

Are the Dead Around Us and Will We Meet Them Again?

*Begleitet den Bruder die bräutliche Schwester?
Umfährt Siegmund Sieglinde dort?*

The question whether the dead are somewhere around us, and whether we will meet them again when we are dead ourselves, are of course of utmost importance for all of us. The answer to both questions is "yes". To the first even in a two-fold way: first in the most concrete form possible, and second in a metaphorical way, which may even be more important.

1

The basis for these propositions is an epistemology called "transcendentally idealistic and (/but) empirically realistic". It has been invented by IMMANUEL KANT in his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. Its basic idea is quite simple, thus convincing:

It had been a problem for the human mind from long to decide whether the world, the things contained in the world and events happening in the world, are in some sense "real" and exist independently of all our perception, or, in the opposite, are only "ideal" and created by the perceiving mind, similar to a dream. For both positions good arguments could be found, and the master brains of many centuries were busy doing so, on both sides.

E.g., if I take "a stone" and throw it to your head, there is obviously this thing, stone, which is common to my world and your world. But the feelings you have when the stone hits are only present in your world, and there is no technology in all human history, up to nowadays, which can transfer the feelings from your head into mine. Even so simple impressions like "salty" or "red" can never be compared directly; our two worlds will stay separated eternally.

The solution of KANT is basically very simple (of course the consequences and details are very complicated !-). He says that *both* theories are true, but only together! On one hand there is one single world, which is the same for every perceiving subject, and which exists also without being perceived at all. He calls it "*Ding an sich*". But this is not what we perceive. Because every act of perception always must combine this "thing" with the *personal way* of the perceiving subject. What we "perceive" / "encounter" / "see" / "realize" / "experience" is always a very different kind of world than the *Ding*. It is a kind of "personal world", which is different for everybody, and which

cannot be communicated from being to being.

In modern terminology you call this second kind of world a *mental model*. The mental model is the only thing you will ever experience. Only in the mental model things like "cause and effect" or "time" exist; in the *Ding-an-sich* the things simply ... "are". (So you can call the mental model also "*Wirklichkeit*".)

See the table we are sitting at: you know you can put your glass on it. More you do not need. A different being who is a carpenter will notice the kind of wood and how it has been treated, etc. A biologist seen fibres and protein structures. A nuclear physicist sees the electrons and much more empty space than anything else, on which you simply put your glass.

All these are correct models of the same "*Ding an sich*", but for very different purposes.

2

So is with people:

If I make experiences with any human being, eg. my friend-friend Felix, I only perceive the one mental model which is created in my brain by my mechanisms of perception. There is no way to perceive the "*Felix-an-sich*". He is real, but not reachable.

So every person exists many times: As part of the *Ding-an-sich*, but this is not accessible by anyone, including himself. And as many mental models, each one constructed anew by some human.

Please note, these mental models are "real"! They are not only "real", but they are even the only reality we can ever access! They are the most concrete thing possible. And of course, these mental models cannot "die". It is impossible. They can only be forgotten.

As long as we don't, they are around us. And we will see them in death if we program our mind to do so in the long coming dream.

3

But of course all people we know and love have also a "meaning": There are values they stand for, creeds they sacrificed for, ideas they suffered for.

Taking all these into account in our daily decisions is another kind of presence which may be called metaphorical, but which may even be more important.