

CHAOS

A USER'S GUIDE



Solutions for developing ourselves, our communities and organizations in a chaotic world

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Introduction

Chaos is my friend

Bob Dylan

When people ask me what I do, I usually tell them: “I spend half my time trying to understand the world and the other half explaining it to others.”

So, for 25 years (much longer according to my parents) I have been trying to understand the world around me. After the usual school-boy experiments, growing bean-seeds and the like, I figured I could understand the world by becoming an engineer. I did learn a few things – but not enough to really figure out the world. I realized that it was no longer science that governed the world but economics and business – it was no longer a world of engineers but of storekeepers, financiers and company lawyers. And so, I decided to get an MBA. But that again did not take me any closer to finding answers to my fundamental questions of the world.

It dawned on me then that the answer was not in my part of the world but maybe ... on the other side. I thought I needed to look at things from the other side of the planet and I was off on a world-tour looking for other cultures,

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especially the Eastern. I travelled for a whole year, at a time when neither internet nor mobiles existed. I had only a backpack that contained my shorts, t-shirts, and below them a suit, two shirts and a pair of city shoes. Those travels were about the encounter of the West and the East and led to my first book, *Asia, Business and Good Manners*, which was the first business guide for Asia. This book was followed by others. The last to be published was *Succeeding with the Asians*.

Well, my search continued.

I thought I should return, after all, to the base: philosophy. So, like an enthusiastic novice discovering the main approaches in philosophy, I began studying both the Western and Eastern schools, from ancient times leading up to the Integral philosophy which, without any doubt, is the approach most in resonance with my own vision and our present-day world.

Since, with an around the world trip almost every year and several years of meditation, at last I have the answer; at this moment I know I will never find the answer to “how the world works, but I have discovered that the path leading to the answer is itself a part of the answer.

I have also observed that the sciences, philosophies, spiritual disciplines, the East, the West, all converge very harmoniously, and this convergence can give us new keys for understanding this changing world.

I wish to share with you what I have discovered and learned along the way. I want to show you that the world is getting better and better, it is getting worse and worse, faster and faster, to the point where the world has become turbulent and chaotic.

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I will also give you some very simple tools that are based on one of the most advanced domains of science: the theories of chaos. And these tools will help you to analyze, understand and thus act in the turbulent, chaotic world that we live in.

And finally, I will share with you some practical, concrete examples. We shall then see how we can use new lenses and new tools in order to live and act in this fast-changing world. We shall see how to understand and live our personal and family lives, how to behave in our organizations, our associations, our companies – in this world overrun by an avalanche of changes.