding in abundance in the world, I'd like you, my Guide, to accompany me to accept the circumstances I'm living in with inner peace.

Guilt

Guilt is a knot of suffering that has trapped human beings since time immemorial. It's as if we did something wrong in primordial times and we hope that our feelings of guilt will redeem us, generation after generation. Guilt is associated with punishment and we assume that punishment can be liberating.

Guilt and punishment feed each other, one unable to satisfy the other. In *Crime and Punishment*, Dostoyevsky tells the story of Rodion Raskolnikov who murders an old woman to demonstrate that a superior being can do anything without remorse. Everything is going well for him until his brilliant intellect opens the way for him to feel and he comes into contact with suffering. Then Rodion accepts his punishment and, through love and compassion, he tries to redeem his guilt.

I remember playing with the nannies in my house when I was ten years old. "The Jews killed Christ," they told me. I knew who Christ was because at school they started classes many times with 'Our Father, who art in heaven,' while I recited the 'Shema Yisrael' taught to me by my family. That Christ was crucified I also knew, but that the Jews were responsible for this execution was more difficult to swallow. If this was true and I'm Jewish then what responsibility do I bear?

When I grew out of infancy, a military dictatorship took control of my country by force. While this dictatorship was committing atrocities against people there was a dilemma that I couldn't resolve. What responsibility do those in favour of this regime bear as they close their eyes to the protests of those who suffer and hurt?

Later on, when my partner died at my side, what responsibility did I bear?

Perhaps the feeling of guilt is best illustrated by the biblical myth of Abraham. It wasn't enough for Abraham to say, "I'll kill my beloved son because God asks it of me and therefore the act will be justified." Abraham knew that the act would not be justified and that God was condemning him to eternal guilt.

Søren Kierkegaard says in *Fear and Trembling* that the only thing that truly interested him in life was to comprehend what was passing through the head of Abraham during the three days that he travelled to Moriah where God asked him to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac. Kierkegaard develops the arguments to elucidate if Abraham was effectively the model of faith or rather a potential murderer. God stayed the arm that held the sacrificial knife before it passed through Isaac's heart but after this experience Abraham never laughed again and guilt consumed his heart.

I quote from the tale that Silo makes of this myth in *Universal Root Myths*⁵ which will accompany us while elucidating this knot of suffering.

Many generations passed from the time of the patriarchs to that of the Flood. And it was after the deluge that Jehovah set the rainbow in the sky to seal his pact with men that all seed would continue to multiply. And still later, Terah took his son Abram and his daughter-in-law Sarai from Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan. Then Abram and Sarai went down to Egypt, but after a time they returned to Hebron. The livestock and goods of Abram had grown, but his heart was filled with sadness because at his age he still had no offspring.

Abram was already old when he conceived a child with his servant Hagar. But his wife Sarai and Hagar had a falling out, and Hagar departed for the desert, taking with

⁵ Collected works, Volume 1, Latitude Press, 2003, pp 276

her the cause of her affliction. Then an angel appeared and told her: "You have conceived, and upon giving birth you will name your son Ishmael, because Jehovah has heard your prayers. Ishmael, therefore, will mean 'God hears,' and his descendants will be many and his people will live in the deserts, worshipping God not by what the eye sees but by what the ear hears. And thus they will pray to God and God will hear them." Much later, Sarai in her old age at last became pregnant, and although Abram was father of all of them and cared for them all as his own children, Sarai's descendants and those of Hagar continued the dispute that had begun with their mothers.

Then God said: "From now on your name will not be Abram but Abraham, because you will be the father of a multitude, and Sarai will be named Sarah, like a princess of nations. As for your son with Sarah, you will name him Isaac."

There came a time when God put Abraham to a test. "Abraham!" he called. And Abraham replied, "Here I am." God said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him as a burnt offering on one of the hills that I shall show you."

So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his ass, and took with him two of his men and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the sacrifice and set out for the place God had spoken of. On the third day, Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. Then Abraham said to his men, "Stay here with the ass, while I and the boy go over there to worship, and then we will return to you." Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and laid it on the shoulder of his son Isaac; he himself carried the fire and the knife, and then the two of them walked on together. Isaac said to his father, Abraham, "Father!" And Abraham said, "What is it, my son?" His son said, "We have both the fire and the wood, but where is the young animal for the sacrifice?" Abraham said, "God will provide a young creature for the burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together. When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood. He then bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son, but the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, saying, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he answered, "Here I am." The Lord said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, since you have not

withheld you son, your only son, from me.” And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught by its horns in a thicket. Abraham took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering in place of his son. And so it was that Abraham called that place “The Lord Will Provide.”

Perhaps the anguish of this terrible test remained in Abraham’s heart until his death. And thus, again and again he told himself: “Jehovah repudiates human sacrifice and, even more, the sacrifice of one’s own son. If he orders a sacrifice, I must not obey it because it would mean disobeying his prohibition. But to reject what he commands is also to sin against him. Must I obey something that my god rejects? Yes, if he demands it. But my dull-witted reason struggles, moreover, with the heart of an old man who loves the impossible gift that Jehovah gave him so late in life. Is this test the consequence of the laughter that filled me when I was told that my son would be born? Is it not the laughter that Sarah stifled when she heard that prophecy? For some reason Jehovah gave him the name ‘Isaac,’ which means ‘laughter.’ My wife and I were already old when we were told that we would have this child, and we could not believe that such a thing was possible. Does Jehovah play with his creatures as a child plays with sand? Or is it that, knowing his anger and his punishment, we overlook the fact that he also tests and teaches us with divine mockery?”

I call my guide once more, I go within myself and I connect with this stillness that seems to live within me and wants to speak through my mouth and write through my fingers. What is guilt? How does it impede my communication with meaning? How do I leap over it so that meaning continues to unfold in the human?

A universe of kindness is kept within us. Kindness is brought from the spiritual world to the world of time. The resistances to shape itself in the world which kindness finds, we experience as guilt. Guilt is the difficulty that kindness finds to colour the human world.

Evil doesn’t exist in being. When kindness is hidden, evil appears, just as the night appears when the sun goes down.

These resistances to become real which kindness finds are knots that we don't know how to untie. These knots trap the light of meaning and we act impulsively without that guide.

We cannot hide guilt because the irradiation of kindness always illuminates it. Once guilt is put to one side kindness will overtake it and it'll materialise in the world.

How do you set to one side the rock that I put in the path of the light?

The inexhaustible spring of kindness will never cease to emanate its water. There's no guilt that can close the source of this spring. Guilt blackens the look, but the spring is always there.

There are those who believe they're the guardians of this spring and they lift their accusing fingers to fuel your faults. Only you are the guardian of the spring. Those who stand on their pedestals and proclaim themselves custodians of morality, those with the eye of the inquisitor, they're ignoble and want to extinguish all nobility from your heart. Let them talk to themselves. Don't fear them and don't get angry. Laugh and continue on your way. Laugh and let your laughter become a protective shield against everything they try to poison.

The marvellous spring of kindness continues here with the melodious and multi-colour waters. It doesn't matter who you've wanted to harm, it doesn't matter what you believe you're capable of doing, it doesn't even matter what you were actually capable of doing, that water is from the immortal world and it won't cease until it's being drunk by every immortal person.

So, what is guilt?

I look into your eyes and I ask, "If somehow I could remove guilt from your heart, would you continue to act in the same way?"

Do you believe that guilt motivates the redeeming action?

It's kindness that motivates a kind action and not guilt. Guilt is only the impediment to feeling the fresh spring water.

An accident affected your life and you denied life. "There's no such kindness there in the profound because if it were there I wouldn't have suffered the loss of my loved ones."

You say this with an angry heart, but here guilt imprisoned you. It doesn't matter how much you renounce meaning because it'll continue to shine whether you accept it or not.

Guilt doesn't liberate you from anger with your Gods: guilt only hides them so that you can't hear their voices.

What's important is very close because it always lives within you. It's not possible to lose it because it doesn't belong to us. What's important cannot disappear because it cannot die.

Guilt doesn't allow me to see what is essential and it keeps my look tied to the periphery. But the essential thing is alive and there's a language that allows us to communicate with it.

Guilt is an impediment for the expression of meaning and not a way to reach it.

How is guilt cleansed? Guilt is a stone in the path of meaning. Punishment does not resolve it and it doesn't remove this stone from the path. Punishment, on the contrary, contributes to guilt remaining and impedes the passage of the light. Punishment seeks that you never leave guilt behind.

How is guilt cleansed? Guilt is a fabric of forgetfulness that covers meaning. Faith isn't enough to lift that fabric and if you insist on it, faith becomes sick with fanaticism. The fanatic cannot enter into contact with God. They confuse their illness and their guilt with divine messages.

Neither punishment, nor fanatical faith liberates you from guilt.

Guilt is as hard as ice. Nothing can break it, only the sun can melt it.

Guilt is impenetrable like metal, yet if you apply heat it becomes flexible and can be moulded.

Something seems to hide guilt. I hide it from others, but I cannot conceal it because I'm always in its presence. I try to hide it from myself. If no one discovers it, it will also remain concealed from me. What is it that you want to conceal? The confession of guilt has a cathartic value that relieves the soul. Confession uncovers what was concealed before my very eyes. The key to confession isn't to reveal to others what is concealed, but to reveal it to oneself. That's the moment in which I make contact with something true, darkness becomes illuminated and a deep cry of catharsis is produced. What is concealed is the intimate responsibility for the breach in the flow of kindness. The same fact for which I reproach myself—be it monstrous or accidental—that fact, which makes the knot of guilt appear, hardens and conceals the intimate responsibility that shames me.

Oedipus kills an old man who he doesn't know and who turns out to be his father. Then, on guessing the riddle of the sphinx, he marries a woman who, without knowing it, turns out to be his mother and has children with her. When the drama is discovered, his mother-wife commits suicide and he, suffocated by guilt, gouges his eyes out and roams blind for the rest of his life. Why does he gouge his eyes out? What doesn't Oedipus want to see? Why does she kill herself? Certainly it isn't due to the incestuous accident that the tragedy describes as her will wasn't compromised. It's because of her intimate responsibility that, in order to explain requires an interpretation of the drama: Oedipus' father wanted to thwart the Oracle of Delphi's prophecy by assassinating his own son... and he did so with the complicity of Oedipus' mother.

Guilt is the way to conceal the intimate responsibility in the interruption of the transfer of meaning to the world. This concealment is also recurrent in myths.

In the myth of Abraham there are at least two situations that are concealed. One is the expulsion of Hagar, mother of Ishmael, into the desert. The second is the laughter of Sarah when Yahweh tells them that they'll have a son, "I'll once again have joy at this age?" jokes Sarai. To conceal doesn't mean that they aren't in the story. What is concealed in guilt is generally in view, but it isn't adequately considered and it's overlooked that here resides intimate responsibility for the interruption of meaning. In this case, Sarai's complicity in laughing at God is overlooked when, already old, he announces the birth of a son to them. Also overlooked is the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael into the wilderness because of Sarai's jealousy.

For the liberation of guilt, therefore, a catharsis in which intimate responsibility is revealed—confession in some religions—isn't enough, but rather a reinterpretation of the drama experienced is necessary.

Silo proposes a way out of the myth of Abraham in *Universal Root Myths*. Using divine mockery, he reinterprets the myth as a wake-up call for laughing at and doubting Him, when God announces to them that they'd have a child although they were old.

Continuing this line, this root myth of the feeling of guilt could be interpreted as:

Abraham took the sacrificial dagger ready to kill his beloved son Isaac at the top of Mount Moriah and Yahweh stayed his hand saying, “Stop Abraham, do not harm your son and here is the ram that I give you for the sacrifice.”

Abraham felt a profound relief of tension and tears welled up in his eyes. Yahweh, God, continued, “How could it occur to you to think, Abraham, that I, Yahweh, would send you to do something that goes against my own Law. How could you believe that I was speaking seriously, that I, Yahweh, would do something against myself? Learn this lesson so that your faith never again goes against human life. That is God’s law, my law. Now laugh because this is why we gave Isaac this name that means ‘laughter.’ Because you and Sarah mocked me and now I, Yahweh, mock you and you believed me. Laugh and hug Isaac, hug Sarai and love Me, your God, Yahweh, with a new faith.”

Catharsis and reinterpretation will end in an action towards the world that will end in dissolving the cyst of guilt. I don’t believe it’s possible that an action can redeem us from the feeling of guilt. Actions that we do from the motor of guilt go to maintaining this knot of suffering. Guilt conceals intimate responsibility and action exercised from here will pursue my own redemption, becoming a ‘for me’ that will continue this concealment.

There are two elements that we should bear in mind in order to liberate ourselves from this: friendliness and laughter. I should take care that any new interpretation of the guilty situation that I use, and the action I decide to do, should have the quality of extreme friendliness. Friendliness distances us from punishment and self-punishment that does nothing more than deepen the conflict. The other element is a sense of humour, the de-dramatisation of the situation and the gain in the capacity to laugh at ourselves a little bit.

In the creation myth, Adam and Eve are expelled from Paradise for having eaten from the Tree of Knowledge and tasted the fruit of good and of evil. Here guilt and punishment appear at the same point. However, Adam and Eve couldn’t discern between good and evil until they had acquired Knowledge. They have no choice other than to eat from the Tree of Knowledge and only this way can they become aware of Eternity, their home. God, on expelling them from Paradise, removes them from Eternity and grants them Human Life. The life for both of them is very short, but in this lapse of time—before the soul returns to the celestial world—they’ll gain knowledge that will accumulate from generation to generation until finally returning to Eternity with the awareness of what that means, thereby

fulfilling God's plan. Here is a re-interpretation of the myth that once again liberates us from the knot of guilt and punishment.

Oedipus doesn't want to see the complicity of his lover in the attempt to assassinate him in order to thwart the Oracle of Delphi and instead he prefers to gouge his eyes out—the discovery that it's his biological mother is something secondary in this case. This is the reason for the mother's suicide and not the incest, which was accidental.

Trying to synthesise, guilt is a blockage in the flow of kindness towards the world that's produced in order to conceal intimate responsibility for the interruption of this flow. Punishment deepens the feelings of guilt and its function is to make guilt eternal and indissoluble. This internal confusion that guilt produces is taken advantage of by moralisers who feed it and dominate the people they accuse. When one manages to recognise this intimate responsibility for what was trying to be concealed, catharsis and relief are achieved. The work with feelings of guilt requires extreme friendliness with oneself and with others, which distances us from all possible punishment or inquisition. After the catharsis it's necessary to reinterpret events, lifting the intimate responsibility with a certain sense of humour and leaving the knot that appeared as the situation of guilt on a second level. Finally, kindness is embodied in action, which will re-establish the flow of meaning to the world.

VALID ACTION

The Basis of Action. The Interruption of Meaning. Violence and Nonviolence. Morality and Freedom. Inner Faith. An Evolutionary Leap.

The Basis of Action

Action is where all creation concludes. It's the ultimate meaning of meaning, its achievement and its destiny. It's where being is finally reflected.

I called my guide to ask their name.

"My name is Toobe," they reply.

"Toobe?" I ask.

to-be, To dee, To do

Action is the craftsman who sculpts the model that is. Action is the sculptor that will copy the model time and again until being sees itself. This model can't be found in this space and in this time. It has no representation for the consciousness and nevertheless it operates through the consciousness. Individual action will never be able to complete it and therefore consciousnesses seek each other, cultures seek each other and actions form chains.

Actions chain themselves to others like the threads of the loom. It's the same ball of thread since the primordial beginning. Each thread becomes woven into the mesh of the memory. Isn't it here, the moment you opened your hand and closed your fist for the first time and when you lifted up your head and shoulders and walked on two feet for the first time or when you wanted to embrace the fire for the first time? Every action is a thread which is spun into the loom and, once woven, it can't be recognised in isolation, but you see the marvellous pattern drawn on the tapestry of history.

Every action has its origin in representation, in images of the consciousness. Representations go towards the sensitive world and are manifested, shaped, embodied and realised. These representations are the illusions and reveries that will try, time and again, to materialise in the world of objects. But the vessel of objects is too small for our ideals and

will never be able to contain them all. If a dream is ever completed in the world then immediately another, more important one will take its place. Action will try to make the dream come true and will fail, over and over again.

If our dreams were only a compensation for the void then what the consciousness would translate into the world would be this void. If our dreams were only different ways of fleeing from finitude, from non-meaning, from nothingness then we'd find no basis for action. Any action, as grotesque as it may be, would be justified by its attempt to escape from death.

Nevertheless, not everything in the consciousness is illusion. The non-representable transmits a signal that's also captured and translated by the consciousness. Non-illusion, that which is, the meaning, transmits its signal and we're rarely aware of it. When the consciousness detects and translates the signal coming from the world outside of time, the experience is all-encompassing, total and extraordinary. This happens from time to time, but the signal is being permanently captured even if it's not being recognised. This impulse coming from another space is expressed in representation and this representation is shaped in the world. In this world of consciousness mixed with dreams and illusions Meaning is introduced in representation and, through it, is transformed into action and expressed in the world. To recognise the action of meaning while we're under the influence of illusion is a new state of consciousness.

'The me', reverie and illusion are the means used by the consciousness to bring being into the world. It's the means of creation. 'I am' is expressed through dreams and reveries. But 'I am' isn't a dream and isn't a reverie. 'The me' identifies itself with dreams and goes from one dream to another. 'The me' is a dreamer that creates its dream. 'The me' tries to trap the 'I am'. When 'the me' traps the 'I am', the 'I am' has been hidden.

Meaning is the basis. Bringing the non-representable model to the representable world is meaning in action.

Other people, all human beings are essential for the realisation of meaning. Everyone makes their own particular representation of what is non-representable. The expression of meaning that others make is just as fundamental as mine and to affect it is to affect meaning itself.

Because meaning is to bring being into the world, there's no opposition between the worldly and the eternal, the one and the whole, diversity and equality, pure light and the rainbow.

As the non-representable cannot be represented by an individual consciousness, it'll seek complementation for this. Man and Woman will come together, people will unite and cultures will find themselves in a new social configuration that will also correspond to a new moment of consciousness.

The Interruption of Meaning

When we give a basis to action, our intuition identifies a transcendent meaning of consciousness. Reason resists accepting that something beyond its grasp is what orientates it and gives it meaning. Confused reason spies on us and its wounded pride objects to this vision that we're accessing. So it presents us with a list of calamities, countless unfolding monstrosities and atrocities carried out by this same consciousness, whose function of translating meaning, making the model and bringing being into the world, we have comprehended.

Consciousness, bereft of meaning, starts a process of disintegration and brings this disintegration into the world. It puts a distance between itself and other consciousnesses, it's dehumanised, it disintegrates and it becomes violent, trying through force and pressure to keep the crumbling contents together. All of this violence and destructuring is brought into the world of objects, producing a horrifying world that terrifies on sight.

What is it that betrays the mind? What is it that intervenes between meaning and action?

Fear is what blocks the revealing of meaning in the world. Fear of loneliness, poverty, illness and death. Fear appears together with the configuration of 'the me'. 'The me' is very important for consciousness. 'The me' is what gives unity and coordination to its functions and transforms representation into action. Without 'the me' there's no bringing of meaning into the world. Fear is the translation that consciousness makes of conservation instincts. Life has evolved thanks to conservation instincts and those instincts are translated in the consciousness as two basic fears: the fear of death and the fear of loneliness. This is the moon that eclipses meaning; the root of suffering.

When meaning drives action, it's the creation drive that reaches the temporal world.
When fear is what drives action, it's destruction that emerges.

Meaning wants to exist, fear to disappear.

Meaning wants to expand, fear to contract.

Meaning wants to create, fear to extract.

The translation of the non-representable in the world of the representable, or the translation of what is beyond time and space in time and space, the expression of meaning, requires the conjunction of individual consciousness with other consciousnesses. It's not possible for an isolated consciousness to perform its task. Only together with others can being be translated. Consciousnesses complement each other, forging links through communication, solidarity, communion, love and compassion.

When consciousness is isolated and fear conceals meaning, the movement that leads it to join together with others still continues, but in this case the binding that it uses is violence.

When loneliness possesses me, envy, jealousy and revenge break the ties that join together consciousnesses and I reconnect them but this time with the rope of violence. Possessed by death I flee myself and on fleeing I'm unable to feel the eternal silence.

When meaning drives action I experience meaning, expansion, plenty, joy and unity.
When fear drives action I experience fear, contraction, suffering, pain and disintegration.

But the interesting thing isn't the fear that appears in the moment that the consciousness is formalised into 'a me'. What is interesting is that what is behind 'the me' and its fear is meaning and the driver that wants to make it real. *The interesting thing is the shining Aten⁶ of blinding light, of inexhaustible kindness that no force can extinguish.*

Violence and Nonviolence

There's something very important within all of us. An aspiration, sometimes a dream, sometimes an ideal and sometimes a drive that orientates our lives, all live in the hearts of each one of us. If you awaken your inner look and bring it behind the anxiety, behind the

⁶ Aten – the disk of the sun in ancient Egyptian mythology, and originally an aspect of Ra, the ancient Egyptian sun god.

anger and behind the sadness then we'll discover a calmness and tranquillity there. In the zone where the inner look lives, in the depths of human beings, is the love we want to express, the justice we aspire to build, the peace we want to breathe, the joy we hope to transmit, the hugs we want to give and the trust we want to show.

All this wonder is looking for ways to express itself outside of us and, in this push, fills life with meaning. Thus, meaning is something that comes from within each one of us and colours life. If something prevents the expression in the external world of what lies within then I feel internal pressure, stinging, suffocation and a restlessness that grows until it explodes. This impediment to its expression is what we experience as violence.

In ancient times, what prevented the development of the human were the elements of nature. Today, with nature already domesticated, the barrier to human expression is exercised by the social environment we live in. But one thing is to subjugate nature and another is to subject human beings. One thing is for me to use the stones, plants and animals for my intentions and quite another to use human beings so that they do what I want.

Violence against another person is to prevent them from bringing what is within them into the world. It's to stop them expressing their meaning in life. I can do this by means of physical violence upon the body or by applying economic violence, by restricting access to health and education. There are other, even more sophisticated forms, such as convincing people that they're empty inside and that the best they can do is to fill themselves up with things.

What is opposed to violence is Humanisation. To humanise is to create the conditions for the expression of that which truly drives the human. It is to struggle so that every human being has the possibility to do what they want with their life.

Today it's a little complicated because violence is already Lord and Master of the landscape and has emptied the souls of the masses. Hardly anyone remembers what the direction of their life is.

Oblivious to our meaning, events blow us around like leaves in the wind.

Violence is the response we give when fear invades the soul: the greater my fear, the more violent my behaviour. The more insecure a society feels, the more violent its organisation will be. It's not possible to remove it like a cancer. Nor is it possible to

eliminate it with more violence. Violence is a peculiar bug, any action carried out with the same substance will make it grow, and when it reaches its peak it'll have destroyed everything.

Violence, awakened by fear, is a runaway, uncontrollable force, which assails and imprisons the human so that it no longer appears in its path. We're possessed by it, it knocks us down with the force of a huge wave that breaks against a glacier and it turns us into animals.

In resisting this violence with violence, it increases until the defeat of the conquered. As violence increases, the human wanes, whichever the side is that applies it. Even the weakest group, when using the maximum violence also achieves its highest level of dehumanisation.

In a running of bulls the animals are baited until they become desperate beasts with a brute-force to attack anyone who crosses their path. When you place yourself in their path, a shiver runs through your body and fear in its purest form arises, choking your throat. A silent scream explodes in your lungs and suddenly you're capable of anything to get out the way. The Matador and the bull eye each other up. He resists the fear, knowing that half a tonne of anger will charge at him. The Matador resists and waits. The bull starts running with its huge energy. Bull and Matador are one, one runs, the other resists hidden behind a red cloth, and at a short distance the beast is emboldened with that fabric and that red. The bull will gore him to dust, but then the Matador shifts the cloth a little and the bull follows the brightness of the cloth and passes by. Olé.

This dance continues until the bull is exhausted and it could even be tamed if the Matador didn't kill it first. Let us skip that last scene in order to imagine how to resist violence in the dance with the bull. How it can be channelled and finally tamed through nonviolence.

There's nothing more despicable for violence than nonviolence. Opposing factions always use violence and justify it as a defence against their opponent. When nonviolence appears on the scene, all the violent factions collude against it. Seemingly irreconcilable sides recognise a completely alien element that could end up dissolving them all. By deploying a nonviolent stance on a given stage, all the fragments of violent society

immediately begin to join together like dispersed mercury droplets that come together in mutual recognition.

You'll have to hold your position while the bull builds up rage, while he watches you pretending not to see you. His first attempt is to display his magnificence so that you see the childishness of your principles. Facing its disdain you might think that he doesn't see you, yet he has noticed your every movement. Then he'll show his anger disguised as morality or ideology. Ah, Matador, are you able to resist? There you are, radiant in a costume of pure gold. Can you maintain the purity and the shine? The bull is trying to enrage you. If successful he'll have won. He knows very well that you're afraid of him and that if you respond to that fear with violence, then he will be the Matador.

Seeing how fear is born in your innards, seeing your own despair and violence before you and choosing a nonviolent response deserves plaudits. Here is greatness being achieved in the human.

In order to express itself, nonviolence must enter into communication with violence. Nonviolence isn't stepping aside and avoiding violence. Nonviolence can only exist through contact with violence. This is different from pacifism which distances itself and creates a void. Nonviolence's *raison d'être* is the struggle against violence. Only when we understand the impossibility of answering violence with violence will we understand the importance of playing, dancing, advancing and retreating, taming violence until we persuade it, even humanise it.

You've got to get within the bull's reach, shake the red blanket and make yourself visible. The important thing is that the crowd identifies with you and not the bull.

At some point he'll charge at you and you'll feel his snorting blowing in your ear. Then remove the rag and let him ram into the air carrying only his own rage. Moving forwards and backwards is the art of nonviolence. Not only forwards, not only backwards. As soon as the first dance is finished the second begins. The crowd, increasingly pleased, will vibrate to the rhythm of nonviolence.

The last scene of our example, the bull's death—forgive me Spain—is superfluous. Perhaps it's a ritual transfer of the bull's attributes to the Matador. But if this were so, the

Matador, and the crowd identified with him, would remain not only with the strength but also with the violence.

In this world of horror, maintaining an ethical stance becomes increasingly difficult. We're obliged to choose between violent factions and whichever option we take, we betray what we believe in. We're pushed into taking sides. "Them or us," they tell us. Many in this situation opt out and escape into their own world, but that doesn't stop the violence increasing and feeding off the fear it generates. No matter what faction events have placed us in, what matters is that we understand that you, me and the other person are much more important than any side.

Although I develop in a society I don't like and am obliged by the blackmail of necessity, it doesn't have my consent or my faith. On the contrary, my action will be orientated towards its transformation. I will disbelieve the success, triumphalism and money of this society which I consider unjust and will support any initiative, however small, that goes in the direction of overcoming pain and suffering. I will seek reconciliation, communication and meaning. I will affirm humanist values and try to be coherent with the rule of treating others as I want to be treated.

When we're depressed it's because violence has already destroyed our dreams but we don't want to accept it. However, those shattered dreams weren't really our own, we borrowed them from a dying society. On disappearing they left a void to be filled with aspirations that have accompanied us since ancient times and drive us towards new worlds. A dream dies when another more powerful one is about to be born. Dreams aren't just imagination; they're also the language spoken by the Gods. While the era goes about destructuring this civilisation that has failed to produce a just and libertarian society, something new stirring within us drives us to create the signs, the forms of relationship and the language of the future Universal Human Nation.

Morality and Freedom

The problem with morality is that it's badly discredited. We justify so much barbarism in the name of morality that this word has been emptied of its great power to give meaning

to action. The saying⁷, "God helps those who help themselves," or proclaiming life to be above everything whilst blessing the guns that kill ones enemies, has eventually shown morality for what it is. Moralists ended up becoming the symbol of incoherence, foaming at the mouth proclaiming a moral crisis, not realising that what was in crisis was their 'morality'.

Morality is an action performed under some kind of mandate that comes from another world. It comes from the space of good. The action driven by morality is experienced as a mandate. It's done because that's what must be done. The action does not require a meditated justification because it's justified by every cell of my body. Everything in me knows that this action is correct. Once finished we experience the pleasure of a done duty, a task fulfilled. By contrast, when not yet done, there's a debt, a pending duty.

When we speak of a mandate that comes from another world problems start to arise because that world isn't representable. That leads the interpreters of this world to use intelligible language about the spaces of good. But in order to learn such morality I don't read anything written by that interpreter, or even hear the words they speak, but I imitate what he or she does. The interesting thing about morality is its ability to be transmitted by imitation. Herein lays its importance, since I can access meaning by carrying out a kind of action and the door to transcendence also opens for anyone who mimics such action.

But if the 'interpreter' preaches but does not practice, as the saying goes, demanding one type of action and doing another, they produce a moral fatigue in me and an inability to imitate them. So this morality is no longer a morality but mere written words and ultimately dead words. The interpreter becomes a cynic, then a moralist and, finally, persecuted by their own incoherence, an inquisitor.

The moral action I wish to follow is for me, above all, an aspiration, a way of behaving through which I communicate with the significance of life.

Imitation may be the most important way of learning and, if not, is the fastest and with the quickest propagation. Imitation isn't a creative act, but once imitated the register is very close to the experience of creation.

⁷ Original Spanish saying is "a Dios rogando y con el mazo dando" which would literally translate as, "praying to God while hitting with the hammer"

The great souls—the exemplary lives that embodied meaning and made their lives an example—have given us a great gift: through the imitation of their behaviour we can communicate with what was revealed to them or that somehow they gained access to. But if we deify these people we remove them from this time and this space, which leaves them out of reach of our imitation and the demonstration effect that such behaviour is possible moves away from us.

A rule or conduct that proposes a moral reference will be recognised as true if, as we implement it, we make contact with the meaning of life: without either feelings of guilt or threats and punishment. A moral reference is recognised because its imitation connects me with my own meaning. It communicates me with myself.

The action I perform out of social obligation, because of what people may say, by peer pressure, isn't a moral action. Such actions I perform bound by an abstract and external body are done only with the intention of recovering my lost freedom which was taken away from me by that abstract body. Here I'm a victim of violence and immorality. I'd like to do these actions quickly to get out of the situation and recover myself.

Doing what must be done is experienced quite differently within me. It's a mandate, almost a call, which comes from within. Moral action has a flavour that fills, it's not in a hurry, meaning is being expressed and meaning is experienced. It's God looking at himself.

Morality is a teacher of actions and behaviour suggested from the world beyond time and space. We may speak of morality because there is meaning in life. Morality is a proposal of conduct which reflects meaning into the world. It's a proposal and not an obligation. The imitation of behaviour or the implementation of a proposal has to be a free act, by choice and without obligation or pressure of any kind. Only then can we speak of a moral act. It's freedom of choice, the very decision to act in one way rather than another that ennobles and endows an action with meaning. It's that freedom that makes the imperative a moral one: we must do what must be done. Otherwise the imperative will provoke contradiction and internal violence.

The moral act is possible only in a state of freedom. Why must the moral act be chosen among all possibilities? Because this action puts me in touch with the transcendental. The transcendental is the maximum freedom. It's a break with the limitations imposed by time

and space. The moral act, the true one: even if I experience it as an obligation and commitment, I experience growth and freedom as I carry it out.

This principle in 'The Inner Look,' by Silo, 'When you treat others as you would have them treat you, you liberate yourself,' encapsulates the nub of the moral issue. You can do whatever you want, but there's a way of doing so that connects you with meaning and freedom, and another way that'll make you a prisoner of suffering. Your chains will move you further away from meaning and each step you take will add a new link.

This is the most important of all principles and the centre of all things moral. Following this rule would be sufficient to achieve great human and social change. But ours is the only species that has to choose this behaviour. It's not done 'naturally', as would be the case with ants or other animal societies. Taking this maxim and acting according to it in one's personal life, in labour relations, international relations and translating it into various fields would lead to a fully human society. Because this is what must be done and because it's dictated by meaning, we'll attempt it, civilisation after civilisation, until the Earth is finally a home for human beings.

Inner Faith

When Silo began his message in the Andes Mountains he said, "Without inner faith there is fear, fear produces violence and violence produces destruction. Therefore, internal faith prevents destruction."

I call my guide to show me where faith is, to take me to its centre and to be with me while I travel that road.

Faith is mine to place. This is all I have: the most important treasure. There, in faith, all the inner strength to encourage action is concentrated.

Motor and heart of doing.

Where have I placed my faith?

Faith is a powerful and inexhaustible force. It concentrates the energy of life and gives life to action. It is energetic concentration that will be transformed into motion.

Where have you placed it?

In ancient times faith used to be placed in a God whose priests orientated the movement of the people. In other times, faith was placed in the State whose representatives controlled what was and wasn't done. Finally faith was placed in Money and the owners of money also became the owners of action.

Only you can place your faith, no one can seize it without your consent and nobody can take it from you. But if you don't put it somewhere, it'll be inverted and you'll become sad.

Inexhaustible energy of human action, precipitation of the transcendental that's given to you so that you may fulfil your destiny: where is your faith? Where isn't it and should be? Where is it, and shouldn't be? No one else has it without your permission, no one. In a moment of freedom it leaves you to go to someone else and they gain a new force. It regenerates and energises you as soon as you place it somewhere.

In an act of freedom I place my faith in the best of you, in what you bring from another world that will break through and you'll feel life and meaning. This faith I place in you is the same one that regenerates me.

Because my faith can only be placed in an act of freedom, if something lets it down, I'll get it back by taking responsibility for that placement. In this way I connect again to its source. This energy comes from me and I direct it towards what I want. If I didn't understand this I'd be externalising faith, placing it in someone or something outside of myself and it would seem to me that what animates and gives vitality to the action is something external. Soon my actions will depend on that external entity.

Faith is externalised and deposited in someone or something outside of me. Later that external something wearing the faith I placed in it, motivates and encourages me. Once faith is placed in an external entity I'll labour under the illusion that this external entity is what gives life to my actions, forgetting that this external entity has the power of the faith that I transferred to it.

Faith moves action in the world and if something controls faith, it has the power of the world. But that power has been conceded by millions of men and women who have the capacity to produce faith. The power that we've created by endowing it with our faith is maintained through violence and is responsible for most of the social misery. That suffering has its origin in the awarding of human energy to a non-human entity.

There always comes a time when those entities in which we've placed our faith let us down. These are the moments of social failure. Then depression and non-meaning assail us, seeking to drown our action. If I refuse to accept that my faith has been let down then I'll panic and desperate violence will be set in motion.

Faith is the energy of the soul concentrated and injected wherever we wish. Its target will be able to count on additional strength that can end up being very large. In the same way we forget the work of the dynamo when the light bulb is on, so we forget that it's our faith that allows the action of the person we entrusted it with.

When I'm let down the mysterious channel through which I was transferring my faith to another is cut off. By interrupting the flow it becomes available for me to redirect it. Even in the worst betrayal no one can remain in possession of my faith. This recovery of the availability of my faith is possible only if I accept that it was granted by my free decision, if not I'll stay trapped in resentment, faith will be inverted, I'll not want to trust anyone again and that energy, now stuck, will be diluted in bitterness.

When a reverie fails it seems that faith vanishes. Resentment will lead me towards mistrust and scepticism. I don't want to accept that I was following a mirage and that failure awoke me from its enchantment. If I accept this then I'll realise that faith continues to live in me. I'll recover it from the illusion that consumed its energy. But where shall I direct it? I'll direct it towards a new reverie, but then what is the point? The point is that faith is available to me even if I can only direct it towards a new dream. Dreams translate tensions and wounds of the consciousness, but they also translate meaning. There are dreams through which the Gods speak.

After each failure, a new impulse orientates me closer and closer to my destiny. The more I fail, the more I learn, and the closer I get to the reverie that translates the model of what is and will be built by humanity. In every failure my destiny becomes aligned to human destiny. In failure I find the inexhaustible faith that allows me to try again. Faith is the very energy of meaning. That there is meaning is what makes it possible to be convinced that there is meaning. No matter the number of failures, the attempt will always arise to complete being in the world, until it fulfils humanity's destiny. This comprehension isn't possible without learning, and learning isn't possible without error, and error cannot be recognised without failure. At every turn of this spiral we find

ourselves closer to the centre, approaching a point which is the origin and the end, or is neither origin nor end.

Galileo, when you saw that the Earth revolved around the sun, did you also know you were revolving around it too? Not only the Earth, you also revolve around the sun though it may seem to you that you're motionless. We perceive that everything revolves around 'the me'. 'The me' is placed in the body, that's its terrain. A force I can't see turns it around a centre. Remnants of this force are captured by the consciousness and translated as faith.

What can I do to look at the centre I'm facing?

We're so very different, you and I. Yes, everything I've been writing points to something in the profound that unites us and makes us inseparable, as if we were the same substance, but now I go out to the street and there are so many people I don't know it makes me scared. How can I break those limits, those boundaries that separate us? We need something in common to drive us towards the future: a project to unite us. All the projects that brought us together in antiquity have already failed. They completed their cycle. Today we're apart and failing to recognise one another.

There's a human paradox in communication. Communication is what we want above all. Communication brings us closer to that transcendental union, a communion with the 'Everything'. Communication is a unique experience that gives us joy and hope. It's so important that any activity can be a pretext. The paradox is that without the pretext we cannot achieve communication. What usually happens is that the pretext, that activity we do, appears as the primary and darkens the consciousness. If we wake up from that we'll see that life itself is a pretext for meeting other human beings. Of course everything is upside down and today anything is more important than any other thing. However, this other thing is my only chance to grasp meaning.

Big changes are preceded by major crises. A crisis occurs when all the components of a certain order have been disrupted and chaos appears to be the only truth. Change is precisely a new way of organising the elements of a system and this is only possible if the previous order becomes destructured. The transition between an old order and a new one can be very painful because we're walking on the verge of complete disintegration all the

time. As we build a new kind of organisation or relationship, the old confronts us and opposes us dialectically. This duality can be as tense as can be or so loose that it's hardly noticeable, in any case, we always have as a reference that there's something opposing us. When change approaches there's complete upheaval and nothing is solid enough to serve as a point of support to move towards the new state. We're part of the system we want to change and when it becomes convulsed we convulse with it. The only reference we can find has to be something that's not part of that crisis. Where can I find something solid when the whole Earth is trembling? In something that isn't on the Earth. If everything is trembling I must let go of everything since there's nothing useful to hold on to. In this great failure, the centre around which everything turns will remain stationary. This centre continues to emanate faith. In the greatest instability I'll hold on to faith and I won't try to stop the accelerating upheaval because I'll know that soon everything will have changed and I want to be there to admire it.

Where should you direct your faith? Only you can know this and wherever you decide to direct it, the creative force will go there. I believe there's something great in everyone and this greatness drives us and manifests itself. This wonder inside us will keep moving through all the remnants of animal nature left in us. I see, in the future, a society of peace, justice, men and women free to accomplish the meaning of their lives. I believe there's something good in people and when it manifests it makes them shine with the luminosity of meaning. When darkness obscures the human and everything seems to move according to the random cruelty of chaos, I see the flickering flashes of compassion and then faith in me and my fellow human beings finds its channel once again to build what I believe is destiny. In my darkest moments something stirs within me and changes my look to see the great effort of the subtle to overcome the coarse, the first light to illuminate others, calmly, permanently, waiting for the chance to jump the fence.

An evolutionary leap

When I saw the native forest that surrounds Lake Icalma in the far south of Chile, well into the Andes, a unique beauty left me speechless and stationary. Looking at the reflection of the snow on the mirror of water I wondered, "What is the meaning of life?"

A monkey-puzzle⁸ tree about 2000 years old in front of me replied, "For me it's seeing this beauty."

"So, may I stay here and look at it too?" I asked again.

"The thing is," the tree responded, "you're not a monkey-puzzle tree."

"I'm not a monkey-puzzle tree." The answer hit me and something vaporous entered my body making me come back to my senses.

Meaning is expressing itself all the time, since before the beginning: in the universe that's home to life, in life, in the ancient monkey-puzzle trees, in the consciousness, in the human. At some point the consciousness perceives an inner spark hitherto unknown to it and becomes awake to the human. The human: that intersection between the eternal and the temporal, that creative principle that colours the worldly, that God entrusted with the task of bringing being into the world.

The human has been clearing cobwebs off its consciousness, why shouldn't it now try to be aware of the human, aware of itself?

Why would the human not try for a consciousness aware of meaning?

Consciousness appeared and at a point in its development it recognised a glow in itself, it felt the breath of the human. Since then, the human has brought meaning to the world through the consciousness, humanising it. It transforms the world and the consciousness.

The human performs its task through the consciousness. Through dreams and reveries it translates meaning and creates in the world. The consciousness, driven by reveries, doesn't know this and goes about trying to complete an illusion in the world. It fails in that path and one reverie replaces another. The human introduces the essence to these images and, failure after failure, meaning is expressed in the history of humankind. Jumbled up amongst all the images of the consciousness is something important seeking to materialise.

But if there's a meaning, if the transcendental is hidden within the whole stream of consciousness then there must be a way to recognise it. It's because this meaning exists

⁸ Araucaria Araucana, also known as the Chile Pine, is native to South-Central Chile and also Chile's national tree. The author is Chilean.

that it's interesting to awaken the consciousness from reverie. It's because of the possibility of recognising it that we seek a new way of working.

It's because I want to see you and go beyond what separates us that I want an evolutionary leap. If nothingness were behind what I am then there would be no justification for attempting the leap. Something very strong is calling, wanting to be seen, felt, anticipated and conscious.

Can the consciousness awaken from reverie? But what is it that wakes up when we talk about an awakened consciousness? Certainly not 'the me'. 'The me' is present in all levels of consciousness. In dreams I see my 'me' in action and, in vigil I act in the world. But who watches 'the me' in sleep? This observer identifies with 'the me' on waking from sleep and believes it's 'the me'. This observer was lost in the dream and now is lost in reverie. What is awakening as the level of consciousness broadens is this observer. What wakes up in vigil is the inner look that isn't identified with 'the me' and becomes conscious of itself while 'the me' works in the world.

The inner look is born from the depths and communicates an area of inner silence with the noisy world. If the screeching of the inner world is very strong, the inner look cannot bear it and falls asleep. Internal noise increases due to the disintegration caused in us by contradictions. The consciousness avoids disintegration by increasing the internal pressure. 'The me' becomes very active taking up all the energy in order to not become deconstructed and this produces a grinding noise that prevents perception of the inner look's luminosity. Integration of the contents of consciousness relaxes the work of 'the me', reduces noise, and allows the inner look to emerge. It's because there's meaning and the possibility to make contact with it that it's worthwhile overcoming contradictions and advancing towards a coherent life.

This awakening is known as the level of 'consciousness of self.' Accessing it requires some effort, since it isn't yet rooted in the consciousness like sleep, semi-sleep or vigil. This level isn't useful for fulfilling my reveries. It won't make me smarter or more pleasant, or more powerful. I'll simply be more alert and I'll realise that my reveries are reveries. Above all I'll remember that I exist, or rather, my existence will be present. I'll notice certain changes in behaviour and changes in my emotional tone. I'll see how compulsions and reveries that used to grab me arise, but now they'll not make me act, but

rather I'll see them pass by and be able to defer my response in the world. The difficulty with this mental behaviour is that the look is separated from the reverie and I feel a little bit more naked without those beliefs about myself that I'd like to exhibit. If I accept myself with kindness I'll conquer the inertia of reveries and the consciousness will set itself to work in another level.

Why would the consciousness require a new level of work?

A new level of consciousness does not mean the others are no longer useful. From sleep to vigil, each level is necessary for a given task. Each level fulfils a function in life and the activities pertaining to a level cannot be replaced by those of another.

It's the need to emerge from suffering, to eliminate violence and connect with a transcendental meaning that consciousness seeks a new way of being in the world. It's a necessity that inhabits another space, we carry it within. It's the evolutionary drive and is stronger than reason.

It flows through the levels of consciousness and a new level gradually becomes incorporated. In vigil I wake up from a dream I believed in during the night. Upon entering consciousness of self, I wake up from the reverie that covers my days, I stop believing in the illusion my life is built on. This absence of illusion leads to the recognition of a centre, a place where the look comes from, a place that, from time to time, is filled with meaning. I exist and when I exist I open the way for what truly exists to irrupt into the consciousness.

BEING AND MEANING

Who I Am. Consciousness of Being. Where I'm Going. To Humanise the World.

Who I Am

*Eternity Needed to Know itself,
for this it created Life,
Life overcame Resistances and gained Consciousness,
Consciousness recognised Immortality,
and returned to its Destiny*

We've reached a reality that transcends consciousness, something that's beyond what consciousness is capable of perceiving and that nevertheless is what gives it meaning and consistency. We've also said that this transcendent reality is permanently giving off signals and that somehow the consciousness captures them and translates them in its system of images; that this reality is filtered in dreams and reveries and gives a direction to consciousness; that if we affirm freedom, it's the freedom to deny ourselves something transcendental or to meet it; that if we set out to find meaning we'll awaken an inner look and the consciousness will become aware of itself; that from time to time in this path meaning will irrupt to show us something amazing that we cannot integrate because consciousness has no way to comprehend this world that it has presented to us; that it's meaning itself that's driving us to a new way of consciousness; and that through this channel humanity will also be able to put an end to suffering and violence and will attain a new state of organisation.

Meaning isn't something that exists in the tangible world and therefore cannot be perceived by touch, sight or smell. It's possible to experience meaning in life by taking the look to the depths of consciousness. When the look is internalised the translation of this experience in daily language or images isn't made easy, rather it becomes more difficult

and the throat and pencil choke, they feel emotional, making it difficult to express and communicate the most important thing to be expressed and communicated.

Who I am and where I'm going are the questions that will guide our minds towards the region where the true responses are to be found, or the questions that will silence the mind allowing it to hear 'I am', being and its meaning. People don't know who they are or where they're going. They identify with things and the body and they believe that their destiny is that of things and the body. But we're neither things nor the body. We identify with them but we aren't them. We believe something that isn't true. This question leads us to comprehend the illusion of 'the me', its non-meaning. But who am I really? With hands empty, without my things, behind my anxiety, behind my anguish, behind my pain, when I connect with something more internal, I am who I am, a response of communion. *I am* expresses itself and builds the world. You're not only 'me', you're also a part of everything and you're going towards the light, towards everything, towards where everything goes.

I am wants to be in the world. The meaning in life is to grow, to fill life. Life has nothing to do with suffering, nor does it grow to avoid it. Life is growth, full and meaningful. Meaning in life is experienced as a fulfilment, as a leaving behind of the void and filling it.

I am is everything and is one, it is unity. It needs to be shaped, to be embodied, to materialise in diversity. *I am* is the human that needs to be brought into the world.

Human society is the expression of *I am*. The appearance of society is part of Creation. Creation is the *Need of I am*.

'Me' is a holistic image of consciousness that it uses in order to operate in the world. This image is used by consciousness to fulfil its mission: to make human society.

Knowledge is what being gains in its journey through existence. Simultaneous knowledge and eternity were not possible. *The human is a need of eternity to become aware of, and know, itself.*

The legend says that in the beginning was Eternity. But Eternity didn't know that it was eternity: happy, joyful, pure and simple eternity. So it needed to know what eternity was. It needed Knowledge in order to discover itself. So Necessity created Life. Life is Eternity's

Path in order to realise what Eternity is. Life met resistances. These resistances are pain and suffering. On conquering resistances, on conquering pain and suffering, Eternity met Learning and Knowledge. Knowledge seeks Eternity. Eternity and Knowledge seek each other without meeting.

We can know who we are and what our destiny is. For this we have to touch the region where the responses are to be found. It isn't possible to get there directly. That region is covered by layers of fears, by scabs caused by the bleeding of the void. It's possible to generate the mental ambiance so that this region may express itself and for the responses that we need to emerge.

I enter and meet *I am*. *I am* is the translation of being in myself. Being is being, it is what it is and will be, what exists before and after my body. *I am* is a translation of my consciousness which puts me in contact with 'the everything'.

You arrive here removing your clothes. Stripping. Discovering that what you believe you are, you aren't. You are the era, but the era is changing. You are the body, and the body perishes. You are reverie and desire, but they lead you to suffering. You are 'the me' but 'the me' dies with the body. So who are you? You are the void and nothingness. If that's so, why does this void not shock you? Why is this silence so dense? Who's observing this void?... Who's observing?

Suddenly you brush against another world, like a comet that shoots across the sky and looks without stopping. It sees everything, but retains nothing.

What Moses heard, "I am who I am", what Buddha found, "what doesn't die", and what pursued Paul, "Why do you pursue me, Saul?" you will see with your own inner eye. Here it is for everyone, to be expressed.

Consciousness of Being

Human beings are lost in things. They believe that they're things and that only things have existence. To be in Nonmeaning is to be identified with things, asleep and unaware of existence, as if things were what will make an impression on *I am* and endow it with meaning. Normal vigil is a state of identification with things.

We believe in death just as we believe in dreams while asleep. We believe in death in the same way we believe what we identify with in vigil. When we wake up from sleep we no longer believe in the dream. When we wake up from vigil we no longer believe in death. It's in order to conquer the illusion of death that we need to climb the next rung on the ladder and awaken the inner look. This look is directed to the world from a centre that's behind perception and I experience it when I become aware of my existence.

Existence is the basis for enlarging consciousness. I exist but I live oblivious to my existence. I exist and I'm not a thing, I perceive things from my existence. When I become aware that I exist, tensions and problems present themselves. This background noise makes it difficult for me to make contact with this centre. If it's very acute then my being will be distracted in the jungle of contradictions. Any action that surpasses my contradictions will help to diminish the ruminations of my head as it tries to solve the insoluble. My being is identified with these tensions but I'm not them, neither am I my problems, nor my body. The inner look makes contact with existence, with what truly exists and differentiates being from things.

Things make an impression on my existence. They impress upon it in the same way that light activates the chemicals in photographic paper so that the image appears. Things impress upon inner reality and reveal what already exists there. This thing that exists, in turn, is driven into consciousness so that it materialises in the social world.

I exist and on becoming aware of this I communicate with a vital current that I perceive as a force that circulates around my body. I don't precisely know what this force is, it doesn't seem to be muscular, I could call it psychic, but sincerely I have to say that I don't know what it is. I perceive a force and the perception is mine, but I ignore exactly what it is that I perceive. This force is here although I don't know to direct it and sometimes it confuses me. Other times I become emotional and ecstasy has me on the verge of tears. It makes me recognise being in everything that exists. *I am*, on seeing its being in things, on seeing itself in the world, endows things with meaning and the world becomes the mirror of being.

Where I'm Going

Here I am trying to communicate with you, trying to share an experience that's still wrapped in intuition. What drives me to approach you? Could it be just a whim or does it respond to a need, something that I'm impelled to do and unable to prevent? I'm writing for you, I'm trying to touch something in you or to calm myself in order to feel you. How to break what separates us so that we can meet?

Although it seems to me that experience of being should be enough in itself, and although I don't manage to observe the act that's directed towards other people, I'm driven towards them. Where are they? Where are you to whom I'm writing without even knowing you, without knowing if I'll be alive when you read my book? From within I can observe things outside. But you? Where are you?

Other people are an enigma: the entire enigma of creation synthesised in this person in front of me. Other people exist; they exist for themselves, not for me. They aren't there to love me or to look after me or to fulfil me. All kinds of roles, magic and rituals exist to attract them, to enchant them, to feel that they're part of the atmosphere I breathe. Oblivious to my existence, I want other people to realise that I exist.

Your body is there and you're within your body, your body is the matter with which you act over matter, but you—inside there—are in another space that I cannot reach by delving through matter. Within the body is the place where you can be found. But within isn't a physical or temporal space that I can reach with my bodily organs.

Everything outside is replete with this 'within' that has been externalised. My gaze drifts around this room, through the window, every centimetre of the garden, the street, the concrete, the horns... I, who do not see you anywhere, now cannot stop meeting you, wherever I move my body, I meet you. Every millimetre of my life, every instant of my time I have you within my view. Things aren't things, they're materialisations from within. For a moment I find you and this meeting isn't just any other ordinary moment.

The body separates outside from inside. Primitive consciousness tries to cross this limit gobbling down everything from outside. But outside isn't a natural world. Outside is the externalisation of a within, and outside there are also bodies within which are the 'withins'

of other people. This possessive reflex is an impediment to our encounter. It belongs to a state of consciousness. So, just as the immobility of the body is proper to a level of sleep, the possessive reflex is proper to a level of vigil and has surely fulfilled its function in the evolution of life. Something in me goes beyond this tendency, it doesn't want to swallow the outside, but rather to extract from itself a profundity that wants to materialise.

When I become aware that I exist, other people exist as other people. Another person is the incarnation of liberty and their existence destabilises me. Never have we been closer to unity and, at the same time, more conscious of difference. In this discovery of ones own existence and that of another person, existence makes itself present. There's something new that exists and which I start to recognise. Something exists and is here, brushing against us. At the start, through ignorance, I prefer to deny it but little by little consciousness of existence is formed and an apparently motiveless joy accompanies this vision.

When existence makes itself present I'm responding to the world and simultaneously I'm aware of my existence. Consciousness of existence awakens the inner look and this isn't identified with perceptions but rather with an inner centre or with existence itself. In this place non-existence seems impossible or something inappropriate. Something seems to be born within that does not follow the same fate as the body. Nevertheless, the body itself seems to be bounded in time, a time dedicated to the expression of meaning. Death starts to cede its power over my life and because of this my allotted time becomes tinged with meaning. Something very important must be living, it must be given existence and it must come from true existence to temporal existence.

To Humanise the World

Being is brought into space-time and this process is humanisation. The bringing of being, the exteriorisation of the within, is the human task. When a blockage is produced in this direction the process is inverted. Dehumanisation starts when the evolutionary current is disconnected from meaning. When the evolutionary drive loses its direction, the process degenerates. When the flow from the eternal world to the temporal world is interrupted, on blocking this bringing of meaning from the immaterial world into the material world,

creation is degraded and everything created becomes corrupted and a monstrosity is produced.

Monstrosity is the indicator of the interruption of evolution. Anything that we may do so that this creative current retakes its course will produce a tremendous joy in us. Any small action by us that helps life to continue its process of growth and fulfilment rewards us with an emotional happiness, sometimes disproportionate to whatever gesture it is that we did. Maybe these are the sorts of emotions that will accompany humanity in the future when contact with meaning has been re-established.

When the movement of being towards the world is detained, the translation that consciousness makes of this is a void. In reality the void cannot be experienced and rather what appears is a horror of the void: the fear of loneliness and death. This horror is unbearable and consciousness—a transformer of energy and a transporter of the subtle into space-time—flees in terror. Consciousness is lost in a puff of nonmeaning.

Behind this agitated running-to-nowhere is the fear of nothingness. Nothingness is unrepresentable but we can make an effort to make it appear. Let's try to give the fearful event a representation in order to complete it. Is the colour of nothingness black or greyish? The smell; nauseating or odourless? Can it be observed or is it diluted in an aseptic grey?

According to Henri Bergson in the question, "Why being and not nothingness?" it's being assumed that at the beginning was nothing and that the appearance of being is what requires justification. It is, he says, like asking ourselves about a round square. Things are the inverse, and it's the assumption of nothingness which finds no justification.

For Parmenides, what is is, and what isn't isn't, therefore it's impossible to ask a question about what isn't.

What's behind my fear, behind fury? For a moment let's try to swim in the sea of nothingness; this sea without waves and without salt. I relax and, on relaxing my tensions, I sink. Nothingness enters through my nostrils, rushes into my throat and dissolves me. The elongation of the wave is horizontal, for ever. I hear a pulse in the blackness, the echo of a pulse, an imperceptible current in the calm waters, resonant movement and static. I don't know if I'm moving or if something's approaching. An immobile current takes me. Slowly. I'm bathing in a force. Now it's a force of clear light and nothingness vanishes as

if it had never been here. A jet of life and meaning fills space. I try to remember the void and I can't. The void is an impossibility. It's what doesn't exist.

So there's being (meaning), the human and the world. The life plan is to achieve consciousness of life. This consciousness in evolution was capable of distinguishing within it the importance of the human and now starts to recognise its existence.

The human is the impetus that brings being into the world through creation. The human seeks to reflect being and for this seeks itself. Creation needs to make a truly human society—removed from violence and suffering—in which the human can recognise an image of being within it. The materialisation of this society is indispensable for this creating force—the human, now not just as a consciousness of existence, but also as a consciousness of being—to continue the path towards its destiny.

When each and every human being can express meaning the human task will be complete. To domesticate nature was the first step and the use of violence was required for that but these prehistoric remnants must be surpassed in order for being to continue its development. The next step is to reach the state of human society, but this is a project for all the world's peoples and cultures. In the human task other people are indispensable and to destroy another person or to diminish them is to destroy or to diminish oneself, it's to degrade the model that must be made. Living in a society without a direction, I find myself adrift, hitting myself against the reefs, unable to make it into port. I'm part of society and responsible for what it does in my name. So, condemnation of its violence has meaning, non-cooperation with injustice has meaning, the union with others who are different to me—from other customs and traditions—has meaning in order to build the Universal Human Nation.

What is unrepresentable can only be represented by the conjunction of all consciousnesses throughout history. While a single human being is held back by another human being from carrying out this function the human cannot materialise.

An individual consciousness cannot make meaning appear by itself, neither can a subset of consciousnesses do it. Each and every one of us are required for meaning to materialise. This need for all human beings to manifest essence, or being, gives us the basis for a moral universe. Because there's meaning and because actions can connect me or distance me from it, I can distinguish good from bad. Good actions produce the experience of meaning

in me and the need that I have to express it, together with the impossibility of doing it without the rest of humanity, reveals to us a profound morality. Meaning cannot be expressed until every human being is able to express their meaning and therefore the only possible moral project is the overcoming of suffering and violence. Transforming oneself and transforming the world until we treat others as we want to be treated—beyond a guiding principle—must become a personal lifestyle and a system of social organisation.

The project of a human society is coupled with progress in consciousness. Consciousness of life will continue its development, turning into consciousness of itself, consciousness of meaning until becoming social consciousness and consciousness of being in the world.

History has reached the moment in which consciousnesses have managed to synchronise and communicate instantly on the whole of planet Earth and, beyond ones own individuality, nationality, religion or tradition, we're part of humanity and it's on the future of humanity that individual future depends. Humanity has to decide if it's going to continue evolving and make a human society—a translation of something marvellous and worthy of its origin—or if it'll stop here, degenerating into incomprehensible monstrosity.

Humanity isn't something abstract and each one of us, in the testimony of our own lives, decides the future of humanity. We decide destiny with every action. Today's great crisis is because social evolution has stopped. Material development of the world hasn't brought spiritual development with it. Levels of injustice and suffering are on the increase. Something isn't working and this will provoke a global upheaval that will be impossible to control with violence. Society, based on discrimination, exploitation and bullying will disintegrate in order to make way for a humanising construction. Until this happens, the upheavals will appear increasingly exaggerated until they convince every man and woman about the importance of making contact with meaning in life and reminding us that we're here to build the model of a transcendent world.

So, just as we can't turn off the sun, neither can we turn off the human which is inextinguishable. We can delay its deployment into existence but its permanence will survive any grotesque force that opposes it. The human illuminates life and we're driven—in reality impelled, obliged—to express meaning. We've come into this world to express,

in the perishable world, an image of an immortal world, to express the sacred in the here and now. And justice, kindness and love are sacred. The human will continue its creation until seeing it in existence.

EPILOGUE

In the measure that I wrote these pages, finding myself in front of my incomprehensible worlds and playing with the language to translate them into this book, I started to recognise very similar experiences in many of my friends. Even though the words of their descriptions weren't the same as I was using, something in their look, in the agitation of their emotion, in the calmness of their breathing, told me that they were experiencing and speaking about something similar to what I was writing. Also in the books that I read in this period, I seemed to recognise something similar to what I was trying to relate. I saw myself using expressions about being that I never imagined myself able to use given that they were very difficult concepts for my intellect.

How is it possible that something so intimate—an experience so moving and inexpressible—ends up being common to so many people? How can it be that I venture to an unexplored land and find it full of tourists, colonisers and even guides who know many of the paths of its impenetrable forests?

Everything started by putting a belief in doubt. Everything started from doubting the belief in death which is so rooted in the atmosphere of the era and taints the discourse of science, art and even religion.

There is meaning in life and so nothing ends with death. What are the consequences of this hypothesis and what is the proof that this hypothesis is true?

Trying to centre myself in what I was experiencing, discussing with my own intellect which presented me with accelerating theories about these mysteries, I sought an encounter with something beyond myself, for moments, in something small, without me predicting it and it seemed to me that I was met by what I was seeking. Not only am I looking for meaning in life, but also Meaning is looking for me so that I can express it. On the path, the silence leads me and then something very important presents itself; so important that I'd like to enter into that communion without having to return from there.

With each step, the more I was amazed by the precision of the descriptions made by Silo in *The Inner Look*. Suddenly it seemed to me that what I'd once taken for poetry or metaphor was simply inner literalness—literary precision for a lost traveller.

And so I concluded that my discoveries weren't discoveries at all, rather zones of being, translations of meaning, to which we all arrive when, without hurry, we travel the inner paths with the confidence that they'll lead us where we want to go.