

THE FULFILMENT OF LIFE

By Bjørn Pettersen

Did you think that life is only for material prosperity and emotional happiness? Did you think that if you only live up to the requests and expectations of society, you have honoured your duty to life? And did you think that if you only fulfil your wishes and dreams in life, your sorrows will be extinguished and you will be eternally happy? Or did you think that if you only believe in God you are secure and you will achieve eternal life and happiness in the hereafter?

Life is like a long journey on which we never seem to reach our presumed destination. For every new mountain peak we leave behind, there always appear new landscapes and new horizons in the distance before us. Why is always that drive there which makes us move forward in our lives? And why are we never really satisfied? What is it that we always reach for, consciously or unconsciously? That is our Self – our indefinable and unutterable inmost being, beyond all imaginations, thoughts, intellect and ego – and beyond our waking, dream and deep-dreamless-sleep stages of mind. That is our real identity, independent of our names, titles or other artificial identities, which only awaits our "coming home" – that we realise who in truth we are. But our body's mighty apparatus of senses always draws our attention outwards. It makes us always look for another – a life partner or soul mate – who we believe and hope will satisfy all our deepest needs. Or it makes us search in others' knowledge – in literature, in science and in art – to get answers to our grinding questions about ourselves. No one seems to do like "the old woman against the stream"^{*)}, who through learning the language of her own body and reading the scriptures of her own mind, came to know her Self. In the deepest deep of your inner being is the source to all that you are and all that you'll ever be – and also all that which you still don't know and of which you are not conscious, but which you seek unconsciously through everything you do. There lies the answer to all your longings and to all your yearnings and hopes. There you can quench your thirst from the immortal source of eternal life, and there you can bathe and eat and dress in the inexhaustible stream from the luxurious horn of plenty.

Nothing of real and lasting value lies outside your self. Life's destination and highest achievement is to realize your Self, which is the *summum bonum* or final good of life, and its very fulfilment.

^{*)} For the English reader: This refers to an old Norwegian fairy tale of the same title, which has become a common expression in Norwegian.