

## **The Rainmaker**

The story of the Rainmaker is central to using the Guideways. It offers you a way to understand what you are doing when you enter the inner space of a reading. This story is based on an event experienced by Richard Wilhelm, the first significant translator of the I Ching. Wilhelm, who died in 1930, spent most of his life as a German Evangelical minister to China who was proud of the fact that he never converted a single Chinese. The event occurred before the First World War, when Wilhelm was visiting a small village in Northern China. C. G. Jung, who saw Wilhelm as a great “maternal intellect” who “inoculated us with the true spirit of the East” took the story as a paradigm of the synchronistic power of the inner work to effect change that ambition and aggression never could.

The village Wilhelm visited in July or August was experiencing a drought. In fact the village had received no rain in over five years. The situation was quite serious and the villagers were doing everything they could. The shamans lay naked in the sun to call the rain spirits, exorcists in fine robes set off firecrackers to drive away malevolent spirits and the locals Catholics processed their idols through the village incessantly. Nothing worked.

The village elders came together in consternation. There was nothing else for it, they decided – they had to call a Rainmaker. They put a message onto a small train headed up into the surrounding mountains. Three days later the train returned and a little man stepped out. The Elders clustered round to welcome him, offering him all the resources the village could muster- beautiful ritual robes, lots of firecrackers, all the money they had, the last reserves of their stored food and, most probably, their daughters.

“Make me a little hut at the edge of the village,” the little man replied. “Put my rice in front of the door three times each day.”

“Is that all?” the astonished elders asked.

“Yes, that is all.”

The hut was quickly assembled. The little man entered it and closed the door. The rice disappeared regularly. Nothing happened. Three days later it started to rain. Then it snowed. Then it hailed. Five years worth of precipitation came down in the space of about 48 hours. When the skies cleared, the villagers were wild with joy, singing and celebrating. The little man emerged from the hut and headed for the train platform. But unlike the villagers, Wilhelm was watching him. He went up to the little man on the station platform and, after a very courteous bow, asked him: “Honored Sir, that was amazing. You made it rain! What did you do?”

“Nobody can make it rain,” the little man replied.

“But, the rain came – really, what did you do?”

“You know”, the little man replied, “it is very simple. Where I live, up on the mountain, we live in Dao. When we need sun, sun comes. When we need rain, rain comes. But these people here? They crazy! Totally out of Dao. When I come here, I get crazy, just like them. So I go into the hut, put myself back in Dao and of course rain comes. I didn’t do it. It just happens.”

Each time we go into the little hut burdened by collective insanity, each time we give up our certainties and drives and simply open ourselves to the Way of Change and let its symbols reshape our hearts we are that Rainmaker. And as we do the inner work, unconcerned about the outcome, magically, synchronistically – “of course the rain comes.”