

A Beautiful *Maya* Metaphor

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Tom: Dear Ram, I have ordered your book and am looking forward to reading it, although as the self I don't look forward to things, but you know what I mean.

Over the past week I was making beautiful progress, fulfilling my *dharma* by studying, and I would experience the self through moments of deep bliss, one such experience that lasted at least 45 minutes. I figured I was making headway, but I must have got sloppy because all of a sudden the stress was back and I found myself identifying with the non-real me. I was shocked at how subtly ego-identification can creep back in, and before I knew it, it was all "woe is me, the world is not adhering to my wants and desires." Luckily, I am now getting back on track as awareness, not that I was ever not awareness. Again, you understand.

While I was contemplating the self this morning, an interesting example of what *maya* was came to me, and I would like to know if this example is correct in relation to the self. I don't know if you have ever played *The Sims*, which is a video game in which you can build a house and control its inhabitants' lives, e.g. make them shower, dress, eat, sleep, etc. Now the "people" in this video game "think" that they are all performing their own actions, living their own lives in a world full of drama and duality. What they don't realise (obviously I know they are not conscious, but bear with me) is that all of their actions are dictated by a higher power, in this case me, the player, and that who they are as well as the world that they apparently live in is one and the same. They appear to have free will and they appear to live in a dualistic reality, but there never was free will and the same intelligence that shapes them (ones and zeros, I guess, since it's a video game) is exactly the same intelligence that shapes the house, the grass and the trees, even the space between everything. If one of them dies it is just an illusion, as they are everything, so really they can't die, because to die the intelligence that shapes the entire video game would have to be removed, removing the video game itself.

This seems to be the case with *maya*. We are all in this giant illusion, but because we don't realise that who we are is everything we suffer, as the body-mind is so fleeting and constantly changing. So this was my new-generation take on Vedanta. I am curious to know what you will think.

Ram: A beautiful metaphor, Tom.