

## Part I

*I will get nowhere by explaining prideful behaviour, for example, by referring to an individual's "pride". Nor can you explain aggression by referring to instinctive (or even learned) "aggressiveness". Such an explanation, which shifts attention from the interpersonal field to a factitious inner tendency, principle, instinct, or whatnot, is, I suggest, very great nonsense which only hides the real questions*

- Gregory Bateson

### **Rain in a paper cup**

The beat of the sea on the shore always calms my mind. Like the blood circulating my body the flow of water has its own rhythm – like my breath the sea rolls in and out at a pace that I don't have to do anything to keep up with. I just follow. And after a while I relax.

That unnerving sensation. A feeling of having been upset not by *something* but by a thousand little things accumulating over the day, during the week, throughout the year. Moments of frustration adding up to general unease: the eternal lack of time and hastened pace of life, paternalistic politicians with endless good intentions, apathetic youth chasing fabricated dreams, overwhelming systematisation undermining common sense, news of warring factions and impoverished human beings, wealth of choice and lack of variety, environmental degradation and human-induced climate change, helpless everyday. How many pictures of misery can one cope with? Pictures amassing day after day, new faces and new places but same theme and same scheme. Pictures of pictures upset me the most. Bland iconic statements hiding the deeper story. It is all too often impossible to know if such pictures are sincere.

Tonight, untruthful pictures took me on a detour like signposts pointing in the opposite direction of where I was going. They let me believe they were real and got me lost in my own story. Replaced my ability to act with impotence. It took the singing of the sea and my blood in unison to dissolve my worry. As this cloud lifted the landscape shifted slightly. The mountains on the other side of the fjord moved so I could make out details previously hidden and a feeling of joy mixed with sadness welled up instead. I felt the beauty of the Arctic sunset, the longing for a certain woman far away on another continent, the presence of my beloved sister, an approaching journey, self-inflicted solitude, everything coming together in a second, and I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. I became aware that something was different from before, like when a dream crystallises and you suddenly remember the particular details of a nightly vision previously hidden in the unconscious.

That's how these words began. Like the spilling over of the pouring rain in a paper cup that someone left on the table outside before seeking shelter. So I refuse to be held accountable. Where that word / appears think of *rain in a paper cup*. Yet it will be impossible to divorce all these words from the collection of experiences and impressions that go by my name as it is exactly the connections between all these pictures that make the rain spill over.

So a few words must be said about the rain. It has fallen many times, on the soils of many continents, and in the process this rain has become aware that water is the same no matter where it appears. Torrential rains, fresh water reservoirs, the deep ocean, mist, monsoons, clouds, Antarctic ice shelves, all is water, only the names are different. To keep track of the different functions and appearances it

has different names. A most fundamental fact of the world (which is probably why it is often forgotten). Another feature of water is you cannot divide it, or measure it, without presenting physical barriers to its natural flow. Only in this way is it possible to talk of quantities of water. To picture it in the abstract.

Pictures that sticks to the rain in this cup of water are male, white, European (Danish even), middle class, blue-eyed; along with a host of other, more relative ones such as youth, educated, privileged, cosmopolitan, and polite ones like interested, well-intentioned, good-mannered (according to his grandmother) and even more personal ones like post-agnostic, post-post-modern, anti-this, pro-that, take a piss, wear a hat. These have become pictures of pictures eventually inhibiting the flow of rain in the cup and that is why it started raining on these pages. We are what is on the other side of pictures like these. Untruthful pictures limits our view and depicts a fragmented, wretched, and dangerous world. A world that exists outside our lives and threatens to come down on us if we are not careful to observe the regulations that exist in order to keep everything in the right place.

The world is no such place. It is the aim of these words to trace the outline of certain areas of the world so that a clearer picture will come to view. Areas that it is important to have some connection with in order to achieve a balanced picture of ourselves. Not because there is anything to be learned from these pages, these are just the thoughts of the overflowing rain in a cup. It is widely known that there is nothing new or original to be said, everything has been said in a variety of ways in all the worlds' languages. Only silence truthfully conveys the true state of affairs. The writer has no claim to these words. Thus there is nothing to be gained from reading these pages with a certain cast of mind, one which discriminates between a writer and a reader. An anthropologist is well aware that there is no such thing as experience divorced from context and quantum physicists have long since discovered that observation is an act in itself and therefore changes the state of affairs. An outsider has knowledge which puts the insider's knowledge in context, while the insider has insights peculiar to his knowledge. This enquiry is an attempt to cast a different light on the pictures of pictures of our world. A diary of an exploration into the climate, physical and mental, in which we currently live.

That is how my story is your story are our stories, intertwined and inseparable, generated by our common imagination.