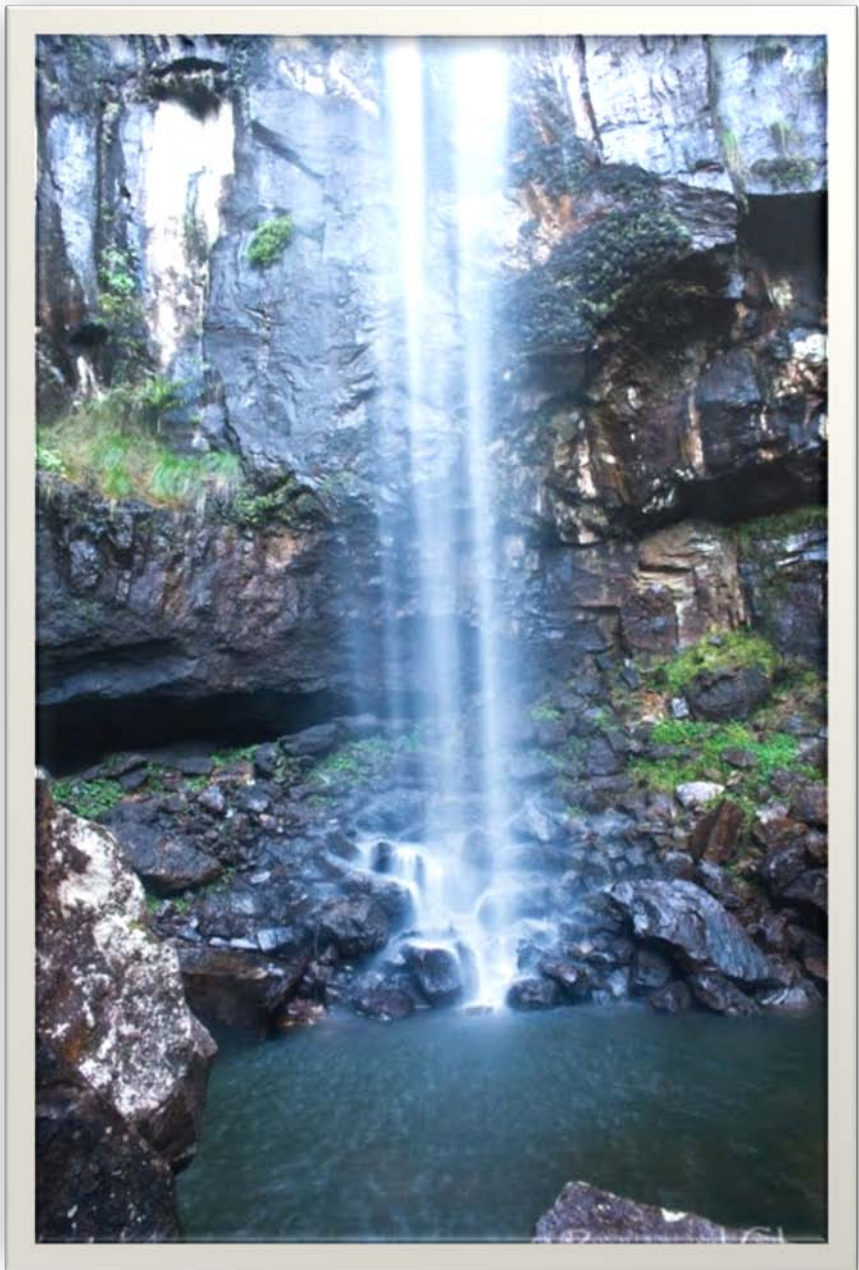


A Mind Like Clear Water
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I recently attended a kumijo class, where I train with both staff and bokken, and at the end of the evening we were all seated on the mats. The fellow who had taken the class talked to the practitioners for a while, about what he'd been taught regarding the people – the conscious and subconscious mind. He informed us that the subconscious was white; positive, and that if we had negative thoughts – black – they would go into the subconscious and turn it grey.

What a disappointing discussion.

Dualisms like good/bad, black/white, positive/negative merely reinforce the stereotypical paradigms that have become a religious and political tool – as well as a major advertising ploy – for manipulating people into an untrue view of what is acceptable or otherwise. It's seemed like it's been done forever. These concepts are just that. Concepts. They are unrealities without any reference in life.

So what's the reality?

The dissolution of andocentric mind. The breakthrough. An absolution from thinking 'humanly' to the denial of everything else, except, perhaps, peripherally.

Analogy

Not far from where I live there is a place called Protestors Falls.

At the end of a track that meanders through the rainforest I a deep pool fed from a waterfall that cascades down a two hundred and forty foot escarpment. It can be quite loud there beside the pool, sitting upon boulders that embrace it, because the place is a natural amphitheatre. Bat caves exist high up in the cliff face; ferns and native plants defy gravity from rocky outcroppings.

Sitting there you can look up towards the top of the falls. The experience is akin to reverse vertigo. The sky sits on top of it all in such a vivid blue as to hurt the eyes. Birds whip-call across the valley.

I've been there as dusk turns to dark and the profusion of fireflies warp the senses in the darkness as they flicker between huge trees and land on my eyelashes.

The place is holy.

The water from the falls comes from elsewhere – higher up – from amongst the gorges and gullies, catchments for rain and spring-fed creeks.

From where it thunders or trickles, depending on the season, into the deep pool at its base, it murmurs and tumbles down and down, over rock and rock and rock, linking with other creeks and waterways until it reaches the sea.

Of course.

But along the journey of its destiny are habitats. Frogs live there. Lizards. Birds and snakes, paddymelons, echidna, wallabies, turtles and, so I have been told, platypus. They have lived around or in the waters of this place since the Dreamtime.

But tour buses sometimes bring people here. And isn't it nice to take a dip in the deep, deep pure waters of the pool at the base of the falls?

They are responsible for the decimation of these habitats; for the poisoning of these waters. They wear deodorant, perfume, sunblock, make-up, hair product; false things; toxic things.

And if someone just told them to be clean of all these things first? To enter the waters aware?

The subconscious is not a void, nor is it a mess. It can be a garden or a forest of wild profusion – that depends on the *nature* of the person – it doesn't matter which. But each mind is unique and will flourish as long as it remains in its natural state. We must be very careful to prevent that which is toxic, or noxious, or alien, from gaining hold.

To do this requires a modicum of detachment. From emotional detachment and detachment from the material. From 'buying into' the jargon or the expectations of others. From outside interference that seeks to tell you what is right or wrong, black or white, positive or negative, light or dark.

A mind like clear water takes care. It requires love and it needs to be left alone sometimes. To be quiet.

Your body will usually inform you of when you are being pressured or polluted by unnatural things. It will suffer agitation or tension; your gut will express anxiety; your head will experience pressure, maybe

your hands will shake. Perhaps you will suffer 'want' and this will cause confusion and sometimes even despair. Maybe you won't sleep so well anymore.

Let it go. Take it off yourself. Fix it.

I've swum in that pool at the base of Protestors Falls, naked and clean. I've straddled what I call the god rock, in the heart of the waters.

It taught me – have a mind like clear water.